

Academy Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 17 May 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present: Abbie Thorrington – Headteacher
Louise Leah – Academy Council Member
Sarah Woolven – Academy Council Member
Julie Trout – Academy Council Member
3 other parents in attendance (virtual and face to face)

Notes taken by: Julie Trout

1. **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

On Thursday 26 May, years 7 – 10 will be off timetable for 3 periods to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This will be a non-uniform day, students to wear red, white and blue with a £1 donation going into house funds. Year 11s will be focusing on their exams but will engage in activities over lunchtime if they wish.

2. **Uniform Update**

Following the Government's guidance to reduce the cost of school uniforms, the Academy's proposed change from blazers to black logo v neck sweatshirts was agreed by the Council and students. Shirt and tie will still be worn under sweatshirts which are considerably cheaper (£11 - £15) than blazers. Year 6s joining in September can still purchase blazers but they will be phased out by September 2023.

Abbie will write to parents advising of the change. Sweatshirts can be purchased from PMG and the school will look into plain black sweatshirts being available too with iron on / sew on logos.

Parents asked whether the school would consider girls wearing skirts rather than trousers and girls/boys wearing shorts in the summer. Abbie will raise this with the Trust and report back.

3. **Sky Tour Visit**

Part of the school's Hinterland project; to increase opportunities for students outside of their usual curriculum, was for year 8s to attend a climate change conference. Abbie applied to Sky who are launching a new educational programme on climate change and applied to take part. Not only was the school successful but it was chosen to host the national launch of the project and become the pilot school.

This is an amazing opportunity for the school and the soft launch will take place Monday 6 June, with the official launch on Thursday 16 June. Although targeted for



year 8s, a dry run will take place including 100 – 120 students from years 7 and 9, including the school's Eco Council.

4. **School Attendance Procedures**

A parent had asked about quite strongly worded letters sent home to parents regarding absence which could be classed as “unauthorised attendance”. Abbie advised the wording of the letters, dictated by the Department of Education cannot be altered but offered reassurance to any parent or carer receiving a letter to contact the school for a full explanation.

Abbie thought it would be useful to explain the school's attendance procedures governed by the Department for Education.

96% attendance is the Government target and any student dropping below this will be contacted by the school and then monitored over the next 2 weeks. A virtual or phone call will then be arranged and support strategies discussed. If attendance is not on track after a further 2 weeks a formal attendance meeting will take place. A continued decline in attendance from this point would result in the Educational Welfare Officer being involved.

Parents asked whether absence could be included in end of year reports and possibly AP1 and AP2 reports. Abbie will look into this.

5. **Homework**

From September there will be a cultural change in homework and a new teacher has been tasked with reviewing current homework setting for the school and will look to add more structure for next year.

Google Classroom is now being used as there have been technical difficulties with Doodle.

6. **Parents Facebook Group**

A reminder that the Academy Council has a facebook group for parents and carers to join, this is separate to the school's page, and it is hoped to build a community space for parents to communicate, ask questions and share information. The page is named **Parents / Carers of Ipswich Academy**. Academy council members can also be messaged by email **AcademyCouncilia@ParadigmTrust.org**.

7. **Any Other Business**

A parent asked about the Year 7 Mersea Island trip. Abbie confirmed more info will follow shortly.

A parent asked about Year 11 Prom at Trinity Park on 1 July, again Abbie confirmed more info to follow.

A parent advised that the Year 9 Options Evening was very well attended and informative.



8. Date of Next Meeting

The academy council plans to meet again this term to arrange the dates of meetings for academic year 22/23.