



BURY  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PRIMARY

# FAQ'S FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS





## THE UNIQUENESS OF BURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### *What makes Bury Grammar Kindergarten unique?*

Our Kindergarten is not simply a nursery: we are part of a school, with pupils ranging from age 3 to 18.

We teach children to read and write and use numbers from the youngest age – and they benefit from the influence of seeing older children every day who are already in Infant School.

While our childcare will fill you with confidence, we are so much more than a nursery: we are preparing children for life at school.

### *Why choose BGS Primary Division above other local primary schools?*

We get asked this question a lot! While we can't comment on other schools, we do know what works well for BGS pupils.

In a nutshell, what is crucial is our independence.

Our independence means that:

- We are able to offer a wide range of subjects and enrich pupils' learning experiences from the youngest age
- Our pupils are not constrained by any glass ceiling at all: we can (and do!) encourage them to 'get ahead' and move on rapidly
- We do not have to follow the 'latest trend' in teaching; rather, we use methods which have been shown to work
- BGS has the means and freedom to be forward-looking and innovative, for example, provide every pupil with a Microsoft Surface device
- We attract the very best teachers
- Our facilities are extraordinary
- We offer more than 50 extra-curricular activities each week.

### *And what makes BGS Primary Division unique compared with other independent schools?*

We also get asked this question a lot – and once more, it is not easy to answer as we are focussing on our own school.

But what we can tell you about BGS is:

- We are warm and friendly while having the highest standards
- Our pupils move on to Senior School having a fantastic head start in every way
- Our parents say our communication with them is fabulous
- We are a traditional school (and proud of it) but also a modern and forward-looking school
- Our pupils enjoy all the facilities of a large school and extensive estate (45 acres) while being based in relatively small, safe buildings and a nurturing environment
- BGS pupils have the best of both worlds: primary trained expert teachers as well as senior school based teachers who are academic experts in their subjects
- BGS primary pupils go on to achieve outstanding GCSE and A Level results. (We know, because we are with them along the whole journey)
- A BGS primary education means a pupil can look forward to an unbroken educational journey all the way through to the age of 18 – enjoying the same positive ethos and high standards along the way.

## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

### *How will I know if my child is doing well?*

We should start by saying that it is the norm for our children to fly!

Every day, we capture special moments and will share these with you - via our *Learning Journey* platform, or *ReallySchools* platform for Kindergarten and Reception pupils. Our weekly newsletter keeps parents up to date with Primary Division news and whole school news! We believe it is important to keep you regularly informed with your child's progress as we prepare them for their next steps.

Communication is something on which we pride ourselves at BGS. We are likely to talk every day and also meet formally with parents during each of the three academic terms. You will always know how much progress your children are making and we hope you will encourage them to enjoy their achievements, as we will!

P.S. We are one of those schools which will NEVER sit back and say, 'your child has now met their targets...time to stop there.' This is because (a) learning is too exciting and complex to be reduced to linear targets (b) no human being has ever finished learning.



**What will the BGS Infant and Junior curriculum hold for my child?**

An ambitious, varied and challenging programme of learning designed to give your child a significant head start in life.

We think it's fabulous to learn to read and write and know your times tables at the youngest age. Mastery in English and Maths is a given at our School. We like to open up our children's experiences beyond the core curriculum to learning Science, History, Geography, French, Art, Drama, Design Technology, IT, Music, PE, Swimming, Philosophy and Sport from the youngest age... And more!

The key to a fabulous education is the curriculum.

**Do you have an extra-curricular programme?**

Yes, we believe a happy and fulfilled child is a busy child! We have more than 50 extra-curricular activities on offer every week, in which your child can participate, the vast majority of which are covered within the fees (so there is no need to pay for out of school swimming lessons, Art clubs, dance classes etc).

Children are encouraged to try everything! It is important for children to experience activities which they know they love doing, and also something which takes them out of their comfort zone.

At BGS, we encourage our children to get involved, as exploring interests, and developing skills at an early age provide the beginnings of a lifetime of interests and enjoyment!

**Do pupils have homework?**

Yes, in moderation, and as appropriate according to age. The aims of homework at BGS are:

- To learn good habits from a young age
- To continue the joy of learning beyond the school gates
- To explore individual interests and nurture talents
- To learn more and get ahead!

**Will my child go swimming and what sporting facilities will they use?**

ALL our children go swimming in our school pool - and this starts in Kindergarten.

Our sporting facilities really are quite extraordinary. Our infant pupils have an amazing experience with their very own sports hall and use of our extensive 45-acre campus, including a 4G pitch, a dance studio, and spacious playing fields!

**PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE**

**I've heard that transition from one year group into another is handled really well at BGS. Is this the case?**

Absolutely!

- Our kindergarten pupils see infant pupils across the playground every day and are literally a few steps away from the Infant building... This makes transition into Reception super straight forward.
- Our infants enjoy fun events to get them ready to move into Juniors and meet their next teachers well in advance of the new school year.
- Our Juniors are often taught by senior school based teachers so will know some of them already and they spend quite a lot of time in senior school prior to Year 7.

We think we handle transition exceptionally well – and this is something that is unique to an 'all through school'.

**Do you think about what it is like for a parent as their child progresses through school?**

Yes, very much so. We know that you are also on a journey with your child. This means we make sure that:

- Parents are actively involved in the transition process from year to year
- Parents meet new teachers and get to know them
- Welcome evenings provide an encouraging and informative start to each academic year
- We talk to you about the future regularly, this is what education is all about!

**What is the position on the Senior School entrance exam?**

Pupils who join us in Infants or Juniors can expect not to have to take our entrance examination \*

This is because we are confident that our primary education gives our pupils a fantastic head start and because an exam could not possibly tell us anything we did not already know about them.

