



**Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the  
FULL GOVERNING BODY  
of Helsby High School**

<b>Date:</b>	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 5.00pm	
<b>Venue:</b>	Via Zoom Video Conferencing	
<b>Present:</b>	Ms G Fullbrook – Chair Dr A Morley – Vice Chair Mr M Hill Mrs F Miller Mr T O’Neill Mrs A Critchley Mrs J O’Hare Mr A Wheeler Mr I Devereux-Roberts Ms R Clarke Mr C Jennings	Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Head Teacher LA Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Staff Governor Co-opted Governor
<b>Absent:</b>		
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs S Warburton Dr A Prichard-Roberts Mr J Cooney Mr M Vickers John Addison	Deputy Head Teacher Assistant Head Teacher Assistant Head Teacher School Business Manager Clerk

**The meeting met its quorum.**

**Decisions, actions and areas of challenge during discussions indicated in bold text**

<b>Agenda item 1</b>	<b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Chair welcomed all present and advised that an apology for absence had been received from Mr G Corker.
<b>Resolved:</b>	That the apology for absence received from Mr G Corker be accepted.

<b>Agenda item 2</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Governing Body considered the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2020.
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</b>

<b>Agenda item 3</b>	<b>ACTION LOG</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	The Action Log was reviewed and updated.  The Head Teacher advised that the School was precluded by the DfE from seeking reimbursement of monies for the purchase of cleaning materials owing to the fact that it

	would be adding to the budget surplus this year.
<b>Agenda item 4</b>	<b>HEADTEACHERS REPORT</b>
	<p>The Headteacher in submitting his report to Governors focussed on providing an overview of the current ways of operating. In contrast to the uncertainty that preceded their introduction during the last lockdown, the new arrangements had settled down and become embedded very quickly. This was down to a number of factors: the fact that they mostly represented similar ways of working to those experienced last spring; the contingency planning which took place last term; and the overwhelming determination of senior, teaching and support staff colleagues and also parents to support and care for the young people as they experienced such a traumatic period.</p> <p><b>Remote Learning</b></p> <p>Following lockdown, School immediately switched to full-time remote learning for all students, with staff delivering lessons via Microsoft Teams following the normal school timetable. Student attendance and engagement had been very high, with over 90% of students consistently in ‘lessons’ and any non-attendance being quickly followed up with students/parents. The switch to this way of working had been impressively automatic, despite the unexpected lockdown announcement on the eve of the first day of the provision. Staff had worked exceptionally hard: teachers were finding that the planning required was much more than for classroom-based lessons and lesson delivery very intense; the IT Support Team worked hard to support students’ access over the initial few days and there was a team of Teaching Assistant staff monitoring student attendance, engagement and behaviour in lessons and liaising with parents as appropriate. <b>Mrs O’Hare, as a parent of a student at the School, thanked the School for the different live learning experience from last lockdown</b></p> <p>Inevitably teaching staff had focused their initial work on engaging students and becoming accustomed to the basic management of the lessons using the Teams platform, although it was notable that staff had begun to start to trial different approaches and use some of the more advanced functionality available. The Senior Leadership Team had been planning how to further develop this provision at a pace which was appropriate for all staff. The Senior Assistant Head Teacher (Mrs K Neal) and Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form (Mr I Duffell) had handled this work impressively and had already begun to start to work with Subject Leaders on ways to assess students’ actual learning (as opposed to just their engagement) and also how they could monitor the quality of remote learning provision across their departments.</p> <p>Inevitably, one of the biggest barriers was IT capability, with internet reliability an issue for some students. School was confident that most students had appropriate IT access, which needed to be more than just a smartphone. School was allocated 66 laptops by the Department for Education last term, which had been distributed, and had purchased over 30 more to meet need. As more parents worked from home, leaving students without straightforward IT access, the demand was continuous and School was currently collecting in and distributing iPads given previously to staff to try to meet the needs of students/families.</p> <p>A draft summary of the School’s ‘Remote Learning Provision’, had been circulated to Governors and which was currently being finalised with teaching staff. There was a 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 deadline for schools to place information summarising their remote learning offer on their website and this document was the School’s response to that requirement. <b>Governors had no specific comments to make on the document.</b></p> <p><b>The Chair commented that feedback received through social media had been very positive. Ms. Clarke advised that from a staff point of view, the whole remote learning process felt very positive and engendered a feeling that staff were getting closer to students as they</b></p>

were inter-acting on an individual basis. However, it took longer to plan an on-line lesson as opposed to a face to face lesson.

