



OLD BRADFORDIANS

MARCH 2025

WELCOME TO OUR

SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER



HEADMASTER'S UPDATE

Dear Old Bradfordians and friends of BGS,
Welcome to this first OB newsletter of 2025.
As soon as I mentioned the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) in the last digital letter they arrived at BGS! Which makes me wonder if prescience might be invited a second time and what or who I should mention in this edition? All answers on the back of a postcard please...

The pronouncements we receive in latter day ISI reports are less descriptive (and idiosyncratic!) than they once were. That said, we 'met' all the required standards and gratefully received some positive comments reflecting our hard work. A snippet of the ISI commentary is provided below:

"Leadership, management and governance are highly effective, with governors contributing a broad range of expertise to support strategic decision making and ensure accountability. Senior leaders analyse data effectively to identify areas for improvement, set clear priorities and drive initiatives that enhance teaching quality, pupil outcomes and overall school performance"

"Activities such as peer mentoring, volunteering and promoting diversity help pupils develop social responsibility, engage in their community and understand real-world roles and institutions"



“Leaders successfully embed the school’s ethos across all activities, encouraging pupils to strive for excellence. Assemblies themed around excelling and historical examples of alumni achievements enforce this ethos”

“Teaching fosters linguistic development across all year groups ... teachers actively support mathematical development through structured lessons and effective questioning that challenges pupils ... the curriculum in aesthetic and creative subjects inspires and challenges pupils”

“Recreational activities complement academic learning, broadening pupils’ skills through sports, drama and creative pursuits. A wide range of extra-curricular options, such as chess, debating, crocheting and writing clubs, promotes teamwork, leadership and well-rounded development”

“Leaders actively promote pupils’ wellbeing through support structures such as wellbeing rooms and sensory spaces. Strong anti-bullying messages and forums for pupils to share their views enable leaders to identify concerns promptly and foster a positive school culture”

Inspections come reasonably thick and fast these days, but this latest one, conducted under a new framework, has given rise to some encouraging and validating judgements. Education is not a zero-sum game. All balls can be rolled up the hill at the same time. It is pleasing that others, ISI and The Good Schools Guide before them, have noted our efforts to make constant, incremental progress in all areas. The inclusivity, warmth and humanity of BGS has been recognised. So too has our pursuit of excellence and the highest standards, be that with regards to pupil behaviour or, for example, achievements in the exam hall, theatre or tennis court. Long will that continue.

Colleagues at BGS share a common purpose, we apply ourselves in good faith and seek to do the best we can. That is also true of our efforts to foster a cohesive and vibrant Old Bradfordian community and enable and support individual alumni to keep in touch with each other and our School. We are organising a greater number of social events than ever before.



This year, it has been my pleasure to meet up with OBs in Edinburgh, enjoy a curry with others in Leeds and more recently rub shoulders with the masses over drinks and nibbles near St Paul's in London. Long serving and respected colleagues, Julian Reed-Purvis (History) and Matt Wilde (Physical Education) attended the latter – reminiscences and conversation flowed late into the night (and into the early morning)!

As I write these words we are also looking forward to other, more traditional social occasions this Spring Term including the 1940/50/60/70s Reunion Lunch in the Douglas Hamilton Room and the annual OB Water Polo fixture the following day.

Thereafter, we will be building up to our Gala Dinner in the Price Hall on Saturday 21st June which coincides with a weekend of BGS sport reunions and activity. The dinner will also raise vital funds for means tested Assisted Places, thus enabling our School and OB community to remain accessible to aspirational families of all kinds and protect the guiding values and mission, and grounded character, of BGS for generations to come. If you haven't been back to BGS for a while, now is the moment to return.

Our Giving Day from 8am on Thursday 27th to 8pm on Friday 28th March also serves the same noble purpose and unites our OBs around the globe in a common goal. I encourage everyone to get behind the Gala Dinner and Giving Day and change young lives for the better through the transformational impact of a BGS education. Times are challenging and the need is great. There is much talk about 'levelling up' and The North. At BGS we are actually doing something about it. Join us.

Read on to learn more about the comings and goings of life at BGS and of fellow OBs; there is much you might wish to get involved in. Additionally, please take a look at our [Latest News – Bradford Grammar School](#) for more stories about the recent successes of pupils.

Moreover, if you haven't yet dipped into our BGS publications, please do so via:

- The annual Bradfordian magazine [The Bradfordian](#)
- The annual Old Bradfordian magazine [The Old Bradfordian](#)
- Hoc Age, our termly digest [Hoc Age](#)

Enjoy reading all that follows, the things that make BGS unique, and I look forward to the pleasure of your company at future OB events.

Yours ever, Hoc Age!

Simon



A MESSAGE FROM GORDON GREEN OBA PRESIDENT

OBA CHANGES APPROVED

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of Members held on 6th March, changes in the future of the structure of the Old Bradfordians Association were approved. The Committee had for some time been considering the future of the Association in its existing form bearing in mind the difficulty in recruiting new committee members and the changes in the demographics of the local Bradford area.

