



Minutes of the Uffculme School Local Governing Committee Meeting held on 19 November 2020 via Microsoft Teams

Attendees	Initials	Attendees	Initials
Caroline Wigley (Chair)	CWI	Leo MacKenzie	LMA
Alan Blackburn	ABL	Matt Pearce	MPE
Jo Dentith	JDE	John Roberts	JRO
Jill Larcombe	JLA	Andrew Woodward	AWO

Apologies / Absence (reason if required)	Initials	In Attendance	Initials
		Lorraine Heath	LHE
		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

None. AWO will leave at 7pm.

2. Declaration of Business Interests

2.1 No business interests relevant to agenda items were declared.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held 17 September 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising from those minutes

4.1 Progress with actions from the last meeting

4.1.1 Parent governor recruitment – following the recruitment process, the Chair and Headteacher have put two names to the Trust board for approval. It is hoped the new governors will be able to attend the February meeting.

4.1.2 Training – two governors are still to complete their level 2 safeguarding training.

4.1.3 Portfolio meetings with SLT lead – will be reported under item 7.2.

4.1.4 Other actions are complete.

4.2 Any other matters arising from the last meeting

JDE's successor as Headteacher of Uffculme Primary School will join the LGC, although not immediately he is in post.

5. Safeguarding

5.1 Feedback from Safeguarding Audit

5.1.1 JLA reported that she and CWI had a meeting with Chris Lepper (CLE). Unfortunately, CLE had experienced technical issues with the online safeguarding audit form and had been unable to complete it. The submission must be made by 15 December and the LGC will receive the safeguarding action plan at their next meeting.

5.1.2 The return to school has gone well although there have been some issues with the use of homophobic and racist language, particularly in the younger students and on social media. Concerted work is being done to address this.

5.1.3 Attendance is at 95% overall and 96.5% for disadvantaged students. Covid related student absences have been very limited so far.

5.1.4 A lot of CLE's time is taken up with Looked After Children, though the number of meetings that are now on-line is saving travelling time and has also resulted in increased attendance from outside bodies.

5.1.5 An increase in the number of vulnerable children because of financial problems had not been seen at the time of the meeting.

5.1.6 There are some gaps in knowledge about new Year 7 pupils as not all safeguarding records have been received from primary schools and there have been no face to face meetings with primary staff.

6. Headteacher's Report

ABL highlighted a few points in his report

- As it is the LGC's responsibility to ensure PAN is full, the reason the new Year 7 being below 216 was explained.
- ABL updated the LGC about Looked After Children the school has been asked to admit.
- Parents have shown their level of trust in the school in the way they have sent their children back. Initially in September, there was a fairly high level of absence, but this decreased quickly and is now at nearly normal levels. Attendance is at 95-96% compared to a national figure of 89%.

- The increased number of LAC has been a challenge for CLE as there is a lot of admin and Heads of Year are taking on some of the work of supporting these pupils.
- Some of the fixed term exclusions were because of inappropriate language, as referred to in item 5.1. A consistent message is being given to the pupils through assemblies, personal development etc to make it clear this is unacceptable.
- ABL updated the LGC on recent staff changes.
- Year 8 Parents Evenings and Open Evening – these online events were really successful and well received by parents. The Parent Tutor day on 1 December will also be entirely online.
- **AWO requested that attendance data for SEND pupils be added to future reports.**
- **AWO asked why there are potentially so many pupils with EHCPs in the intake for 2021 and what the implications will be for the SENDCO and her team. ABL responded that Uffculme is seen as a good school that parents believe will meet their children's needs. An increased number of students with EHCPs will mean the Learning Support team have more demands on their time. It may also have budget implications if the students do not have funding, so the cost of additional TA time will have to come from the school's core budget.**
- **JLA questioned whether either of the students reported as leaving the school have gone to home education. ABL responded that one has but explained the exceptional circumstances. All appropriate protocols have been followed and the LA kept fully informed.**
- Activities Week 2021 – still planning to have a week but it will be a scaled down version.

