



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

<b>Date:</b>	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 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 Ms R Clarke Mr C Jennings Mrs J O’Hare Mr A Wheeler Mr I Devereux-Roberts	Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Head Teacher LA Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Staff Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor
<b>Absent:</b>		
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs S Warburton Mrs K Neal Mr M Vickers John Addison	Deputy Head Teacher Senior 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 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2020.
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 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.  Governors were advised that the local PCSO had been contacted and would visit the School to monitor the traffic situation and provide a presence.

Agenda item 4	HEADTEACHERS REPORT
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p>	<p>The Headteacher advised that his current update should be read as a supplement to the recent updates in the form of staff briefings and letters to parents.</p> <p>School was now very much into the next phase in the pandemic - staying open during the second national 'lockdown'. Staff and student attendance remained high, demonstrating the willingness of both teachers and parents to continue to support students' learning in school despite understandable anxiety over rising numbers of Covid cases nationally, locally and, inevitably, in the School itself.</p> <p><b>Staff Attendance</b></p> <p>Compared to most schools, staff attendance had been very high - a tribute to the commitment and professionalism of colleagues, putting aside personal anxiety to support the students. There had been little non-Covid absence and just the expected Covid-related absence (mainly waiting for family test results and childcare due to children being sent home from school). No teaching colleagues had tested positive to date, only one teacher had had a 14-day self-isolation due to a Covid case in their family and School now had two members of the support staff working from home as a result of last week's government guidance that critically extremely vulnerable people should stay at home during the current 'lockdown'.</p> <p>With little change to current ways of working likely in the circumstances, work in School was challenging for staff. They were still having to move between classrooms, were limited in what they could do in lessons and were having to support an increasing number of students self-isolating at home. However, they were doing so with a flexibility, positivity and a pragmatic 'take each day as it came' approach which underpinned their resilience.</p> <p><b>Student Attendance</b></p> <p>Student attendance remained relatively high compared to national attendance, with the increasing number of students being brought to school by car the only real noticeable sign of increased parental anxiety. Student behaviour always became more challenging as this long term progressed and this year was no different. This was particularly the case at Key Stage 3, where the restrictions on the curriculum were most significant, with little practical work possible to vary students' learning during the school day. Learning activities within lessons, such as group work, were also restricted by Covid arrangements and students often spent a lot of time each day in the same classroom with the same students. None of this helped student motivation and behaviour, nor did unsupervised time at the start of a lesson whilst teachers travelled to classrooms. That said, in the other side of the building, in the 'Upper School', there was a very calm, mature atmosphere amongst Years 10-13 students, who were able to move about more than the younger students, mix more and also undertake more practical work in subjects such as Art, D&amp;T and Science.</p> <p><b>Self-Isolating Students</b></p> <p>Governors would be aware that School had now had 8 student Covid cases, most of which had resulted in a significant number of students self-isolating as a result of 'close contact' with those students in School prior to their symptoms and/or test. Staff had been setting work using Microsoft Teams, their confidence in its use increasing significantly with practice. Teams allowed students to be provided with the resources being used in the classroom in School and also enabled students to submit work and receive feedback. As staff confidence and competence with Teams increased, one option if the number of cases increased was to teach all lessons via Teams, to be joined by students in the classroom and at home alike. However, this was much easier with smaller, older classes than it would be with larger and younger ones.</p> <p>Regular phone-calls from pastoral staff had kept in touch with those students unfortunately</p>

