

**Background**

Bowdon Preparatory School is a friendly, popular and very successful day prep school for girls, situated in the Greater Manchester suburb of Altrincham. With 320 pupils aged 3 to 11, the school is full and has already closed its waiting lists for Reception class entry for the next three years.

Bowdon Prep is a special place where staff are dedicated to providing a stimulating, exciting environment where everyone feels valued and safe; creativity and ideas can flourish and children can reach their full potential

**History of the school**

The school was originally established in 1983 by Mrs Jane Tan, who ran it as a proprietor Head for almost thirty years. Bowdon Prep moved into the new site in Ashley Road, Altrincham, in September 2011. The move gave it considerably more space, better facilities and a sports field, and since then has consolidated its position as the leading local girls’ prep school. Pupil numbers have increased by 50% and looking ahead, there is extremely strong demand for places.

**Overview of the School**

Bowdon Prep aims to provide a traditional education that gives girls a genuine love of learning, the confidence to think and speak for themselves, and a range of solid values. There is a very strong family atmosphere and staff relate well to their pupils, giving plenty of individual attention.

A hallmark of the school is the visible passion that staff display. Everyone really cares, and this is a school where staff, children and parents pull together. Although the school is now larger and more complex than before, it has kept its very personal feeling and it does function very much as a real community where everyone matters and everyone looks after one another.

The style of the school is friendly but polite, with manners and respect for one another being regarded as important. There is a quiet purpose to the school, but it is not a hot-house and the underlying tone is one of relaxed confidence. Teachers achieve excellent academic results through extremely good teaching, and by encouraging and stimulating the girls to learn as happily and effectively as possible.

Our overall goal is to develop rounded and confident girls who are really well prepared for the challenges of the 21st-century world and for the next stages of their education that will help them succeed in adult life.

The local education market is dominated by a selective system with a small number of secondary schools that are in great demand. These include grammar schools as well as some of the UK’s leading independent schools, with intense competition for places and much parental concern about the various entrance examinations. Even though Bowdon Prep is mixed ability on entry, it has always enjoyed a very strong track record of success. Many of the girls go on to schools such as Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, Manchester High School for Girls, Withington Girls’ School and Alderley Edge School for Girls.

**Size and structure**

Bowdon Prep has two forms per year from Reception upwards, and also two Kindergarten classes. There are typically 20 girls in each form. In Year 4 to 6 girls are taught in focus learning groups in classes no larger than 16.

The school is open daily from 7.30am to 6pm, the school day is 8.40am to 3.45pm.

There is a teaching staff of approximately 30, including some part-timers, plus teaching assistants and various peripatetic music teachers, etc.

The support team includes the Head’s PA, the school secretary, a part-time finance team of two, the catering team and the site manager and two caretakers.

**Premises and Facilities**

The move to the new location gave Bowdon Prep the unusual advantage of having senior school facilities within a prep school. As a result it benefits from an extremely spacious sports hall, dance and drama studio, well-equipped science laboratories, a modern ICT suite, a very large art studio, a large dining room, a well-equipped duplex library, good-sized classrooms and so on.

Outdoor facilities include an attractive playground and a sports field with netball and tennis courts.

The overall campus extends to several acres even though we are located in an essentially residential area. The feeling of spaciousness adds to our broader educational offering.

**Governors and governance**

Bowdon Preparatory School is a registered charity, Overall responsibility lies with the Governing Body, who are also the trustees of the charity as well as unpaid non-executive directors, however, the Headmistress leads the day to day running of the school.

The Governors have excellent relationships with the Headmistress and the staff, with mutual respect, a shared set of values, and strong commitment to the success and happiness of Bowdon Prep.

**Safeguarding**

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Offers of employment are subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS and other employment checks.