

BDAT Briefing February 2023

Happy Half term colleagues and welcome back to Spring 2.

This newsletter starts with some excellent news from Cullingworth Primary who celebrate another GOOD OFSTED, introduces some new faces and features some extracts from BDAT, our schools and our students have hit the headlines in the last term. Happy reading!

Compassion, personal development and kindness shines through as Cullingworth celebrates another strong OFSTED judgement

Following a two day inspection in December 2022, staff and students at Cullingworth primary school were delighted to remain a good school in a strong OFSTED report where the values, hard work and care of all **#TeamCullingworth** shone through.

The report focused on the care and compassion demonstrated by both staff and students highlighting how *'pupils live and breathe the trust and school's 'ICARE' values of inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience and excellence. They have a strong sense of pride in being a member of the school community. Adults and pupils are glad to be members of 'Team Cullingworth'.*



The report commended the hard work of leaders and teachers who *'have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)'. Pupils are described in the report as 'cheerful, curious and in lessons are engaged and attentive'. It goes on to say 'Pupils are taught about important issues such as equality, tolerance and prejudice. They talk about these issues with maturity and understanding'.*

The school was also praised for the vast range of experiences offered beyond the curriculum. The school provides *'many clubs and sporting opportunities that are accessed by a wide range of pupils'. During the inspection, pupils were involved in a tree planting initiative with inspections commenting that "This is a positive example of pupils leading a project and learning to become active and productive citizens.'*

Cathy Isaac, Head Teacher at Cullingworth Village Primary, said: *"We are so proud that the excellent work of our pupils and our staff has been recognised by Ofsted. I am pleased that the inspectors recognised that both reading and Maths are taught well but that the strong focus on children's personal development through our carefully constructed curriculum, and additional opportunities available to pupils is seen as equally important, something we are all incredibly passionate about. The balance between this and our excellent academic outcomes is something we are very proud of".* To read the full report please click [here](#)

Introducing the new DfE Regional Director for Yorkshire and Humberside

Alison Wilson has been successful in securing the role of Regional Director (previously Regional School Commissioner for Yorkshire and Humber taking up post from 6th February.

Alison has spent the vast majority of her career in public service - in local, regional and national government. She has been a Civil Servant since 2011 - spending 11 years in DfE before serving a year with HM Treasury. Alison has a wealth of relevant experience from her career in DfE. She has worked in policy areas including school funding reform, academies policy and special educational needs. In 2014 she took up the post of Head of Office to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for the North of England. She went on to lead the Opportunity Area Programme in 2018 - initially in Scarborough and Doncaster, and then nationally. During the pandemic, Alison led the DfE's Vulnerable Children Unit, for which she was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List this year. Alison has spent the last year working in HM Treasury, leading work to establish the new Darlington Economic Campus which will soon be home to over 1,000 additional civil servant roles.

Alison will now be BDAT and Bradford's most senior official making decisions on areas including children's social care, schools and academies, area based education programme to improve outcomes for children and families. To find out more: [About us - Regional Department for Education \(DfE\) Directors - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Meanwhile closer to home.... Meet James Clarke, BDAT Head of Safeguarding.

James Clarke joined the central team at BDAT in January 2023 as Head of Safeguarding for the Trust.



Previously James has been working in education for fourteen years having most latterly been a senior leader in a large secondary school undertaking the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as well as leading on their attendance, inclusion and wellbeing strategies. James has a wealth of experience in supporting students pastorally, both operationally helping them overcome barriers to learning, and strategically in ensuring that systems and procedures enable every pupil to achieve their potential.

James' responsibility is to work strategically on safeguarding practice across BDAT by collaborating with colleagues in each of our schools to ensure effective systems are in place to drive the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils through sharing of good practice, quality assurance, policy development and training.

