



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential.



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26th January 2018

www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk



Head Teacher's Message

Dear Parents/Carers,

I was reading last weekend that January 2018 is set to become one of the gloomiest on record. I assumed that this was related to how people may feel post-Christmas. However, on further reading, it outlined that it has been a month, so far, devoid of significant amounts of sun! As we reach the end of January though, there are signs of spring with at least one early daffodil in flower in our daffodil bed in the school. It is amazing to see the resilience of such plants in repeatedly flowering year after year despite the poor soil conditions, the lack of rainfall in the summer, hard frosts and waterlogging in the winter. There are two things we could all do as the month reaches the end – smile – as this always lifts the gloom, and show resilience in meeting the challenges, like these incredible flowers do. At Blackfen school we encourage all our community to do these two things.

Our annual trip to India departs next week and includes a visit to our partner schools. We wish Mrs Blatch, Mrs Frogley and all the students a safe and enjoyable trip.

It was good to see such a large turnout to the year 11 parents' evening. This was on the day following the publication of the PPE results for year 11 students. The evening was a good opportunity for staff, students and parents to engage in positive learning conversations about attainment and progress. Challenging targets have been set for all our young people and I have seen them this term in lessons and activities really stretching themselves to meet and exceed these targets.

Our year 9 into 10 options process is now underway. Students in year 9 have been sitting examinations and will find out more about the choices available to them during the next few weeks. They will also embark on a series of taster lessons to help them to make informed choices. We look forward to welcoming parents/carers to forthcoming information and parents' evenings.

Staffing news

We say goodbye to Mrs Heather, AV Technician, at the end of this week. We thank her for all her work.

We have welcomed Miss Purbrick back to the school this week.

As last year, to ensure that all staff are updated on policies, procedures, current thinking and future planning we will be holding half termly staff meetings. The dates for these are Tuesday 27th February and Tuesday 24th April. On these dates students should be in school by 8.40 for lesson 1 to begin at 8.45.

The half term finishes at the normal time of 3.10 on Friday 9 February 2018. We return to school at the normal time on Monday 19 February 2018. It will be week B when we return to school.

Best wishes,



Matthew Brown, Head teacher

Governors' Message

My fellow Vice-Chair, Carol Townsend, reported in the last issue that we have recently welcomed three new governors onto the Governing Body. They are in the process of completing their induction, and Mrs Townsend and I will be their mentors going forward. We are also talking with them about which Committee(s) they would like to join.

You can see details of Committee membership and the current composition of the Governing Body on the School website under 'School Life/Governance and Business'. Other details to be found there include our meeting attendance record, our register of business interests, and business and financial information relating to our status as an academy. As an academy, the School is required to share this information in the public domain to ensure our financial and business operations are fair, accessible and open for scrutiny. If you have any queries about this information, please call 020 8303 1887 and speak to the Head Teacher's PA in the first instance.

In addition to our schedule of regular Committee and Governing Body meetings, the next key event in our Governing Body calendar will be our annual Governors' Day where we receive training or briefing on specific aspects of the School's work or education generally. We also try to meet with students over lunch which is one of the highlights of the day. We will be meeting shortly with the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher to discuss the theme and arrangements for this year's Governors' Day.

Janet Phelps, Joint Vice-Chair of Governors

KS4 Course Selection process begins!

Students in year 9 have been starting to think about their career aspirations and the choices they are about to make in their Community time this week. Full details and the KS4 Course Selection booklet will be given out at KS4 Course Selection Evening on Thursday 8th February at either 5.30pm or 6.30pm. If your daughter is in Green community, Blue Community or Red Community 1 – 4, you should come to the 5.30pm slot. If your daughter is in Red Community 5 – 9, Yellow Community or Purple Community, you should come to the 6.30pm slot. At this evening there will be subject stalls providing information about the different GCSE subjects and you will be given more specific information about how the Course selection process works and what it involves.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Nicola Hoad, Assistant Headteacher

News from the Vocational Faculty: the departments of Business, Economics and Law

The Business and Economics departments are very excited to relaunch the popular and fun incentive: 'Employee of the Month'. Students from all Key Stages can be rewarded for various criteria, for example, improving a piece of work; displaying outstanding effort; showing a growth mind-set attitude to learning in lessons or producing an excellent piece of work. This encourages students to develop the skills, attitudes and hard work they will need to achieve and succeed in the world of business. The 'Employee of the month' will then receive a reward or bonus at the end of the month. We are looking forward to discovering Blackfen's budding entrepreneurs and will update you in future editions of the Family Newsletter!

