



**BURY**  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
SENIOR SCHOOLS

# FAQ'S FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS



## TRANSITION INTO YEAR 7

### *How many pupils come from BGS Juniors and how many from other schools?*

Whilst all our Juniors usually transition in our seniors, this equates to about 35% of our pupils in Year 7, therefore around 65% of pupils come from other schools. Very many of those pupils from 'other' schools will be the only pupil from their school. We all work hard to make sure everyone settles in very quickly, and they invariably do! Please see our brochure on Year 6 to Year 7 transition here: [www.burygrammar.com/admissions/senior-schools-admissions/year-6-to-year-7-transition](http://www.burygrammar.com/admissions/senior-schools-admissions/year-6-to-year-7-transition) we have a whole team of senior staff devoted to making sure things go smoothly for everyone.

Pupils will meet their new classmates and form tutors well before September and we fully expect you to have made new friends before Year 7 actually starts!



### *Will pupils be invited into school prior to September for a taster day?*

Yes – we have two induction days, one in June and one in September. Please check our Admissions pages and our website calendar for information about our events.

### *I know the home-school partnership is really important to you. How will you communicate with us as new Y7 parents?*

We'll communicate with you well: often, politely, honestly and always with the aim of working together to do the very best for your son/daughter. Whichever medium you choose to communicate is fine with us: email, face to face, phone calls - whatever best fits in with your family life. Our home-school partnership is absolutely essential to making your child's education successful: we will always be proactive in contacting you, you will receive information every six weeks on how your child is doing academically and above all, we see our relationship as a genuine partnership to ensure your child flourishes. Form Tutors are at the heart of the Pastoral Teams and are the first port of call for parents. Trust, openness and confidence in each other are essential. (Why would you do it any other way?!)

### *How do you help pupils settle in?*

Through a tried and tested successful induction programme and thanks to a brilliant pastoral team, welcoming staff and older pupils. We all remember our first day at senior school and we want our new Year 7s to love theirs! We have a Welcome Evening and an Induction Day in June, plus a Parents' Evening and a second Induction Day in September. We also have a whole variety of activities designed to help pupils get to know each other throughout their first month. We honestly very rarely have any pupil who is not fully settled in and happy in a very small amount of time. While the first day might be slightly nerve-wracking, school is always full of laughter on day one.



### *We have some questions about homework and how pupils will be supported?*

Being a Microsoft School is integral to our pupils' lessons in school and for their homework. We believe that homework is a vital element of the learning process, enabling pupils to consolidate work carried out in lessons, explore topics further and undertake research in preparation for classroom activities. Establishing good study habits early on is the key to success in examinations and life beyond school.

Our teachers are here to support pupils and to help them set up routines right from the start.

Senior School homework is set using the web-based system satchel:one, providing you and your child with access to their own personal online homework diary.



## STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD

### *How will Bury Grammar School maintain current achievements and continue to stand out from the crowd?*

Thank you for recognising the achievements of our pupils and staff.

How will we maintain this? There is a real momentum and excitement about the School regarding the future: we all genuinely work together and firmly believe our teachers and pupils have the ability to reach even greater heights still. Our 'can do' approach is probably the number one ingredient to our continued success.

How will we continue to stand out? We believe our mix of academic high standards and a genuinely warm, friendly approach are unique.

### *What would you say was the difference between Bury Grammar and a state school?*

We can't comment on other schools, but we know that what makes us unique is the focus on **quality** in EVERY area: academic, pastoral care, communications, enrichment, planning ahead, kindness and the 'can do' approach we mentioned above.

### *What is the right pupil for your school? What sets BGS apart from other schools?*

#### *What are you trying to achieve over the next 5 years?*

Our typical pupil is above average intelligence and has a thirst for learning – but there is absolutely not one type: diversity is something that enriches the school.

What sets us apart? Being academic but also human.

In the next 5 years: we aim to continue to strengthen provision in every area, lead the way nationally and give our pupils the very best and happiest education possible.

Please see our Strategic Plan here [www.burygrammar.com/about-us/aims-strategic-plan](http://www.burygrammar.com/about-us/aims-strategic-plan)

### *How does Bury Grammar School differ from other independent schools?*

We can't comment on any other school; we only know what we are doing. Regarding BGS, we genuinely believe that we have the best teachers you could possibly find, a warm and busy environment, staff who listen and who are quick to adapt, an all-round education focused on the future, intelligent leadership, a very 'hands on' senior leadership team and an incredible thirst to keep on doing better! Our teachers are outward looking and have the courage to be ambitious.



### *How do you encourage and celebrate diversity within school?*

Through assemblies, form times, the PSHE programme, careful planning of the curriculum, our use of resources, prefect role models, how we communicate with each other and our rewards system – in essence, continual reaffirmation of what we are about. BGS is genuinely a happy, tolerant school full of people with all kinds of different backgrounds and ideas. We see this as one of our real strengths.



## ACADEMIC

### *What are your GCSE and A Level results like?*

The average grade at GCSE is a 7 (the old grade A).

