

Minutes of the Uffculme School Local Governance Committee Meeting held on 18 June 2020 via Microsoft Teams

Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Caroline Wigley (Chair)	CWI	Leo MacKenzie	LMA
Julian Berry	JBE	Matt Pearce	MPE
Alan Blackburn	ABL	John Roberts	JRO
Jo Dentith	JDE		
Hannah Devine-Wright	HDW		
Jill Larcombe	JLA		

Apologies / Absence (reason if required)	Initials	In Attendance	Initials
Andrew Woodward	AWO	Liz Mitchell (Clerk)	LMI

Signed as a correct record of the meeting:

Date:.....

CWI welcomed all to the meeting and it was confirmed that it was being recorded.

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

2. Declaration of Business Interests

No business interests relevant to agenda items were declared.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held 13 February 2020 were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising from those minutes

4.1 Progress with actions from the last meeting

4.1.1 First Aid Policy – is on the agenda.

4.1.2 ABL has not been able to look into safeguarding procedures at other schools' Sports Centres.

4.1.3 SIP – key of progress codes has been added and revised copy is on the Governors' Portal.

4.1.4 Health and Safety Policy – the UAT policy is undergoing a full review so until this is complete, the old version is in place. The meeting was updated about personnel changes to UAT Financial Director and Head of Business Operations at Uffculme School.

4.1.5 AWO has yet to undertake training.

4.2 Any other matters arising from the last meeting

None.

5. Safeguarding

5.1 Annexes A and B to the Safeguarding Policy

These had been approved as Chair's Actions as they were needed for circulation to staff before pupils returned to school.

5.2 Single Central Record

The Chair is responsible for monitoring the SCR and was due to carry out random checks on paper files with the HR team, however this has not been possible during lockdown. ABL informed the meeting about the work that has been done recently to the SCR by HR staff to ensure it is complete and accurate.

5.3 Update on Directors' decisions about DBS checks

The Directors have taken a number of decisions regarding DBS checks which apply to all schools in the UAT:

- Staff are to sign an annual safeguarding declaration
- DBS reassessment to take place whenever there is a significant change to an employee's job or role.
- DBS to be redone following any allegation about a staff member
- DBS to be carried out on any member of staff who only has a List 99 check – these have all been done at Uffculme.
- Governors and Directors to have an enhanced DBS check every 4 years.

6. Headteacher's Report

6.1 Coronavirus Update:

6.1.1 ABL informed the governors that it has been a really challenging time and the staff have worked very hard to do whatever has been needed, such as collating evidence for Year 11 grades and dealing with the challenges of remote learning. There have been several iterations of the plans for transition for the new intake. Some staff have struggled with isolation. ABL paid tribute to all the staff for their efforts and noted the work of the premises team in ensuring the site is safe for staff and students.

6.1.1 ABL told governors the very sad news of the sudden death of David Cameron, a very popular member of staff for 19 years, which has been a real blow to the school community.

6.1.3 Parents have given a huge amount of positive support, expressing their gratitude for the efforts the school is making both in terms of the academic work provided and the pastoral support for their children.

6.1.4 LMA had submitted a number of questions on the Headteacher's Report:

6.1.4.1 Has the 'attendance' of students been measured by the take-up of online learning and levels of engagement?

- ABL responded that a survey with Year 10 parents showed 92% were really pleased with the work set and pupils were well engaged, though this may be slightly over optimistic as there are 20-25 students whose engagement is not as good as it should be (probably the same students who staff would be struggling to engage if they were in school). Lower in the school all Heads of Year have worked with class teachers to identify any students who are causing concern – this is broadly in line with expectations, with most being engaged. In general, there is a picture of students who really care about their education, want to do well and are trying their best.
- LMA asked whether it can be assumed that engagement with the online resources transfers into learning. ABL responded that online learning is not the same as being in school but students are doing the work and submitting it to teachers for feedback.
- LMA further asked what efforts are being put into planning to help the students catch up. ABL replied that it is difficult to plan until it is known what will happen in September, however SLT are initially making plans for key exam groups in Year 10 and for Year 9 students who will have GCSEs at the end of Year 10.
- There is now the opportunity to bring students in Years 7-9 in over the last few weeks of term to have meetings with their tutors when they can start looking at plans for September.
- It does not appear that the school will be expected to open fully over the summer holiday.
- There is a great deal of uncertainty for next year. Gaps in learning will have to be filled and foundations secured for KS3 pupils. The DfE want to run exams next summer and Ofqual is considering some form of teacher assessment alongside the exams and cutting some content, though that would penalise some students and would be detrimental for post-16 studies.
- The ethos and culture at Uffculme help as students are positive about working in partnership with the school to get where they need to be – they have a desire to succeed. HDW stated that this is a testament to the school.
- The school is only able to plan a short time ahead as the situation is so fluid. The current priority is getting Year 10 students back in and giving parents confidence that it is safe.
- Headteachers are being advised to plan for both a full return of students in September and for having year groups in on a rota – a huge logistical challenge. There will be no concrete plan until there is certainty about what will happen. HDW congratulated the school on what it is doing.

6.1.4.2 LMA's second question related to the impact of Covid on staff.

- ABL responded that some are struggling with mental health and wellbeing, others are shielding or are vulnerable. Some have challenges with internet capacity. There has been regular contact with all staff throughout and about half way through lockdown a piece of work was done on wellbeing, following which some staff took up the opportunity to access the wellbeing services the school provides.
- HDW asked whether staff are offered testing for Coronavirus. ABL explained testing is not routine, though all who work in schools are key workers so could get a test if needed. The school is now registered as an employer so tests can be fast tracked.
- HDW asked about those staff in high risk groups. ABL confirmed that some are not coming into school. Social distancing rules are being strictly adhered to.
- LMA asked whether the school has had all the resources needed to respond to Coronavirus. ABL said initially there was a short period when it was difficult to get basic cleaning materials but there is now a stock of materials and of appropriate PPE. The guidance is that PPE should only be used where it is absolutely needed. If there is a culture of strictly following social distancing,

minimising students mixing, maintain good hygiene etc PPE is not needed. This is why the appendix to the H&S policy was needed.

6.1.4.3 LMA asked whether the school has looked after and prepared the current Year 11 appropriately and whether there are any things that could have been done differently. Is there an area of weakness or risk in the transition between settings for Year 11 students?

- ABL acknowledged it had been difficult. DfE confirmed that no work undertaken after lockdown could be used as exam evidence. After exams the transition is usually picked up by the settings the students would be attending in Year 12. The school has never had the capacity to do transition work with Year 11s. It has tried hard to be supportive and provide pastoral care through SLT members, the Head of Year and tutors. JRO has also liaised with colleges. The biggest effort from staff on behalf of Year 11 has been around collating and submitting evidence to exam boards.
- There was discussion about whether the school had done enough for the Year 11 students in terms of setting work to prepare them for Post-16 and also in terms of communication with families, and whether more should be done in future on transition for Year 11.
- ABL acknowledged these views and will reflect on them. However, the school is limited by staff capacity.
- Communication with families of Year 11s could perhaps have been better though JRO outlined the pastoral work done by himself and the Head of Year. The Careers Advisor has also continued to work with the most vulnerable students to ensure they are ready for college.
- It was a very different end to their school career than for a normal cohort, however efforts have been made (barbeque, Year Book, rescheduled prom) to help the Year 11 feel part of the school.

6.1.5 ABL commented about the provision of IT resources by the DfE, which has pledged to support vulnerable students and Year 10s with IT needs. Disappointingly, resources will only be provided for a very limited number of pupils (total of 19 at Uffculme) and as yet very little has been received. There are also restrictions on what software (including safeguarding software) can be loaded onto the laptops so they will not be as useful as they could be.

6.2 Staffing Update

ABL updated the meeting about staffing changes. Interviews are still to be held for one teaching vacancy, but all others have been filled.

7. School Improvement

7.1 Governor portfolio reports;

7.1.1 SEND – JDE's report on her meeting with Mrs Hawkins in February is in the meeting papers.

7.1.2 Teaching and Learning - LMA had a meeting with Katie Francombe just before lockdown. Will send report to the clerk to distribute.

8. SEF

ABL reminded the meeting that this is no longer a requirement for Ofsted but is a useful snapshot to have to refer to should the school have a pre-visit call from Ofsted. A trust wide template is being developed, which ABL is working on at the moment and should have ready to bring to the next LGC meeting.

9. Policies

9.1 Policies for approval

9.1.1 Safeguarding Policy – Coronavirus Annex 1 and Annex B. Already mentioned in item 5.1 above. The meeting unanimously agreed to formally ratify both annexes.

9.1.2 Behaviour Policy – Coronavirus Annex. The meeting unanimously agreed to ratify this annex.

9.1.3 E-Safety Policy. This was a Trust wide policy but has now be devolved to LGCs. The LGC voted to adopt the policy.

9.2 Policies for Information

9.2.1 Children Looked After Policy. JLA informed the meeting that this was agreed by the UAT board subject to an amendment which was not included in the version distributed to the LGC. A point is to be added, under 'Aims', that the Safeguarding Governor is to be the person to take responsibility for Looked After Children. This will be amended and the policy recirculated to governors.

9.2.2 First Aid Policy. This is delegated to the SLT who have approved it. To governors for information.

9.2.3 Drugs Policy. This is delegated to the SLT who have approved it. To governors for information.

9.3 Update on other policies and documents

9.3.1 Home School Agreement – an addition has been made to cover behaviour during the pandemic to ensure students conform to safety measures. It has only been circulated to those students who are coming into school

9.3.2 Provider Access Policy Statement. Was due for review by SLT. Deferred till next term.

9.3.3 Assessment Policy. Is overdue for review by SLT.

10. Governor Development

10.1 Report on any training/development undertaken

- LMA was undertaking a course on strategic leadership, but this has been postponed till Sept.
- JDE and ABL undertook an online exclusion training update in May for Headteachers who may sit on exclusion review panels. Both found it very beneficial. It highlighted the importance of schools maintaining a paper trail of evidence. Governors have to be very clear about procedures and responsibilities.
- CWI and JLA took a webinar on Safeguarding during the pandemic.
- JLA is taking part in a training programme (virtual) for professional clerks.

10.2 Training needs to be addressed

- Staff have access to a bank of online training courses. Clerk has asked HR to look into whether the package would enable governors to access courses.
- Training on Careers Education was due as a pre-meeting session. Also training on Deep Dives was going to be part of the Learning Walk which was cancelled. These need to be covered next term.

11. Any Urgent Business Brought Forward by the Chair

None.

12. Items for the next agenda

May be necessary to hold another virtual meeting.

HDW asked how governors can best support ABL and the school in terms of their portfolio responsibilities etc at the moment. ABL suggested governors make email contact with their linked members of SLT, who are keeping an eye on their briefs and moving the agenda forward where they can. However, he also asked governors to be sensitive to the pressure staff are under.

Agenda items:

- Start of year business items.
- SEF – new version from ABL.

13. Impact of this meeting

There was discussion of the DfE enforced limit on the number of students on site which is frustrating to the school as there is the capacity to accommodate more. KS3 students are to be invited in to see their tutors before the end of term but will only be for one, one-hour session because of these restrictions. School transport is available to students.

JLA asked for the thanks of the LGC to ABL, the SLT and the rest of the staff to be minuted. They have all worked very hard over a difficult period and deserve huge admiration.

13.1 Impact on outcomes:

- LGC are now better informed about the challenges the school has been facing.
- Highlighted what the school has achieved and the challenges it has been given and overcome.
- Teachers are working very hard (despite what is being said in the media).
- Work in planning is outstanding.
- HT will reflect on Year 11 transition and see what more can be done in future.

13.2 Risks and Concerns:

- Risk Assessment – ABL has shared this with CWI and will put on the portal for governors to see the planning behind actions and operational details. It has been signed off by both the LA and the board.
- Staff wellbeing – important to bring to the fore and have open discussions.
- There will be learning to come out of the situation, which should be done quickly once the pandemic is over. Areas where systems can be made more robust and any practices that should be retained in the future should be identified.
- IT – the pace of change and use of IT is to be commended and still could be used in other ways in the future. However, there is an equity issue in students’ access to IT and these discrepancies must not be overlooked. ABL noted that this is why the school has taken certain decisions on how IT is used to ensure it makes the best provision it can whilst at the same time bearing in mind that IT poverty exists for some pupils.

14. Date of next meeting

Dates for next academic year will be circulated when received from the Board.

This was JBE’s last meeting as he is stepping down before his term of office ends next term. He was thanked by CWI and ABL for his work on behalf of the governors and school over the past years. His input and support for the school has been valued.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7pm.

ACTIONS

Item	Action	Who	Deadline
5.	SCR checks to be undertaken	Chair	When school returns
6.1.4	Reflection on Year 11 Transition	ABL	When school returns
7.1.4	Distribution of Teaching and Learning visit report	LMA/Clerk	ASAP
10.2	Access to online training modules through school supplier	Clerk	ASAP
10.2	Reschedule missed training	Clerk	ASAP
12.	Portfolio holders to contact SLT links	Govs	17/7 (end term)
13.	Risk Assessment to be put on Governors’ Portal	ABL	ASAP
13.	Identification of any lessons to be learned from school shutdown	ABL	When school returns
14.	Circulate meeting dates for 2020/2021	Clerk	When received from board