	<p>having to learn from home whilst they self-isolated. Parents of Free School Meal students in this position had also been given the option of food parcels or supermarket vouchers to the value of meals missed in School, with most opting for the latter.</p> <p><b>The Future</b>  An increasing cause of anxiety for students, parents and staff was the uncertainty over next summer’s examinations, with the worsening national Covid picture increasing the possibility that they might not be able to go ahead as planned. The most recent letter to parents, advised that School was focusing work with Year 11 and 13 students this term on course coverage to enabled School to then respond after Christmas to whatever assessment processes were required. Year 13 were currently doing some low-key assessments and Years 7-9 students had their assessment window shortly. The balance between taking each day as it came, focusing on Covid measure implementation, and a longer-term focus on education and student academic progress wasn’t easy to strike given the circumstances. It was a case of gently increasing the focus on the latter area whilst not lessening the effectiveness of the work in the former.</p> <p>One aspect of School work which had been postponed for now until well after Christmas was the possibility of parents’ evenings, which felt a long way off given the circumstances. School was following up the Year 13 assessments with phone-calls, was developing plans for on-line Parent Information Evenings and would review later in the year whether to hold traditional parents’ evenings or develop alternative approaches to the partnership working with parents.</p> <p><b>Governors asked about the health and wellbeing of the SLT during these challenging times. The Headteacher thanked Governors for their enquiry but stated that all was well and that the challenge was to take one day at a time whilst looking at the education of students long term whilst not ignoring Covid.</b></p> <p><b>As a Headteacher Mr Devereux-Roberts commented that a major impact on the wellbeing of Senior Leaders was waiting for the outcomes of track and trace which could be received any time of the day.</b></p> <p><b>The Chair thanked the Headteacher for his comprehensive report and wished it to be known that Governors felt well informed about what was happening in School.</b></p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the report be noted.</b>
<b>Agenda item 5</b>	<b>REMOTE LEARNING PROVISION</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The Senior Assistant Headteacher (KN) updated Governors on the remote learning provision being utilised in School.</p> <p>Governors were advised that during lockdown School had used the Show My Homework platform which had worked well. However, when contact with students was resumed School moved to MS Teams as the infrastructure was in place and staff had the appropriate training.</p> <p>Staff had continued to receive CPD around remote ways of working via a number of platforms and staff had now become proficient in delivering remote learning. Further CPD would be undertaken around setting assignments via Teams which would further up-skill staff.</p> <p>The self-isolation of a number of Yr10 students had presented a challenge as only a proportion of the bubble was sent home. This necessitated School adopting a blended learning approach with work set via Teams. Staff had to quickly become proficient in up loading files, setting assignments although the use of the chat function enabled staff and students to communicate.</p> <p>There had been some issues around work set not being completed especially in Yr10.</p>

	<p>Accordingly, contact was made as to why the students were not completing the work set and a number of issues around passwords and returning work via platforms other than Teams were identified. It was also discovered that there were no issues with connectivity but that in some cases there was a lack of parental engagement. The majority of the students had received a pastoral telephone call to ensure that everything was fine.</p> <p>It had been stressed to students who were at home that it was imperative that work was completed otherwise they would be behind when they returned to School. More checks would be made if the numbers self-isolating increased.</p> <p><b>Mrs O’Hare asked if it was the intention to move completely away from Show My Homework? In response KN advised that School was still using Show My Homework for regular homework but Teams for students self-isolating. Show My Homework had a parental app which enabled contact to be maintained which unfortunately was not available on Teams.</b></p> <p><b>Mrs O’Hare asked if lessons delivered via Teams were tailored or the same as those delivered in class. KN reported that the work on Teams should align with that delivered in the classroom.</b></p> <p><b>The Chair asked if parents were informed when children were not engaging? KN reported that where School was concerned about lack of engagement a pastoral phone call was made asking if the student was having any difficulties.</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Critchley commented that anything which was done to inform and engage parents during this time should be welcomed.</b></p> <p><b>In response to questions from Dr Morley, KN reported how meetings were scheduled and lesson invitations issued.</b></p> <p><b>In closing the discussion, the Chair thanked staff for their commitment in particular to those staff who had not, initially, been technically proficient but had worked hard to develop the necessary skills to ensure that students continued to receive an education.</b></p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the report be noted</b>
<b>Agenda item 6</b>	<b>SAFEGUARDING UPDATE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>The Deputy Head Teacher reported that the Safeguarding Policy, which was a Cheshire West and Chester Council Policy, had been circulated to Governors and asked if there were any comments/observations</p> <p><b>Mr Devereux-Roberts as Safeguarding Governor advised that he had read the Policy and had not found any specific issues.</b></p> <p><b>Mr Wheeler referred to the requirement for there to be sufficient Governors trained in Safer Recruitment and asked what number was considered to be sufficient and was the training time limited? The Deputy Head Teacher advised that it would be necessary to visit training records in respect of which Governors had undertaken the training but that it was not time limited. A recruitment Panel must have someone trained in Safer Recruitment on it The Deputy Head Teacher also referred to the home learning module produced by the NSPCC that the SLT had access and which could be made available to Governors if they so wished.</b></p> <p>The Deputy Head Teacher also reminded that if Governors had not already done so, could they contact Mr Cooney advising that they had read the latest version of the Keeping Children</p>

