



**BRIGHTON**

**GRAMMAR**

## **Sam Linder** **2024 Keynote Speech**

On the pocket of our blazer, close to our hearts is our BGS crest.

A coat of arms or a crest draws from medieval times where its purpose was to establish a person's identity in battle. To represent a family or an alliance.

Good morning Mr. Featherston, Mr Angus, Dr. Swann, Both of my parents Sophie and Karl, my PA, my siblings Max, Harry and Daisy, staff, and boys.

Our Crest is based on the badge designed by Dr George Henry Crowther, who founded BGS on the 14th of February 1882.

In over 141 years, our core values at BGS have changed very little. The School still prides itself on instilling a sense of belonging, providing an all-round education, and inspiring a lifelong love of learning.

Crowther's motto, *Meliora Sequamur* (let us pursue better things), is at the heart of everything BGS stands for and drives everything we do.

So, what do you see as you look at the Crest?

A shield with a cross offering protection and strength? Two shells suggesting faith?

A finger pointing to a star giving us direction and purpose?

A wreath of oak leaves representing the mighty oak?

This Crest represents our school, but Brighton Grammar School is more than a crest.

It is the pride we feel when hearing the ATAR's every year. It is the unforgettable, jaw dropping moments on the Crowther. It is the soaring singing of the choir at Christmas or the unity and timing of the bands.

It's the laughter with mates, the hurdles, the peaks, the risks, the falls. It's not the power of "I", it's the power of "we". We are more than a crest.

Looking around this room, I see many faces and we are not the same. We have different interests, and separate goals. However, we all share something in common. All of us. We are part of a community, and we want to pursue better things together.

We are an all-boys school in Brighton.

We all fit on one campus. Share the one oval and are not defined by size.

That's what the people outside the quad see. People outside of these walls. But what do we see? What do we feel? What do we hear?

I'll tell you what I've seen. On camps, I've seen the guts and determination to persevere through extreme exhaustion, hunger and being out of your comfort zone.

I've seen when we want to stop, eat, want to drink, drop the pack... when we want to quit. Yet we all finish. I've seen new friendships form on camps no matter who you are on the inside because it's the Brighton Grammar culture and values that encourages us to be open minded and inclusive.



This demonstrates we are more than the crest, extending far beyond the classroom walls.

I'll tell you what I have felt. In 2019, I walked through the big gates with my oversized uniform, my heavy books, and a big smile, excited but nervous. Then the entire year 12 cohort joined us. They circled around us year 7s and started chanting. All we could do was listen.

I felt this electric spark. The goosebumps. I could feel the connection. The passion. The energy. Motivation. I felt part of something bigger and more powerful. They made us feel welcome. They showed us that we are more than a crest.

I'll tell you what I've heard. Last year, near the commencement of 2023, we all gathered beneath the oak, under the influence of our new Chantologists. I remember hearing that thumping drum echo within the walls of the quad, the clapping all in sync, and the bell ringing so symbolically thanks to Sammy Trainor's excellent technique.

As we all crouched to the surface, faintly chanting under the control of Harry Lewis to then erupting into a huge roar that empowered all of us. It made me feel like I belonged.

Yet we didn't just chant for this. We didn't. We did it for us. We are more than this crest.

Now I'm sure many of you would have had experiences that inspire you. I would like you to think of them.

-Why do you show up every day?

-Why do you wear the blazer?

-Why do you chant?

It's not easy to answer these questions. I know that I can't. That's because it's a feeling. A feeling that's hard to describe, explain, or talk about.

But I can give you a tip to bring you a step closer to getting this feeling. It all starts by loving the School. We show this in many ways.

By respecting chantology, by applauding loudly as the curtain falls at the production, by feeling the pride when someone performs at assembly, by singing the School chorus correctly.

By acknowledging the teacher's dedication, by supporting the debaters, by cheering for the rowers, by appreciating the talented singers and musicians, by stopping to look at the creativity of the artists, by embracing Chapel and by singing our School hymn like we mean it.

By Abiding by the School values. Respect. Integrity. Accountability and Passion.

I just want you to imagine what would happen if we all did this. All of us here. I can imagine it. Our sound will echo.

So, I ask that we look at what lies behind our crest. Because it is what lies behind it, that gives it meaning. We know it. We feel it.

Therefore, I have the large honour in presenting to all of you today the 2024 Brighton Grammar Legacy project.

"More Than A Crest".

Thank you.