



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you and your family are well. Firstly, I would like to pass on my congratulations to all of our students who have engaged so well with home learning under difficult and challenging situations. I know that some students have found it incredibly difficult to get motivated and deal with such a different way of working, but many have shown grit and resilience and really worked hard over the past few weeks. I am so looking forward to seeing your son/daughter back in school next week. The purpose of this letter is to give you an overview on their return to school and the plan for the coming weeks.

Lateral flow testing

All students are being offered testing from Monday. Those who have self-consented (and most now have) will have received an appointment time for Monday to come in for their first test. They need to arrive just before their appointment time (no need for school dress code), complete their test and return home immediately. The test is relatively straight forward and is self-administered. Results will be sent to your son/daughter's phone shortly after the test has been completed. The second test will take place during the day on Friday 12th where students will be called for during lesson time and return to lesson. The third in school test will take place during the following week. After the third test, students will be issued with home testing kits and instructions on how to complete these tests. If your son/daughter has tested positive for Covid-19 in the last 90 days then they should **not** take a test next week but should return to school on Tuesday. We will arrange further test days in a few weeks for those students who fall into this category so they should still complete a self-consent form.

Return to lessons

Sixth Form lessons commence on Tuesday 9th March, at the normal school times. For those students who have a session 1 lesson they should come in for an 8.30am start. It is week 3 on the timetable next week so your son/daughter must ensure they know exactly which sessions they should be in for. All students will be expected to wear full dress code on return to school, including their suit jacket. Please be aware that all windows will be open in classrooms so they should wear layers if it is cold. Students must wear their lanyard/swipe at all times and should enter and leave the school site through the gate in the staff/visitor car park as they did last term. The canteen will be open for break and lunchtimes and timetabled study sessions start straight away so students must ensure they attend these sessions.

Masks

All students and staff will be expected to wear a mask at all times when in school. This includes on arrival, whilst moving around the school site and in all classrooms including the study centre. This is because it is not possible to social distance in school. Students must also wear a mask in the learning zone, the only exception is when they are actually eating/drinking but at all other times they must wear their mask. Students should therefore ensure they have a mask with them (and a spare) every day. I do not expect staff to have to speak to students who are not co-operating, this is everyone's responsibility and we are all helping to protect each other by wearing masks.



Grades

As you are now aware, students will not be sitting external exams this year but instead we will be using a mix of different assessments to grade students. We will clarify what this will involve over the next few weeks. On return to school teachers will be working with students to cover content and continue teaching with some usual class assessments. Students should not be requesting additional work or handing in 'extra' work but instead ensuring that they have completed all work that has been set during home learning and that they attend all lessons and engage in all work set in class in the coming weeks. We know that some students may feel over whelmed or unprepared for return to lessons and we will ensure that we support these students which may involve additional study time or intervention. A Level and BTEC results will be issued by the exam boards on Tuesday 10th August. On this date any student who is applying to university should be available to collect results and respond to their university offer. We will be in school to support students who have not achieved the required grades and help them with the 'clearing' process.

UCAS/Apprenticeships

Most students applying to university should now have heard back from their universities and will be requested to make their 'firm' and 'insurance' choices if they haven't done so already. Application for student finance is now open and this needs to be completed on-line before the 22nd May. It takes about 30 minutes to do and students need their National insurance number and passport details to complete the form. It is suggested that you put aside the time to sit down with your son/daughter in order to get this done correctly. Link to application site: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance?step-by-step-nav=18045f76-ac04-41b7-b147-5687d8fbb64a>

For students applying for an apprenticeship now is the time to take action! We have made a new 'Team' for students to use to find out about all the apprenticeships that we are given information on. You can also refer to the apprenticeships section of the school website under the Sixth Form tab. We also advertise on Teams other opportunities such as virtual work experience, taster events and other supporting resources so your son/daughter needs to check this Team regularly. If your son/daughter would like a one to one careers meeting with our Prospects advisor, please contact Mrs Eiffert to arrange. If your son/daughter has a CV or covering letter you want checked please contact Mrs Drewer our transition co-ordinator.

All year 13 students have a Unifrog account where they can access a huge amount of resources and careers guidance. Please encourage you son/daughter to use this excellent resource.

We are so looking forward to welcoming back our students next week and ensuring that they have a successful final few weeks at Blackfen. If your son/daughter has any worries or concerns please talk to us and let us know so that we can support them. Things are looking brighter and in the words of Captain Sir Tom Moore "Tomorrow Will Be a Good Day".

Have a restful weekend.

Yours sincerely



Miss K Brewer

Assistant Headteacher, Head of Sixth Form