



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential.



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16th March 2018

www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk



Blackfen staff and students at Taj Mahal

Head Teacher's Message

Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to thank all parents and carers for their support during the last few weeks. The "snow" week was a difficult week for us all and I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding. On the Thursday it appeared that it would be possible to open the school as the paths were clear of snow. It was unfortunate that I had to make the decision to close the school early and I am sorry for any inconvenience caused to those who had made the journey to school in the morning. We have had an opportunity to review our procedures in light of the snow events and the short term closure procedure has been updated.

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NEXT ISSUE: 29th March 2018

Students from the school have been performing and competing in competitions across the region in the last 2 weeks. Four students were involved in the Ready, Steady, Light competition at Rose Bruford college under the leadership of Ms Smith (Work experience and Careers). They won the collaborative trophy and were just 0.3 points off winning the competition overall. Well done to all those involved.

Ms Kingsbury-Barker (Librarian) led a group at the Poetry Slam competition in Bexley and they finished winners beating 6 other schools in Bexley to this prestigious award. The school was represented by students in years 8 and 9.

From the Creativity and Performance faculty Ms Sunderland led the KS3 dance group in the London final of the dance competition having already won the Bexley competition. Students had a fantastic day at the Olympic Park and they all performed really well. Finally, Mr Newton-Grant and Mr Olan led a group of students to perform at Wembley in the Voice in a Million concert. Well done to all those involved in this.

It is great to see that our young people are taking up opportunities to represent the school and themselves in these competitions and performances. A great deal of work goes into these events – both by students and by staff. As a school we encourage our young people to participate and play an active role in the local and wider community.

In addition we held our third challenge day of the year. With year 7 in Canterbury for the day the focus in school was on International Women's day for year 8, a range of activities, including work on the extended project qualification, for years 12 and 13, innovation and creativity for year 9 and science for year 10. Year 11 students were involved in their flightpaths conference all day as they prepare for final examinations.

Our Careers Forum took place on Tuesday 6 March 2018. It was a very positive and successful evening with a fantastic turn out from students, parents and carers. There was very enthusiastic dialogue with representatives from a range of organisations about future aspirations.

Staffing news

We wish Ms Wood all the best as she begins her maternity leave. We look forward to her news.

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 24th April and Tuesday 5th June. On these dates students should be in school by 8.40 for lesson 1 to begin at 8.45.

End of term

Term finishes on Thursday 29 March 2018 at 12.50. The school will run normal lessons during the morning. As in previous years it is **not** a non-school uniform day.

The summer term starts on Monday 16 April 2018 at 8.20 for an 8.30 start. It will be week B.

Best wishes,



Matthew Brown, Head teacher

Governors' Message

Since our last message, governors have participated in a range of activities at the School which include:-

- Individual governors meeting with heads of faculties to discuss and be briefed on their faculty's priorities, challenges and successes. Each faculty works to their Self Evaluation Form and Raising Attainment Plan within the School's overarching Raising Attainment Plan. Governors report to the full Governing Body on these meetings.
- Discussions on the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) which will come into force on 25 May 2018 and which will affect a large number of institutions and organisations, including schools.
- Attending the very successful annual Careers Forum which catered for students from Hurstmere School as well as Blackfen. Hurstmere School is one of our partners in the Penhill Academy Trust and Hurstmere students often progress to Blackfen School's 6th form.
- Attending Curriculum, Staffing, Finance and Audit, and Premises Committee meetings. There will be a full Governing Body meeting on 22 March.

By the time this newsletter comes out, our annual Governors' Day will also have taken place and we will report on this in a future newsletter. The aims of the Day are to:-

- investigate some of the ways in which the school carries out self-evaluation
- become familiar in self evaluation and the fundamental role it plays in school improvement planning and the school's raising attainment plan, and to
- understand the significant role which governors play in self-evaluation and school improvement planning.

Janet Phelps, Joint Vice-Chair of Governors

Uniform Reminder

Please remember that Year 7 coats must be Black or Navy Blue as per the uniform and equipment information issued in July last year.

'Outerwear should consist of a plain navy or black coat, jacket, raincoat, anorak/cagoule, or duffle coat. Coats of other colours or with large logos or brand names are not permitted and may be confiscated. Denim, fur/ fake fur, leather or suede jackets are not acceptable. Any hair decoration, including bandanas, must be discrete and in school colours; black, red or navy. All Hijabs must be plain black, red or navy.'

