

## William Howard School LAB Meeting Minutes

**Monday, 25 January, 5.30 pm on Teams**

<b>Present:</b>	Dr John Storr (JS)	Chair
	Chris J McAree (CJM)	Headteacher
	Sheila Johnston (SJ)	LAB member
	Jackie Kirsopp (JK)	LAB member
	Diane Harrison (DH)	LAB member
	Gill McLean (GMcL)	Staff LAB member
	Joanna Gray (JG)	Parent LAB member
	Lorrayne Hughes (LH)	CEO
<b>Together with:</b>	Lucy M Hewson (LMH)	Clerk to WHS LAB
	Laura O'Connor (LOC)	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Lauren Hitchen (LHi)	Acting Head, Longtown PS
	Matthew Aitchison-Rayson (MAR)	LAB member
	Beverley Kent (BK)	LAB member
	Carl Gibson (CG)	Finance Manager
<b>Absent:</b>	James Porter (JP)	LAB member

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

Item		Minutes	Action/By who?
1	Welcome and apologies	Apologies received from LHi, MAR, CG and BK.	
2	<b>a)</b> Declaration of Interest <b>b)</b> Notice of Any Other Business	JK is currently doing some work with the CET Finance team  No AOB.	

3	To approve and consider the matters arising of the LAB Minutes for 17 November 2020	<p>The minutes were taken as a true and accurate record.</p> <p><b>Item 5</b> – query on top slicing. CEO updated that top slicing does not exist now. There is one budget across the schools. We work as a family of schools.</p> <p>Once the new Head of Finance, Mrs Martin, begins with the Trust, a training session is needed on Curriculum lead financial planning. Thank you to JK for supporting the Trust.</p>	
4	Headteachers Operational Update	<p>There has been a policy in place for remote learning since last March. We have updated this as we have gone along. The Virtual Learning area on the main website has been made a lot bigger. We have 75-82% full engagement with the students completing all the work. 20% of students are more hit and miss, doing 2-3 hours studying rather than 4-5 hours. Then there is a handful of students not doing any studying.</p> <p>Students have now had 80 lessons since the start of term – there can be a lot of backlog if students are not participating in all the lessons and the teachers have asked the students to concentrate on the core subjects if they have fallen behind. The Pastoral team support these students individually to get them back on track.</p> <p>There are also those persistently absent students, most of whom are reluctant learners. We are targeting these students in our own vulnerable hub. There were 15 of these students in school today (the reset sessions are twice a week for each student).</p> <p>Hub numbers have increased from 50 to 67 because of this PA group. Key worker parents aren't sending their children into the hub unless they need the provision, though there are nearly 80 registered, each day just over 50 attend.</p> <p>Vulnerable and EHCP students have critical care plans, some are in the hub, others are learning off site and have specific support (key workers). We have issued well over 100 laptops, increased Data limits where we can, issued 4G routers where these will help with connectivity. Karen Williams has published curriculum maps and assessment and support is on the website so parents can understand where their children are at with their learning and also where they are going. The students targeted for catch-up from the last lockdown in Maths and English are still receiving this through the staff we employed through regular 30min 1 to 1 subject sessions. Some are being done on site due to connectivity issues.</p> <p>We are looking at the quality of the learning, and ensuring that the students are learning not just doing. The monitoring of lessons is something all SLT and Middle Leaders are doing.</p> <p>We have asked Year 11 to do too much assessed work so have pulled back on this. It is about focussing on quality not quantity.</p> <p>We have carried out some CPD staff training for teachers to try to keep going with positive behaviour for the students, how to reinforce this with</p>	

		<p>online learning expectations. CPD is also ongoing on how best to utilise the technology and platforms that we use. We hope to get the students back in school around or before Easter and want them to come back in with the same standards as they left with. There will be much social adjustment again.</p> <p>School life continues - we are planning next year's timetable and we are still running student competitions. We are mindful of staff workload and pressure especially those who are working and home schooling their own children. We have had some constructive union meetings in the last couple of weeks.</p> <p>CEO noted that CJM and his team are constantly tweaking what is being offered to students. WHS is doing well with its mental health support. We need to support staff through this – we are learning every day on how to teach and assess remotely. There is always someone available live one to one for every subject to help the students with what they are doing. We have a lot of daily contact with parents.</p> <p>Head suggested staff can do simple things to switch off for 10 minutes eg organise a virtual coffee break at 11 am with a fellow colleague. It is important we manage their well-being during this latest shutdown.</p> <p><b>LAB member asked what feedback from parents and students was re exam cancellations.</b></p> <p>Year 11 students are a bit down about the news - they will be doing some mini tests, but in general were trying to engage well and positively. Year 13 students were noticeably more worried and demoralised. Assessments were put back a week after student feedback from the Head Boy and Head Girl about the need for the students to clear their minds and reset.</p> <p>BTecs have carried on like normal and we gave the students the option not to do them.</p> <p><b>DH left the meeting.</b></p>	
5	Finance Report	<p><b>Taken after Item 3.</b></p> <p>P3 end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter – we are doing slightly better than projected – we are £16k better than hoped at this point in the year. Covid impact is more pertinent now than at the last LAB meeting.</p> <p>Costs coming in are budgeted for. We are trying to minimise budget pressures re lockdown. Letting income has vanished and we are having to maintain our own transport routes (we have negotiated with providers for 20% retainers for those routes not running).</p>	

There has been some pressure on the budget in January. There are some areas we are not incurring costs so we may offset the loss of income and bus costs.

CEO noted that the Trust finished the year in a better financial position. Reserves were increased by £400k. We have around £790k in reserves going into 2020-21. This is still lacking for a Trust of our size.

**LAB member asked about cost of laptops.**

The laptops were from the DfE and on the capital registers. 650 laptops have come into the Trust with over 100 to WHS. Some donations are coming through. An example was given of a £250 donation that we bought some routers we needed with.

We have asset registers and loan agreements when laptops go out and they should be returned after lockdown. We will then consider what we do with these after Covid, and what the priorities are. This is something being taken forward by the ICT collaborative group.

Chair has donated a laptop and another parent donated some laptops. It is difficult to get hold of devices at mid-point price at present. CEO gave the example of how the Trust had ordered 500 laptops in summer which have only just been delivered.

There was a discussion on internet connectivity. Students can access the work on a variety of devices. All students do have access to devices as far as we are ascertain. Our issue is connectivity which is unsolvable in many cases. When often 3-4 people are all trying to do Teams meetings in one household, this is difficult. Many areas in our rural catchment area, some quite close to Carlisle even, have broadband speeds that the physical infrastructure only provide between 2-8MB speed connection, which diminishes during the day as the load on the infrastructure is high. A Teams call for a group meeting needs a stable 2MB connection so, as had been experienced by several LAB members tonight, connections freeze or drop out at times. An increase in data doesn't help the situation in most cases as there are a lack of 4G masts in the area. DfE have done deals with mobile companies to uplift data but a lot of households don't have access to 4G or it is too weak a signal for a router to be effective. The DfE deals and BT lifting of download limits are all really positive and to be commended but cannot compensate for where the infrastructure is yet to be upgraded. Where it has been, it is now world beating, but it has certainly not reached all parts of the catchment area.

For Years 12 and 13 all can't be on screen as their connection won't let them be on a whole lesson, though we do try to always teach live. We just have to think of other ways to do lessons.

**LAB member asked about minimum hours for face to face teaching?**

		Head noted that the connectivity issues were known about in the last lockdown and is why the school chose to stay with recorded lessons so students can access as and when. Around a quarter of the school can't access the internet at the speed they need to do lessons live. The DfE have done a tremendous job on data allowance and BT have removed caps on broadband but it doesn't get around infrastructure issues.	
6	Covid Catch Up Plan – update	As above in Headteacher' report. Students targeted for Maths and English are still having one to one lessons.	
7	<p>Reports to Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HR Report</li>   <li>- Attendance / Exclusions</li>   <li>- School Dashboard</li>   <li>- Safeguarding Report</li>   <li>- Estates</li> </ul>	<p><b>HR report – LAB member asked about two resignations from one area?</b> Head explained this. We can start with a new team so this is an opportunity.</p> <p><b>Attendance/Exclusions</b> – exclusions were very low last term and attendance was very positive until last week of term. We were down to 60% attendance on the last day of term. Over the term we had better attendance than a lot of schools. Last week of term there were quite a few Covid cases and some parents chose to keep students at home to protect family Christmas bubbles. Overall attendance is not monitored at present. We monitor engagement, attendance of vulnerable students, and report on critical workers' children who have a place in hub and don't attend when they say they are going to.</p> <p><b>School dashboard</b> – LAB member thought this was a great document and really useful.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b> – report as read.</p> <p><b>Estates</b> – report as read.</p>	
8	Student Achievement Report	<p>For information – data report is now not really applicable as it reports what we expected students to get in terminal exams, the grades they will be awarded will be based on the current standard they are working at, a subtle difference but it may mean the grades will be more generous. CEO noted it was important to see where the students have got to by Christmas.</p> <p>We need to think about what will happen for Years 10 and 12. They have been very disrupted and Year 12s haven't done formal exams. We have emerging thoughts about the current Year 11 and how to use Year 13 teachers to teach the Year 12 timetable in the last half-term. Nationally we need to consider how to replicate the system put in place this year for next year in terms of mitigations that were in place for the exams.</p> <p><b>LAB member asked about the KS2 metric.</b></p>	

		This is the first year group who didn't take old levels. Progress 8 measure projects forward to what the school got in the previous year and this can't happen this year.	
9	School Improvement Plan (Review Term 1)	<p>This is reviewed at the end of each term. International links and student participation have been curtailed due to Covid.</p> <p>When LAB members meet with their SLT contact, they will need to know where we are up to.</p> <p><b>Action: Some name changes needed re new LAB members.</b></p>	Update SIP with LAB member names
10	CET update - Sustained School Improvement	<p><b>Action: The Sustained School Improvement – Priorities 2020-21 document will be circulated to the LAB.</b></p> <p>The Trust are joining the NGA Learning Link. This is a virtual learning package for LAB members which will be very useful</p> <p>We have invested heavily in creating School Improvement teams. They are meeting regularly on strategic priorities.</p> <p>A new Head of Finance begins in March. One of her tasks will be to provide Finance training for the LABs.</p> <p>There is a photography competition which will go towards creating a CET calendar at the end of the year – all are welcome to contribute.</p> <p>CEO noted that the Head has worked tirelessly in this period and she makes sure he is having regular breaks. He is holding WHS together with his great SLT.</p> <p><b>LAB member also thanked CEO for all her work. You are both doing a fantastic job.</b></p>	SSIP 2020-21 circulated to the LAB
11	School specific issues - Student Participation/ Leadership Report	<p><b>After Item 2.</b></p> <p>LOC went through Student participation. We are trying to keep clubs, house projects and charity events alive in lockdown. There is a Student Participation team in school in charge of certain elements.</p> <p>We try and identify gaps with student participation with groups. We are working with Karen Williams re website and newsletter etc.</p> <p>We are trying to maintain community and national links though these are not the same offer as previously. Student leaders are meeting with staff responsible. Uptake is strong in KS3.</p> <p>LOC gave many examples of how the House system gets involved eg foodbank donations, Eden Valley Hospice fund raising, Bake off, Santa dash. Local businesses continue to support payments of four charities.</p> <p>The extra curriculum club is in a bubble format, Student leadership and voice are still going strong. They worked with Sixth form on open evenings. We are trying to produce a newsletter for Student voice which will go out towards half term.</p>	

	<p>- Sabbatical Request</p>	<p>Mentoring - Sixth form is working with Year 8. We are preparing recorded sessions to support Year 8. , We are working on a Pen friend project as exchange visits cannot happen.</p> <p>There was a huge intake to Open spaces last term. The students really appreciated access to the farm. They receive regular updates on the farm even when they can't be there.</p> <p>There has also been a Time capsule project and the tea party with elderly was revised to Christmas hampers. There are some productive and exciting activities.</p> <p>Chair thought the work sounded amazing.</p> <p><b>LAB member asked what plans there were for the future.</b></p> <p>It is important to connect them to places beyond the school and we have made connections with a school in Spain.</p> <p><b>LOC left the meeting.</b></p> <p>Sabbatical request from geography teacher.for a full academic year from 2022 to 2023.</p> <p><b>LAB member asked the Head could cover the post.</b></p> <p>He thought he could as it was a full year contract with 18 months' notice.</p> <p><b>Decision: Sabbatical request approved.</b></p>	
12	AOB	<p>Due to her new role as the Head's PA, GMcL will step down as Staff LAB member. She was thanked for her work over the last few years. A letter will go out to all staff to recruit a new Staff LAB member.</p> <p>JG will be joint Safeguarding lead with DH.</p> <p>We may need to have a LAB meeting in March to cover schools return.</p>	

The meeting finished at 19.06 pm

Signed .....  


Dr J Storr, Chair, WHS LAB

Date .....4.5.21.....

Date of next meeting – Tuesday, 4 May 2021 at 5.30 pm