



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing with important information for parents of Year 12 students.

Work Experience

This takes place for all year 12 students 27th – 31st March. All placement forms must be completed and returned by Friday 27th January. Forms are available outside the office or on the website in the sixth form section. Work experience is an important part of the year 12 'programme of study' and references will be requested from the placement for students to keep on record.

PPE's

All year 12 (two-year course) students will be sitting PPE's (pre-public exams) in the next few weeks. BTEC students will complete PPEs w/b 6th March and A level students w/b 17th April (straight after the Easter break). It is vital that students are preparing fully for these exams during their non-contact / study time in school and at home during the evening / weekend.

BTEC students have their actual external exams in May so the PPEs are a crucial practice run in preparing for these important exams. Students should be using PLCs (personalised learning checklists) to support their revision in each subject as well as the array of revision guides available to use in the study centre. Once we have the results of these assessments we will be in contact with you where we have concerns. Some of our students are already working really hard and should be congratulated. However, some students are not engaging in their studies in an appropriate way and need to urgently address this now. Please also ensure that your child is limiting the hours they work in their part-time jobs (this should be no more than 12 hours a week and should not be more than one school evening a week).

Attendance/Punctuality

I must remind you that students need to attend school every day, unless they are very unwell. We are concerned about the attendance level of a number of our students as missed lessons is so detrimental to learning and achievement. You will receive a letter each half term if your child's attendance falls below our expected threshold as it is our duty to report this to you. You will also be notified if your child is absent from school/a lesson without parental confirmation of absence. If a student truants a lesson they are required to complete an S3 one-hour detention on the following Tuesday at 3pm.

Punctuality is also highly important at Blackfen. Too many students are coming into school late or arriving late to lessons. This is both detrimental to their learning and the learning of others in the class and also disrespectful to the teacher. Lessons start at 8.30am and therefore students should be in their teaching room at this time. Likewise, after break and lunch lessons start at 11.15am and 2.00pm – students need to be in the classroom at this time.

Any minutes late need to be made up after school on a MONDAY. You will receive a report home each half term if we are concerned about your child's punctuality. Please note in some circumstance a student may be refused entry to a lesson if they are repeatedly late for lessons.

Vaping

We are aware that a number of students in the sixth form do vape. However, I must make you aware that it is illegal for under 18s to vape. It is against school rules for anyone to vape on the premises or to have vaping equipment with them. If a student is caught vaping, with a vape or with a student who is vaping they will receive an S4 sanction – which is a day in internal suspension. This will also be recorded on their school record. Apart from the legalities there are clear health risks associated with vaping, with many products containing a lot more nicotine than a cigarette as well as a number of other dangerous chemicals.



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Bronze



Maths &
Computing



Healthy Schools



Students have had assemblies on the dangers and risks associated with vaping so it is certainly something that they should not be doing.

We are also concerned about the number of students who ask to leave lessons to go to the toilet. Students should use these facilities during break, lunch and lesson changeover and not during lesson time. Please note: students will only be allowed out for the toilet if they have a confirmed medical reason to do this.

Mobile phones

Sixth Form students have the privilege of being able to use their phones in the learning zone and on the top corridor of the sixth form block. At all other times phones and headphones must not be seen. If they are seen they will be confiscated and held in the sixth form, office until the end of the day. A number of sixth form students are breaking this rule and not being role models to lower school students.

Next Steps

We will be focusing over the coming weeks on the choice's students have at post-18. In our first Challenge day in November we introduced year 12 students to our Unifrog programme which is a platform for supporting students to make decisions about university applications and apprenticeships, it is also where they should be recording all of their enrichment and other activities to build up their profile. We have talked about pros/cons of going to university and discussed apprenticeships in community time, PSHE and year meetings and over the coming weeks we will look in more detail at these options and students will start their university applications in the summer term. We will be inviting in parents/carers to attend our 'Next Steps' evening on Thursday 9th March so that you are informed of the options available to your child and how best to support them.

Students on the one-year foundation programme will be working with their teachers and the careers provider on choices for next year including applications to college on an apprenticeship.

Please support your child by going through the content of this letter. If you have any queries or questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

K Brewer.

Miss K Brewer
Assistant Head teacher, Head of Sixth Form