

HODGSON ACADEMY PARENT FORUM

Wednesday 24th February 2016

7.30pm in the Learning Centre

MINUTES

Present: Craig Hargreaves, Andrea Preston, Toni Roethling (Principal), Martin Pickles (Finance Director), Fran Peill, Sarah Beatwell and Dawn Taylor (Community Coordinator).

Apologies: Fiona Little, Karen Brown, Derek Yarwood (Deputy Principal) and Roger Lloyd-Jones.

1. Matters arising

The academy has issued its own English Baccalaureate (EBacc) certificates to last year's GCSE cohort, as no external certificates are given out nationally.

Former Year 11 students are now able to make contact with Miss Eccles, Lead Teacher of Performing Arts, to collect their Performing Arts folders and portfolios.

2. Formal consultation in to Hodgson Academy joining the Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT) – information and question session

Toni Roethling gave a brief overview as to the history of academies nationally and locally.

In 2011, Hodgson, in partnership with Blackpool Sixth Form College, was designated a National Teaching School. The work of the Fylde Coast Teaching School (FCTS) is teacher training, leadership development, Continuous Professional Development (staff training) and school-to-school support. Today, there are more than 20 strategic partners within FCTS.

The Department for Education (DfE) approached FCTS to consider the sponsorship of a small number of local academies in the Fylde Coast area. The governing bodies and the leadership teams of both Hodgson and Blackpool Sixth Form College agreed to this request and proceeded to create the Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT). This is a legal entity, entrusted by the DfE to take responsibility for at least one other academy and is known as a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). FCAT has so far helped with Unity, Bispham High and Collegiate (which became Blackpool Aspire Academy) and Montgomery.

Good and outstanding schools are being sought to join FCAT. Outstanding local primary Hambleton Academy is a new member of FCAT. Hodgson is in the unusual position of significantly contributing to the running of FCAT but not actually being one of the academies within the trust itself. The direction of travel from the DfE is for all academies to be a full member of a Multi Academy Trust so that they can benefit directly from the skills and expertise of all of the members of the trust.

FCAT is setting up a lot of services, which used to be offered and run by the local authority, for members to buy in to, like human resources.

Toni told the meeting that one of the advantages of Hodgson joining FCAT would be the strength in being part of a body of schools that work collaboratively. To a large degree, Hodgson already benefits from the collaborative work undertaken with the academies in FCAT and it will continue to do so regardless of the outcome of this consultation period. Toni added that very little would change in the way that Hodgson was run operationally and staff would remain contracted to the school rather than the trust.

Toni said that one of the disadvantages could be that Hodgson would potentially lose some of its sovereignty.

Any FCAT member would have to follow the trust's policy, like for example Health and Safety.

Toni explained that it made sense for the academy to explore joining FCAT over any other national MAT due to it being only for Fylde coast schools. Hodgson was involved in the original process of forming FCAT and very much shares FCAT's mission to transform the lives of young people on the Fylde Coast and across Lancashire by raising aspirations and achievements.

If Hodgson was to join a MAT, it would still be in charge of its own finances and budgets.

Hodgson's Governing Body has a working party to explore whether Hodgson should become a full member of FCAT. If recommended, a full consultation will follow with all stakeholders, including parents and staff.

3. Any other business

One parent requested the possibility of a five year plan, with a colour-coded breakdown across year groups, of student holidays and trips run by Hodgson Academy. Toni commented that whilst some trips do tend to run annually, like the Year 11 New York break, these are not guaranteed due to individual members of staff organising them. The academy would be loath, therefore, to put out plans that could change with time.

4. Dates of Future Meetings

- Wednesday 11th May 2016, 7.30pm start
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