Ipswich Academy Council Meeting minutes 28 January, 2026 at 5.30 pm

Introduction and apologies for absence

Present: Adam Wilding (AW) - Principal, Jo Brown - Parent Director, Julie Trout (in person), Claire Cooper and Kevin Brazier (online), Academy Council Members, 3 parents joined in person, 4 joined online

Apologies: Louise Leah, Academy Council Member

Update on communications

AW asked parents how they felt about communication – is the school getting it right, how can we improve? Some parents replied that they had emailed, phoned and gone in person to the school and never received replies. One parent had a positive experience with a response coming back from a teacher the next day. AW replied that the school aims to come back within 2 days and will investigate responses.

A parent raised that there were some staff absence from the recent Year 11 parents evening, and asked would parents be getting a follow up. AW explained that staff who were unable to attend will be making contact with parents as soon as possible.

Timings of the school day update

AW advised that the consultation period ends on Friday. Not much feedback received but will take this as no news is good news. Currently school day doesn't finish until 4.00 pm on Wednesdays, the plan is to finish every day at 3.10 pm.

School related parent viewing info on one Apple platform

A parent asked for this to be added to the agenda as they wanted to know whether all details / communications could be made available on one app. AW replied that the school uses My Child at School app (BromCom) which integrates with MCAS. Using another platform may not work. Sparks is used for maths and science, this app works really well but unfortunately they don't work together. AW urges all parents to use the Mychild at school app as this gives details on behaviour, homework, key messages, timetable, dinner money, etc.

Update on Ofsted May 2024

AW was asked if he could provide an update on the May 2024 Ofsted report (Improvement required). AW replied the school was expecting a visit in Spring / Autumn of this year, only 1 day's notice may be given for a visit. Have a positive for school report card now, some uncertainties and still work to do and will be good when a visit does take place to understand progress made.

Suspensions are down 60% and following an internal audit have made inroads identifying students with special educational needs that are eligible for support. This was previously well below national levels. On leadership there hasn't been stability, 5 heads in 4 years. However, confident that with the two new assistant principals onboard, they have added value and capacity, keeping the team stable.

The next Ofsted visit will follow the new framework that has been introduced.

AW believes the school has great deal of potential and everyone at IA should have the opportunity of good education.

Parents voiced that they are concerned there is a lot of fire fighting for year 11s and other year groups, particularly year 10s are suffering. Also, there is a number of staff absences, not just a few days but weeks of absence and a number of supply teachers.

AW said it is obviously a crucial time for every year 11 and there are staff absences, although this has improved from last year. A new Senco has been appointed who will start after Easter. 3 cover supervisors are IA staff but today supply teachers had to be brought in, it is a difficult balance. He offered reassurance that he is working in the background to manage absences.

A parent asked if they do have supply teachers could they be reminded to introduce themselves to students as they often don't even know their name and this shouldn't be happening. AW said this should happen and he will make sure this is explained in welcome packs that they must introduce themselves.

Two parents commented that their child had three different maths teachers and a supply teacher this week. AW advised that the school always attempted to cover with specialist teachers rather than a general supply teachers and will endeavour to always try to get specialists to cover. This may lead to multiple teachers over a fortnight period.

A parent asked about Ofsted report, could they see a copy, is there a new one? AW replied not since the last report in May 2024. The report is available online. Assistant principal has been brought in and is making inroads in some areas. Plans are in place, just need to see them come to fruition.

Parents feedback on current parents evening process

AW advised that only 50% of year 11 parents attended recent parents evening and he felt this was a low turnout and wondered why and what could be done to improve attendance. Would virtual appointments be an option? Parents commented that this was the only opportunity to see teachers face to face and all felt it was important to come in. They commented that in their experience, this has always been the case, there are always the same parents at events / meetings. AW said we try and run 5 events per year – options, show books, etc. All agreed these were important events and that they are important to attend.

Extra curricular opportunities

AW feels the school offers a good amount of afterschool activities but would like more clarity. He has tasked one of the assistant principals to look at these, firm up and ensure they are promoted well. Parents felt it wasn't always easy to find the details. There will be a timetable on the website soon.

Social media

AW is trying to promote IA on social media but often this promotes negative responses. He asked parents to let him know if they see any negativity so he can have a conversation with a parent or individual. He can be contacted by email - adam.wilding@paradigmtrust.org.uk.

Any Other Business

A parent wanted to know why their daughter was made to do PE when she had a bad leg. They had emailed the school to let them know. AW replied it was always best to send their child in with a letter but he would check and respond directly.

Parents were asked if they wanted to buy English revision books for year 10, they paid back in June and have still not received them. AW took details and will follow up.

When will parents receive winter AP results? AW replied this is taking longer than anticipated and his first go as head at IA and the process has to be right. They will be out imminently.

Ties – when normal ones (not clips) are brought could they be stocked and purchased in reception as difficult to get from shop. In theory AW said yes, but he would have to look into it. Currently there are only loan ties held in reception for the day.

Uniform – two parents reported that clothes have been going missing from PE changing rooms. AW will feedback this back and ask PE teachers to be more vigilant about supervising the changing rooms.

When will year 9 options be taking place? AW replied that 26 February is the options date, this will go out to parents on the 26th, with responses via Google form. Parents will choose with their child. School is going to use AI to work it out. This has been trialled and very impressed with result.

Year 11 GCSE timetable when will this be available? AW advised this needs to be sorted out as there are some clashes with subjects, some students have 3 exams on one day. The school will have to make sure the students are secure in the building and it may be that they have to sit an exam in the evening. It is still quite early to provide timetables as 3rd round of mocks are coming up soon. Expect they will come out after these.

Year 11 prom arrangements – cost and venue? Again, this information will come out after next round of mocks. Need students to be focussed.

Do year 11 students need to be in school when they don't have an exam? Yes they will need to attend school until their last exam. Timetables will be reworked and issued.

Work experience in summer for Year 11 students – a teacher had mentioned this might be possible? AW replied this would be something students would arrange themselves, the school wouldn't be involved.

Will the school be introducing phone pouches? AW would not be against this but there are no imminent plans. May need to rethink approach with the new guidance.

Interventions for year 10 – will this be happening? AW said he needs to be mindful of teachers time. Once year 11s are in exam season there will be sessions for year 10s, bespoke sessions around study and revision skills. A parent asked whether this could be done in base group time, AW replied he would look into this.

Date of next meeting

25 March 2026

Meeting closed 6.30 pm