The Chair asked how many lessons students were receiving per day/ The Head Teacher advised that School was following a normal timetable with students spending the first 15 minutes of each day with their form tutor followed by 5 hours of lessons. The Head Teacher commented that there was a need to focus on tracking learning rather than just whether students were engaging. This would involve a form of quality monitoring but was mindful of increasing teacher workload at present. The Chair asked how student's work was monitored? The Head Teacher advised that monitoring was now easier as the technology was more embedded and teachers could review students work remotely as they completed it. Ms. Clarke also advised that teachers were using break out rooms with individual students.

#### **Key Worker and Vulnerable Student Provision**

Numbers had settled at approximately 30 students on site each day (roughly 20 key worker children/10 vulnerable students) - down from approximately 40 last week. Although this was twice as many as during the first lockdown last spring, it was very manageable and was being thoughtfully overseen by SEN/Pastoral colleagues. School was in constant dialogue with critical workers who appeared to appreciate the flexibility and the provision School was offering. Students in school were following the same remote learning as their peers working from home. A large majority of vulnerable students were not attending but School was in constant communication with them and had also made home visits where staff had not felt completely reassured of their well-being via other means. The Headteacher said that thanks were due to James Cooney, Assistant Head Teacher, for his leadership of this provision.

#### **Mass (Asymptomatic) Testing Programme**

School had worked very hard to set up our 'test centre' in the Hall, with the Deputy Headteacher and School Business Manager overseeing the lateral flow testing of staff which had begun w/c 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021. School would test students attending the key worker and vulnerable student provision w/c 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The current scale of this was manageable in terms of leadership oversight, administrative support provided by the support staff and the sourcing of agency processing staff (the cost of which would be reimbursed by the DfE). However, should students return en masse at some stage and access this programme then, the scale and challenge would be significantly greater.

#### **Free School Meal Vouchers**

Although DfE guidance suggested that School should have been providing food parcels to families in lieu of Free School Meals not being taken in school, from the outset School was concerned about their suggested contents and also the demands they would have placed on families to have to prepare meals. Hence School had been providing Tesco and Morrisons vouchers to Helsby and Frodsham families respectively (there were parents in managerial roles in both local supermarkets who had been assisting School with this.) From w/c Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021, School intended to use the re-introduced national voucher scheme.

#### **Catch-Up Programme**

Governors were reminded that a key component of work this term was due to be the launch of the 'Catch-Up Programme' with students. The Assistant Head Teacher, Dr Amy Prichard-Roberts had been in detailed discussion with providers since the start of term.

## Examinations

The Head Teacher advised that since writing his report, he had written to the parents of Yr11 and Yr13 students advising that Ofqual had announced that following on from the cancellation of this summer's GCSE, A-Level and vocational qualification examinations, a consultation exercise would be undertaken on the decision that students' grades would be based on their teachers' assessment of the standard at which the student was performing.

The consultations, to which both students and parents were invited to respond, could be found via links detailed in the letter and should be responded to by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Given the 'evidence' that schools currently had to inform teacher-assessed grades (such as 'mock' examination results) was much less than was the case when the same decision was made in March last year, this was likely to be a complex and emotive issue for schools to deal with over the next 6-8 months. **Mrs Miller asked how students had reacted to the announcement? The Head Teacher advised that not unnaturally, students felt very anxious about the uncertainty and being isolated as they were not in School to access support. In addition, there had been no Mock Examinations this year so evidence base would not be as strong At this stage, students may worry that as there have been no Mock Examinations this year so far, the evidence base may not feel as strong.**

Governors were advised that vocational examinations scheduled for January had gone ahead, although many schools locally and nationally withdrew their students from them. HHS felt though that to do so would be unfair on students who had worked so hard to prepare for them and hence students were given the choice. Most students chose to sit them, although some understandably chose not to, either because of discomfort given current Covid circumstances or because they felt that their current absence from school meant they did not feel as prepared as they needed to be. Schools have been told that arrangements would be put in place to make sure students who didn't attend weren't disadvantaged.

