

**William Howard School
LAB Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, 17 November 2020, 5:30pm via Teams**

Present:	Dr John Storr (JS)	Chair
	Chris J McAree (CJM)	Headteacher
	Sheila Johnston (SJ)	LAB member
	James Porter (JP)	LAB member
	Jackie Kirsopp (JK)	LAB member
	Diane Harrison (DH)	LAB member
	Matthew Aitchison-Rayson (MAR)	LAB member
	Joanna Gray (JG)	Parent LAB member
Together with:	Lucy M Hewson (LMH)	Clerk to WHS LAB
	Carl Gibson (CG)	Finance Manager
	Nick Polmear (NP)	Operations Director
	Sue Newstead (SN)	Director of Learning Provision (SENCO)
	Kelly Gilmour (KG)	Lead SENCO for WHS
Apologies:	Lauren Hitchen (LHi)	Acting Head, Longtown PS
	Beverley Kent (BK)	LAB member
	Gill McLean (GMcL)	Staff LAB member
	Lorrayne Hughes (LH)	CEO

Minutes taken by Mrs L M Hewson, Clerk to WHS LAB

Item		Minutes	Action/By who?
1	Welcome and apologies	Apologies were received from LHi, LH, BK and GMcL. Chair noted term of office has now ended for J Maidwell, Parent LAB member. We also received a resignation from L Graham though she is still supporting Sixth form with careers advice. Chair welcomed our new Parent LAB member, JG, who has joined the LAB.	
2	a) Declaration of Interest	None.	

	b) Notice of Any Other Business	None.	
3	To approve and consider the matters arising of the LAB Minutes for 16 September 2020	There were no matters arising. Minutes were taken as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
4	Operations update (To include possible HSE and Ofsted visits)	<p>Head updated on this. There is the prospect of a Health & Safety Executive visit. We have no issues around risk assessments. We haven't had an Ofsted visit. There has been some virtual information gathering from Ofsted on how schools have gone back but not with any of our schools yet.</p> <p>We continue to have good attendance. We have been lucky when it comes to staff absences. There was one positive case at the start of term and one who didn't go into school after half term. There were 2 members of staff tracked and traced since half term, they are completing their self isolation and have been teaching remotely. We have seen little disruption.</p> <p>We have only had 2 positive cases in school. One student with a positive test, had returned back Monday still with symptoms. They were re-tested last night. There are seven students on a second consecutive self-isolation as they again tested positive. We are waiting for Public Health Cumbria advice on this as there are contradictory messages re family and self isolation. Compared to local rates of infection, we have done really well. We haven't had to shut down individual year groups and we haven't had much absence either.</p> <p>LAB member asked if any of those self-isolating have tested positive. No, which means the systems in school are working. We have been lucky.</p> <p>Chair asked about the student's attitude to taking responsibility for cross infection. It is good. We started the year without masks but then we began wearing masks in communal areas when we went into Tier 2. Students have been compliant. They hand sanitise. We have to remind some Year 7s not to wait for their friends on the way home.</p> <p>NP noted when he goes into WHS he feels very confident. Head is driving the message forward especially with staff as there is some complacency in social distancing.</p>	
5	Finance Report	<p>CG noted there was not much to report as we are only looking at Period 1. Year to date figures are as expected. Staff changes in P1 and P2 are in line with normal circumstances. We are keeping a close eye on the costs and make sure we pick up any opportunities for savings. There are no additional costs for staffing due to Covid (we haven't had to use supply teachers). We won't be able to gauge where we are at until P3.</p> <p>Full year forecast figures are difficult to discuss yet. It is a tight budget so we are keeping a close eye on what is going on. There is a concern re lettings income unless the Covid situation improves in the New Year. We have forecast for lower levels into the New Year and then an upturn in lettings income later in 2021. All other income streams are guaranteed and costs are where we expect.</p>	

