

BDAT Briefing – September 2020

Hello colleagues and friends of BDAT - Welcome back to school.

As CEO of a Trust serving 17 schools, I have had the opportunity to touch base with a large number of colleagues from different BDAT academies (and with colleagues in schools outside BDAT) over the summer to get their thoughts on schools reopening. I recognise that for all of us returning to school this September is going to be very different and for some, a real cause of anxiety. For some of our staff and students this may be the first time you have been back in school since March.

We all know COVID has not gone away. Bradford has been well publicised as an area where infection rates were deemed enough of a concern to require a local lockdown. Similarly, we have all seen that some of our neighbouring countries are seeing an upsurge in cases requiring reinstatement of international quarantines. There remains a level of risk for all of us every time we step outside of our family homes.

Having said all that, colleagues have also overwhelmingly told me how they agree that it is important we get our children back in to school and resume some kind of normality. The impact of continued lock down on our mental, emotional and social health is well documented and also presents real risks to many of our families, our students and to our staff. Five months for some children with only limited face-to-face learning is a considerable time away from their friends and teachers.

This September, as all BDAT schools and the central office reopen, we need to balance these two competing pressures. Your school leaders have done a huge amount of work, supported by the Trust and Board of Directors to mitigate the risks and to ensure your schools are as safe as we can make them. Every school has published and shared their own risk assessment with their staff, and the Trust has worked through our people policies with Union colleagues to ensure you have clear guidance about how we can support you during these unusual times. We will continue to work to refine these processes, risk assessments and school action plans over coming months, building on national health guidance and sharing best practice collaboratively across our family of schools.

We will continue to publish all the latest guidance on the COVID page on the BDAT website so you know where to find it <https://www.bdat-academies.org/covid-19-policies-and-guidance/> and we will be continuing to provide at least weekly briefings for Headteachers, school leaders, Chairs of Governors and Trustees for the foreseeable future.

Throughout the last six months I have continually referenced the efforts and resilience of staff across BDAT to do absolutely and unequivocally what is right for our students. Our schools, our students, our governors and our Trustees could not have asked for more. Thank you again for everything you continue do and I look forward to seeing you in school over the next few weeks.

With very best wishes



Carol Dewhurst, CEO



Trust Wide News

A-Level, GCSE and BTEC drama leads to some fantastic results for BDAT students

Well we got their eventually - after some remarkable last minute decisions and u-turns - our year 11 and year 13 students finally got the results they had been waiting for.

Final results for all courses were awarded using a mixture of centre assessed grades and OFQUAL moderated grades, resulting in some really great results for individual students. All of our schools pulled out the stops and hosted some fantastic “socially-distanced” results collections, ensuring the achievements of students was recognised – after all results collection is a right of passage you never forget! There were lots of happy faces from both the students and the staff.

GCSE results day 2020 was a particular milestone over at **Bradford Forster Academy** as students collected their exam results for the first year ever! The success stories were proudly led by the Head Girl, Allyna Charles (right) who secured 8 grade 9's and 1 grade 7. Allyna said, *“The last few months have been so stressful for everyone, but I am so thrilled with my results- it is a reward for all my hard work and for all my teachers' hard work too.”*



2020- 2021 – a year to focus on inclusion and equality

COVID was not the only story to hit the press and profoundly mark our lives in the first six months of 2020. All of us were affected by the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of George Floyd and both the intentionally systematic racism, but also the unconscious bias which runs through modern society.

BDAT has always had a Trust value of inclusion which we define as *“understanding everyone is equal, without exception, valuing and encouraging diversity and difference and proactively seeking to learn from others.”*

Throughout this year we are committed to ensuring that we unpick this value and really ensure it is embedded across what we do as a Trust and our family of schools and how we act. In future newsletters we will share with you more of our thinking around this issue. We will be looking for volunteers to help shape our inclusion strategy and join our diversity workstream to share good practice.

What is clear is we need to ensure that inclusion runs through all our practice - from how we teach a broad balanced curriculum to our students - to how we recruit, train and retain our staff. Inclusion also needs to cover the full range of protected characteristics including gender, ethnicity, religion and also consider the contexts and demographics of the schools we serve. We have more thinking to do to make sure what we do is meaningful and impactful, but this must be a priority across our Trust as we enter a new academic year.