Students wearing incorrect uniform may have items confiscated and will receive a signature on their conduct card

Miss Hoad, Assistant Head teacher

Challenge Day

Year 11 Challenge Day - *Flightpaths to the future*

Flight 23-08-18 is now boarding and it was a real pleasure to see Year 11 students wearing the Sixth Form dress code with confidence and style, as they started the take-off for Year 12 during their *Flightpaths* Challenge Day.

The purpose of the Challenge Day was to keep the aspirations of Year 11 students firmly fixed on their flightpath to Year 12 and beyond, and to inspire their personal motivation and academic performance next term. Based on the school's Growth Mindset attitudes of **Positivity, Resilience, Introspection, Determination and Effort**, the Challenge Day motto *Take PRIDE in today and you'll be PROUD of tomorrow* summed up the ethos of the event. We were very, very proud of the way in which students stepped up and accepted the challenge of new thinking, honest self-reflection and rigorous time management planning.

The Challenge Day team consisted of Blackfen Staff, Sixth Form students and external speakers, who led a carousel of workshops focusing on the following topics:

Check-in - Personal baggage: External facilitator - 'Other Roads Training'
Building personal self-esteem and confidence; controlling stress and anxiety

Boarding pass 1 – Home or Away: the English Faculty
Exploring University food, accommodation and courses

Boarding pass 2 – The Driving lesson: Blackfen Sixth Form students
Inside knowledge on what Key Stage 5 studying and learning is all about

Travel schedule - Time management: Dr Valletta, Ms Hoad and Ms Minnis
Time management strategies for scheduling revision and staying motivated

As part of the Time Management workshop, students decided the support they need at home to ensure that Easter revision is scheduled, actioned and completed! They discussed strategies for staying motivated and planning their work effectively but 'Family support' is essential at this stage. **Year 11 parents are requested to discuss pages 4 – 7 in the Time Management booklet with their daughters by Friday 16th March.**

Will you come on board?

We invited Year 11 parents to "come on board" and attend one of the *Travel Schedule* workshops. Thank you so much to all of the parents who re-arranged busy schedules in order to work alongside their daughters. It was great to welcome so many of you to these workshops; a real treat to listen to your conversations and most encouraging to see Blackfen 'Family support' in action.

Look out for the Easter revision schedule, published with this edition of the Family Newsletter and also posted on the school website.

Ms F Minnis – Assistant Headteacher

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Year 7 History

Since January the Year 7 girls have been studying life in Medieval England. One of the main focuses has been on the power of the Church and why people at the time believed that religion was so important. They have closely studied the tense relationship between the Monarchy and the Church, which has included the case study of the murder Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral. On 12th March the year 7 girls were taken to the scene of the crime and were able to walk around Canterbury Cathedral which brought to life the story of Becket's death. Inside the Cathedral the students marvelled at the beautiful stained glass windows and had the opportunity to hear an American choir sing. Canterbury is an extremely historic city and on our visit we were able to visit the ruins of the Stone Keep castle and Dane John Mound, the former Motte and Bailey castle, both of which were built to protect London from foreign invaders. The students were able to see why each position was chosen for building a castle and how they would have protected Canterbury and London from attack. The girls really enjoyed the trip and didn't even complain about the rain!

Here is what a few of the girls said about the trip:

"I really enjoyed looking at the cathedral. The windows were very pretty."

"Seeing the castles was good, even though they were ruins you could tell what life was once like."

"It was really creepy knowing that I was walking on dead bodies buried under the floor, but I learned a lot and really enjoyed the day."

Ms Allam, Subject Leader of History

Literacy

Jack Petchey

Congratulations to Ailsa Maporisa and Feto Ogungbayi who will be performing their Jack Petchey Speak Out persuasive arguments in the Bexley Regional Finals. The event will take place on Wednesday 21st March 2018, at 6pm, at Trinity School, Belvedere and family and friends are invited to attend and support them. We wish them every success.