In his spare time, James enjoys playing and watching football and other sports, as well as spending time with family and friends. And on a final note, I have just found out James is getting married this Easter – I am sure you will join me in wishing him every happiness and a brilliant day. 😊

BDAT in the News

Changing perceptions: parents now have a school they believe in:

Chris Tolson, Headteacher at The Academy at St James puts pen to paper in an article for Teach First explaining the Academies journey from inadequate to good with outstanding leadership. Chris joined The Academy at St James in January 2017, as their new Headteacher – their fourth in seven months. At the time, the school was in Special Measures, and Chris decided to join the first cohort of Teach First's [Leading Together programme](#) – a two-year, fully funded programme that develops the whole senior leadership team and creates long-term improvements. Fast forward five years, and in May 2022, the school achieved an Ofsted rating of Good overall, with an Outstanding in leadership and management. Chris reflects on the school's journey, their challenges and their achievements. To read the full article, please visit [Changing perceptions: parents now have a school they believe in | Teach First](#)



Building a Successful Trust

Meanwhile over in HeadTeacher magazine, CEO Carol Dewhurst sets out the lessons learned in an evolving MAT, as BDAT celebrates our tenth anniversary. Highlighting the importance of maintaining strong vision and values, clear communications and developing the people within the Trust at all levels, the article shares how BDAT got to be the Trust we are today.

To read the full article visit [Building a Successful Trust - Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust \(bdat-academies.org\)](#)

Pupils at Oxenhope Primary School put through their paces by a GB athlete

International badminton player Jenny Wallwork visited the school and hosted a sponsored sports event. All the children participated in a fitness circuit. Jenny also spoke about how she became an athlete. The event was organised through Sports for Schools. Headteacher, Mrs Alice Jones, says: "The children and staff had a fabulous time. We love PE at our school, and the health and wellbeing of the pupils is one of our priorities. We take pride in being able to offer such exciting sporting opportunities for our children".



Movers and Shakers

Congratulations are due to two of our Secondary Headteachers who have secured permanent Headship posts at the school they have been leading on an interim basis this academic year.

In January 2023 **Steve Mulligan** (second down) was confirmed as substantive Headteacher at **Immanuel College**. Steve had been seconded from Belle Vue Girls to support Immanuel College and has been doing a brilliant job working with the leadership team.

In February 2023, following a competitive two-day interview process we were also delighted to appoint **Debbie Anness** (top left) as Head Teacher at **Belle Vue Girls**. Debbie had stepped up admirably to lead Belle Vue following Steve's secondment.

Both appointments will commence with immediate effect.

We also have to say goodbye to another one of our secondary leaders as **Clare Martin**, (third down) Principal of **Bradford Girls' Grammar School** will leave the school at Easter 2023. Mrs Martin leaves us to take up a new Headship at King James's School in Knaresborough. King James's is a school that is very close to Mrs Martin's heart as she started her leadership career there.

Whilst we are disappointed that we will not be working together going forward, we do want to say a special thank you to Mrs Martin for all of her hard work and dedication to BGGs and for supporting the school conversion to BDAT. Mrs Martin joined BGGs at the start of the COVID pandemic and has led the school admirably during these unprecedented times, navigating her way through the pandemic, helping the school improve an OFSTED grade and traversing the complications of the Academy transfer. We hope to be able to confirm the plans to secure the leadership at Bradford Girls' within the next few weeks.

We would also like to welcome our new Trustee, **Joanna Vickers** to the **BDAT Trust Board**. Joanna is the Chief Operating Officer at New Collaborative Learning Trust and is responsible for the line management of Finance, IT, Estate, Health and Safety, GDPR and the Governance Manager for the Trust. Jo was previously Faculty Leader for Business, Maths and ICT, Assistant Principal and also Director of Finance and Estates. Jo has been the Independent Member of the Audit Committee since April 2021.

A warm welcome to **John Halstead** who will be joining BDAT as the **Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee**. John is the Chief Finance and Operating Officer at Consilium Academies and has responsibility for all operational areas of the organisation and the effective delivery of the following Consilium Academies central teams: Finance, Estates, IT, Marketing, Health and Safety and Administration. John's previous roles include: Director of Finance, Trust Head of Finance, Supervisor at RSM and Trainee Accountant. John has professional experience as a trained auditor and is a previous Trustee at The Hallam Schools Partnership Academy Trust where he was Chair of the Audit Committee.

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