In recent times the Association has been dependent on the School in a number of ways – in particular the management of the large membership database and, more recently, the organisation of OBA social events.

This has enabled such events to be held both locally and at various locations throughout the country and further afield. Following a number of meetings with the Headmaster, the OBA Committee and the School agreed on a course of action which was ratified by the membership at the EGM.

In summary the new arrangements are :

- The OBA will in future be managed by the School Development Department. Consequently there will be no OBA Committee or President.
- The OBA funds of approximately £120,000 will be donated to the School. The majority of this will be allocated to the Assisted Places Fund with a substantial amount going to a new fund intended to support needy former pupils in their undergraduate studies at University.

The retiring OBA Committee recognises that these changes, which have the full support of the School, form a significant change in the way of running the OBA, but feel that they will strengthen the OBA and reinvigorate its activities under a new management team. At the same time, the proposed donation of our funds will assist the lives of both current and future Old Bradfordians for years to come.

BAFTA HONOUR FOR OB AIDY

An Old Bradfordian who has used his platform as an award-winning television presenter and writer to change perceptions around Tourette syndrome and neurodiversity has been accepted onto a prestigious national arts programme.



Aidy Smith (2009) has joined BAFTA's Connect Program which aims to support emerging talents who are trailblazers for inclusivity and representation across the TV and film industry.

Aidy was diagnosed with Tourette's when he was aged seven and has gone on to become the co-host and producer of the hit Amazon Prime television show, The Three Drinkers, which has been aired in 130 countries in 30 different languages; write various drinks columns for the national press, such as The Independent, and have drinks segments on various radio shows, including BBC Radio London.

He has spent years campaigning to educate and inspire others about Tourette's, which causes people to make involuntary sounds and movements, as well as about neurodiversity, having been also diagnosed with ADHD two years ago.

Aidy is heavily involved in charities such as The ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity, of which he is a Patron, and the world's largest Tourette's charity, the Tourette Association of America, for which he is Global Ambassador. He has created a number of inspiring radio and television documentaries about both Tourette Syndrome and ADHD which have appeared on broadcast media such as BBC Radio 4 and Virgin Radio.

Speaking about his latest achievement with BAFTA he said: "Ever since I was a little boy, I remember watching the BAFTA Awards in complete awe. To be able to walk into that building in Piccadilly knowing that I'm now a part of such a talented and creative community of people is a 'pinch me' moment to say the least."



The ambition with BAFTA is to promote television shows which normalise neurodivergence, where people who are neurodiverse become the heroes and champions of the television series. I'm looking forward to talking to a number of different commissioners and tv channels about these ideas."

"I want to continue to inspire, educate and raise awareness and help a whole new generation understand that they belong and that there's a place for them at the table."



DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT NEWS

Head of Development, Anya Friis

As we step into spring, we are incredibly excited about our upcoming events including the annual 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s reunion and swimming and water polo gala. As well as two large events; the BGS Giving Day and Hoc Age Weekender. It is wonderful that we have such an engaged alumni community.



On Thursday 27 March we kick off our second ever Giving Day, where we call on the Bradford Grammar School community to get involved in something truly Impactful. We are asking you to **Be the One** to help us raise £100,000 to change the life of one deserving child through our Assisted Places programme.

With the support of Old Bradfordian's, parents and friends of BGS we can continue to uphold the founding principles of our School and ensure our rich history of providing access to an outstanding education continues. Together, we can change lives and shape futures. [Click here](#) to see members of our BGS community speaking about the importance of this month's Giving Day. If you would like to get involved and donate early, please [click here](#).

Our Hoc Age Weekender begins on Friday 20th June which sees students compete against alumni in cricket, netball, hockey and rugby, finishing with a regatta on Saturday morning. The final event of the weekend is our Gala Dinner in the Price Hall on Saturday 21st, this is an evening to celebrate the successes of our Old Bradfordian community all whilst supporting the 1662 Campaign for Assisted Places.

To purchase your Gala Dinner ticket (£80): <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/EAIR>
Or to purchase a table of 10 (£800): <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DXWO>

The Development Office looks forward to sharing the success of our Giving Day and to welcoming you at one of our upcoming events.

GET READY FOR GIVING DAY 27 & 28 MARCH

ALUMNI EVENTS

OLD BRADFORDIANS' CLUB (LONDON) ANNUAL DINNER

The 2024 version on 22nd November witnessed 93 OBs, partners and guests, ranging across several generations, fill The Churchill Room to capacity. We enjoyed an excellent meal in an outstanding historical setting and speeches, firstly from the headmaster, Simon Hinchliffe, who outlined the school's academic and sporting achievements and explained how the school was well placed compared with many of its peers in Yorkshire to cope with the imposition of VAT on school fees, and secondly from our chief guest, OB actor Enzo Cilenti, who spoke about how the school provided him with the catalyst and motivation to succeed in the precarious profession of acting.

Mark Lawrence, President of The Old Bradfordians Club (London).



ALUMNI EVENTS

XV RUGBY BGS V COLFES



On the evening of Friday 13 December Colfe's School took on BGS 1XV in the annual Walton Downing Thompson Cup fixture. It was a fantastic evening that was very well attended (over 400 people) and hosted by Ilkley RUFC, showing the very best of Yorkshire hospitality.