6.1 Targets for 2020/2021

- The decision has been taken by Directors that whole cohort performance targets for Year 11 should not be set this year, though they will monitor achievement through the year and review the data next summer. It is still not certain how grades will be awarded and is not a level playing field for students having varying amounts of time out of school.
- The setting of individual targets for Year 10 was deferred and is currently in progress, now that staff have a better understanding of the year group.

6.2 Catch-up Funding

The use of this allocation is restricted and is being used to support additional resources to benefit the students. It is being used for:

- Student access to IT was a concern during the first lockdown so some of the funding has been used to buy laptops which can be used in school or at home as required.
- As it replaced Year 7 catchup funding, a proportion has been used to target Year 7s in need of extra support having missed their last months at primary school.
- Some is being used for targeted support and intervention at KS4, particularly with Year 11 and JRO has planned a programme of support for students who are struggling in the run up to exams.
- Resources and materials for students for home learning have been funded.
- About £20,000 has yet to be allocated and will be directed as needs become clearer through the year.

6.3 On-going review of current Covid Security structure

6.3.1 A new version of the school's risk assessment, updated for the current lockdown, had been distributed to governors. ABL outlined three main changes:

- Any clinically extremely vulnerable staff are to work from home. This affects 2 staff at Uffculme.
- All after school extra-curricular activities have been suspended (particularly affecting PE). There is still a substantial programme during school hours.
- Face masks to be worn in communal areas. Parents and students have been very supportive and compliant with this change.

6.3.2 LMA asked if plans would need to be altered as the winter weather got colder. ABL responded that the original measures were 'winter proofed' as far as possible, and there is now a plan for wet weather PE, so requirements for further changes should be limited. SLT look at the Covid protection measures in the classrooms they visit during learning walks and they feed back to

staff. Arrangements are under constant review and students have made some sensible suggestions which have helped design the measures in place.

- LHE commented that the security measures at Uffculme are really successful. There is good buy in from the students who comply with the rules (staying in their bubbles, the one-way system etc). The only staggering of timings is at break and students are not disturbing other lessons.
- The school has to attain a balance between ensuring a protected environment and allowing education to continue.
- **JLA referred to the Covid Catchup Funding and asked if governors will receive a costed, written plan as they have responsibility for scrutinising it. ABL said they will (in a similar format to the PP report) and he will circulate in the next few weeks.**
- **JLA further asked when ABL would be able to report on the impact of the funding. ABL will report to the LGC regularly through the year.**

7. School Improvement

7.1 Review of Core Priorities

The need to keep the school up and running, develop remote learning and focus on attendance has overtaken that official School Improvement Plan (SIP). SLT are having to do a lot of additional duties and cover which has reduced their capacity to focus on other issues. However, ABL reassured governors that the school is not lacking ambition in what it is doing. He has reviewed the priorities in the SIP and the overarching priorities are still being met, although the detail of the actions that had been planned have changed because of the context the school is working in.

7.1.1 Outcomes – in a very strong position. Year 11 kept up their momentum during the first lockdown, are working well and are in a good position.

7.1.2 Curriculum and Assessment – the work on remote learning has crystallised this focus. Sequencing is clear because of the way work is uploaded. Katie Francombe will lead work on students as self-regulated learners later in the year.

7.1.3 Personal Development – students are really happy and value being back at school. A lot of work has been done on PSHE and RE and on extending the Personal Development programme.

7.1.4 Behaviour – the school is working with the new policy. Issue like the use of homophobic language are being addressed. Lockdown has brought this issue to the fore.

7.1.5 Leadership and Management – lockdown has shown the strength of both middle and senior leaders in the school and now looking at how to build capacity for the future. There have been real opportunities for middle leaders to step up which has been very positive.

Though the steps underlying the priorities have not been what the school expected to do, things are still moving forward. Will return to this later in the year and look at in more detail.