Over two thirds of sixth formers have A grades on their certificates. Please see our website for more information:

[www.burygrammar.com/about-us/examination-results](http://www.burygrammar.com/about-us/examination-results)

### *Are children grouped according to academic ability or are they in mixed ability groups?*

The whole school is selective. Within this, there is further setting in Maths and English.

### *How does Bury Grammar inspire children to think for themselves?*

This is an integral part of what we do. True learning equates to thinking for yourself in our view. In every lesson, assembly and interaction we encourage and give pupils the confidence to ask questions and think on their feet. The end result is that BGS pupils are very good at this essential life skill.

### *How do you cater for outstandingly gifted pupils?*

In as many ways as there are pupils and differing talents (that is, a lot!). Our teachers are employed because they are so adept at stretching the most able and because they love to pass on their expert subject knowledge.

We cater for outstanding pupils by challenging them, expecting the highest standards from them, expecting



them to think for themselves, showing them how they might extend their knowledge, asking them questions, going beyond the syllabus, getting excited for their enthusiasm – and in a myriad of other ways!

The outcome? Exceptional value added for the most able, excellent university places, stellar results and happy fulfilled pupils. Of course, we don't only do this for the most able – we do this for everyone.

Please see our booklet on our Scholarship Programme here: [www.burygrammar.com/admissions/senior-schools-admissions/year-6-to-year-7-transition](http://www.burygrammar.com/admissions/senior-schools-admissions/year-6-to-year-7-transition)

### *What if my child is struggling in a subject?*

It is absolutely a given at BGS and a central tenant of what we do that we would give your child extra support, encouragement and time until they no longer struggled, and their confidence was restored. We never want a child to struggle. Our teachers are exceptional at doing this - there will be extra help of this sort going on in school every day.

### *How would you know if they are struggling? Would you be proactive?*

We would know because our teachers know their pupils extremely well and our whole pastoral team pours over pupils' grades every six weeks to identify if anyone is under performing. There is nowhere to hide at BGS! We would absolutely be proactive- this is something on which we pride ourselves. If we're concerned, we'll talk to you as parents and of course to your child and we'll put measures in place to make sure the struggling comes to a swift end. Professional pride and care for the children mean we are very good at such intervention.

### *How much homework is there?*

In Year 7, three lots of 20-minute homework per night. Homework is really important to consolidate learning, challenge pupils to go beyond the syllabus and learn independence. But it also should not take over families' lives! As in most things, moderation is the key to success.

### *How do you help pupils get into university?*

We are very good at this! In several ways:

- We teach pupils well, so they gain fantastic grades
- Our UCAS support is phenomenal - every student will get all the help they need
- Our Sixth Form Team is very knowledgeable and experienced
- We have a long track record of success and know how to make this happen
- There is an ethos of high aspirations.

High aspirations and expectations are gold dust in terms of university applications! Every year, the vast majority of students gain a place on their first-choice course. In recent years, there have been Oxbridge successes in Science, Modern Languages, History and Philosophy and Theology; all of our medics secured places.

[www.burygrammar.com/our-schools/sixth-form/our-university-success](http://www.burygrammar.com/our-schools/sixth-form/our-university-success)

### *Why do you do a three-year GCSE programme?*

We do this to enable us to go beyond the syllabus, make learning more interesting, ensure the best possible preparation for A-level and enable everyone to get the highest grades possible.



## EXTRA CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

*I've heard Bury Grammar has lots of extra-curricular activities. When do they take place? Can my child get involved in all of them?*

There are over 100 different activities - so many it would take you most of a school year to experience them all if you tried a new one every day. They often lead to a lifelong passion or career. Please visit our school website for full details of the activities on offer [www.burygrammar.com/enrichmentatbgs/senior-school-and-sixth-form-enrichment](http://www.burygrammar.com/enrichmentatbgs/senior-school-and-sixth-form-enrichment)

We very much encourage every pupil to get involved!



*I'd like to know more about the CCF, please.*

We have the biggest voluntary Combined Cadet Force (CCF) in the country and now also have an RAF section. Our pupils absolutely love being in the CCF and gain so much in terms of leadership skills and resilience from involvement. Pupils from Year 9 upwards are invited to take part. An RAF section was founded last year, which enables pupils to go gliding and flying, visit RAF stations, participate in STEM activities, build and develop teamwork and leadership skills, improve cyber awareness, investigate airmanship, and aeronautical studies as well as military skills such as drill. You can read more on our school website: [www.burygrammar.com/enrichmentatbgs/senior-school-and-sixth-form-enrichment/combined-cadet-force](http://www.burygrammar.com/enrichmentatbgs/senior-school-and-sixth-form-enrichment/combined-cadet-force)

*We understand you are keen for pupils to support charities?*

Yes, this is correct. There is a continuing tradition at BGS of helping others and supporting charities. Over the last few years, we have formed a close partnership with Bury Hospice and have worked on a number of projects together. We are excited for our new cohort of pupils to join us in our endeavours. We know they will have lots of ideas, and indeed energy as we look to strengthen our charity work. We recognise that feeling part of something and connecting to the community around us is important for our sense of wellbeing.