The Law department has also been busy developing Blackfen's budding lawyers, with two of our A-level students taking part in a superb day of legal experiences. At the Temple Inn barristers' chambers, Isaac Aycliffe and Eddie Kempster reported that that they were given lectures and activities to further understand the role and lifestyle of a solicitor: "We also learnt about the courses we should take at university in order to become solicitors. We visited the Royal Courts of Justice and the Old Bailey, where we got to view actual cases take place in both locations. This gave us an insight into how a court is laid out and how it runs. Overall the trip was very educational for us and will be beneficial for our A-level revision and the future."

Such an exciting and enlightening experience will undoubtedly develop our students' growth mind-set in relation to perseverance and resilience when challenging themselves to attain the very best grades for their future studies. We wish them every success.

Ms I Terry / Ms J Knowles – Vocational Faculty Co-Leaders

Literacy News

Year 7 Creative Writing Competition

Congratulations to the winners of the Halloween Horror short story competition. The competition was launched for the first time this year and Mrs Norwood was delighted to receive an entry from almost every Year 7 pupil - the quality was so outstanding that it was difficult to come to a decision. Trophies, certificates and vouchers were awarded during the end of term assembly to Jessica White, Nicole Ivanova and Iris Callard, who achieved first, second and third place respectively. Many other students will be receiving certificates of merits during their English lessons, and class anthologies will be going on display in the school library. Thank you to everybody who took part.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)

As of this week, Blackfen will be implementing the DEAR initiative which aims to promote the vital importance of reading and to provide time and space to develop this skill, and most importantly to read a book for pure pleasure. During Community Time, on business days, all form members will be expected to have a reading book in their bags and to read in silence, whilst the form tutor signs journals and deals with business matters. The aim is that all students across the school (apart from those involved in assembly) should be reading. As you are no doubt aware, the new GCSE examinations are increasingly challenging and many require a very high reading age, a skill which needs to be developed consistently through KS3, KS4 and KS5 as well as independent reading at home. Detentions will be set for any pupil who does not have a book and they will be expected to write lines instead during the silent reading time. We would be highly appreciative if parents would support us by ensuring that all students carry a reading book in their school bag and that they continue to read independently at home for at least 20 minutes every day, as this is shown to have a considerable impact upon examination success.

Medication

Please may we remind parents that as per the school's Medical Policy, students should not be carrying any medication on their person in school unless it is for a life threatening illness such as diabetes, epilepsy, seizures, asthma etc. Medication should be given in to the school office for safe keeping and administering.

Medication cannot be administered to students without written permission from parents/carers. This includes paracetamol and ibuprofen as well as prescribed medication. A copy of the permission slip is available from reception or the school office when required. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

School Office

Year 10 Work Experience

Our Year 10 students are busy finalising their work experience placements to be handed in to Room 106 by Friday 9th February. One of last year's students, Sophie, completed her work experience in London at the global financial services organisation Northern Trust. This placement utilised all of Sophie's employability skills and we received the following glowing reference:

'Sophie approached the whole programme with enthusiasm and engaged positively with all teams. We all appreciated her professionalism, self-management and strong team work. Sophie's comprehensive written report is an excellent log of the programme and reflects on the experiences she has gained. It was a pleasure to have Sophie in our employment.'

We hope that this will inspire those of you completing your work experience this July.

A work diary excerpt from Sophie Castle Year 11, Blue Community

On my first day of work experience at Northern Trust I stayed on the first floor which was spent with the Hedge Fund Services team. I spent 30 minutes with a partner from each section of the team where I learnt what they do and how they manage their job. I learnt that the HFS team within Northern Trust has two main jobs; private businesses (individuals) like pension funds and managing money; asset management (larger companies) like buying/ selling and sharing stock.

I was also with the Workplace Services team. This is where I learnt how important health and safety within a big company is. For example, the team on Workplace Services deals with a lot of problems from maintenance to fire drills. This is extremely important within a big company, like Northern Trust, because it's crucial everyone knows where to exit from a fire drill, and the workplace must be a happy and comfy environment for the employees to work throughout the day. I also go to experience the server rooms which are one of the key points to keep the company going, without them the computers wouldn't respond fast enough to the company's needs as there are so many updates going through the system every minute.

I had a short meeting with the head of Conduct for a discussion on an external meeting I will be participating in on Wednesday. I then took part and shared my ideas on a meeting about a new scheme within the company called the young apprentice; which follows the idea of the TV programme, 'The Apprentice'. I then went to a presentation from an American director, who created a film and documentary on American civil rights, which I made a PowerPoint on for Pride Week, which was shared throughout the company. Finally, on Friday I sat with the Investment Operations out-sourcing team where I learnt what they do for the clients and why they are important.

