



# Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear Parent/carers

As we move towards the end of the academic year I write to you with important information with regards to the last few weeks. Please read through the details in this letter and contact me if you wish to discuss anything further.

## Study support

A big part of being in the Sixth Form is being able to study independently and effectively. Some students struggle to do this and don't know how to study effectively or revise for exams and assessments. Students should use their silent supervised study periods to: write up detailed notes following on from class, recap and revise their notes or carry out additional or supplementary reading using textbooks and recommended subject websites (e.g. tutor2u). We have spent time in tutor sessions looking at study methods and revision techniques so students should have ideas about what style suits them best. Subject teachers will recommend subject specific websites or additional reading resources but I would also encourage all students to purchase revision guides for each of their subjects if they haven't done so already. A series we recommend is the 'my revision notes' series: <https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/mrn>. These books can be purchased from Amazon or from Hodder and are produced for most A Level and BTEC courses (check you order correct exam board).

To support 'A' Level students further next term we are adding additional study centre time onto students' timetables which will be dedicated to 're-visit' tasks linking the year 13 content to year 12 content. 'A' Level students will have a folder of resources and tasks to be completed which will be kept in the study centre for use during the silent study sessions. We recognise that this is a key area in helping our students to be better prepared for linear (end of two year) examinations. Students who have been highlighted as requiring extra support (following PPE results and progress during year 12) will be placed on a support programme from September where their work in study sessions will be monitored. Students retaking GCSE Maths will be given 'GCSE Pod' tasks to complete in study time to ensure they are prepared to achieve their grade 4 in this subject. The retake PPE results will be given to students as soon as they have been marked and graded and any required follow up will be communicated to parents/carers in the next two weeks. I can't reiterate enough the importance of good study habits and ensuring that your child dedicates an appropriate amount of time to their studies outside of lessons – this should be their priority next year to ensure they achieve good grades.

## Transition to year 13

Now that our year 13 students have completed their final exams and left the Sixth Form, we work with our current year 12 students in the move into year 13. This has begun with some re-arrangement of some tutor groups and we start to refer to this year group as 'Year 13'. This also brings about the need to seriously start planning for the 'next Steps' after Sixth Form. We are now working towards starting UCAS applications and preparing students for applying for apprenticeships. During the last few weeks of term and over the summer your child should be taking up the opportunities that we are providing them with to support their next steps. We are running some UCAS preparation sessions this week where students will be informed about writing their personal statement (all university applicants need to attend). Students will then need to submit their draft personal statement for their tutor to check before the summer break – they should then continue to work on this over the summer including completing further activities they can then include in the application, for example: MOOCS (on-line courses), degree taster courses, open days, volunteering, physical or virtual work experience and wider reading. There will be a UCAS workshop on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July where students will complete the vast majority of their application or attend an apprenticeship preparation workshop (students will be able to attend both). Those students who have expressed an interest in studying the EPQ (Extended Project qualification) should have completed the preparation on-line course and will be required to attend some preparation sessions this week. EPQ students will also have a workshop session on the 18<sup>th</sup> July which they must attend.

We have an additional Team in 'Teams' called 'Insights and work experience' – this is where we advertise many opportunities for students to sign up to – please encourage your child to check this regularly. There are also many support materials in the 'Year 12 Team' for preparing students for their UCAS application and apprenticeships – please take time to look through these resources with your child. Finally, all students have their Unifrog account which they can use to: search for degree courses and universities, search apprenticeships, find support resources, look for appropriate MOOCs, get careers guidance and complete their personal statements. This site is amazing for supporting students (and their parents) with careers and 'next steps' guidance.

We very much look forward to taking all year 12 students to visit Sussex University this week – this is a campus-based university in a vibrant city. Even students who are not considering going to university will find this trip informative as they may choose to go to university later in life.

Moving on to next academic year we have booked a number of external speakers and providers to talk to our students about various important topics. We will let students know of these in advance as they will be held during afternoon sessions in school (when students may normally go home early). We welcome a motivational speaker in this term on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July to talk to all of our current students (this will be during the morning and all students are expected to attend – even if they would normally start later).

I would strongly advise that students sign up for Unifrog webinars this week – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> 'How to ace your personal statement' and on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 'University alternatives – Apprenticeships, jobs and gap years'. These are free to sign up to through their Unifrog account. Students are also encouraged to use the many resources available through their Unifrog account in particular the 'read, watch, listen' listen resource section and the course search section.

Thank you for all your support this year. I hope you have an enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing you all at the 'Year 13 Information evening' in early September (date TBC).

Yours sincerely

*K. Brewer.*

Miss Brewer  
Assistant Head teacher, Head of Sixth Form