

**1 September 2015**

Dear Parent / Carer

*September 2015 - a confident fresh start*

This week is not only the start of a new academic year, but a new beginning for Ipswich Academy. As Principal my job is to lead a school which is focused on the future, not to look back at what may have happened in the past. We will be looking at the successes we want to achieve by July 2016 and beyond.

In our first term, our priority is going to be developing confidence. This means:

- Being confident that all students have the necessary literacy skills for effective learning in all subjects.
- Being confident that all students are clear about what is expected of them to make progress in their learning in every lesson.
- Being confident that all teachers and learning support staff are delivering good or outstanding lessons and learning experiences.
- Being confident that parents understand what we are doing and are working with us to support the learning and progress of their children.

So, what is actually going to change to improve results? We will focus on three areas: the quality of teaching, behaviour for learning and the quality of leadership and management.

*Quality of teaching*

The first thing we will do is to ensure that students have sufficient literacy skills to access the curriculum at the right level. Nothing else works if they cannot. This will mean ensuring that teachers are assisting students to develop these skills and, if necessary, putting the basics in place. We will then focus on core subjects such as mathematics, science and IT. At the same time, we will be supporting those high-achieving pupils to ensure they reach their goals.

We have designed a programme of staff development activities for the week of the 1<sup>st</sup> of September which will give us the foundation for the future. We will then conduct a review of teaching and learning during the first week of school (starting on 7<sup>th</sup> September). Over the weekend of the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> September we will analyse the results so that by 14<sup>th</sup> September we will be in a strong position to decide what needs to improve and how quickly.

We will then have a forensic focus on teaching and learning based on the use of accurate data about student achievement and levels of progress. All staff will be held accountable for outcomes whatever their role. Our priority is to ensure that all lessons at Ipswich Academy are good, and become outstanding, and that all students have opportunities to achieve their potential.

*Behaviour for learning*

In terms of behaviour, our initial focus will be on ensuring that the behaviour of students does not disrupt the teaching and learning of any other students at the academy. Our rules will be simple and clear, and the consequences for not obeying them will be spelled out and fully enforced.

### *Leadership and management*

The leadership team has a tried-and-tested approach to school improvement which has led to two of our three current schools being judged “outstanding” by OFSTED. We are confident about our ability to make this school a success and provide each student with the outstanding education that they deserve.

We know that successful schools are founded on a relentless focus on excellence, outcomes and achievement. This means that everyone understands what is expected of them; students, parents / carers and all staff working in the school. As Principal I have a commitment to all students and you, their parents / carers, to lead and manage Ipswich Academy to be an outstanding school as soon as possible.

We expect that you have questions for us, so we are including with this letter a question and answer sheet which we hope covers some of the immediate issues. We will also be holding parents / carers meetings to provide you with the opportunity to meet me and ask any further questions. These will be held on 10<sup>th</sup> September at Ipswich Academy, Braziers Wood Road, Ipswich at the following times: Key Stage 3 at 3pm, Key Stage 4 at 4pm and Key Stage 5 at 5pm.

I am also happy to speak to you individually, please contact Gina Garwood on 01473 256500 if you would like to arrange this.

Yours faithfully,

Amanda Phillips  
Executive Principal  
Paradigm Trust