- **JLA asked about staff wellbeing and student mental health. CLE and Karina Balado have done a lot of work with individual students, ensuring they are supported. ABL does not think Uffculme has seen the level of mental health issues with students that some schools have. Though there is general anxiety about Covid and Year 11 are anxious about exams, there are not a large number of students with significant issues. In terms of staff the HR manager, has done a lot of good work doing risk assessments for all staff who are vulnerable and these have also been offered to any staff who are anxious about their working environment. The Wellbeing Director for the Trust has also worked with Uffculme staff on their wellbeing. There has been no increase in staff absence because of anxiety.**
- LHE commented that the burden on SLT and the impact on their stress levels needs to be acknowledged, particularly on ABL. LMA agreed, saying that SLT should be encouraged to look after themselves as if they take care of themselves other staff will recognise this and follow suit (their Leadership Shadow).

7.2 Updates from Portfolio Holders

7.2.1 *Curriculum and Assessment* – notes of AWO's meeting with Lyndsey Poortman (LPO) had been distributed and he commended the amount of work being done.

- The initial rationale for curriculum review and development was outlined and it had progressed to the development and sequencing phase but the onset of Covid transferred the focus to remote learning. This has galvanised the need for clear sequencing and a logical curriculum.
- **AWO asked why the school uses Microsoft Teams rather than one of the other platforms available. ABL explained that the school already had Teams in use and had expertise on both the teaching and technical side, so it made sense to continue with it. MPE added that other platforms were considered but it was felt the advantages of staying with Office 365, which the school is fairly heavily invested in, such as the single sign-in and the ease of moving files outweighed any disadvantages.**
- There is a full PSHE curriculum in Remote Learning which may be impacted by the work to address the use of inappropriate language by students.
- AWO discussed with LPO the promotion of diversity within the curriculum and the choice of some texts in English.
- AWO's next meeting with LPO will look at curriculum sequencing in a specific curriculum.
- AWO expressed his appreciation for all the work going on in school to maintain excellent standards.

7.2.2 *Teaching and Learning* - LMA has a meeting scheduled with Katie Francombe next week.

7.2.3 *SEND* - AWO is meeting Liz Hawkins tomorrow.

7.2.4 Portfolios will be reviewed when the LGC is back up to full strength.

8. Student Progress

8.1 Updates on Years 11 and 10

8.1.1 Year 11

The data presented was put together early in the term so there are likely to be changes, both with individual students and overall. Generally, the year group is in a strong position. They have settled well, are very few behaviour issues, lessons are positive, and students want, and are quite determined, to do well.

Key measures:

- P8 is about 0.75, close to previous years and would be a real achievement given the upheaval last year.
- Basics 4-9 – similar to previous years.
- Basics 5-9 – still work to do but challenging. There is a gender gap, but some boys will perform better when it comes to the exams.
- PP figure – is very cohort dependent.
- EHCP – very small cohort and some have significant difficulties.

JRO and LPO have put together a really structured plan for the spring term (mocks, intervention etc), which is being communicated to parents soon.

8.1.2 Year 10

ABL will circulate the data tomorrow. It shows a very different picture from Year 11 and lower than would be anticipated. SLT have interrogated the data to analyse the reasons and it appears that staff have been very cautious with their grades. This is for a number of reasons: many departments would have started their curriculum during Year 9 so teachers would have a better knowledge of the pupils at the start of Year 10, the data was collected very early in the term, there was less background data available. ABL anticipates there will be significant and quick improvements as the year progresses and will continue to monitor closely with HoDs.

Governors raised a number of questions:

- **AWO asked if there are plans for delivery of content that would have been taught at the end of Year 9. ABL said this had been part of the planning for catch up and departments all feel they can fit it in. It will be monitored and adjustments made as necessary.**
- **LMA asked about Year 11 and what plans were in place should they lose further time at school. ABL replied that the system of remote learning has put the school in a much stronger position if**

students do have absences, though it can never quite replace being in the classroom so there would be an inevitable impact on the students.

