

MORECAMBE BAY ACADEMY, ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Academy Improvement Board held at the school on Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 4:00pm.

Present: Mr Phil Bell (Chair)
Mr Gavin Gomersall
Mr Andrew McKinnell

Mrs Heather McClurg (Principal)

Also present: Mrs Fiona Graham (Clerk)
Mrs Rebecca Ashcroft (Assistant Principal – Observer)
Miss Sam Gresty (Trainee Business Manager – Observer)
Mrs Angela Livesey (Director of Business and Finance – Observer)
Mr Mark Salthouse (Assistant Principal – Observer)
Miss Helena Thornton (Vice Principal – Observer)

Apologies: Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Alison Halhead and Mrs Sally Kenyon.

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ACTION

In order that Rebecca Ashcroft could make a presentation and then leave the meeting, Members of the AIB agreed to alter the order of the agenda and make item 8, Year Seven Intervention and Progress the first item for discussion.

22.01 Year Seven Intervention and Progress

Board Members were referred to the GL Assessments Literacy Update document that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Rebecca Ashcroft explained the following points;

- The Year Seven cohort was made up of 157 pupils
- A standardised score of 100 was the baseline
- Four strands of intervention were in place to catch up on lost learning
- Pupils attended the intervention on a carousel basis. The big focus was that if a pupil could not read they could not learn.
- Intervention was provided in blocks some were more prolonged than others depending upon the needs of the pupils.
- Assessments were carried out at specific check points and evidence was made of sustained and rapid progress.

Intervention programmes included;

- Read Write Fresh Start
- Lexia Power Up Lexia
- Reading Leaders
- Bedrock intervention

A Board Member asked if these intervention programmes were in place and if assessment had been carried out. Rebecca Ashcroft replied that the GL assessments had been sent away and the results and the intervention programmes had been in place since October half term. Pupils were re-tested every six to eight weeks. Some pupils required specialised intervention and some made accelerated progress and completed the programme of intervention earlier than expected.

Board members were referred to the GL Assessments Numeracy Update document that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Rebecca Ashcroft explained the following points;

In Numeracy, there were four strands of intervention in place:

- Power of 2
- Small group sessions using White Rose Maths resources.
- Mathematics
- Hegerty Maths

These intervention programmes were introduced following consultation with the Maths Department. The programme of intervention was organised on the same basis as the literacy intervention programme with a standardised score of 100 for the baseline.

A Board Member asked if it was possible to see progress following the intervention programmes. Rebecca Ashcroft replied that there were targets in place but the intervention in numeracy had begun in January so at this stage there was nothing measurable although strong tracking and recording was in place so measurable data would be available shortly.

Gavin Gomersall apologised for his late arrival and joined the meeting at 4:15pm.

A Board Member questioned the percentages in the tables. Rebecca Ashcroft explained that the percentages related to the groupings, but she would check that they were correct.

A Board Member sought clarification on the cost for the intervention programmes. Angela Livesey replied that the intervention programmes were covered by the Tutoring grant, Education Recovery funding and Covid Catch Up Premium grant. Everything was tracked and costed on that basis.

Rebecca Ashcroft was thanked for her comprehensive presentation. She gave her apologies and left the meeting at 4:20pm.

22.02 Scheme of Delegation

Members of the AIB approved the Scheme of Delegation subject to any amendments which may follow after a review made by Professor John Crewdson, Chair of the Bay Learning Trust and Mrs Sally Kenyon Chief Executive Officer of the Bay Learning Trust.

22.03 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference had been reviewed and approved by the Full Committee of the Bay Learning Trust.

22.04 Code of Conduct

The Members of the Board adopted the model Code of Conduct and reflected on the commitment, duties and responsibilities included in the code. All AIB Members agreed to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

22.05 AIB Matters

a) Membership

Members of the Board would remain in post for four years or until they agreed that a local governing board should be put in place.

Members of the Board agreed that it would be helpful to seek additional members to join the Academy Improvement Board. This would be an agenda item at the next AIB meeting to be held on Wednesday 16 March 2022.

clerk

b) DBS/Section 128 Checks

The clerk confirmed that all necessary arrangements were in place and all Members had the required clearances.

c) Register of Business Interests

Members of the AIB were reminded of the need to update the Register of Business Interests on an annual basis and to ensure that appropriate details were included on the school's website.

