

Ipswich Academy
Academy Council Meeting
1 October 2025, 5:30pm

Present

Mr Adam Wilding – Principal

Louise Leah – Academy Council Member (minutes)

Julie Trout – Academy Council Member

Kevin Brazier – Academy Council Member

Claire Cooper – Academy Council Member (online)

Jo Brown – Parent Link Director (online)

2 other parents in person

Agenda

1. Introduction and Apologies for absence

Mr Wilding welcomed parents to the meeting. Connection issues meant that no other parents joined online.

2. Introduction to the New Year

Mr Wilding has held welcome meetings for each year group and explained his vision for the school.

3. Behaviour procedure changes – Mr Wilding explained the changes that he has made to the behaviour policy. There were 1724 external suspensions in the last academic year. Parents agreed that suspensions were used too often and are not always a 'punishment' for students. Mr Wilding wants to change the culture and has been giving teachers direction on how to achieve this. He is optimistic that these changes can improve the overall behaviour of students. This includes making more use of internal consequences, for example, if a student is given a C3, they are sent to the Hub for the rest of the lesson, but then are back in class for the following lessons (previously they were sent to the Hub for the rest of the day). He will be using a more restorative approach, which includes engaging more with parents after suspensions. The school is now fully staffed which should help with consistency of consequences.

A parent asked what work they will do if they get sent to the Hub (C3). Mr Wilding explained that they would be doing work for that subject (but not necessarily that lesson) and they can do Reading Plus.

Following an internal exclusion, students will be spoken with to see how they can improve their behaviour. A parent mentioned that their child had a detention but the

teacher didn't follow up with a restorative conversation, though they have seen other teachers doing this. Parents can let Mr Wilding know names of staff if this is not happening.

For serious behaviour consequences, Mr Wilding will use external suspensions when necessary.

4. Timings of school day

Mr Wilding explained that he is considering altering the timings of the school day:

- School would finish at 3:10pm every day (no more 4pm finish on a Wednesday). This would allow for more interventions after school to be offered.
- Base group would increase from 20 minutes to 30 minutes, to enable more time for reading.
- The school week would be 32.5 hours (in line with Government standards).
- This would be implemented in September 2026.

Those present gave them comments on the changes:

- Parents welcomed the 3:10pm finish each day, as they were concerned about children walking home after 4pm in the winter months.
- Parents felt that the current lunchtime is too late (1:20pm), though it was accepted that students start to lose concentration after lunch. Students can access the canteen at break-times as well as lunch.
- Parents asked if there could be a breakfast club. Mr Wilding would like to offer this in the future.

5. Uniform

Clip on ties – Mr Wilding would like to replace these with proper ties. They are cheaper to sell and don't get lost so easily. He would also like the ties for each year group to have an identifying mark (i.e. a stripe of a different colour). The markings would stay with that year group throughout their time at Ipswich Academy.

Jumper – Mr Wilding is looking at plain black jumpers (i.e. no purple stripe) with the logo on. These would cost £5 less than the current jumpers.

Those present were happy with the proposed changes so Mr Wilding will move forward with this.

6. Hinterland

Trips and external activities (Hinterland) are funded mostly by school, with a voluntary contribution from parents. Mr Wilding is looking for suggestions on how to raise further funds to ensure these remain affordable for the school/parents. Some suggestions at the meeting include:

- Car Wash
- Non Uniform days
- Sponsored Christmas Walk around 5g pitch

If any parents have any further ideas, please contact Mr Wilding.

Any other Business

Link Director Role – Jo explained her role as Link Director. Jo is a parent of a child at Ipswich Academy and her role is to act as a parent link between the Principal and the Board. Meetings are held once a month, and Jo has an active role across all Paradigm schools. She has visited other schools within the Paradigm governing body and assisted with 'deep dives'.

Compliment - A parent spoke with Dr Rogers about a sensitive matter, who was proactive in passing this on to the relevant staff member who got in touch with the parent and dealt with the issue. The parent was very pleased with the actions of both staff members.

Attendance Email – A parent said they had sent a lengthy email to the attendance email address explaining why her child would not be at school. The absence was marked as authorised but the issues in the email were not addressed or followed up. Mr Wilding apologised that this hadn't been the case and said this should have been forwarded to the year team who should have responded.

Orthodontist appointments – A parent asked how they can send evidence of Orthodontist appointment to school. Mr Wilding said that a photo of an appointment card or a screenshot of text/emails can be sent to the attendance email address.

Year 11 evening next week – This is happening on Tuesday 6 October at 5:30pm. There will be a presentation and then an opportunity to talk with outside providers (Sixth Forms/Colleges etc). Dr Rogers is creating a Year 11 revision section on the school website.

Year 11 Expected Grades - A parent asked when they will receive their child's expected GCSE grades. Year 10 assessment point results were sent home and these are more for the teachers to know where the gaps are. Mock exams will be held for 2 weeks from 10 November, and before/after February half term. Parents will be informed of the results of the November mock exams, by the end of term (Christmas).

Communication – Parents felt that this still needs improvement which Mr Wilding is keen to improve on. A parent asked where parents can see what their child is studying – details can be found on the school website on the page Learning, then Curriculum.

Parent Involvement - Mr Wilding is keen to get more parents involved. Year 7 has a 'Meet the Teacher' event next week. There are lots of informal evenings planned across all year groups.

Academy council – The 4 parents on the Academy Council, have students in Year 11, so will all be coming off the Academy Council in July 2026. If any parents are interested in joining the Academy Council, please contact Mr Wilding or current members for more information. The role is low commitment (1 meeting each half term) and involves attending meetings to raise issues and liaise with the Principal, and taking notes for those who are unable to attend (this can be rotated among Academy Council members).

Leadership – Mr Wilding will be joined by 2 Assistant Principals in January.

Gym Facilities – The school is looking to increase equipment, possibly with Sport England assistance, who wanted to know how it will benefit the community. There is a possibility in the future to allow access to parents/students outside of school hours.

Next Meeting Dates:

Wednesday 19 November at 5:30pm

Wednesday 28 January 2026 at 5:30pm

Wednesday 25 March 2026 at 5:30pm

Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 5:30pm

Wednesday 1 July 2025 at 5:30pm