

## **Communication Sent Home via SIMs In Touch and access to on-line reporting**

The school uses SIMs In Touch which enables us to send most of our letters, newsletters and messages direct to parents by e-mail and text message. The service has been a great success and much appreciated by our families. We aim to send as much information as possible in this way, therefore we request that you complete the information box on page 1 of the admission form and by signing this admission page you permit us to input your information on the Secondary Contact system. You will then receive information from the school in a reliable and efficient manner. We will be using the text messaging service for urgent information i.e. such as closure of the school due to snow etc.

### **Internet Permission**

At Blackfen School, your child will have supervised access to the Internet in some lessons. Before being allowed to use the Internet (for example in the School Library or in clubs), all students must obtain parental permission. Both they and you must sign the permission in the admission forms as evidence of your approval and their acceptance of the school rules on this matter. Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with other Internet users throughout the world. Our school network filters the available material to prevent access to items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. Whilst our aim for Internet use is to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. However ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the school supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

During lessons, teachers will guide students towards appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio and other potentially offensive media. You may wish to consider restricting your child's internet access using any of the numerous softwares available that allow you to do this. We would like to assure you that we will continue to supervise the use of the internet as vigilantly as we can. The school's 'firewall system' excludes effectively any unsuitable site, chat room or similar social networking site. Emails coming into the school are screened and any which include any inappropriate language or images are blocked. This also applies to email sent from the school system. The use of the internet is reviewed regularly by staff. You will be informed if your child misuses the internet or email in school and of any disciplinary action we are planning to take.

Your child should not use the name of the school on any site and in any context which contains derogatory comments about adults or students either at the school, or who have been previously at the school as students, teachers or otherwise or offensive/inappropriate language or images of any kind. We believe that such use is damaging to the governors, staff and students of this school as well as to the local education authority. Web sites are checked regularly and if any student is found to be bringing the school into disrepute by such action then disciplinary procedures will be put in place. Legal action will also be taken against adults or other organisations who we believe to be misusing the school's name or otherwise bringing the school and its governors, staff, students or parents (past or present) into disrepute. We trust that we can be assured of your support in encouraging your child's safe use of the internet.

### **Student Rules for Internet Use**

Students are responsible for acceptable behaviour on the Internet just as they are in a classroom or a school corridor. General school rules apply.

The Internet is provided for students to conduct individual research. Parental permission is required. Remember that access is a privilege, not a right and that access requires responsibility.

Individual users of the Internet are responsible for their behaviour and communications over the network. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honour the agreements they have signed.

Students must understand that their computer storage area and personal USB memory sticks are open to inspection by staff who will review files and communications to ensure that they are using the system responsibly. They must also understand that emails are monitored and abuse of the system will result in immediate suspension of their email account.

During lessons, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Outside of lessons, families bear responsibility for such guidance, as they would with other information sources such as television, telephones, films, radio and other potentially offensive media.

#### **The following are not permitted:**

1. Revealing personal information i.e. phone numbers, addresses, logins, passwords
2. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
3. Using obscene language
4. Harassing, insulting or attacking others
5. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
6. Violating copyright laws
7. Using others' login names or passwords
8. Accessing without permission others' folders, work or files
9. Intentionally wasting limited resources

#### **Sanctions**

1. Violations of the above rules could result in a temporary or permanent ban on Internet or Network use
2. Further disciplinary action may also be taken.
3. When applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.

**Students and parent/carers are required to sign the admission form** to show they have read the above and agree to adhere to it. The school's Acceptable Users Policy is also in the students Learning Journals.

## Data Protection

### GDPR Privacy notice for students and their families

Blackfen school is the data controller of the personal information you provide to us. This means the school determines the purposes for which, and the manner in which, any personal data relating to students and their families is to be processed.

In some cases, your data will be outsourced to a third party processor. However, this will only be done with your consent, unless the law requires the school to share your data. Where the school outsources data to a third party processor, the same data protection standards that Blackfen school upholds are imposed on the processor.