However, some parents like their children to face the challenge of an exam and choose for their child to sit our entrance examination in any case. We understand this view and are perfectly happy with it.

Given that BGS Senior School is becoming more and more popular (300 external applicants for around 80 places last year) you can see why parents might be keen for their child to start early with us.

Send your child to BGS and the next educational decision comes at age 18 and which university.

\*There might be exceptional circumstances in which we would ask parents for their child to sit the entrance examination, but this would be discussed in advance.



## BGS TEACHERS

***We have heard you are fantastic at communicating with busy families. How do you do this?***

Pupils are warmly greeted at the door each school day by the staff based in that area of school: our Kindergarten Manager and Key Workers, Infant teachers, Junior teachers and the Senior team.

We know this ensures a great start to the day, embedding good routines, making sure our children feel welcomed and creating a sense of belonging.

School is open from 8am until 4pm, every day. For parents who need to get to work, we also have a great Wrap Around Care facility from 7.30am until 6pm each day.

***We assume your teachers are well qualified. Is this the case?***

Yes, absolutely. We are lucky to attract a high number of applicants to every post and are therefore able to employ well qualified, highly motivated and committed teachers and key workers.

They really are the life blood of the school and our parents are extremely positive about them!

***How would you describe BGS primary teachers?***

Our teachers are kind, enthusiastic and experts at getting the best out of young people.

Your child will enjoy the best possible balance of (a) teachers who are absolute primary experts, teach the majority of subjects and provide pastoral care and (b) Senior School trained teachers who are subject experts and are able to help your child get ahead.

***You say you know all your pupils well. Is this correct?***

Yes. Every pupil is well known, including by our Primary Principal. Class sizes are relatively small (but not so small there is no room for a range of friendship groups) and staff-children ratios in Kindergarten are carefully adhered to.

You only need to spend a few minutes at BGS to see how well we know our pupils and how well they know us!

***Is good parent-school communication important to you?***

Quality communication is extremely important to us and our families. Our teaching staff are approachable, friendly professionals with the best interests of the pupils at the heart of everything they do.

While you may well see your child's teacher every day, if you don't see them in person, you can send them an email, phone us or make an appointment to come in.

A number of people families have commented to us that our communications are really impressive.

## KINDERGARTEN PRACTICALITIES

***Do you offer part time places in Kindergarten?***

Yes, of course, because we listen carefully to our families. We appreciate that our parents lead very busy lives, and we are here to help. We offer a range of flexible options for our Kindergarten children to suit every lifestyle. Parents can choose full or part time places to suit their needs, and we offer 30 funded hours (free to parents) for 3-to 4-year-olds under the Government Scheme.

***Do you accept childcare vouchers?***

Yes! We accept childcare vouchers for tuition fees including Breakfast & After School Club and Holiday Club. Any payment of fees by vouchers is subject to the provision of the parent contract, in that fees are paid by direct debit. Parents wishing to use childcare vouchers are asked to make arrangements with the Bursar's Office in advance by calling: 0161 696 8600 or emailing [bursarsinfo@burygrammar.com](mailto:bursarsinfo@burygrammar.com). We will provide you with all the information you need!

***How do I claim 30 hours funding?***

It is simple and we are happy to help guide you through this! Parents who qualify for 30 funded hours can choose full or part time places under our All-Inclusive Package or our Flexi Term Time Package. Our All-Inclusive Package provides a place for your child for 51 weeks of the year. Under our Flexi Term Time Package, your child attends Kindergarten during each of our three academic terms with the option of joining our Holiday Club for any number of days or weeks during the school holidays.

For those who do not qualify for 30 funded hours, we continue to offer 15 funded hours and both full time and part time options are available under this scheme.

To see further information on the Government website, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-and-education-for-2-to-4-year-olds>

## IS INDEPENDENT EDUCATION WORTH IT?

***New parents to our school often like to know is independent education worth the investment?***

YES! We believe this is the best possible investment you can make in your child. Why? Because their education will be with them throughout their life and can never be repeated.

Our parents have overwhelmingly said this to us in a number of confidential surveys.



## WHAT OUR PARENTS SAY

*This is all very interesting – but we expect you to say these kinds of things about yourself!  
What do BGS parents say?*

‘We could not be happier with our choice of school.’

‘I am so pleased with the progress my son has made since moving to BGS and thank you for the positivity in your communications – it is refreshing!’

‘I am so glad we chose Bury Grammar Kindergarten; I know that my son enjoys every minute of his day!’

‘We have to wait in the car if we are early, our children don’t want to come home!’

‘All four of my children have benefitted from the wealth of experience the warm and friendly staff, the unrivalled, fantastic opportunities that are on offer at Bury Grammar and the outstanding preparation for starting school – we could not be happier parents!’

A recent confidential survey showed that our parents overwhelmingly feel that:

- Bury Grammar School has been the right choice for their child
- Their child is happy
- Their child is making great progress
- The investment in a BGS education has been a wise one
- They would recommend our school to you!



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## WHAT NEXT?

*I am keen for my child to join BGS – ASAP! What do I do next?*

Please get in touch! There are three ways to contact us:

Online: [www.burygrammar.com/admissions](http://www.burygrammar.com/admissions)

Apply now: <https://www.burygrammar.com/admissions/application-form>

Enquire now: <https://www.burygrammar.com/admissions/enquiry-form>

Email: [admissions@burygrammar.com](mailto:admissions@burygrammar.com)

Telephone: **0161 696 8600 (1)** We have an answer machine service so you can call us anytime and leave a message.

Please do come and see us for yourself. We’d be delighted to meet with you and to show you around our school.