

19th April 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Have your say in our consultation on changes at Bradford Girls' Grammar School

As a Trust and school we have promised to seek your opinion on important future matters affecting your school. We greatly value your views as parents and carers and want to keep you updated on developments and continue to seek your opinions as we look to the future. As part of our ongoing dialogue, BDAT and the Governing Body would now welcome your comments on two key issues. The first part of the information provided today is for your feedback and views. The second part of the letter is for information only, confirming a change to the school week from September 2024.

1. For Feedback: De-amalgamation of Bradford Girls Grammar School (BGGs) and Lady Royd Primary School

You may not have realised that BGGs and Lady Royd Primary school are legally one school. In the Government's monitoring they share one school registration number, are inspected as one education establishment under OFSTED and have one governing body. This set up is historic and based on the school previously being an independent school which has grown and evolved over time.

The first proposal we would like your opinion on is whether is to split (de-amalgamate) the existing 'all-through' Bradford Girls' Grammar School into two schools, a Secondary phase (ages 11 to 16) that would continue to operate as Bradford Girls' Grammar School and a Primary phase, already known as Lady Royd Primary School (ages 4 to 11).

We believe there are a number of benefits to your children in making the change. The two schools already operate separately in many ways, with their own identity and branding. Lady Royd Primary is co-educational, whilst the Secondary phase is girls only. As such the school is not currently operating as a true 'all-through' school, with the majority of pupils being new to the school in Year 7.

There are also clear education benefits to the de-amalgamation. At present the school is accountable for the delivery of one educational vision, which is challenging due to the breadth of teaching years

from reception through to GCSE. Managing the education provision as two separate schools would ensure staff can focus on their own phase, which is likely to drive educational improvements quicker.

We strongly believe as a Trust and school this proposal will better reflect current working arrangements at Bradford Girls' Grammar School and Lady Royd Primary, whilst improving educational outcomes to get the very best outcomes for your children.

What will this mean for my child?

As with the academy conversion we believe that this change can be implemented seamlessly, without having any detrimental impact on the education and experiences of your children in school.

- The schools ethos, vision and values will remain unchanged.
- The staff supporting and teaching your children will remain the same. Each school will have its own dedicated school leader, with Mrs Keeley Poole leading the Primary phase and Mrs Cath Proud joining the school as substantive Secondary Head from September 2023. (As per previous communications, Mrs Rachael Howarth will act as Secondary Interim Head Teacher for the summer 2023 term)
- School will continue to offer the same curriculum and extra-curricular experiences your children currently enjoy. We will continue to seek to enhance these working as part of the BDAT family of schools.
- We will also be seeking to update BGGGS Secondary school admission arrangements to ensure that all girls will continue to have the same priority opportunity to proceed from Lady Royd Primary to Bradford Girls' Grammar School that they enjoy today. Our Primary admissions policy will remain unchanged.

A detailed list of FAQs has been prepared and attached to this letter which should answer any further questions you have.

How can you have your say?

We understand you may have views on this proposal, and we are keen to make sure your views are taken in to account before we make any final decisions or approach the Department for Education. We will be running a consultation period over the next half term from 24th April to 26th May.

There are a number of way you can have your say during this period:

1. We will be hosting a series of parental engagement events where you can have your say or ask questions. These are scheduled for:
 - **Monday 24th April at 8.30am, which will include a short presentation on the proposal**
 - **Wednesday 24th May at 3.00pm to gather interim and additional feedback**
 - **Monday 19th June at 8.30am to provide initial feedback on proposals following consultation and seek any final views from parents and carers.**
2. We have also set up a dedicated email address where you can send us your views:
consultation@bggs.com
3. We also have a postal box set up in both the primary and secondary phase reception, where you can leave paper based comments to inform the consultation.

As we move through the consultation we will ensure that the FAQs are updated and available on the school website.

Following the close of the feedback we are committed to sharing with you the consultation feedback.

Supplementary question: We are minded that one question DfE may ask is whether we have considered extending Bradford Girls' Secondary School phase to welcome boys. This is not something we are currently minded to consider as we have previously understood from parents that they are highly supportive of the Secondary phase being girls only, however if you have strong views in this area please do include them in your consultation feedback.

2. For information only: Changes to the school year from September 2024

We also wanted to inform parents and carers regarding changes to the school year from **September 2024**. As you will be aware the Government expects schools to offer 38 weeks education to students. This is what we believe your children are entitled to and will guarantee them the very best education. BGGS has historically operated a 36 week school year – this is a legacy from when the school was an independent school. This means your children are currently missing out on 2 weeks of schooling per year, impacting on the quality and breadth of education received. Increasing to a 38-week school year

would ensure a full entitlement of learning, whilst aligning to the wider BDAT family of schools, Bradford Local Area and National requirements for educating our young people.

It is important for parents to understand that the move to a 38 week school year will happen irrespective of the decision whether to de-amalgamate. However, we wanted to make you aware of this arrangement as early as possible to enable you to plan. Exact term dates will be released for the 2024-25 academic year as usual in the Autumn term however they are likely to broadly mirror the LA district arrangements operating across the vast majority of other schools in Bradford.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you do have any questions or comments, please do pop into one of our upcoming parental engagement events or speak to a member of the school leadership team. You have until **26th May 2023** to let us know your views and you can also raise questions by emailing the following email address: consultation@bggs.com.

Although BDAT and the Governing Body appreciate these changes proposed are significant, we do believe our proposal opens up exciting opportunities for the next stages of the Bradford Girls' Grammar School and Lady Royd Primary School's journey and we are genuinely and only putting these proposals forward in the firm belief they will enhance the educational experience of your children during their time at our school.

We look forward to continuing on this journey with your support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CJ Sutcliffe'.

CJ Sutcliffe
Chair of Governors
Bradford Girls' Grammar School

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol Dewhurst'.

Carol Dewhurst OBE
Chief Executive Officer
Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust