

Annual Report from Braunton Academy Chair of Governors

2014- 2015



I became Chair of Governors in October 2014 in what has been a challenging year, full of change for everyone at the Academy.

The Governing Body continues to work within a structure of Portfolio Groups; however, some of the groups have been merged and re-named to avoid duplication of purpose. 'Student Progress' and 'Teaching and Learning' have come together to become the 'Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Outcomes' Portfolio Group. We have also merged Finance and Estate to create a more streamlined way of working. 'Leadership & Management' and 'Behaviour & Safety' Groups remain, as does with the 'Food User' Group also meeting to monitor the school's food provision. We currently have 12 Governors and are looking to recruit committed new members to ensure that we have viable and interactive portfolio meetings that can monitor the work of the Academy and report back to our FGB meetings once a term.

The new Principal, Mick Cammack, began the academic year with a mandate for change. Ofsted's categorisation of our Academy as a '3: Requires Improvement' in April 2014 meant that the Academy needed to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning. Mr Cammack has worked extremely hard this year to improve performances across the Academy and there is a clear understanding from staff and students that expectations have been raised.

New initiatives are being implemented including training opportunities, sharing good practice, and a clear staff monitoring cycle led by subject leaders on the quality of teaching and marking within their departments. Subject leaders and middle managers are held closely to account by senior leaders for this monitoring and regularly produce evidence to substantiate their findings. Improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning remains the Academy's first priority.

A new data information system has been implemented, which is designed to set more accurate and challenging targets for students and allow for rigorous analysis of information on students' progress. The Academy has been an early adopter of the Progress 8 measure. There are now clear measurable milestones to check on progress.

Other areas of the school reflect the raised expectations of Braunton Academy. Our new Academy vision '*Aspire & Achieve: Inspiring the aspirational 21st century learner*' is echoed in our new Aspire Centre which contains the new library, independent learning centre and reception area. Following extensive pupil, staff and parent interaction, we have introduced a smart new uniform. Our website & prospectus have all been updated and we have a revitalised PTA. A comprehensive staff handbook has been compiled by the PA to the Principal with clear procedures and policies for clarity of working.

A full parent, staff and pupil survey was carried out in May 2015. 36% of parents responded. 88% of those who responded said they would recommend the Academy to other parents. Areas they would like to see improved are quality of teaching, developing potential and school communication. 85% of students said they would recommend the Academy to others and would also like to see an improvement in quality of teaching and school facilities. Our aim is to conduct this survey every two years to monitor progress.

The Academy's finances continue to be very well managed and communicated to the Governors by the school Finance Manager, Sally Piper, through the Finance and Estate Portfolio Group. Budgets are tight.

Sadly, this year we have had three deaths. A Year 11 student died after a long illness, our Head of Technology passed away suddenly in March and our Maths Teaching Assistant this summer. These losses had a big impact on the whole Academy. Comprehensive measures were put in place to help and support students and staff.

In summary the bar has been raised and we are moving forward as an Academy. Mr Cammack has had a challenging first year but is working extremely hard to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning, instigate rigorous monitoring and tracking of student progress and ensuring that Braunton Academy has an ethos of aspiration for all our staff and students.

Jennette Baxter
Chair of Governors
15 September 2015.