It was agreed that the Register of Business Interest forms would be updated at the next face to face meeting on Wednesday 16 March 2022.

**All
Members
clerk**

It was noted that this register should remain in school and that the Data Controller had been made aware of this form.

d) Declaration of Business Interests

There were no business interests in relation to the agenda items.

22.06 Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 November 2021, having been circulated, were approved and would be signed by the Chair as a correct record. **Chair Clerk**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

22.07 Principal's Report

The Principal's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Heather McClurg drew attention to the following;

- School reopening and attendance
- Behaviour
- Covid
- School numbers Year Seven
- Sixth Form Opening Evening
- Current Year Seven
- Teacher assessments
- Staffing
- Staffing requirements
- Covid vaccinations

School reopening and attendance

Attendance had been a challenge, since returning in the autumn term. Weekly attendance meetings were held, where all data: behaviour, attendance and safeguarding information was triangulated so early concerns could be identified. A system of engaging with the parents had been put in place.

Behaviour

Behaviour and attendance had been challenging during the autumn term but it was beginning to settle now. Before Christmas 37 members of staff had been absent due to Covid. This crisis had been managed and the school was staffed, but closed a day early on the Thursday lunchtime. Staffing in January had been stable and with one staff Covid case since Christmas.

School Numbers Year Seven

The final allocation of school places was still to be confirmed by Lancashire County Council. Early indications showed 152 first preferences. The number of first preferences last year was 117 so a significant increase in first choice places. This figure was expected to increase due to pupils not getting first choice places and some parents putting in paper applications or late applications.

One area that could be problematic for the numbers in Year Seven was that Bay Leadership Academy and Carnforth High School had increased their Pan. Angela Livesey added that in terms of the budget there had been caution with the number of pupils.

Sixth Form Open Evening

This had been held on 19 January and had been extremely well attended. 125 application packs had been distributed and the first applications from other schools for sixth form places had been received.

Teacher Assessments

Central Government required the completion of three series of Teacher Assessed grades (TAGs). The first of these had taken place and catch up with any pupils that were absent was in place. The dates of the Year Eleven mock examinations had been altered to the first two weeks in March to enable pupils to be fully prepared for these assessments. The TAG process would be completed in the summer term with the pupils' final assessment.

Staffing

The Principal explained that she had given notice of intention to leave at the end of this academic year. The post had been advertised with a closing date of 4 February and an interview date of 10 February. Angela Livesey, Director of Business and Finance would be retiring at the end of the academic year. Although due to leave entitlement she would leave at the end of May.

Christopher Starr, had been appointed Head of Maths. He had moved from Second in Maths to replace Natalie Carr who had moved to Carnforth High School. An advert was live for a Second in Maths.

Kate Watton who was a current member of staff had been appointed as Second in English. This vacancy was due to the end of a protected TLR. The post had been advertised internally and there had been three applicants. Enquiries had been raised with the Director of Ripley ITT SCITT regarding Kate Watton as she was an early career framework teacher. The Director had confirmed that Kate Watton would be a good appointment. In addition, the School Improvement partner working with the school had observed Kate Watton teach and stated she was the strongest teacher in the department.

Staffing Requirements

There were a number of staff who would be going on maternity leave.

Maternity leave for the Year Leader for Year Eleven would be covered internally by a member of staff. Currently the member of staff was covering a Year Ten maternity leave. Maternity cover would be required for a PE/Dance teacher.

The next item of discussion was deemed confidential and minuted as such.

The post of Vice Principal would be advertised, but this would be done after half term so it was staggered in relation to the appointment of a new Principal.

Covid Vaccinations

Covid vaccinations were being hosted at the school on 21 February for 12-15 year olds. The NHS were in charge of all the consent requirements.

A Board Member enquired if the police would be alerted about the Covid vaccinations on 21 February. Heather McClurg confirmed that they would be alerted.

A Board Member asked about the increase in Year Seven first choice applications. Heather McClurg replied that the 157 figures was the top line figure at the moment. There had been lots of work done to encourage applications, but analysis would be carried out on the figures.

The Chair expressed very grateful thanks to both Heather McClurg and Angela Livesey for all their hard work for the school. He appreciated that this would not be the last meeting but he thanked Heather McClurg for her dedication and leadership during such difficult times. He thanked Angela Livesey for all the work she had done with sorting out the finances of the school.

The Principal was thanked for her informative report.

