

# CASE STUDY:

## The Glasgow Academy

### Independent school, Glasgow

The Glasgow Academy is a co-educational independent day school for children aged between 3 and 18 years old and is the oldest continuously independent school in the West of Scotland. The story of the Academy begins with William Campbell who convened a meeting in 1845 to discuss the possibility of establishing “an academic institution in the city” of Glasgow. Former Lord Provost Henry Dunlop Esq was appointed as the first President of the organisation, then known as “The Glasgow Academy Company” and the first three registered pupils at the school were his sons.

During a process which began in 1991, The Glasgow Academy merged with Westbourne School for Girls and became fully co-educational 145 years after it was first discussed whether it would be “found advisable to admit girls”. Additional sites at Newlands and Milngavie were acquired which were originally the former Dairsie House School and Atholl Preparatory School; merging with The Academy in 2005 and 1999 respectively.

In 2018, an initial scoping project was carried out by the Business Archives Surveying Officer, and advice about how to safeguard the material held by the school was given, along with an initial list of material held. The survey identified material from 1845 to the present day and relating to all aspects of the school’s history. The records were found to consist of governance and administrative records along with admission registers, records of clubs and societies, as well as prospectuses, roll books, and the school magazine. The survey also recorded 5 linear metres of unlisted photographs, as well as the collections of several other schools that have since merged with The Academy such as Dairsie House School, and Atholl Preparatory School.

As a result of the survey and accompanying recommendations report, the Academy took forward the recommendation to employ a professional Archivist in October 2019, which led to the official launch of the school’s Archive service in early 2020.

*As a direct result of the Surveying Officer’s visit and their recommendations report, The Glasgow Academy decided to invest in the history of the school by creating designated storage spaces which comply with current legislation for storing and accessing archives, and by setting up an archive service with a professional archivist in post to oversee the mixed collections. Without the help and advice of the Surveying Officer, none of this would have been possible.*

**Lorraine Murray**  
**Archivist, The Glasgow Academy**

As the governing institution is a business which continues to operate, the Archive collection is expected to grow through the transfer of internal records from within the Academy and by acquisition of material from interested stakeholders such as Alumni, associated groups and societies, and from members of the public.

The Academy has always cared for their historic assets and uses its reputation and proud traditional values to promote the school. Having an established Archive service will help to reinforce the sense of history and tradition that already exists within the wider school family and can be used to highlight the heritage and create PR opportunities and as a means of outreach and engagement not just within the school, but as part of the wider community.