On my last day of work experience at Northern Trust I spent it with the Corporate Actions team. This is where they ask the clients, of the company, what they want to do with their stocks and shares. They also deal with a lot of other banks, around the globe. I moved around each part of the team to learn what they all do differently within the team. I was shown all the different software teams use and how they are different, this made me realise that every job within the company is very different. I then went on to a catch up with the HFS team for the end of my experience, this is where I was able to recap on what I had learnt and ask any final questions, before having to say thank you and goodbye.

My favourite day at Northern Trust would be my second day with Workplace Services, because they were showing me the new interior designs for areas like the staff canteen and the reception. This was interesting for me because I'm interested in that type of career, interior design.

Calendar of Events – Spring/Summer Terms 2018

Details of Events scheduled so far

Date	Event
Monday 29 th January 2018	Year 9 DTP & Meningitis immunisation
Tuesday 30 th January 2018	Challenge Day
Thursday 1 st February 2018	Year 9 Options Assembly P5 (students only)
Friday 2 nd – Monday 12 th February 2018	School Trip to India
Thursday 8 th February 2018	Year 9 Options Evening Sessions - 5.30pm (Green, Blue and Red 1-4) & 6.30pm (Yellow, Purple and Red 5-9)
Monday 12th – Friday 16th February 2018	Half Term
Wednesday 21 st & Thursday 22 nd February 2018	Year 11 Geography Trip
Thursday 22 nd February 2018	Year 9 Parents Evening Green, Blue and Red 1-4
Tuesday 27 th February 2018	Extended Staff Briefing – school starts at 8.45am
Wednesday 28 th February 2018	Sixth Form University Information Evening
Thursday 1 st March 2018	Year 9 Parents Evening Yellow, Purple and Red 5-9
Monday 5 th – Friday 9 th March 2018	KS3 & KS4 Madrid Trip (Music Dept)
Tuesday 6 th March 2018	Careers Forum 4.30pm – 7.00pm
Monday 12 th March 2018	Challenge Day
Tuesday 13 th March 2018	Year 12 Geography Trip
Wednesday 14 th March 2018	Year 9 Subject Selection Interviews Year 12 Government & Politics Revision Day
Thursday 15 th March 2018	Voice in a Million trip to Wembley Arena Year 11 PFS afternoon
Monday 19 th – Friday 23 rd March 2018	Achievement Assemblies (Students only)
Wednesday 21 st & Wednesday 22 nd March 2018	Year 10 Geography Trips
Wednesday 21 st March 2018	Easter Concert
Saturday 24 th – Saturday 31 st March 2018	Year 8 & 9 Ski Trip
Monday 2nd – Friday 13th April 2018	Easter Holidays
Tuesday 24 th April 2018	Extended Staff Briefing - school starts at 8.45am
Thursday 26 th April 2018	Year 7 Parents Evening 4.30pm – 7.00pm
Friday 27 th – Monday 30 th April 2018	Duke of Edinburgh weekend (practice)
Monday 30 th April 2018	Year 8 HPV Immunisation
Thursday 3 rd May 2018	Year 8 Parents Evening 4.30pm – 7.00pm
Monday 7th May 2018	Bank Holiday
Friday 18 th – Monday 21 st May 2018	Duke of Edinburgh Weekend
Monday 21 st May 2018	Year 8 & 9 Immunisation catch up session
Wednesday 23 rd May 2018	Sixth Form Oscars
Friday 25 th May 2018	Sixth Form Leavers Assembly
Monday 28th May – Friday 1st June 2018	Half Term

Tuesday 5 th June 2018	Extended Staff Briefing – <i>school starts at 8.45am</i>
WB 11 th June 2018	Year 10 PPE week
Thursday 14 th June 2018	Sports Awards Evening
Wednesday 20 th June 2018	Summer Festival
Monday 26 th & Tuesday 27 th June 2018	Art Exhibition
<i>Thursday 28th June 2018</i>	<i>Challenge Day</i>
Thursday 28 th – Friday 29 th June 2018	Year 12 Eastbourne Trip
Friday 29 th June 2018	Year 12 Induction Day/Year 11 Celebration
Monday 2 nd – Friday 13 th July 2018	Year 10 Work Experience fortnight
Monday 2 nd July 2018	Green Community Certificate Presentation
Tuesday 3 rd July 2018	Year 6 Induction day and Year 6 Parents Evening
Wednesday 4 th July 2018	Red Community Certificate Presentation
Thursday 5 th July 2018	Yellow Community Certificate Presentation
Friday 6 th July 2018	Purple Community Certificate Presentation
Monday 9 th July 2018	Blue Community Certificate Presentation
Tuesday 10 th July 2018	Sports Day
Wednesday 11 th July 2018	Discover Day 1
Thursday 12 th July 2018	Discover Day 2
Friday 13 th July 2018	Last Day of Term – <i>school finishes at 12.50pm</i>