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CIRCULAR 2023-24 TL027

To: Parents/Guardians of all enrolled students
Cc: Bursar

October 2023

Development Proposal

As you are aware, at Blackwater IC we have been working closely with Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and a steering group made up of local people, some of whom are parents and staff at Blackwater IC, in relation to Educational Area Planning.

The development proposal put forward in May 2021 by this group was for the establishment of a new school in the Mid Down area. We have just received the exciting news that this proposal has been approved by the Permanent Secretary to establish a new 11-18 College. As a component part of the proposal all Blackwater IC students and staff will form the foundation of the new school and it will offer the post 16 provision that is not currently available at Blackwater IC.

Due to the limitations of our current site, Blackwater Integrated College can't expand as we need to, and the new school provides a much needed solution for this as well as meeting the needs of families new to integrated education. We are excited about the future and the massive benefits the new state of the art facility will provide for children of all abilities and backgrounds in the local and surrounding areas, including increased integrated provision and a new provision for post-16 learning.

Blackwater Integrated College is committed to working with the Department of Education to bring the proposal to reality and we look forward to the opportunity to become an integral part of the establishment of the new college.

You may be wondering what this means for your child: there will be no disruption to our students' education as we move forward with the process and there will be the opportunity for Year 12 students to remain for Years 13 and 14 instead of moving on to another school. We do not have exact details yet about many areas of the proposal but will work closely with parents to keep you informed of all plans and decisions throughout each stage.

If there are any questions at all do not hesitate to contact us and we will try and answer them as soon as we can. The proposal will be published on the Department of Education website later this morning and the Steering Group will issue a press release to all relevant media sources to coincide with this later today.

Stephen Taylor
Principal

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