



## Former Pupils Association / 1717 Club / Baines Alumni

### Update March 2020

Dear Member of the Baines FPA, Alumni and 1717 Club,

We thought we would write to give you all an update about the events and things that have been happening at school over the last few months. Here is an update from Alison Chapman as Headteacher of Baines School and from David Astall, the FPA President 2020.

In September 2019, our school moved to being an 11-16 school, after the closure of the Sixth Form. What an eventful year 2019/20 is turning out to be. On 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019, the school had a fire in the sports hall. This was one of the worst experiences anyone can have as a Headteacher, the worry about keeping everyone safe. The fire was in a fan above the gym in the sports hall building and I am pleased to inform you that our fire drill system was very effective and everyone was safe. So much so, that we managed to keep everyone in school for the remainder of the day. I was relieved that we did not have to do a full school evacuation on the field across the road, as it was a very wet day. At one stage we had 8 fire engines at school. This has caused difficulties for the education of pupils because we were unable to fully re-open that building (sports hall, gym, dance studio and two computer rooms) until just recently. We had disruption for about seventeen school weeks. However, the students, staff and community were fantastic.

Ofsted visited the school at the end of November 2019 and has recognised the improvement journey that the school is on. We weren't quite able to move the judgement to a secure 'good' overall yet, due to the new developments needing time to have an impact on all students. However, it was clear that we have improved since the last inspection before I started.

"Pupils said that they feel safe and that they enjoy school. Older pupils told inspectors that the school is 'massively better' than it was at the last inspection. They now consider classrooms to be places where they can learn.

The headteacher and, more recently, other senior leaders, have made some brave decisions to improve this school. Standards at Baines School have turned a corner.

Pupils achieve well in several subjects, including geography, science and art. This is also true for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In these subjects, leaders ensure that this group of pupils' needs are well met."

As you will be aware, schools are closed at the moment (apart from providing support for a few vulnerable children and children of keyworkers). Baines is responding to the needs of our nation, we are setting work electronically for our students and interacting with them using Class Charts and Google Classroom. This way, they can still learn while they are at home. I have made the following video to keep in touch with them, this has been uploaded to our Baines You Tube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNCN-h-k69M>

Last year the school generously offered a room to house the school archive and to use for a base for the FPA and Alumni. The James Baines Room is very apt as it is the old headmaster's study in the original school. It has the advantage of being outside the fencing and therefore can be accessed through the lower school car park. Eventually the room will be equipped with computer facilities for searching the school archive and Baines Voices. Baines Voices is an oral archive being created by members of the school community both past and present. It is hoped to store memories of the school to enhance the physical and electronic archive. Much of the archive is being scanned in order to preserve the originals. At this time of emergency in the country many people are undergoing 'Spring Cleaning' and therefore if materials are found that you think may enhance the archive then please drop them in after the lockdown. If you wish to record, either at home or in school memories for the Baines Voices then please do so and send to us.

We are planning to produce an Alumni website which will include some of the archive and Baines Voices.

On Tuesday mornings, members of our community are welcome to visit and have a cup of tea / coffee to chat but also to work on the Baines archives. I must thank the committee members of the FPA, they meet regularly to help organise the social events but also to ensure that the Baines legacy continues. They have also helped me to learn lots about how Baines was in the past and I love hearing about how many generations of families have all been pupils at Baines School.

### **Gifts to the School**

The FPA have again been very generous to supporting the school through donations. We were grateful for the kind donation from FPA members who paid for the organ to be surveyed so that we knew how much it would cost to be restored to working use. Unfortunately, the cost was prohibitive at well above £100,000.

We also had a donation from the FPA towards a laser cutter and equipment for our design technology department. We are really pleased that this means the students can make more exciting products in their lessons.

### **FPA – Annual General Meeting and Meal – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2020**



Although, this was the time where our country started to really become concerned with the Coronavirus, we still enjoyed a lovely meeting and evening where Former Pupils, staff and governors reunited for a meal, speeches and the famous raffle!

The school has a new catering manager this year and the team really excelled in the food they

cooked and our senior students served the meal.





I really enjoy the tradition of meeting once per year, and hearing the memories about Baines. This year, David Astall is the new President of the FPA, a former member of staff and also someone who really developed the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at our school. On behalf of everyone in the FPA, I would like to wish him a wonderful year.

### **FPA section on the school website**

A few members have said they cannot find the FPA section on the school website. Here is the direct link: <http://baines.lancs.sch.uk/former-pupils/> or alternatively go to the school website, click on community and then click on former pupils association. You will then be able to access information about the FPA, I recognise it needs a little updating. We are hoping to create a new 'button' called 'Alumni' in the near future and the FPA will be in that section of the website.

### **Keeping in Touch**

We have a specific email address for the Former Pupils Association and are hoping to increase communications via email. If you wish to contact us, please email us at [FPA@baines.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:FPA@baines.lancs.sch.uk) . Please pass on to anyone who may wish to join the FPA, membership of the FPA is by annual subscription (£10 per member, per year) and this covers the cost of communication and subsidises the Annual Dinner. The funding also donates a little to the school every year so that the current pupils, school and community may benefit. This is really appreciated by the school.

For those members of the school community who are not members of the Former Pupils Association and therefore members of the Alumni you can contact the Alumni secretary at [bainesalumni@btinternet.com](mailto:bainesalumni@btinternet.com)

### **The President of the FPA**

This year's FPA president is David Astall, who was appointed Head of Computer Science in June 1989 but took up the post in January 1990, due to contract issues with Essex County Council. He was also a member of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award team for much of his school career. He retired from teaching in 2015 to take up a post at Cambridge International.

The President Elect is Muriel Ryding, former headteacher of the school. She takes up her position in March 2021.

**David Astall**  
**FPA President 2020/21**

**Alison Chapman**  
**Headteacher**