	<p>Safe in Education document</p> <p>In respect of attendance, there were currently 26 students self-isolating which was a significant decrease in numbers. If any of these students were entitled to Free School Meals then School was issuing a £15 supermarket vouchers per week of absence. This was much appreciated by families who were finding the current situation difficult</p> <p>Current overall attendance was at 94.2%. and Governors were reminded that student Covid related absences attracted an X Code unless they received a positive result which then became an I Code. By Year group attendance was as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yr7 95.8%</li> <li>• Yr8 94.7%</li> <li>• Yr9 93.1%</li> <li>• Yr10 92.6 %</li> <li>• Yr11 94.6%</li> </ul> <p>Students whose illness absences were a cause for concern were now required to provide medical evidence. School had issued 9 fixed penalty warning letters and 6 legal warning letters. There were 18 students whose attendance was below 50% whilst 1 Year 11 student had not returned to School since September. 5 students were being home educated and in 3 cases parents had explicitly stated that this was owing to Covid issues.</p> <p>In respect of persistent absence, 183 students had been classed as such although as it was early in the academic year, this would improve. 69 of these students were classed as disadvantaged which was a high percentage of the total number of disadvantaged students.</p> <p><b>Mrs Critchley asked if School had enough support. The Deputy Head Teacher advised that support was adequate in School, however, some families needed support from TAF meetings so issuing a fixed penalty notice would be inappropriate in these cases. However, some families had children who were perennially absent and School was adopting a hard line with them.</b></p> <p><b>Mrs Critchley asked if families were reluctant to let children return to School because of the possibility of them contracting Covid because of moving around in School. The Deputy Head Teacher responded that where this was the case, the School was using the 5 Student Support Centres to support students to return to School.</b></p>		
<b>Resolved:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Safeguarding Report be noted.</li> <li>2. That the Safeguarding Policy be approved</li> </ol>		
<b>Action:</b>	<b>What:</b>	<b>Who:</b>	<b>When:</b>
	<b>Deputy Head Teacher to ascertain which Governors had undertaken the Safer Recruitment training.</b>	<b>SW</b>	<b>Next meeting</b>
<b>Agenda item 7</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>		
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p><u>Governor Vacancies</u> The Chair advised of the resignations of Mrs D Jones and Mrs B Ratcliffe both Co-opted Governors. This now meant that the Governing Body was carrying 3 vacancies for Co-opted Governors.</p> <p>Governors considered that before any consideration was given to filling these vacancies a Governors' Skills Audit should be undertaken to identify any skills gaps in the Governing Body's composition and thus inform the appointment process.</p> <p><u>Future Governance Focus</u> The Chair requested Governors to begin to give some thought prior to the meeting of the</p>		

