



**Janet Lawley**, *Headmistress of Bury Grammar School (Girls) from 1986 until 1998 is a Patron of the Appeal.*

“In the 10 years since I retired as Headmistress I have continued to work with schools as a consultant. My work has taken me into many good schools and those with serious difficulties, to long-established independent schools and some of the newest Academies, junior and senior schools all over the British Isles and overseas. I have been privileged to see many faces of education and I know that there is something very special about the Bury Grammar Schools. Their combination of tradition and the best of what is new, the quality of those who have served and learned in them and the good northern common sense of their management make the schools a community, not just linked schools.

That special ethos and ability to help young people to be the best they can be, was a key talking point during the Old Girls’ Association dinner for this year’s Founders’ Day. It was moving and exciting to hear of the part BGS had played in the lives of its former students, socially as well as academically, preparing them for work and service as members of their communities and families. BGS had given them roots and wings. They knew who they were with the wisdom and understanding of the schools’ motto as a launching pad and they had been brave enough to fly with the strong wings of the swan. BGS doesn’t tell its pupils the answers. It prepares them to make decisions for themselves. It puts “The Key” into their hands.

The troubled and challenged world we live in will need the next generation to have strong roots and powerful wings and so I have been honoured and delighted to be able to work as a Patron of the Appeal. BGS has invested in the youngest members of its community and the exciting new Kindergarten is almost ready to be unveiled. It will give the best possible start to its pupils’ journey through schooling. Now thoughts are turning towards the Sixth Form Centre which will give the oldest students an experience second to none. It has long been the proud boast of the schools that we can provide single sex education in a coeducational environment. We can build upon the different ways in which boys and girls learn, not in isolation but in a shared life. Central to that provision for the senior students will be a Sixth Form Centre where they can share and cooperate, learn and relax.

We could not achieve all this without the generosity of former students and friends of the schools. With bursaries to support those who could not otherwise benefit from what the schools have to offer and the finest of facilities for all ages, BGS is producing young people who will rise to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Many of those who read the Key will perceive the wisdom of contributing to the next generation’s preparation for the future. Not everyone has spare cash in these economically tough times. There is another way to help by remembering the Schools in your will. Legacies can be an investment in the future and an expression of gratitude for the advantages we had when we were young.

I owe BGS a great deal. It brought me friendship, a new understanding of what learning really is and the excitement of watching young people discover who they are and what they might become. It is a pleasure to be able to continue to be part of this special community.”