



## **Bexley Grammar School**

Danson Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BL

A Specialist Language College and

IB World School

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Dear Parent/Carer,

For parents/carers joining the BGS community for the first time, a warm welcome to you all! I look forward to a productive working relationship in which, together, we support your children to become the very best versions of themselves in achieving the very best of their potential.

I last wrote to parents and carers when the heat was unbearable back in July. Now, here we are on the second day of September, having met our new year 7 pupils and our new year 12 students in far more comfortable conditions.

It's been an exciting, rather hectic day in the sixth form as we sort out last minute arrivals and timetable changes. It was wonderful to see them all assembled in a packed hall this morning, smart and eager, as they embark on their IB journey, fortified by their brilliant GCSE results. We hope, even after one day, that these two year groups are feeling more settled; it will take a week or more for students new to the school to fully navigate the site. As the Sidemen made famous this summer, BGS is a huge site!

The rest of the school (8-11 and 13) starts promptly for registration at 8.30am on Monday, alongside year 7 pupils. Year 12 students should arrive later but in time to register promptly in their form rooms at 10.00am. They will then follow their timetable from period 3 (week A) on Monday.

Please note the following dates which are approaching rapidly:

- Monday 12 September Early closure (for Speech Day) at 2.15pm
- Tuesday 13 September Students not in school (staff training day)

Primarily for parents of year 7 who are new to the school, I must ask that you do not use our visitors' car park to collect your child from school unless the child is injured or has a medical appointment or similar. I urge you instead, if your child travels with you by car, to park well away from the school, either beyond the roundabout at the west end of Danson Lane or beyond the width restriction at the east end, and let your child walk the five minutes to or from the school gates, even in inclement weather. The stretch of road immediately outside the school is made very dangerous at the start and end of school if parents ignore this advice. Today there were dangerous pick ups (on the yellow zig-zag markings!) at the end of the day with only 192 pupils leaving from 3pm. On Monday there will be 1400. Please help us keep your children safe.

Similarly, if you are collecting your child on foot, please plan with your child where you will wait (should they turn left or right as they come out?) a little distance from the school gates, to keep the pavement clear and allow everyone to leave safely. Standing at the gate leads to congestion and frustration; children then step into the road to go around the blockage! So, please, wait well away from the gate.

And the last practical detail: students new to the school will need to bring cash for lunch for the first couple of days next week until you receive an email inviting you to open a ParentPay account which will use biometric registration in school. This was delayed today but should be operational early next week.

Some developments over the summer, in which you may be interested, include:

- The installation of LED lighting throughout the school
- 130 new computers
- New chairs and tables for 10 classrooms in Languages and 3 more in the main building
- A similar number of rooms repainted and several recarpeted
- A new, large canopy on the edge of the school field near the sixth form centre
- New line markings for our car parks and markings for several four-square games on our hard surfaces

I am so proud of what your children achieved last year, sometimes in challenging circumstances. The performance of our students in our examination years was outstanding. If you haven't yet seen my celebration of the summer results in the latest news section on our website please have a look: [Year 13 here](#) and [Year 11 here](#).

Examination results are one measure that indicate that we are going from strength to strength as a school community; we are expecting to demonstrate to Ofsted this year (I hope this term, since we are many years overdue for a visit from inspectors) that we remain an outstanding school. You will all have an opportunity to be a part of that visit by contributing your support in a meaningful way, through your feedback, to allow your children to continue to thrive from the privileges that an 'outstanding' status gives a school.

I look forward to having all students back in school on Monday to start the year in earnest.

Best wishes,



Steve Elphick