		<p>LAB member asked about the pupil teacher ratio (high) and class sizes (high) and teaching cost (high) from the benchmarking information sent out. Is this a concern to discuss?</p> <p>Average teaching costs are high as a lot of staff have been at the school a long time. Over the next 5-10 years, this will change as some of these staff will retire. The average class size is higher than the Head would like. However, we do deliver an efficient timetable (with only 1 spare period of staffing).</p> <p>LAB member asked about support staff costs. Head said because of the SEN Resourced Provision there are higher costs on this than comparable schools. Support staff from the Central Team aren't shown in these accounts, which saves money in School.</p> <p>LAB member asked about 2021-22 budget balance. Head noted that the Finance team are working on budgets for next year. Head noted that any staff numbers we need to reduce does not equate to many and works out with retirements etc. We hope to have budgets completed by the end of the calendar year.</p> <p>LAB member asked about comparisons to other schools. We are looking at this in the software. Action: Chair asked about top slicing and the basis for determining the contribution of each school. AMT, Head of Finance, to respond to this. CG left the meeting.</p>	<p>AMT to feedback re top slicing</p>
6	2020 SEND Report	<p>Kelly Gilmour and Sue Newstead updated on this item. (taken after Item 3) SN said that it was a very comprehensive report.</p> <p>Head noted that on page 3 it was noted that support from SEN lead workers (from the Local Authority) was poor.</p> <p>SN noted there is at present a huge backlog. We have good connections and a good relationship, but the service we are receiving at present is not good enough. As the world returns to normal we need to catch up.</p> <p>LAB member asked if this had deteriorated because of Covid. It is not the whole reason but it has got worse because of Covid. It took the Local Authority (LA) a while to risk assess their roles in school. It is difficult to come in and out of other peoples' bubbles. They are now visiting but this took a while before that decision was made.</p> <p>NP asked if they aware of what we think? Yes – they are.</p> <p>SN noted that we are self-sufficient in WHS. We have a robust identification process now. The gaps are where we are relying on the LA to amend and write EHCPs. We still continue with work on the ground without waiting for their response. One concern is that there is a lag on funding. We are chasing this and working with the Finance team on this.</p> <p>LAB member said - well done with the work you have done in lock down and the positive feedback from parents is very impressive.</p> <p>SN and KG left the meeting.</p>	

7	Achievement Report	<p>Year 11: Head updated that English isn't predicted for great progress at present. There needs to be further extended writing practice. There was a Data input in early October before mini mocks. There have been many interventions and a separate action plan for English. We hope to improve predicted attainment for English by the January mocks.</p> <p>There was a lot of practice on Maths over lockdown. Students are achieving well as they had had lots of practice. There is less strength on problem solving as this is more difficult online. The department will build to strengthen this. The curriculum for Maths will have been covered by Christmas so we can focus on problem solving in the New year.</p> <p>Predicted Ebacc results are looking good. We are currently on course to finish the History syllabus by February. There are targeted schemes of work to put in place over the 12 week period from then to May half term.</p> <p>Year 13: Year 13 predicted results are looking very positive. Students went onto Teams straight away in the first lockdown. There has been no lag. As Year 12 they were formally assessed in the Summer as well. Biology has very good predicted grades (1 and ½ grades above average predictions). It is a really good cohort of students in Sixth form. Attendance is 98% so far this term. Students are beginning to get offers back from Universities. The students coalesce so well together and support each other. Current indications are that the students are really focussed.</p>	
8	School Improvement (Catch Up Plan– an update)	<p>We have begun intervention work in Maths and English. The Year 8 transition class haven't made the progress they normally would. They need to be in the room with the teachers. Seeing the interaction on screen isn't the same for them. The team working on transition in Year 8 have taken this into account. There are individual students with individual gaps in their learning in all year groups. Maths - we are targeting 15-16 students in KS4 on specific topics, and will begin this in English as well.</p> <p>We now have 127 FSM students (from 88) (they were nearly all already PP students). We need some personal tuition capacity. However, the vast majority of this is online and these students need to engage one to one, in small groups.</p>	
9	Reports to Note - People Report - Appraisal Report - Safeguarding Report	<p>People report. CJM went through the report. We are hoping to recruit a DT Technician this week. There is a vacancy for support to the K cohort. CJM went through maternity covers. LT Sickness absence cases – K Rogerson involved. Head reported he felt that Mrs Rogerson has made a fantastic start for the Trust as HR Manager.</p> <p>Appraisal report – tabled on the screen. Appraisal decisions are taken by CEO and ratified by A & C Committee. 51 out of 82 have been successful, 29 partial, 2 unsuccessful. It is DfE guidance that to fail an appraisal due to Covid the employee would have to be on informal capability. We have carried out appraisals for 90 support staff as well.</p> <p>Safeguarding report – as read. LAB member noted the number of incidents logged on CPOMS.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance and Behaviour Report 	<p>The numbers are slightly lower. There is a reduction in self harm. The bubble system may have reduced cross fertilisation of ideas. There are low incidents of bullying because of segregation of groups and a drop off of bad behaviour incidents on buses, as they are in seating plans.</p> <p>Attendance and behaviour – our attendance is above national attendance. Pupil Premium (PP) attendance and Persistent Absence (PA) still need to improve further.</p> <p>We have only had to give 3 exclusions since half term. We are just over one exclusion per week which is amazing (Compared to this point last year we are over 33% less)</p>	
10	2019/20 PP Review & 2020/21 PP Plan	<p>This is written every 3 years. We usually examine attendance data and exam results to measure impact on actions taken but there isn't any this year due to Covid. However, we are still implementing the plan. PP attendance is improved from 2-3 years ago.</p>	
11	<p>Policies to Approve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEND Policy Part 2 & 3 - SEND Accessibility Plan - Admissions Policy - Sixth Form Admissions Policy - Relationships (Behaviour) Policy 	<p>Behaviour policy – LAB member asked about possible inconsistent terminology; also about student presence if there was a need for an immediate search of their possessions.</p> <p>Not necessarily, if a student had brought a blade into school, if the student was taking part in PE we would look at their bag for instance.</p> <p>Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy have been updated with KCSiE 2020.</p> <p>Decision: All Policies ratified.</p>	
12	CPD Plan	<p>Head went through this. The CPD plan is being implemented to address CPD needs of the SIP. In addition to the program we also through monitoring that is continuing, for example the Head went to 106 lessons and fed back what he'd seen last week, undertake more bespoke CPD. We have targeted CPD with individuals re tone of their voice and other areas we identify. One area we continue to work on is helping teachers to work smartly with preparation of lessons.</p>	
13	CET Update / School Improvement Team Developments	<p>NP updated on this. Covid incident management is huge, we are now on v12 of the risk assessment. We have invited unions to see the latest version.</p> <p>School attendance is a changing landscape. WHS attendance is very good (91.4%), TWA is 54.1% and WA 88% this week. TWA has had 130 students and 6 staff having to isolate. Our attendance compares favourably nationally but it is volatile.</p> <p>We have a contingency of laptops ready to deploy. There have been 45 deployed in Carlisle and Brampton and 45 on the West coast. The ICT team have done a great job on getting these out to students.</p> <p>External monitoring: Mark Wilson, School Improvement Partner has been suspended across all our schools due to Covid.</p>	