Government confirms plans for new suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)

Shortly before the summer the Government reconfirmed their intention to begin the process to reform NPQs for the teaching sector. The new qualifications are expected to be available from September 2021.

The purpose of the reformed suite of NPQs is to design qualifications which will help all teachers and leaders to continuously develop their knowledge and skills throughout their careers. DfE evidence suggests that a third of primary teachers and half of secondary teachers say they don't get enough CPD. These new NPQs have been described as the golden thread of CPD and can run through a teacher's whole teaching career.

These reforms will include introducing 3 specialist NPQs aimed at middle leaders:

- a qualification focused on the **leadership of teaching** (for teachers whose role may include responsibility for improving teaching practice in a subject or phase)
- a qualification focused on **behaviour and culture** (for teachers whose role may include responsibility for behaviour management and pupil wellbeing)
- a qualification focused on **teacher development** (for teachers whose role may include responsibility for supporting the training and development of others, including early career teachers)
- reformed **leadership NPQs** to ensure aspiring and serving school leaders have the specific knowledge and skills they need to carry out their roles – this includes a review of the current NPQH; NPQEH and NPQSL.

BDAT is working with a number of the lead and delivery partners considering delivering the new NPQs and will keep staff informed of plans as they evolve.

Trust Board and Governor meetings to continue remotely until at least October half term



While schools settle back in to full reopening, the expectation is that the majority of school governing body and Academy Board meetings will continue remotely using TEAMS until at least October half term. Interestingly feedback from remote meetings has been very positive with better take up than usual in some schools, so it is likely we will continue to consider some remote meetings moving forward.

BDAT will be providing a template "bridging" LGB agenda for schools for the Autumn period which covers off both usual start of year and school business, but also the key areas of safety, compliance and reopening business needed following COVID partial school closures. Key items for September will be ensuring all schools present final risk assessments for Governing Body information, the launch of the new BDAT safeguarding reports and ratification of new behaviour policies.

BDAT reconfirms position on pay and performance management for staff end of year reviews

Earlier in the year we wrote to you to confirm that due to the exceptional nature of the last six months, assessing staff against performance targets set long before the virus would not be possible, and therefore Trustees confirmed that all staff who are not at the top of their pay range will now automatically qualify to move up their pay range and will receive an automatic incremental point rise at the end of their respective incremental cycles (with the limited exception of UPS staff who have not already got one previous year's "good" appraisal).

We can confirm this decision still stands and this increment will be awarded as soon as Governing Bodies have confirmation end of year performance management conversations have been completed. (It is important to remember that performance management is a statutory entitlement for staff as set out in teacher pay and conditions so the process does still need to happen – however the outcome of this conversation will not impact on pay).

On July 21st, the Government confirmed the **teacher inflationary pay award for 2020-21**. The media headline of 3.1% is the overall increase in the pay bill but rates of increment vary depending on where staff are placed on the pay scale. The rate for school leaders on the upper pay scale is a 2.75% increase. Main scale staff are weighted:

Main 1	5.50%
Main 2	4.95%
Main 3	4.40%
Main 4	3.85%
Main 5	3.30%
Main 6	2.75%

The Board has confirmed this pay award for teachers, and this will be paid in the September pay run.

More recently, the national agreement for **support staff** has been agreed at 2.75% and this has also been ratified by the BDAT Board. Support staff will receive their incremental increase in the September pay run and then the back-pay increment (from April 1st to Sept 1st) in the October pay run.



Movers and Shakers

- **Nicky White**, Headteacher at **Westminster primary** has taken up a new post as Head of an all-through Academy in the North East. Nicky leaves us at half term and we will be looking to advertise and recruit in September.
- **Cath Proud** joins us as Headteacher of **Bradford Forster** from September. Cath was previously acting Headteacher at Heckmondwike Grammar.
- **Anne Proctor** steps up to Headteacher at **East Morton Primary** having previously been Head of School at **St Philips**
- And in the central team, **Claire Berry** joins the Trust as Head of Corporate Governance and Compliance from 14th September and **Hayley Budge** joins as PA to the CEO, both starting on 14th September.

Please keep sharing your stories and thank you for all you are doing
#wearebdot