## Staff Well-Being

Once again many staff were working from home and hence were likely to be feeling more isolated than would be the case in 'normal' times. Hopefully the option of working in school, the virtual 'meetings' scheduled in to enable staff teams to gather together and their engagement with students would alleviate feelings of isolation. It was hoped that the feeling that staff were making such an obvious difference to students and their families at such a difficult time would be very beneficial to colleagues in terms of their sense of job satisfaction and 'public service'. This was in contrast to the feeling of frustration that they couldn't do more to help that many colleagues described feeling during the first lockdown last spring.

## The School's Covid-19 Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment which had been updated in light of new arrangements this term had been circulated to Governors. **Governors had no comments to make on the updated Risk Assessment**

## The Future

Students were due to return to school on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2021 although there was clearly much doubt over how possible that would be. It was also unclear what the intended link was between the mass testing programme and students' return to school - ie was the programme seen as the key to students being able to return even if the prevalence of Covid in wider society was still relatively high? By the next FGB on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 there

	should be a much clearer picture about what the rest of this academic year would look like.
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the report be noted.</b>
<b>Agenda item 5</b>	<b>KEY WORKER AND VULNERABLE STUDENT PROVISION</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Mr J Cooney, Assistant Head Teacher reported that School based remote learning had commenced on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.</p> <p>The number of children of key workers and vulnerable children in School had started at 40 but was now around 30 (20 children of key workers and 10 vulnerable children) and were mainly in Yrs7-9. These students had the same learning as those at home and were in year group bubbles.</p> <p>Mr Cooney explained that School currently had 52 children identified as vulnerable although there were over 350 who were regularly contacted to ensure that they were not struggling at home. The Government's expectation was that vulnerable students should be in School although parents were making the decision to keep them at home. School was monitoring these children via the Pastoral Support Team and the local authority had asked for an "Officially Vulnerable List" with a daily report being made as to who were in School and who were not.</p> <p>Student engagement was monitored during the day and those students who were not engaging when School opened received a Teams "Wake Up Call" to ensure that they were ready to commence lessons. Students who continually did not engage had a home visit and School was engaging with outside agencies to confirm that it was engaging with vulnerable students.</p> <p>In respect of laptops, School had given out 78 with 66 of these being received from the DfE. School had 15 in reserve and was confident that anyone who had asked for IT support had received it.</p> <p>Teaching Assistants were running the School Based Learning Provision with 50% being in School and 50% operating remotely. Students not engaging were contacted by the TAs operating from home with a daily report being made on the level of engagement. In terms of engagement the vast majority of students were engaging and those who were not were those students who had difficulty engaging whilst in School. School was looking at using its reward system for those who continually engaged.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked if students were able to spend time with their peers in lessons? Mr Cooney advised that break out rooms could be used to discuss issues with individual students outside of the main room. All lessons had a chat function so students could engage with their classmates. Ms Clarke remarked that the technology was very inter-active and that there was also the "raised hand" function to confirm understanding.</b></p> <p><b>Mr Jennings asked about the use of video cameras during lessons. Mr Cooney advised that DfE Guidance was clear in that staff could use cameras but with certain safeguards around backgrounds, dress etc. Any extension of this to allow students to use video cameras would require parental permission.</b></p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the report be noted</b>
<b>Agenda item 6</b>	<b>MASS TESTING PROGRAMME</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	Mrs S Warburton, Deputy Head Teacher updated Governors on the arrangements put in place in respect of the Mass Testing Programme.