The match was extremely competitive with the lead changing three times in the final 5 minutes; but sadly, for the BGS players, staff and supporters the fixture was lost 15-17. This is Colfe's second win out of five since the Cup's inception. Colfe's certainly enjoyed the trip up North, and BGS is already looking forward to trying to re-capture the trophy, in London, next April.

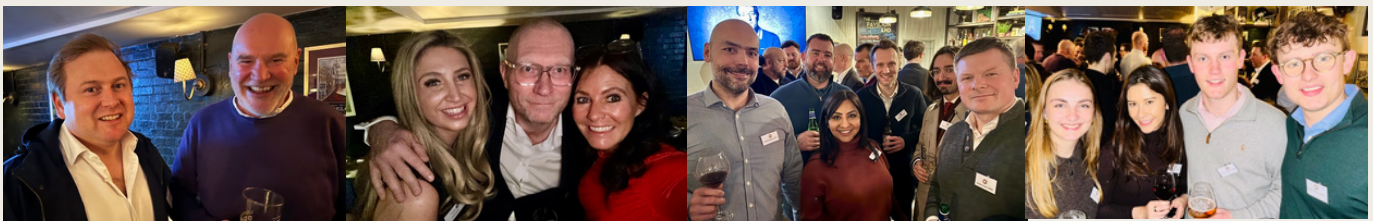
The club house was packed with OBs and friends of BGS. Special thanks go to the Old Bradfordians Club (London) for the generous, ongoing support of the fixture.



LONDON SOCIAL - 27 FEBRUARY 2025



On Thursday 27 February a hundred Old Bradfordians came together over drinks at The Pavilion End, St Pauls. This joint event, which was organised by the Development Office and the Old Bradfordians' Club (London), was also attended by the Headmaster, Dr Simon Hinchliffe and long-serving teachers, Matt Wilde and Julian Reed-Purvis who met their former students to share stories of days gone by.



AVAILABLE TO BOOK NOW



The Old Bradfordians' Club, London invite you to a Social Evening at The Saint Bar in London.

Meet up with OBs new and old in the heart of the city at 6pm for drinks, food and great company.

Anyone wishing to attend, please contact:
oldbradfordianslondonclub@gmail.com

COMING SOON - OUR BIGGEST EVENT

HOC AGE WEEKENDER - 20 & 21 JUNE 2025

For the very first time, in 2025 we will bring you a weekend full of fun, friends and sport at BGS.

This is the ultimate opportunity to come and meet up with friends old and new and to get involved in the numerous activities we are pulling together on this Hoc Age Weekender on 20 & 21 June.



The weekend will honour and celebrate our Old Bradfordians who have made an impact in the city and world we live in.

We'll have a cricket, hockey, netball and rugby festival, rowing competition, food stalls, a BBQ and refreshments. Please see the full list of events on the next page.

We really hope you, your friends and family can join us on this weekend and enjoy all that's on offer; it's the perfect opportunity to get together with OBs and enjoy the Yorkshire sunshine!

Email: [**oldbradfordians@bradfordgrammar.com**](mailto:oldbradfordians@bradfordgrammar.com) to tell us which events you are interested in.

*HOC AGE WEEKENDER & GALA DINNER
20 & 21 JUNE 2025*

OB EVENTS

HOC AGE WEEKENDER



20

JUNE

OB V BGS Cricket Festival,
Pavillion, BGS

20

JUNE

OB V BGS Hockey Festival
All weather pitch. BGS

20

JUNE

Touch Rugby
Pavillion, BGS

20

JUNE

Netball Festival
All Weather Pitch, BGS

21

JUNE

Rowing and riverside picnic lunch
The Boathouse, Saltaire

21

JUNE

Made in Bradford Gala Dinner,
Price Hall, BGS

25

JUNE

Bacchus Cup, Golf and Dinner,
Shipley Golf Club

SATURDAY 21 JUNE 2025
6.30PM-12AM, BGS



MADE IN BRADFORD

GALA DINNER

**OLD BRADFORDIANS EVENT RAISING FUNDS
FOR THE 1662 CAMPAIGN FOR ASSISTED PLACES**

ONLY 7 TABLES LEFT!

The end of the Hoc Age weekender will be marked with a Gala Dinner in the Price Hall. This is a fabulous opportunity to get together with your peers to honour Old Bradfordians who have had an impact on our school, city and country. The event is open to Old Bradfordians and Friends of BGS.

This black tie Gala Dinner is for the 1662 Campaign, which exists to provide Assisted Places to talented children from around West Yorkshire. With social deprivation on the rise, we aim to ensure children from all backgrounds have access to an exemplary BGS education so they, in turn, can reach their full potential. Our fundraising goal is to raise over £30,000. This will fund a place in our Sixth Form for one student.

Tickets are now on sale at £80pp which includes a drinks reception, 3 course dinner and entertainment through the night.

To book individual tickets, visit: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/EAIR>

To book a table for 10, visit: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DXWO>