- LMA further questioned whether the school has analysed what students do and don't get out of remote learning, after the Spring lockdown. ABL said there is a full mirror curriculum online so students should be able to keep pace exactly with what they would do if they were in school and is the closest thing to being in the classroom that can be provided. It will also be a very powerful revision tool.
- JLA asked if the gap is widening between disadvantaged students and the full cohort. JRO responded that this is not indicated by the Year 11 data, but it is very cohort specific and difficult to compare year on year. The school must make sure that disadvantaged students do not miss out through not having access to IT and this is part of the reasoning behind buying laptops from the catchup funding. JLA commented that students without IT access would miss out on the remote learning as a revision tool. A survey is to be conducted at the tutor parents evening to identify what IT access students have at home to enable support to be targeted effectively. MPE commented that in the development of remote learning there has been a focus on the pupil experience being the same as if in school. Despite some teething issues, the roll out has been really successful and both staff and pupils are engaging very well. The learning platform is accessible on a lot of devices which aids accessibility (a lot of students use their phones) but the school needs to remain aware of anything that might add a barrier to accessing learning for individuals.

9. Policies

9.1 *Child Protection (LGC approval):*

Governors had agreed this policy by email as it needed to be in place. Concern about business being done outside of meetings was noted.

9.2 *Remote Learning Policy (SLT approval):*

- LMA questioned whether the school had been able to test the aspirations for students set out in the policy. ABL explained that students are accessing remote learning alongside their lessons and the platform is the main vehicle for homework and assignments. Staff are constantly monitoring and giving feedback, which is very positive so far (at both key stages), and which would inform change. Remote learning is also the way the IT department has been teaching for the past 2½ years, which has given students a lot of valuable experience. LMA said it might be of use to collate this feedback to demonstrate continuous evaluation and improvement. ABL explained the strategy group of staff, which is picking up on feedback and ensuring it is passed back to teachers in a constructive way.

AWO left the meeting.

10. Governor Development

10.1 *Report on any training/development undertaken*

- Clerk is monitoring which online modules governors complete through Every.
- LHE is still keen to get all governors across the Trust together in the Spring Term. Likely to be a 'virtual' event but is important so the schools do not feel disconnected.
- JLA is continuing her training on governance leadership through the confederation of school trusts.
- CWI completed a webinar on wellbeing and mental health

10.2 *Training needs to be addressed*

Induction will be needed for the new governors. Development of a Trust wide programme was suggested.

11. Any Urgent Business Brought Forward by the Chair

None.

CWI thanked JDE for all she has done for the committee over her years as a governor and wished her well in her new post: she will be missed. JDE has found being a governor at Uffculme School has given her clarity on the whole school journey for students.

12. Items for the next agenda

- Year 11 update.
- Covid safety measures
- Development of remote learning (5pm showcase)
- Budget
- Portfolio Holders reports and review of portfolios.
- Safeguarding audit/action plan
- Year 10 data.

13. Impact of this meeting

13.1 Impact on outcomes for pupils

- Governors assured that Covid security measures are in place and working well to keep students safe.
- The development of remote learning is progressing well and a mirror curriculum is in place should students have to be away from school.
- Progress of Year 11 is reassuring and fears that they would have fallen significantly behind during lockdown have not been realised.
- Governors are confident in the leadership of the school in the way ABL and the team are coping with all that is being thrown at them. There is a strong senior and middle leader team.
- Staff loyalty has been demonstrated through the situation.

13.2 Risks and Concerns

- Year 10 data – need to review as governors.
- Concern about the stress on ABL and the SLT from the additional work necessitated by Covid.
- Concern that the increasing numbers of LAC and pupils with SEND is increasing the pressure on certain members of staff.
- Potential financial cost to the core budget, which is already under pressure, of students with EHCPs but not funding, joining the school.

14. Date of next meeting

18 February 2021.

There being no further business the Chair thanked all for attending and the meeting ended at 7.15pm.

ACTIONS

Item	Action	Who	Deadline
6.	Attendance for SEND pupil cohort to be added to future HT reports	ABL	Next meeting
6.2	Covid catchup plan, with costings, to be provided	ABL	
	Regular reports on the impact of the Covid Catchup Fund to be brought to the LGC	ABL	Ongoing
	Portfolio holder meetings with SLT leads.		
	Induction for new governors		