	<p>Initially, the Deputy Head Teacher and the School Business Manager attended 3, 1.5 hour webinars organised by the DfE plus a further 1.5 hour webinar delivered by the local public health authority. In addition, various information documents had been accessed and a risk assessment prepared.</p> <p>The School was using The Hall as a testing venue which comprised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception Desk to register with NHS Track and Trace;</li> <li>• Swabbing Desk which was staffed by School and Agency staff;</li> <li>• Processing Desk where the sampling devices were held also staffed by School and Agency staff; and</li> <li>• Recording Desk where secure information was shared with NHS Track and Trace currently managed by S. Warburton and M. Vickers.</li> </ul> <p>All staff coming into School were given the opportunity to be tested, though this was voluntary whilst the children of key workers and vulnerable children could be tested (once upon their return and a second time within 3-5 days) as part of the mass testing programme but could still access school if they didn't want to access a test. To date, 68 staff had been tested with no positives.</p> <p>Any additional finance to cover the cost of testing would depend on Government decisions. The School was well supplied with PPE</p> <p><b>Ms Clarke asked how School would implement any Government decision to allow all year groups to access School? Mrs Warburton advised that this would depend very much on whether year groups were allowed back into School one group at a time. Tests would still be voluntary, however, School was confident it could upscale if necessary with additional staff.</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Miller asked if staff and students tested themselves? Mrs Warburton advised that it was envisaged that students would test themselves DfE advice must be sought if students were unable to test themselves so at the current time, no assistance would be given by staff.</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Critchley asked how staff involved in the testing process felt about their personal protection. Mrs Warburton advised that staff were all willing volunteers and it was made clear that they could withdraw at any time. Full PPE and training has been provided.</b></p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the report be noted</b>
<b>Agenda item 7</b>	<b>STUDENT PROGRESS AND THE NATIONAL CATCH-UP PROGRAMME</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Dr Amy Prichard-Roberts, Assistant Head Teacher addressed Governors on student progress and the National Catch-Up Programme.</p> <p>In respect of student progress at KS3 a summary had been circulated which detailed by subject and year group the number of students who were expected to exceed/meet/not meet end of year expectations. Dr Prichard-Roberts advised that, in normal circumstances the data would have been based primarily on the formal assessments undertaken during the assessment fortnight during the autumn term. However, provision was very different from normal arrangements and as such the data included class work and other student observations. School wanted to allow a degree of flexibility and had asked teaching staff to bear in mind work done with students from September 2020 and whether students would be back on track by the end of the school year. This would enable parents to receive a report which would outline any real areas for concern.</p> <p>The KS3 report forecasted that in the vast majority of cases students were going to catch up.</p>

	<p>Staff were confident that these predictions were achievable, however, the longer the second lockdown continued, then the assumptions would have to be reviewed.</p> <p><b>The Chair referred to the predictions for science which showed a high level of students not catching up and asked whether staff were being cautious? Dr Prichard-Roberts responded that she had discussed this with the Head of Science who confirmed that the data had been obtained via a robust assessment. Staff were aware of students working below target and would concentrate on them as a priority. Mrs Miller raised the same question in respect of Maths and was assured that the data was accurate, however, there was some concern around Yr8 which was a large group with a broader ability range.</b></p> <p>In respect of Yr13 students, Governors had received an Autumn predicted grade summary. Governors were advised that the Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form was relaxed about what the data indicated and although there might be some individual students causing concern, they would have individual interventions prepared.</p> <p>In respect of the Catch-Up Programme, Dr Prichard-Roberts delivered a Powerpoint presentation which provided detailed information under the following headings, viz:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catch-Up – SDP Objectives;</li> <li>• Overall Aims of the Catch-Up Plan;</li> <li>• Use of Catch-Up funding;</li> <li>• National Tutoring Programme;</li> <li>• How School could implement the National Tutoring Programme;</li> <li>• Action Tutoring for Yr7 Catch-Up;</li> <li>• Connexus for Yr8-11 Catch-Up;</li> <li>• Catch-Up Programme during lockdown; and</li> <li>• Long Term Aims.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resolved:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That the report be noted.</b></li> <li><b>2. That Governors be kept apprised of the progress of the Catch-Up Programme</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Agenda item 8</b></p>	<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p>
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p>	<p><u>Skills Audit</u> The Chair advised that the completed skills audit results and comments had been shared with Governors and showed that there were no major areas of concern in regard to skills gaps.</p> <p><u>Governor Vacancies</u> The Clerk advised that the Governing Body was currently carrying three vacancies for co-opted governors. An approach had been received from a Governor at a local primary school who wished to be considered for appointment</p> <p><u>Future Governance Focus</u> The Chair suggested that in view of the current situation, the current method of operation should continue.</p>
<p><b>Resolved:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That the position in relation to the Skills Audit be noted.</b></li> <li><b>2. That the Chair arrange to meet the prospective Governor and report back to the next meeting</b></li> </ol>

