



## Frequently asked questions about academy transfers

The information in this fact sheet is intended to help answer some of the questions which may arise when considering joining a multi-academy trust. This information is not intended to replace the informal conversations and engagement events that will take place during the transfer process.

### What is an academy?

An academy is an all-ability school that is directly funded by central government and independent of direct control by local government. Academies are inspected by OFSTED under the same framework as maintained schools. Academies are self-governing; Bradford Girls' Grammar School (BGGs) is currently a single academy trust.

### What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is a charitable company limited by guarantee which is formed to oversee a group of schools who are academies. The MAT is the employer of staff and holds the land and buildings of each academy in trust.

### What is the main motivation for joining a MAT?

BGGs governors see the main benefits of joining a MAT as:

- Supporting the school in their OFSTED journey: securing the future and creating potential for future growth
- To develop and support the professional expertise of all staff to further improve effectiveness and outcomes for students
- To generate financial efficiencies to invest back into the classroom for the benefit of students

### Who is Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT)?

BDAT is a multi-academy trust based in Bradford, determined to deliver the very highest standard of education through collaboration, shared best practice and underpinned by their ethos and values.

There are currently 18 academies in BDAT, made up of 14 primary academies and 4 secondary academies.

### Why has BGGs decided to join BDAT?

BGGs governors have explored various different MAT options in recent years. After a thorough process, this merger proposal is a result of nearly 12 months of conversations between the two parties to make sure this was a strong partnership based on a shared educational vision for the current and future students of BGGs. Both parties have worked closely together throughout the early parts of 2022, road testing the relationship and are confident that by joining together the increased collaboration and peer school-to-school support will set BGGs in good stead for the future.

**How does governance work?**

The BDAT Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for the work of the Trust and the academies. The Trust retains high level responsibility and accountability for the use of resources, finance and for educational achievement. This is monitored through regular internal and independent effectiveness and progress analysis, evaluations and reports. Information is shared with the Headteachers/Principals, the Local Governing Body, BDAT Officers and Trustees. Robust discussions are held at all levels to ensure that academy achievement and best value enable the optimum performance of each academy and of the Trust overall.

**How long does an academy transfer take and how will the process affect the day-to-day running of the school?**

This will usually take several months. As part of the process, legal advisers and a project manager have been appointed to provide day-to-day support to assist with the transfer process.

**What is the role of the MAT Chief Executive Officer (CEO)?**

They are the Accounting Officer for the Trust and the strategic support for schools. The CEO is the key contact for the Diocese, Regional Schools Commissioner and the DfE and acts as the point of first contact to ensure schools are not distracted from their core purpose of teaching and learning.

**What do parents and carers need to know?**

- The school is not proposing to change its character and vision and will continue to look, feel and be the same as it is now.
- The school Leadership Team and Governing Body will continue to run the school daily as they do now.
- The name of the school will not change and the school will not change its admissions policy.
- Children with special needs will continue to receive additional support in the way they do now.
- The multi-academy trust arrangements will share some central services across the Trust which will help BGGs be more efficient and make sure that funding is focused on teaching, learning and support for students.
- The multi-academy trust will work co-operatively with local partners, including other schools, community groups and organisations, and the local authority.

**Is an academy like a business?**

No. A business makes profit for its shareholders. An academy is a charitable trust which cannot make profit.

**Are academies bound by the same rules and regulations as other schools?**

Academies are required to follow the law and guidance on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions.

**As part of a MAT, will BGGs still work with the Local Authority (LA)?**

Yes.

**What functions would remain the statutory responsibility of the LA?**

- Home to school transport
- Education psychology, SEND statementing and assessment
- Monitoring of SEND provision
- Prosecution of parents for non-attendance
- Assigned SEND resources for pupils/students with rare conditions needing individually tailored provision
- Provision of specialist facilities for a student who is no longer registered at a school

**Who will be responsible, and pay for assessments of students with additional needs?** The LA retains the same statutory responsibility for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in academies as they would for a maintained school. BGGs would continue to work closely with the LA to ensure that SEND pupils are well provided for and to ensure that the LA meets their statutory commitments with regard to pupils.

**What about funding?**

The funding that BGGs currently receives will pass direct to BDAT. This money will then be routed back less a top-slice. The top-slice pays for central services which are presently purchased at the school.

**How will BGGs be accountable financially?**

BGGs will be held to account financially through its Local Governing Body and the BDAT central finance function and the BDAT Trust Board through the Finance and Resource Committee. BDAT are audited annually and their accounts published. There will be robust systems with an audit conducted by an external independent auditor.

**Will the staff stay the same?**

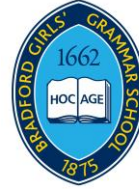
When a school transfers from a single academy trust to a new multi-academy trust, all permanent staff are entitled to transfer to it under the same employment terms and conditions. The process of the transfer assumes 'as is' for staff and that they continue to teach the same classes as they do now.

**Will you engage with staff, community, and parents?**

Yes, information events will be held during the transition phase. This will include the sharing of plans for the transfer of BGGs and BDAT and an opportunity to address any questions or concerns. Information will also be shared direct via letters and online via the school and BDAT websites.

**Will BGGs remain non-selective?**

Yes - academies are non-selective schools. Academies are required to follow the law and guidance on admissions, SEND and exclusions as if they were maintained schools. It is the aim of the trust to ensure that our academies provide high quality, inclusive education for all children.



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**Will BGGs need to change its name?**

No.

**Will BGGs need to change its signage?**

No.

**Can BGGs continue to work with the Local Authority and other schools?**

Yes. Where possible and appropriate, the academy will buy services to/from the local authority. The academy can work with any schools it wishes if this makes a difference to the education of the children.

**Will there be a new uniform?**

No.

**What date would BGGs join BDAT?**

The proposal is that BGGs joins BDAT on 1 January 2023.

**Will BDAT take on other schools?**

BDAT are not currently in consultation with other schools, but do envisage further future growth.

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& LADY ROYD PRIMARY

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