*Can my child have singing lessons?*

Yes, and any kind of music lesson. Music is a core part of BGS life, and we have a fantastic department. Please find more information on our website in the Music section [www.burygrammar.com/enrichmentatbgs/music-at-bgs](http://www.burygrammar.com/enrichmentatbgs/music-at-bgs)

## PRACTICALITIES

*What is a typical school day like?*

The school day is 8.40am to 3.45pm. It begins with an assembly or form time and there are six lessons each day. A typical Year 7 day can consist of six of the following subjects: Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Digital Literacy, Drama, English, Food & Nutrition, French, Geography, History, Maths, Music, PE, Physics, PSHE, Religious Studies, Sports, Swimming or Study Skills.

*I've heard there is an additional bus to Bolton. Is this true?*

Yes. We're delighted to have an additional bus to Bolton, owing to increased demand. For the same reason, we also have a bus now to Oldham. Please find all the details about



our bus routes on our website here:

[www.burygrammar.com/admissions/coach-services](http://www.burygrammar.com/admissions/coach-services)

*Are there travel buddies for new pupils?*

We are very happy to arrange for an older pupil to accompany your child or meet them en-route to help them get used to a new journey to school. We find they very quickly learn the ropes and become confident!

*What about before and after school clubs? When can I drop my child off? How much does it cost?*

You can drop your child off at school at 7.30am and they are welcome to stay until 5.45pm. We hope this makes busy family lives run more smoothly. There is supervised study after school (as well as lots of activities) and pupils can also get breakfast in the canteen in the morning. There is no cost for before or after school care. When pupils are remote learning, we offer key worker care for pupils.

*What are lunches like? Do you have halal food?*

It's lovely. Please visit our website for the full lunch menu. We don't have halal lunches, but we do have superb vegetarian meals and pupils can bring a packed lunch.



## CHARACTER

*I've heard you talk about promoting pupils' confidence. How do you do this?*

A great question! In so many ways - again, our teachers and the pupils themselves are fantastic at this. Here are a few ideas:

- We encourage everyone to have a go and be fearless;
- Our pupils are relentlessly encouraging of each other. Being 'too cool for school' is not a phenomenon we see;
- We seriously promote a happy, tolerant, vibrant atmosphere. The Heads and teachers probably believe in this more than anything else as the gateway to good learning;
- We encourage pupils not to compare themselves with others. Why would you?
- We stress that getting things wrong is not a problem (as long as it is not repeated!) and you're not really learning unless you get stuck sometimes;
- Finally, there is something really special and indefinable about Bury Grammar which means pupils might arrive with us lacking in confidence but leave us happy and relaxed in their own skin. We can't quite pinpoint what it is but it is definitely in the ether at BGS.

*We understand you are keen on pupils being leaders?*

Absolutely! And they don't have to wait until they are the oldest pupils in the school for this. We believe every pupil at BGS has leadership potential and there are plenty of opportunities to lead. Our peer selected school council discuss important matters raised by pupils and develop strategies to put ideas into practice. There are a wide range of leadership opportunities from classroom to whole school: Form Captains, Charity Representatives, Peer Mentors, Eco Representatives, Mental Health



Ambassadors. We recognise the positive impact of peer support and only need to look at our Sixth Form Pupil Leadership team to see the confidence gained from holding a position of responsibility lower down the school. We really believe they are the societal leaders of the future.

***Do you teach children how to manage money?***

Another good question! Yes, in PSHEE - this is an essential life skill. A large number of pupils also study Business and/or Economics as well of course.

***How does your pastoral care work? I know how important this is to children's well-being.***

We really feel our pastoral care is second to none. First and foremost, it is everyone's responsibility. Great pastoral care takes place in form time, but also in the school office and in lessons. At heart, we all care very much about our pupils' well-being and promoting a happy and tolerant atmosphere. We make sure our teenagers are invariably busy, listen to them, know how to have honest and frank conversations with them and above all, keep things in perspective. We would always involve parents in any concerns or conversations we have. We offer superb training to our staff and take pride in being at the cutting edge of modern but down to earth approaches.

***Can your pupils be elite sportsmen/women and do well at school? Do you support them?***

Yes, and yes! We love to see our pupils excel in whatever it is they are great at. We'll always support them. Some of our elite sportsmen/women are also our most talented academics. Perhaps there is something in the adage about giving a job to a busy person if you want to get it done?

***Is there a multi-faith approach?***

Absolutely. We are really proud of our diverse and tolerant community. We have a number of religious assemblies including Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh as well as non-religious assemblies. We encourage our pupils to celebrate and discuss their beliefs.

***Can my child take part in educational quizzes and competitions?***

Yes - there are Science and Maths Olympiads, foreign language spelling bees, mock law trials, essay competitions etc. - the list goes on. We very much encourage this.

***If my child has a bursary will they settle in OK with others? Will they seem different?***

Our bursary pupils thrive at Bury Grammar School. Around 1 in 10 pupils benefits from a bursary and they are often our most successful pupils. No two pupils are alike at BGS: they all come from different backgrounds and with different talents. This is genuinely one of the factors that makes the School so great. We very rarely find anyone does not fit in to our tolerant and openminded school.