22.08 Behaviour and Attendance Report

Mark Salthouse shared details of the Behaviour and Attendance Report that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Attendance

National figures of attendance were similar to those of the school. As at 25 January attendance stood at 87.4%.

Mark Salthouse referred to the table entitled, Five-year trend chronic absence groups number of pupils. He explained that the number of chronic absences was dramatically higher for autumn term one, but this was also the case for many others schools.

The challenges faced were;

- Despite a full year of improvements in attendance prior to the pandemic a culture of good attendance was not yet embedded. This lack of culture had significantly contributed to high rates of absence during autumn term one.
- Chronic absence presented a significant challenge and the priority of the pastoral team was safeguarding these pupils who were rarely in school.
- The pastoral team were Designated Safeguarding Lead (DLS) trained. They had increased home visits and where there was no response had requested the police to carry out welfare checks.
- Those pupils hard to reach had been raised at the weekly attendance meetings and the SEND team had been brought into these meetings.
- It was hoped there would be significant improvements in time, but they were limited at this stage.

The inclusion unit, Phoenix Hub lead by Angela Loynds, a member of the Support Team, was back in place and had significant success with reintegration of pupils. Also, the school was fortunate that Barnardo's Morecambe Bay Mental Health support team was based on the school site and so could support pupils. In addition, the school had links to local agencies

such as Children's Social Care and Children and Family Wellbeing Services. Referrals were made to the support workers for these agencies for children not in school.

A Board Member asked if the systems in place were robust. Mark Salthouse confirmed that there was confidence in the systems.

A Board member enquired how the AIB could provide support. Mark Salthouse replied that the pastoral team was more important than ever before with very challenging family situations with complex needs. Ideally more pastoral staff would help but the school managed as well as possible.

The Principal added that an advert had been posted for a pastoral administrative support post but there had been no responses to the advert. It was intended that the post would be re-advertised.

Behaviour

Behaviour had been very challenging for some time, but it was not as extreme as 2018/19. The challenge was maintaining a culture of expectation of good behaviour. A significant push back against good behaviour had been made by the Year Ten cohort. The number of exclusions in Year Ten had been significantly higher since the start of the autumn term. This had spiked in October to deal with intimidating behaviour. In a week in October there had been 12 exclusions, in a week in January the number had reduced to six or seven.

Priorities to deal with the Year Ten disruptive behaviour had included raising staff expectations, raising parents' expectations and holding Year Ten assemblies on behaviour. Eight Year Ten pupils had Behaviour Contracts drawn up with the help of their parents. These contracts were helping with really challenging defiant behaviour. Mark Salthouse concluded that since January the high level of poor behaviour was beginning to improve.

Mark Salthouse was thanked for his detailed report. He gave his apologies and left the meeting at 4:55pm.

22.09 School Term and Holiday Dates 2022-2023

Members of the Board approved the proposed school term and holiday pattern dates for 2022-2023 and approved the five INSET dates for 2022-2023.

The INSET dates were as follows:

- Thursday 1 September 2022
- Friday 2 September 2022
- Friday 7 October 2022
- Monday 31 October 2022
- Tuesday 1 November 2022

22.10 Unavoidable School Closures

The Principal confirmed that the school had closed on Thursday 15 December 2021 at lunchtime due to 39 members of staff being absent due to Covid. This meant the school closed a day early for the Christmas holiday.

School Closure; half day on Thursday 15 December and half day on Friday 16 December 2021.

22.11 Risk Register

Angela Livesey explained that the level of risk had been increased in some areas due to the limited number of Members of the Academy Improvement Board.

A Board Member enquired if there had been any response on finding Members for the AIB. Heather McClurg replied that the parent governor vacancy had been on the newsletter and on Synergy. Also, staff had been asked, but there had been no response. Board Members agreed to include the membership recruitment on the agenda of the next meeting. **clerk**

A further area of risk that had been increased, was the lower than anticipated numbers of pupils in Year Seven due to the challenges of Covid. The school had been marketed but there had not been the opportunity to invite pupils into visit the school. Angela Livesey said she was cautious, there was still residual funding in place but in real terms the number of pupils needed to increase.

22.12 Financial Compliance

Budget Update

Angela Livesey referred Board Members to the Budget Assumptions 2021-22 revised November 2021. She said the new financial settlement would be known by 21 February 2022. Although it would be higher, with lower pupil numbers, in real terms it would remain static.