School magazine

A brand new school magazine was launched this term: #fenfusion aims to provide articles to appeal to the interest of all pupils including book reviews, hairstyling and fashion tips, celebrity gossip and winter recipes. A copy of #fenfusion has been distributed to each form room and copies are also available to view in the school reception area. The Literary Ambassadors are being highly commended for their diligence, hard work and perseverance in ensuring the timely publication of this magazine. The team is comprised of: Varunegha Sureskumar; Punya Tyagi; Thulasi Mathikaran; Saruka Satheeskumar; Delani Satheeswarren; Disani Vilvarajah and Santiya Manivannan . Mrs Norwood would like to thank the girls for their dedication and resilience in working with such a demanding editor!

World Book Day

This year, Blackfen have extended World Book Day celebrations to encompass a half term's worth of new activities and exciting whole school opportunities.

Year 7 are currently engaged in a Readathon and we would like to thank friends and family members who have supported this event. All sponsor monies will go towards the purchase of new books for the

school library. Please ensure that monies are taken to the school finance office by Wednesday 21st March 2018. We would also like to thank all those pupils who made a valiant effort to come to school dressed as book characters on the 1st March, despite the severe weather conditions.

Additionally, a new whole school competition is running as part of World Book Celebrations this half term. The challenge is for every pupil to write an opening literary hook of 150 words, designed to attract a reader's attention. To make it even more inspiring, each community has been awarded a different genre to focus on, and the pupils' opening hooks must conform to the conventions of that genre. Literacy sessions have been focused on understanding different genres and looking at famous opening expositions by popular writers. Purple community have been studying dystopia, Green community are looking at Murder Mystery, Yellow community are studying Spy/Detective fiction, Blue community are focused on Bildungsroman and Red Community have been assigned The Gothic. Mrs Norwood would like to thank all the students who have responded so enthusiastically to this competition so far. The deadline for this competition is Wednesday 28th March 2018 and we look forward to announcing a winning entry from each community shortly.

Helene Norwood, Literacy Co-coordinator

Blackfen Wins Poetry Slam Competition!

On Friday 9th March 8 students from Years 8 and 9 took part in the annual Bexley School Poetry Slam Competition held at Bexleyheath Library. We competed against 6 other local secondary schools in two rounds, the first of which had a theme of 'Displacement' and the second which was a free choice of theme. All poems had to be written by the students themselves.

The standard of poems performed was very high and it was very interesting to see the different ways students had interpreted both the themed and free choice rounds. The competition was judged by performance poet Kat Francois and our team from Blackfen were thrilled to find out that they had won!



Poetry Slam Team



Poetry Slam Winners

Congratulations to all girls who took part: Mia Annand, Demi Northover, Viktorija Pernaji, Chiah Lee, Amy Li, Aiyi Zhang, Shagini Makaswaran and Janishakini Janarajan. Also a special thank you to Zara Sior Year 10 who gave me invaluable assistance in mentoring the teams.

Mrs Kingsbury-Barker, School Librarian

Careers and Work Experience

Junior Ready Steady Light Competition at Rose Bruford College

Junior Ready Steady Light is a one-day lighting design competition hosted by Rose Bruford College. Students partake in a carousel of practical and theoretical mini-lectures lead by industry professionals until dusk when the final competition really begins as each team lights their allocated site! Two prizes were up for grabs the main prize being for Design and the other for Collaboration. Judged by industry professionals, teams compete to win the opportunity to re-light a famous landmark in the UK, last year it was The National Theatre on London's Southbank.

The competition was initiated just 5 years ago to raise awareness of careers in the creative industries that are not always considered to be a potential and employable pathway such as Lighting Design, Lighting Programming, Video Projection, Production Electrician, Technical Manager and Architectural Lighting to name a few.

The competition was a culmination of a series of STEAM workshops that the Year 8 student team participated in and then put their knowledge into practice as they competed against other schools lighting an architectural site within the Rose Bruford campus. The three workshops included sessions on Technology and Light, Engineering and Light and Maths and Light. The students were surprised when they were handed a protractor to measure their angle of light as they had not realised the maths aspect to lighting!

Our team of four Year 8 students were given a site of a natural walkway to light to show the contrast between artificial and natural textures. They had to consider how to use light effectively and with purpose in the space, justify what they were trying to show and why they chose each individual light. As sunset approached the team planned out their design in detail. With a maximum of 6 lights to use they had to pay careful attention to their brief and also to work well as a team ensuring a good working environment.