The school's GDPR Privacy Notice in full can be found on the school Website.

The Business Manager is the data protection officer. His role is to oversee and monitor the school's data protection procedures and to ensure that they are compliant with the GDPR. The data protection officer can be contacted at [gmo@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk](mailto:gmo@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk).

### Medical information for School Trips (Local visits, day visits, evening and sporting activities)

To cover your child for any school trips for local or day visits, evening and sporting activities over the course of your child's time here at Blackfen School (this could be a five/seven-year period), we will require your written consent to use the information such as medical conditions and parental contact details held on SIMs (school information management system).

The benefits of using SIMs for the purpose of School trips (as specified above) are:-

- Data held will be up to date and accurate.
- Data can be amended by parents using the new SIMs app (more details will follow regarding this).
- To ensure future trips run smoothly and efficiently.
- Data is stored centrally.

We are aware that medical conditions and parental/carer information can change over the years and for this reason **it will be your responsibility to contact us immediately and advise us of any change in circumstances, through the parent app or written notification. Please sign the admission form to indicate you have read this information.**

***Please note that any overseas, residential or adventurous trips your child may attend during their time here at Blackfen, will require a separate medical form to be completed. This will be arranged via the Trip Leader.***

## BIOMETRIC SYSTEM

We have a student recognition system using biometrics at Blackfen School. This allows us to make the best use of efficient systems such as cashless catering. This system has improved the services we are able to offer students and staff significantly, with benefits including:

- Improved security for handling cash transactions in the school
- Reduction in administration time and cost dealing with lost or forgotten cards/passwords/PINs
- Only the student can purchase items from their account
- Children will not have to remember to bring a card
- Reduction in queuing time

We would like to make it clear that Blackfen School complies at all times with Data Protection Act and with the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (which came into force in September 2013) regarding the use of biometric data. In order for your child to use the biometric system (fingerprint), one parent or guardian will need to read, sign and return the enclosed form. We will also offer an opportunity to opt out for those students who, upon consideration, would prefer to use alternative forms of identification. This is done by using a unique PIN number. Parent/Carers can upload money safely onto students' cards via their Wisepay account where they can also check on the amount and type of expenditure and to view the type of food purchases being selected. Details of your Wisepay account will be sent out to you during the Summer. Money can also be uploaded via the use of the cash loader in the Canteen, although we would point out that the queues for this machine can be long during peak times (break and lunch), therefore we would urge you to use Wisepay to avoid cash in the school.

## IMPORTANT NOTES FOR PARENTS

### Background to the use of biometrics in school

For the sake of clarity, biometric information is information about someone's physical or behavioural characteristics that can be used to identify them. There are many possible biometrics, including for example, a digital photograph, fingerprint, or hand shapes. As part of our identity management systems, we will record a biometric measurement taken from a finger, but not a fingerprint image. The information is stored in a highly secure database and will only be used by the school to confirm who is using a range of services. In future we may use other biometric services where appropriate.

Our chosen solution allows us to use a secure database holding biometric data for use with a range of services. This means we will store the least amount of data possible. This reduces the risk of loss of data.

The data that is held cannot be used by any other agency for any other purpose.

The school will not use the biometric information for any purpose other than that stated above. The school will store the biometric information collected securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The school will not share this information with anyone else and will not unlawfully disclose it to any other person.

### **Current Legislation – The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**

This legislation requires schools to:

- Inform parents about the use of the biometric systems in the school and explain what applications use biometrics.
- Receive written permission from one parent if the school is to process biometric information for their child.
- Allow children to choose an alternative way of being identified if they wish.

If you do not wish your child to use the biometric system or your child chooses to use an alternative form of identification we will provide reasonable alternative arrangements that allow them to access current and future services.

Please note that when they leave the school, or if for some other reason they cease to use the biometric system, your child's biometric data will be permanently deleted.

**Please complete the Biometrics consent form enclosed with this pack and return it to the school office.** If you would like more information or the chance to discuss this further, please feel free to contact the Business Manager