

BDAT Briefing January 2022

Welcome back to school. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year and took the opportunity to recharge your batteries.

This terms newsletter includes the latest national news plus find out who will be joining BDAT this summer and which member of staff we will be saying a fond farewell to in the New Year (she will be back as a governor).

Please do keep sending your stories through to Hayley.budge@bdot-academies.org. This newsletter is all about you and for our family. We love getting your news and we know you like reading it. Happy reading!

NATIONAL NEWS

We start this newsletter by flagging three interesting national updates reported over the last half term:

1. “Policy Making in Disruptive Times: the development and impact of School Trust-designed policies on teacher and student outcomes”

University of Nottingham and the Confederation of Schools Trusts (CST), November 2021



Earlier in the year BDAT was one of 14 Multi-Academy Trusts who took part in a research project to track the leadership, policy response and action planning of MATs across some of the most deprived areas in the Northern region of England (Lancashire and West Yorkshire, East Midlands & Humber, and North East), with a particular focus on how they managed the transitions to the ‘new normal’ over the period from April to September 2021:

[Policy making in disruptive times Flagship project Nov 2021.pdf](#)

Key findings from the report describe how MATs were able to harness their size and collective energy to ‘buffer’ their schools by providing key administrative, financial, health and safety and HR services, harnessing the necessary resources, and enabling their schools to focus on their core business of the academic learning and welfare of their students in ways that stand-alone schools and academies might, perhaps, find difficult to match.

Embedded within the report are anecdotes and unambiguous messages of trust and school leaders’ strong sense of intelligent agency, agility, and adaptiveness, allied with a capacity for resilience and an unwavering commitment to provide the best possible educational opportunities for students in the circumstances they were experiencing.

As I write this article, I am mindful that this pandemic is not yet over – indeed early 2022 brings with it new challenges and anxiety linked to the increased prevalence once again of COVID as we battle the Omicron variant. I was however heartened to revisit this report and felt it important to share it with you as it independently reminds us all of how together we are stronger as a family of schools and together we will face, and overcome, the challenges ahead.

2. ***“Looking to the Future: a trust-based landscape for Church of England Schools”.*** **University of Nottingham and the Confederation of Schools Trusts (CST), November 2021**



Another interesting report published in December 2021 is the latest CST “Bridge to the Future report” report setting out the argument that all church schools would be best placed in Academy Trusts and claiming, *“a deep synergy between the potential of academy trusts and the character and aims of church schools”*. The report makes the case that if autonomy remains the issue: *“Whenever there is potential trade off between adult autonomy on the one hand and quality of provision for children on the other, the latter, morally must trump, every time.”*

Whilst Nigel Genders, on behalf of the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership, has been quick to explain that the article is a personal view from one MAT CEO, he has subsequently promised that the national church and diocesan boards (as the religious authority to which church schools relate) will work with government on the forthcoming white paper, in partnership and liaison with MATs and schools rather than through any external network: [CST White Paper Series \(cstuk.org.uk\)](https://cstuk.org.uk)

3. ***Finally, a word from OFSTED thanks to Bradford Teaching School Hub***

At the point of writing, it is unclear if OFSTED will resume inspecting in the New Year after a flurry of Autumn inspections. Early inspection data published by OFSTED on 13 December shows that the overall grade profile for schools has improved compared to the period before the pandemic. The data shows that, during the 3 months up to the end of November 2021, 83% of schools were judged good or outstanding, compared to 77% between September 2019 – when the new education inspection framework (EIF) was introduced – and March 2020, when inspections were suspended due to the pandemic. The data also shows that schools previously judged requires improvement (RI) or inadequate have done particularly well this term. 72% of previously RI schools have attained a good or outstanding grade since September – compared with 56% during the 2019/20 period, while 56% of those previously rated inadequate have improved to good or outstanding, compared with 40% last year.

Further details can be found [here](#); and in the Ofsted inspection.

Looking to the future however, OFSTED have been working hard to almost “softly re-launch the EIF. Very clear presentation slide from Emma Ings, our Regional Director can be accessed [here](#) which cover the pace of inspections, key foci, links to ECF, sexual harm, RSHE and more. Thanks to Bradford TSH for arranging the session.

Also OFSTED are holding a new 90-minute webinar for NEYH school and Trust leaders on: **‘Safeguarding and inspection’ on 31st January or 4th February 2022**. The session will make references throughout to statutory guidance and information and explain how Ofsted will inspect this aspect of schools’ work.

You can register by clicking here: [Registration \(gotowebinar.com\)](https://gotowebinar.com)



BDAT News



Baildon becomes the 18th school set to join the BDAT Family.

On the eve of breaking up for the Christmas Holidays we were all delighted to get final confirmation that **Baildon Church of England primary school** had received their Academy Order from the Secretary of State to join the BDAT family. As you will be aware, we have a long and happy relationship working with Baildon, initially through Baildon Teaching School and more latterly through our reciprocal CPD arrangements. We could not be more delighted to officially welcome them to the family. We expect the school to academise later in the summer following the conversion and consultation process.

HOT OFF THE PRESS: Have you ever thought about training to teach with BDAT?

Thanks to all the BDAT staff who took part in our BDAT Initial Teacher Training Videos. They look and sound absolutely brilliant and completely explain why those considering teaching should train with the BDAT family.

If you fancy a quick look to see if you recognise any of our staff faces, click [here](#)!



Belle Vue Girls Academy are the first BDAT school to experience a new ungraded section 8 visit

Belle Vue Girls were the first (and only) BDAT Academy to receive an OFSTED visit last term as part of the new two-day ungraded inspections, where all "good" schools last inspected in 2016-2017, will receive an inspection this academic year. At the time of writing, the contents of the report remain confidential however, to reassure colleagues anxiously awaiting inspection the process was very fair and measured although in no small part due to the calm and collected leadership from Steve, SLT, Jason and the hard work and engagement of all Academy staff.

We will share more information with all schools, including key tips and lessons learned when the report is published.

Movers and Shakers

This news article we want to say a special thank you to the **legendary Liz Lawley** who has finally retired from supporting the BDAT schools. Liz is a well-known and well-respected Head who has worked across Bradford for many years. Liz joined BDAT when St Johns converted in October 2017 before retiring as substantive Head in 2018.

Since then, Liz has worked tirelessly supporting schools across BDAT including several years support at The Academy at St James, Shipley C of E and more recently working at Clayton St John. All three schools have come on leaps and bounds thanks to her support and guidance. She will be missed although will be staying on supporting several governing bodies in the New Year.

Sadly, there do not seem to be many recent photos of Liz online, so we have had to settle with two “slightly” older pictures including (right) a picture of Liz celebrating St Johns outstanding OFSTED judgement back in 2010 😊



News from our Schools

Finally to finish, two short stories from two of our academies:

Well done to the BDAT schools who took part in the Bradford Schools Games Primary Panathlon last month and in particular to **Belle Vue Girls Academy** and **St Philips CE Primary Academy** who got some great coverage in the latest newsletter. Panathlon gives thousands of young people with disabilities and special needs every year the opportunity to take part in competitive sport [Panathlon Challenge | Competitive Sport for Disabled & SEN Children](#)

Well done also to Wycliffe CE Primary – Their Christmas tree has been voted the best Christmas tree at this year's Christmas Festival! It got our vote!!

Keep sharing your stories: info@bdat-academies.org

Keep up with the latest news: [#wearebdot](https://twitter.com/wearebdot)