		<p>The Trust diagnostic by Ambition Institute has now been carried out with staff, Trustees and LAB members. There were four lines of enquiry. The initial report has been received and it is largely positive and we will report back on the findings at the next LAB.</p> <p>Sustained School improvement plan is in draft and is in four sections. This will go to the Achievement & Climate Committee next week. The strands are raising standards; developing consistent support across the Trust; looking at future growth strategy across Trust and Governance.</p> <p>Collaborative groups (draft) was shown on screen. The leads are receiving a supplementary amount for this work on top of their salary.</p> <p>CEO and LAB Chairs are carrying out appraisals for the Heads before Christmas.</p> <p>Our external finance audit has been carried out remotely which was difficult. The draft report is favourable and will go to the next Audit & Risk Committee.</p> <p>There is a voucher scheme for staff for flu vaccines. It has been a very intense term so far due to Covid. NP and CJM talk daily and there is sometimes conflicting advice from DfE and Public Health England. We are promoting mental health across the Trust and have mental health champions, as Covid can take its toll in lots of different ways.</p>	
14	<p>Developing Governance – Triangulation Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership and Management 	<p>JG to support on Behaviour and Attitudes with DH.</p> <p>JG gave some background on herself as new Parent LAB member. She has 2 children at school. She is Head of Audit & Assurance for a local Accountancy firm. She has particular interest in Finance and Audit. She would like to get up to speed with areas and the acronyms. She is pleased to be on the board and is looking forward to contributing.</p> <p>Behaviour and Attitudes - DH has contacted ROC (SG and Mental Health) and LOC. Discussed attendance and supporting vulnerable students coming back to school and the support for students and teacher’s mental health. It was a positive meeting.</p> <p>Mental Health - JK hasn’t met EM yet this term but JK and BK will meet in January before the next LAB.</p> <p>Sixth form - MAR and GMcL have met with EM on Sixth form. There has been great progress around single subjects - Law and Psychology. Despite lockdown, students are still on track which was great to hear.</p> <p>They discussed how students have taken to going back to school and coped with the transition of being out of school for so long. They were thriving on being back at school.</p> <p>Leadership & Management – report as read. A one line summary would be that the school has anticipated — and thus not been caught out —by problems resulting from Covid.</p>	

		Quality of Education - JP noted report as read. Progress has been made which is amazing given the circumstances. There is a gap between the end of the syllabus and the exams and this is used to revise and develop other parts of social skills. Students don't want to get stale by revising for too long.	
15	AOB	-	

The meeting ended at 19:25 pm

Signed by 

Dr J Storr, Chair of WHS LAB

Date25.1.21.....

Date of next meeting: Monday, 25 January 2021 at 5.30 pm