The report included all the changes that had occurred since the budget had been approved in June 2021. The majority of changes had been absorbed but the pay award settlement for support staff had not been finalised and would be back dated to April 2021.

Reserve Movements from CWR Journals Year End 31 August 2021

The amount was £605,817,000 but the prepayments had not been taken out. The school fund amounted to £78,969.00.

The reserves carried forward from 2020-21 less capital commitments amounted to £489,918.00.

Angela Livesey said the bottom line figure on reserves was around the £500,000 mark, correlated with the changes and was based monthly on the November budget revision. The update in February would be forecast against that figure.

Premises Report

Angela Livesey said there were a lot of financial implications in terms of premises. Reserves potentially committed to Condition Improvement Funds (CIF) for the roof and the science laboratories had been adjusted over a five year project.

The science laboratories had been approved in June 2021, but the work would not start until March 2022. It was not a lengthy project; the four new laboratories and one prep room would be completed by July and would be an excellent asset for the Science Department.

Two CIF project bids had been made for December 2021. One was for the roof of the main building. Having missed out narrowly in the last round the bid had been strengthened and re-tendered.

The other CIF bid was for a new sports hall. The RPA Insurers had rejected the insurance claim. The reports produced had indicated that the damage was due to defective design. The basis of the bid was to replace the sports hall. Designs and tenders had been received and the support documents were being finalised.

If successful the school would be expected to contribute £150,000 towards the roof project and £350,000 towards the sports hall utilising the DfE CIF loans scheme. This represents 15.1% of the overall project cost which would be paid back over a ten year period.

The biggest project was the ground heat source boiler system. Weekly meetings were taking place between the DfE, RPA Insurers, Programme Management team, Enabling Team, Contractors, and Morecambe Bay Academy and the Bay Learning Trust to keep momentum on the project. Works were intrusive and the project was challenging not least because the designs were being done as progress was made. The whole project was fully funded by the DfE and RPA Insurers, the costs had spiralled from £1.5m to £4.1m.

Some changes to this ground heat sources boiler system project had impacted on school and so the work had been changed to twilight work at an additional cost. It was suggested that Morecambe Bay Academy was being used as a test case for other schools. The school had also been offered free IT assessment to reduce carbon foot print which was all helpful to the school at no additional cost. The removal of some asbestos in the roof void was a gain for the school and the twilight working arrangements were not impacting on the school.

A Board Member asked about the defective sports hall design. Angela Livesey explained that the sports hall was built by Lancashire County Council in 1994 and there was no redress. The wood worm was not covered by the insurance. Also, there was a significant amount of asbestos below the flooring.

A Board Member enquired if the sports hall could be kept and another one built on the land behind it. Angela Livesey replied that part of the agreement was that the old sports hall would have to come down, or the net capacity of

the site would significantly increase which was not helpful for CIF bids when the number of pupils on roll was in decline. The bid for the new sports hall could not exceed the area of the existing building. It was only possible to replace the existing building

A Board Member sought details on the curriculum part of the budget. Angela Livesey replied that the budget forecast assumed every penny was spend in all budgets. She mentioned that the energy bills had increased from £8,000 to £12,000 and so energy was about £50,000 adrift.

A Board Member enquired about supply cover costs. Angela Livesey replied that supply cover costs were not significant because it was difficult to get emergency cover. Supply agencies were not in a position to provided day to day cover. The teaching staff at the school had been very accommodating about cover which was fortunate.

22.13 AIB Training

The clerk agreed to circulate details of external training that was available. **clerk**

22.14 Any Other Business

There was no further business.

22.15 Confidentiality

The Members confirmed that all matters discussed at the AIB meetings were confidential.

It was agreed that part of item number 22.07 were deemed to be of a confidential nature and were minuted as such.

22.16 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The pattern of proposed dates and times for future meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that meetings would be held on:

- Wednesday 16 March 2022 at 4pm
- Wednesday 25 May at 4pm
- Wednesday 29 June at 4pm

The chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input and closed the meeting at 5:25pm.

MORECAMBE BAY ACADEMY, ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT BOARD

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Minutes of the meeting of the Academy Improvement Board held at the school on Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 4:00pm.

22.07 Principal's Report

Staffing Requirements

The Head of English had just come forward to say that she would require maternity leave.