	Governing Body in December into areas of governance that should be considered in the Spring and Summer terms.		
<b>Resolved:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Governors express their appreciation of the service to the Governing Body of Mrs Jones and Mrs Ratcliffe.</li> <li>2. That arrangements be made to undertake a Governor's Skills Audit.</li> <li>3. That Governors advise the Chair of any areas of governance which should be considered in the Spring and Summer terms.</li> </ol>		
<b>Action:</b>	<b>What:</b>	<b>Who:</b>	<b>When:</b>
	Arrangements be put in place to undertake a Governor's Skills Audit	Clerk	ASAP
	Governors advise the Chair of any governance areas which should be considered at future meetings	Governors	ASAP

<b>Agenda item 8</b>	<b>FINANCE UPDATE</b>
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<b>Discussion:</b>	<p><u>School Fund</u> The School Business Manager submitted a statement of the income and expenditure for the School Fund to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. The statement had been inspected by the Auditor who had found no irregularities and had thus issued the appropriate audit certificates.</p> <p><u>Month 7 Update</u></p> <p>The School Business Manager had previously circulated a Month 7 Budget Summary for the information of Governors. The SBM suggested that the School continued to be in a strong financial position and could expect to have a significant surplus at the end of the financial year. Discussions would be held in the SLT around how the surplus could be used to improve education within the School.</p> <p>An overspend was to be expected on cleaning materials although this would be offset by savings on teacher supply and catering costs and energy charges.</p> <p><b>Dr Morley referred to the spend on marketing being around 55% and enquired if the School was hoping to attract additional pupils whether the figure in the budget was enough. The SBM advised that this budget heading would overspend by year end owing to the costs of producing virtual open evenings. These had proved so popular that future face to face meetings would probably be enhanced by some virtual element.</b></p> <p><b>Mr O'Neill enquired about intake numbers for Year 7 in September 2021. The SBM advised that no definite figure would be known until March 2021 but estimates suggested that School would again need a significant number of out of area students to achieve PAN..</b></p>
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<b>Resolved:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Annual Statement for the School Fund to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 together with the relevant Audit Certificates be approved.</li> <li>2. That the Month 7 Budget update be noted.</li> </ol>
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<b>Agenda item 9</b>	<b>WHOLE SCHOOL APPRAISAL AND PAY POLICIES 2020/21</b>
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<b>Discussion:</b>	<p><u>Whole School Pay Policy 2020/21</u> Governors considered the Whole School Pay Policy 2020/21 which was based on that prepared by Cheshire West and Chester Council and amended by the Pay Committee at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020.</p> <p>The School Business Manager advised that the Pay Policy contained the pay award as agreed by the Government with effect from September 2020 as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The minimum of the main pay range to be raised by 5.5%;</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The maximum of the main pay range and the minima and maxima of all other pay ranges and allowances to be increased by 2.75%; and</li> <li>• Advisory points to be re-introduced on the MPR and UPR scales.</li> </ul> <p>Governors were advised that School had budgeted for a 3% increase so the award was manageable.</p> <p><b>The Chair and Vice Chair advised that they would meet with the Headteacher and School Business Manager to develop the Pay Policy for the next academic year so that information was provided which would enable Governors to ensure that no group of staff was being treated more or less generously than others became routine. This should include reference to all staff employed at the School.</b></p> <p><u>Appraisal Policy</u> Governors considered the Appraisal Policy for 2020/21.</p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Pay Policy 2020/21 including the national pay award and Appraisal Policy 2020/21 be approved.</li> <li>2. That future versions of the Pay Policy contain details as discussed at the meeting.</li> </ol>
<b>Agenda item 10</b>	<b>3G PITCH UPDATE</b>
<b>Discussion:</b>	<p>Mr Wheeler had circulated a report detailing the current position regarding the construction of the 3G Pitch.</p> <p>Mr. Wheeler advised that the project was still on track financially but that there had been issues around planning conditions being resolved.</p> <p>Governors were also advised that the modular Changing Pavilion had been constructed but until the planning conditions were resolved would have to remain at the manufacturers.</p>
<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>That the progress report in respect of the 3G Pitch be noted.</b>
<b>Agenda item 11</b>	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>
	<b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 5.00pm</b>

**There being no further business the meeting ended at 18.20**