



**CLAIRE  
BELL**



**BIC 2016 LEAVER**

**CURRENTLY DOING DEGREE  
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD  
STUDIES**

**DUKE OF EDINBURGH GOLD  
AWARD RECIPIENT**

## **MY TIME AT BLACKWATER**

I started Blackwater in 2011 and even though I cried on the first day it was definitely the right school for me. During my time at Blackwater, I was involved with the Student Council and I was a Prefect. On reflection, I mostly enjoyed it and due to the small number of pupils, I felt I was able to build a relationship with all the staff and students throughout other year groups. My favourite subjects were Home Economics, Music and French.

I would not consider myself to be academic, but I left Blackwater having passed all my GCSEs. I struggled the most with Maths because I told myself that I couldn't do it. It is thanks to Mrs McVeigh for believing in me and her passion, perseverance and pressure that I passed it.

All the teachers were really helpful and genuinely cared for each student and wanted the best for them. The college has a very good pastoral care system, and we were always reminded that the staff were there for us (and they were)

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award - awarded at Buckingham Palace.
- Level 2 and Level 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development
- Currently completing a Degree in Early Childhood Studies

## **WHERE AM I NOW?**

I am studying a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies and like students in Blackwater I'm also navigating the challenges of online learning. Alongside this, I have a part time job. After this course I aim to progress onto another University then, pursue my dream job of being an early year's teacher

## **WHAT ADVICE WOULD I GIVE STUDENTS?**

There are plenty of other options besides academic routes. I always knew I wanted to work in childcare, so I didn't do A Levels. Make your own choices and do what is best for you without comparing yourself to others. Please ask for help if you are struggling with anything in school because the teachers are there for you (you just have to ask). Try to enjoy school because believe it or not you will probably miss it when you leave.