<b>Action:</b>	<b>What:</b>	<b>Who:</b>	<b>When:</b>
	Chair to meet with prospective Governor	Chair	ASAP

<b>Agenda item 9</b>	<b>FINANCE UPDATE</b>
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<b>Discussion:</b>	<p><u>Month 9 Update</u></p> <p>The School Business Manager advised that the current Budget Control Statement as at December was period 9 of 12 in the financial year and School could expect to have at least 25% of its budget remaining, however, the percentage was nearer 40% although income had continued to fall. There were no new areas of overspend to bring to the attention of Governors and a report would be submitted to the next meeting on the extent of the anticipated surplus.</p> <p>Governors were advised that School currently held over £64,000 of Devolved Formula Capital Funds which would be utilised on specific projects over the Summer period.</p> <p>The School Business Manager had circulated to Governors details of contracts over £2,000 where it had not been possible to obtain three quotations. It was stressed that this was not a common practice within School and tended to be needed where time was of the essence in carrying out emergency repairs, where maintenance work was needed with existing contractors or where work was of a bespoke nature e.g, the Maglock System. The contracts covered the period from October 2019 to January 2021 and the School Business Manager sought the approval of Governors to waive the necessity to obtain three quotations. <b>Mr Wheeler asked if there was any way where the School could demonstrate value for money in respect of the contracts. The School Business Manager advised that all the contractors used were for contracts awarded where 3 quotations were received so a link could be made to the original tender, however, the School Business Manager agreed to add a narrative column explaining the reasons behind the action in future reports. Mr Wheeler suggested that the £2,000 figure was too low for current times particularly if urgent action was needed in respect of IT equipment or infrastructure.</b></p>
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<b>Resolved:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the month 9 Budget update be noted.</li> <li>2. That approval be given to waive the requirement to obtain three quotations for the contracts indicated for the period October 2019 to January 2021.</li> <li>3. That a report outlining the extent of the budget surplus be made to the next meeting</li> </ol>
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<b>Action:</b>	<b>What:</b>	<b>Who:</b>	<b>When:</b>
	Report on Budget surplus to next meeting	SBM	Next Meeting

<b>Agenda item 10</b>	<b>POLICIES</b>
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<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the Addendum to the Safeguarding Policy amended to reflect and respond to current ways of working be approved.</b>
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<b>Agenda item 11</b>	<b>3G PITCH UPDATE</b>
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<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Mr Wheeler gave a brief update to Governors advising that the project was still on track financially and that the drainage blockage had been located which allowed for the discharge of the planning requirements.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that Mr Wheeler had circulated an e-mail advising of the necessity to re-site the Changing Pavilion so that it would then be placed on the other side of the AGP, i.e. the school playing field side.</p>
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	<p>This change had come about because Cheshire Fire Brigade had objected to the previous location and our mitigation. The distance from the CP to where a fire tender could be parked was too great.</p> <p>There were a number of options to overcome this challenge;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excavate additional material from the site and construct an access road with turning circle</li> <li>• Allow a fire tender to access the CP via the pitch in an emergency</li> <li>• Move the CP closer to the pitch</li> </ul> <p>Moving the CP was the most cost effective solution to the problem. Both of the other options would incur significant cost (the new road construction would be in excess of £25,000, if the fire tender were to access the pitch then it would be necessary to reinforce the foundation to accommodate a fire truck and CWaC/HHS would have to undertake to re-lay the pitch if the fire brigade wanted to access the pitch to test access or in the event of an emergency)</p> <p>Moving the CP would have minor cost implications (additional cladding). The CP did not affect the use of the field, nor the intended use under FF grant application.</p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the update position be noted.</li> <li>2. That the siting of the Changing Pavilion as described be approved.</li> </ol>
<b>Agenda item 11</b>	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>
	<p><b>Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 at 5.00pm</b>  <b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 5.00pm</b></p>

**There being no further business the meeting ended at 18.40**