The judging panel consisted of an industry professional, an academic and a student from Rose Bruford with parents and carers invited to attend the awards ceremony. Once all sites were visited by the judges the team nervously awaited the results. Blackfen School for Girls were awarded the Collaborative Prize for justifying their design, teamwork and a good working environment! We were narrowly pipped at the post for the design prize by 0.3 of a point!

I would like to congratulate the four students who took part **Millie Carter P3, Francesca Lee B7, Amy Li P6 and Baileigh Wedderburn Y5** for their hard work and effort on a very long day but successful day.

Mrs Smith, Work Experience and Business/Community Links Coordinator

Careers Forum 2018

Our Careers Forum on Tuesday 6th March was our most successful ever with an excellent range of representatives attending the event and parents and students queuing to enter before the event started!

With over 40 organisations, many career sectors, further and higher education establishments were represented.

It was the first time that we have had Oxford and Cambridge University under one roof to provide our students with valuable information on applying to Russell Group universities.

Feedback from students included 'Very informative event with lots of good advice', 'Advice and information from the representatives has helped with my career ideas' and 'had an enjoyable evening which I found very helpful'. Equally the representatives commented on 'the exceptionally polite and helpful students', 'great event with bright students' and 'really fantastic group of students who were clearly thinking about their future and how to get where they wanted to be'. The representative from 'Goldsmiths University' remarked that she had found it beneficial talking to our students as many didn't realise that they are quite a local university to Blackfen .

Welcoming to the Forum for the first time were Goldsmiths University, Fashion Retail Academy, Berkeley Homes, Bexley Education Psychology Team and Engie (TfL)

It was lovely to see a few of our ex-students attend. Nyla Mirza returned with Ravensbourne to promote the courses they offer and to give potential students an insight into the opportunities. Danni Foley currently studying animation returned with University for the Creative Arts and Alice Hunt was here to promote careers with Berkeley Homes.

We would like to say a big thank you to all our visitors, parents and students in making this event extremely successful especially the student's from sixth form and Year 10 who helped at this event.



Cambridge University Stand



Careers Forum exhibitors

Mrs K Smith, Work Experience and Business/Community Links Coordinator

Year 11 trip to India.

3rd February-13th February

On Saturday 3rd of February we all had to meet Ms Blatch and Mrs Frogley at Heathrow airport, at 12:30pm. Once we had all met we headed off to check in our luggage and get our boarding passes. We got a connecting flight via Mumbai, so we had to get 2 planes before we reached Chennai. Our first flight was 8 hours and the second flight was 2 hours. When we reached our first hotel in Chennai we were given a refreshment and then got our keys to our hotel rooms. We unpacked and freshened up and then went out for dinner in one of the shopping malls in Chennai. We all were very tired, so we slept very well!

On Monday and Tuesday, we visited the Babaji school where we took part in their lessons, interacted closely with the other pupils and got to get an insight into the methods used to teach subjects. One of the lessons we took part in was a dance lesson to learn the Indian style of dance which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. All the students and teachers at the school were so lovely and treated us so well. We had lunch at the school and then continued with some more lessons. We then got given a tour of the school and saw how they grow a lot of their fruit and vegetables as well as having over 6,000 fish! Later, in the day we had a school assembly held by the head teacher and some of the grade 8/9 pupils where they performed dances, songs and drama for us. Both days were so enjoyable and we all had a lovely time. In the afternoon on the Tuesday we went to visit the charity school which is run solely by volunteers and donations. The school was set up to provide education to students who come from poor backgrounds and don't have a place to call home. It was so eye opening to see how happy and grateful the children were despite having small concrete rooms as classrooms and not having somewhere to go home to. It really moved me to see young children so happy with yet so little in comparison to the backgrounds we come from. We spent some time mixing with the other students and we taught each other words, dances and phrases from our cultures. We had all brought donations such as pencils, notebooks, pens and stickers to give the students as well as donating a sum of money that had been raised for them. That evening we went back to our hotel and freshened up and before heading out to the markets in Chennai to go shopping and have some dinner with some of Ms Blatch's friends from the previous partner school.

On Wednesday we got an internal flight from Chennai to Delhi. The flight was only 2 hours long. When we got to Delhi we got a coach to the hotel however due to the narrow roads the coach had to drop us off and we had to walk through the chaotic streets to our hotel. It was so thrilling! There was cars, rickshaws, coaches, and motorbikes everywhere it was so busy! We got to our hotel and dropped off our bags and quickly went off to do some sightseeing in Delhi. The best part was having the opportunity to go on the rickshaw and get a tour of the markets and busy streets.

