



# Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear Parent/Carer and Year 9 students,

## Key Stage 4 course selection 2020 – 2021      Autumn term update Overview of key dates, events and deadlines for Year 9 parents and students

Next term, Year 9 students will select their Key Stage 4 courses for study in Year 10 and Year 11, thereby beginning their transition from Key Stage 3 into Key Stage 4. Inevitably, the selection of Key Stage 4 courses prompts the first serious consideration of post-19 education, training and employment. These decisions are all exciting, serious and very important, which is why the input of family support and guidance is absolutely essential. This letter sets out the schedule and key events in the Key Stage 4 course selection process which parents and students should note.

### Stage 1 – Complete the guidance booklet: ‘Year 9 preparation for Key Stage 4 course selection’

Year 9 students will be issued shortly with a guidance booklet called ‘Year 9 preparation for Key Stage 4 course selection’, for use at home. Parents should read the guidance booklet carefully, as there are specific sections to be completed in discussion with your daughter. The booklet is designed to guide students, with parental input, to reflect on their personal character traits and qualities and their academic strengths and learning journey. Parents need to complete pages 2 - 10 and page 21 of the booklet, in discussion with their daughters and then **sign on page 1** of the booklet to confirm that these pages have been read and discussed. Year 9 students will also be provided with login access details to the *Kudos* website, to enable them to work with their families to assess their interests and skills, as well as explore different education and career options. To access *Kudos*, please visit [www.cascaid.co.uk/kudos](http://www.cascaid.co.uk/kudos) and then click on the ‘Login or Register’ button.

### Stage 2 – Note the schedule of events next term

The following events have been provisionally scheduled for next term. Meetings and interviews are likely to take place as ‘remote’ events, in line with national guidance about stopping the spread of Coronavirus. Parents should be ready to discuss the information received by their daughters.

### January, February and March 2021: Year 9 small-group, remote interviews

Jody Phillips, the independent Careers adviser from ‘Prospects’ who works in Blackfen School, organises informal interviews for students to learn about the range of potential careers that might match their preferred selection of Key Stage 4 courses. It is *not* the case that Year 9 students should be selecting a career at this stage of their academic journey and personal development. Making hard and fast choices about preferred careers before qualification courses have even been started can hinder the selection process and limit the breadth of education and academic experience that we seek to provide in Key Stage 4. However, it is important that Year 9 students are introduced to the world of work, employment and future training and our careers input, led by Mrs Kellie Smith, has been rightly recognised for its sustained excellence by the national award of the Quality in Careers Standard.



- **February 2021: Key Stage 4 course selection guidance for students**

Year 9 students learn about the process of selecting Key Stage 4 courses, based on discussion with parents of the *Year 9 Preparation for Key Stage 4 Course Selection* booklet; information from the *Kudos* website and advice from teachers. The importance of meeting the deadline date for return of their Key Stage 4 course selection forms on Wednesday 17th March 2021 is emphasised to Year 9 students. No changes to Year 9 students' selection of Key Stage 4 courses will be made after this date.

- **February 2021: Key Stage 4 course selection student Taster Weeks**

The Year 9 timetable is adjusted during these dates, so that these special lessons for Year 9 students can take place during the school day. The lessons are designed to offer Year 9 students a mini experience of Key Stage 4-style learning in all of the Key Stage 4 courses on offer for selection.

### **Stage 3 – Key Stage 4 course selection guidance for parents**

**February 2021:** Presentation for parents by school and subject leaders to explain important information about curriculum and assessment in Key Stage 4 courses, as well as qualification content and future pathways to Sixth Form, Apprenticeship, College and University options. We trust this will inform and support discussions at home with your daughter.

### **Stage 4 – The Key Stage 4 course selection booklet is issued**

**February 2021:** The *Key Stage 4 course selection booklet* contains information about all of the Key Stage 4 courses and qualifications on offer, as well as the yellow selection form to record your daughter's final selection of subjects. Parents and students should read the booklet carefully and discuss its contents, keeping in mind information from the *Year 9 Preparation for Key Stage 4 Course Selection* booklet and the *Kudos* website. Students still have time to ask teachers questions about Key Stage 4 courses and parents are also welcome to contact Subject Leaders for further details.

### **Stage 5 – Participate in the Year 9 Parents Evening remote event**

**February/March 2021:** The Year 9 Parents Evening will provide an opportunity for further discussion with teachers regarding students' progress and suitability for preferred Key Stage 4 courses.

### **Stage 6 - DEADLINE for return of Key Stage 4 course selection yellow form**

Students must hand in their Key Stage 4 course selection yellow form – signed by parents, as well as by students - on **WEDNESDAY 17TH MARCH 2021**. It is the responsibility of Year 9 parents to ensure that their daughters have chosen all of their courses as explained by the school and have completed the course selection form correctly. After this date, no changes will be made to Year 9 students' selection of Key Stage 4 courses.

The selection of Key Stage 4 courses is a very special and exciting time in Year 9 and we are looking forward to working with you and your daughter. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you have further queries about the Key Stage 4 course selection process.

Yours faithfully,



**Miss F Minnis**  
**Deputy Head Teacher**

