**Free School Ethos, Vision/ Philosophy and Educational Aims**

**Ethos**

Batley Grammar School **“*is a good school*”** (Ofsted Jan 2015) and we continue our school improvement journey to become an outstanding school. We aim to combine our traditional ethos and culture together with a modern approach to teaching and learning.

Visitors regularly comment about the friendly atmosphere and calm, purposeful learning environment being quite palpable.

***“Pupils have positive attitudes to learning…. They arrive to lessons promptly and are ready to learn. Pupils’ positive attitude to learning and wanting to do well is evident in many classes. They respond well to teachers’ questions*.”** (Ofsted Jan 2015)

At Batley Grammar School we value teachers who take a pride in their work and in the school and who are willing to contribute fully to the life of the school including its extra-curricular programme***.***

The existing 400 year old school has a traditional culture and ethos and although called a 'Grammar' school this is in name only. Despite this academic background the ability profile in recent years has been much broader than might be expected from a previous selective independent school. Strong academic tradition is complemented by a highly supportive and effective pastoral ethos. Such an ethos with its inherent discipline and strong moral code appeals widely across all communities.

The Free School, which evolved from the predecessor school returning to the state funded sector in 2011, hopes to continue to play a major role in developing the academic future in North Kirklees. It is committed to its ethos in its teaching and its human relationships. It gives high priority to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils and it will continue to stress the worth of every human being. In essence it aspires to continue to be a first rate educational environment in which ‘*Every Child* ***Really*** *Matters’.*

An all-through (4-16) Free School model allows for consistency in pastoral care across the whole of a pupil’s educational life. It encourages two-way interaction between older students and younger pupils, with older ones acting as positive role models. Furthermore it maximizes the opportunity for the development of social responsibility, for example, older students being expected to look out for the younger pupils and to be conscious of their needs.

Such a model serves to develop a sense of community throughout the school, particularly with a vertical house system, celebrating events, taking part in productions, concerts and contributing towards collective fund raising and enterprise activities. It allows for appreciation of the work of other classes, irrespective of age, through events such as school assemblies and facilitates cross key stage and cross phase continuity of learning with a consistent pedagogy alongside the integration of complementary teaching and learning methods. The school philosophy, educational aims and objectives are common to all phases.

The all-through school provides continuity for positive parental involvement and the strong ethos of belonging will not be disrupted. These elements which existed in the predecessor independent school contribute towards the strong whole school ethos and we have not only continued, but place great emphasis upon such an approach. A child will be able to remain with the same group of children for the majority of their school life prior to seeking 16-19 provision. This allows for close observation of strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of each child’s development, enabling intervention where necessary. It also allows for observation of the progress of a child’s learning development over a long period of time, ensuring that for example, late learners are not incorrectly classified as slow learners. Resources are able to be shared across the age range allowing upper key stage two pupils to receive teaching and support from subject specialists and to share some of the secondary phase facilities.

**School Vision/Philosophy**

At Batley Grammar School we will aspire to be a ‘school of choice’ by being a caring and supportive school where we identify, encourage and develop the talents and qualities of each pupil from Reception to 16. We will be committed to enabling pupils to thrive and pursue excellence in all areas and, in so doing, helping them to prepare for adult life as confident, independent and respectful members of a caring society.

**Educational Aims**

A. To encourage the highest achievement levels of which pupils are capable and, in so doing, to promote a love of learning.

B. To promote and develop the physical, spiritual, moral and social well being of all pupils.

C. To create a caring environment with well-mannered, respectful, hard working and happy pupils showing consideration for others.

D. To develop self-respect, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-discipline.

E. To promote teamwork between pupils, parents and staff.

F. To develop responsible and enthusiastic individuals with a growing ability to work as independent learners.

G. To equip pupils to understand the world beyond school and to make an effective contribution to it.

**As a Free School in the process of seeking MAT conversion the Trustees would further aim for the school**

H. To be a flagship school and a ‘centre of excellence’ to encourage the sharing of expertise and the raising of aspiration throughout the area.

Promoting the ethos and culture will be essential to achieving success, attaining each pupil’s personal best and addressing underperformance. The Trustees are committed to offer a distinctive educational experience to all pupils within a broad, inclusive curriculum and a culture of high expectation.

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