On Thursday we had to get up at 3:30am to head to the train station to travel to Ranthambore with our luggage. We were put on the sleeper cabin which meant we had beds to sleep on as it was a 6-hour journey. The platform at the train station was a complete culture shock, there were young children asking for money and water which we had never experienced before. When we arrived in Ranthambore we saw so much poverty which seems so surreal as we were all not used to seeing it and really made me realise just how lucky we are. We finally arrived at our hotel which was stunning! At 2pm we had a safari in the Ranthambore National Park where we saw, deer, monkeys, a range of birds, peacocks and crocodiles.

On Friday we drove to Jaipur, the coach journey was 4 hours I enjoyed looking out of the window and just taking everything in. As soon as we arrived in Jaipur we stopped off at the pink palace and took loads of lovely photographs before having some lunch. After lunch we got some of our money changed up and went shopping at the markets. It was then time to drive to our next hotel. As soon as we got there we had some dinner and then all had a nice chat before heading off to bed.

On Saturday we got ourselves ready and got Jeeps to Amber fort. The fort was absolutely beautiful so we all took loads of photos! After some time at amber fort we went and got some henna and went shopping in the markets again. We also got to stop off at the floating palace which is a palace built 'on water' so we got out the coach to take some more photos. We then headed for a late lunch in one of the restaurants. When we got back to the hotel we re-packed our luggage so that we would be ready to drive to Agra the next day.

On Sunday, we drove to Agra. On route we stopped off at Agra Fort (also known as the red fort) and took some more lovely photographs and absorbed the surroundings. The architecture was beautiful! After some time at Agra fort we drove to McDonald's to have some lunch. As we were leaving McDonalds we were approached by a young girl who had been sent to beg by her family. She tried to

take our food and get our attention by pulling our clothes which really moved me it was so sad to see how little she had.

On Monday we woke up at 5am and met at the lobby to get a coach to the Taj Mahal! I couldn't believe I was going to be able to say I have visited one of the wonders of the world. The coach wasn't allowed to drive all the way to the Taj Mahal, so we had to get rickshaws. We then collected our tickets and queued up. We had to wear shoe covers so we didn't make any marks inside the Taj Mahal. The architecture was absolutely mesmerizing. We took loads of photographs. Once we had finished taking photos we got a mini bus back to the hotel and had some breakfast. We then went back to our rooms and chilled out before we had to travel 4 hours back to Delhi. We eventually got to the hotel in Delhi. We got changed and went to have a cooking class with the famous chef Komal Taneja. I found it so strange to see the wealthy juxtaposed with the poorer citizens. Komal was so lovely and told us we could eat however much we wanted but we must be mindful of those who have little to nothing to eat. All of the food Komal made was so tasty. We had lemon rice, lentils with north and south Indian spices, potatoes as well as a lovely ice cream dessert and a carrot pudding. Komal then put on some music and we had a dance and really enjoyed ourselves. Before we left, komal showed us her recipe books she had written. Some of us brought some of her books which she signed for us before we said goodbye and headed back to the hotel.

On Tuesday it was the day we had to go home. We woke up at 8am and had some breakfast and then signed out of the hotel and drove to the airport. The journey home was a 9 hour flight but I slept a lot of it. I cannot explain how incredible the trip was. I am so happy I was given the opportunity to go. I learned so many things about the culture of india and it makes me want to go back there again someday.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Ms Blatch and Mrs Frogley for making the trip of a lifetime so enjoyable and giving me so many amazing memories to look back on.

Jessica Hannah Ballard Year 11

Calendar of Events – Spring/Summer Terms 2018

Details of Events scheduled so far

Date	Event
Monday 19 th – Friday 23 rd March 2018	Achievement Assemblies (Students only)
Wednesday 21 st & Thursday 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
Thursday 29 th March 2018	Last day of Term School finishes at 12.50pm
Monday 2nd – Friday 13th April 2018	Easter Holidays
Monday 16 th April 2018	Start of term at 8.30am (Week B)

Tuesday 24 th April 2018	Extended Staff Briefing - <i>school starts at 8.45am</i>
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>