

**Public Participation**

Question from Mrs Tara Moggeridge, as a parent of children at Budmouth College, on Budmouth College Academy Conversion

Chairman and Members of the Cabinet. I am here today to express my serious concerns of my son's and daughter's education at Budmouth College.

My son has been attending the college since Year 7 and currently studying A levels there in the Sixth Form. He has a chronic health condition so is under Special Educational Needs and has an Educational Health Care Plan. My daughter who was offered a place just before there was any talk of a proposed takeover by Aspirations Academy is due to begin Year 7 this September. Like all parents I want the best education for my children. However, I have grave concerns about Aspirations Academy. Budmouth College is a unique school unlike the mould that Aspirations has created for their other Academies. I have worries about reduction in teaching and support staff that puts my children at risk. When my son started Budmouth College he was a high achiever. He was unfortunately diagnosed with a brain tumour 6 years ago and had surgery to remove it 3 years ago. The staff and support staff have been tremendously professional and helpful with his education throughout this difficult time. With the help he received combined with his determination he achieved 7 GCSES and is now coming up to his second year of A levels.

Do Aspirations Academy promote, support and understand inclusivity of children and young people with Special Educational Needs?

I believe with the new head, the leadership team and the current staff who have been there many years that Budmouth can be outstanding again. I understand the decision to choose Aspirations Academy was made by the RSC and the IEB. We as a group of parents have had many questions unanswered by them. We believe that there needs to be more transparency and that there has not been an official consultation process involving students and parents with the feeling of it being forced upon us. Can we ask that we see a breakdown of savings made or being made over the next 3 years by the laying off of Support staff?

Before I finish I would like to thank Councillor Parry for giving your time to meet with us straight after the full council meeting a few weeks ago and allowing us to voice our concerns, we are grateful for that. I am sure that you will understand that it is a rather stressful and exhausting task for everyone involved but we just want what is best for the children and the future children of Budmouth College. Thank you.

Question from Toby Webber, Student of Budmouth College, on Budmouth College Academy Conversion

My name is Toby, and I started Budmouth College in year 7 in 2013. When I first joined, the school was rated “Outstanding” by Ofsted, and the school was accredited with, and I quote, “GCSE results for students being typically well above average”. “Impeccable behaviour and mature attitudes towards learning” was also noted on the Ofsted report. However, due to allegations coming to light, the then-principle was dismissed, and the position of an acting principle was established. After this, a new principle was brought on and failed to raise the standard from inadequate, and was therefore put on leave.

I understand that Budmouth needs to change. I do. But do you really think that letting corporations into our classrooms are going to fix that? Getting rid of tens of teachers and support staff who have helped people like me pass those all-important exams and giving them the support they need to make it through secondary school? Letting richer people make money off my education? That’s not what my parents or I signed up for when I applied for Budmouth all those years ago.