

CENTRAL LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academy Improvement Board held at the school on Thursday 3 March 2022 at 3:45pm.

Present: Dr Alexis Holden (Chair)
Mr Matt Auger
Mr Andrew McKinnell

Mr John Cowper (Principal)

Also present: Mrs Fiona Graham (Clerk)
Ms Natasha Bilsborough (Trainee School Business Manager – Observer)

Apologies: Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Phil Wood and Mrs Anne Rickards.

In the absence of the Chair, Phil Wood, the Vice Chair, Alexis Holden chaired **ACTION** the meeting.

22.17 AIB Matters

a) Membership

John Cowper had looked into finding parents who may be interested in joining the AIB. Details had been added to the School Newsletter and two parents had come forward. Alexis Holden, in her capacity as Vice Chair and a parent member of the AIB had been in touch with both parents. The parents had agreed to join the next meeting of the AIB, as Observers.

John Cowper and Alexis Holden were thanked for their help in finding parents to join the AIB. The clerk confirmed that these details would be passed to the Bay Learning Trust Board of Directors. **clerk**

The members of the AIB agreed that a skills audit would be useful to look at the areas of expertise that needed development.

b) DBS/Section 128 Checks

John Cowper asked that members of the AIB confirm they had provided photographic evidence for the Single Central Record. **All Members**

c) Declaration of Business Interests

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

22.18 Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2022, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

AIB members noted the following matters;

AIB matters (minute 22.03 refers)

AIB members were asked to complete the Skills Audit form which had been circulated and then email the completed form to the clerk who would compile a summary of the returned forms. The email address for the returned forms was confirmed as grahamf@baylearningtrust.com

**AIB
members
clerk**

22.19 School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Report on Predicted Attainment for Year 11

Members of the AIB were referred to the document entitled Predicted Attainment for Year 11 (February 2022).

Matt Auger explained that the key headlines from 2019 had been used because the data for 2020/21 was teacher assessment and was not externally validated. The true position on school progress was more accurate using the 2019 data. The last mocks had finished on 25 February 2022 and so the data capture 2 for 2022 was the most accurate for targeted intervention. Matt Auger said there had been considerable disruption due to the world wide pandemic and so in reality there would not be much improvement from the progress achieved in 2019. The table showed a summary of details and bullet points on analysis of the headlines.

An AIB member asked about the position for the exams in summer 2022. Matt Auger replied that the Department for Education (DfE) had asked for all exam centre changes by 6 February 2022. The changes were mixed across the different subjects. Some subjects had had entire papers removed and advanced information would look different across the different subjects and specifications.

Matt Auger continued that it was difficult to predict the marking scheme. In the first year of the GCSE changes to the grading system 9-1, the scoring had been set, but as teachers were more familiar with the course contents and the teaching was better the grading percentages had risen.

The performance table gave an indication of the challenge and what was being done to address this. Full details of the support for the Year 11 cohort was included in the document entitled Year 11 raising achievement strategy. Also, Matt Auger mentioned that Years 7 and 8 would be supported in reading skills. Due to the pandemic these cohorts had experienced difficult ends to their primary education and reading was an issue. Lack of reading skills and an inability to access the curriculum had been linked to poor behaviour.

Discussions took place around behaviour. Since the pandemic the volume of complex safeguarding issues and continuum of need had risen considerably. This had not been helped by Lancashire County Council raising the thresholds

for support. The strategy for the use of funding through the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) and Covid Catch Up funding had been very carefully thought out.

Members of the AIB agreed that the table of data on predicted attainment for Year 11 was extremely useful. **An AIB member sought clarification** on Progress 8 headlines. Matt Auger explained that broadly speaking 0 was the national average for similar pupil profiles. A minus number indicated a lower score against the national average for similar pupil profiles whilst a plus indicated a higher score against the national average for similar pupil profiles. Achievement was a vital issue for the school and in order to improve progress a vital part of accessing the curriculum was confidence and a rise in reading abilities.

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

Year 11

The broad headline was the requirement of a significant drive forward of progress. Matt Auger shared with members of the AIB, that the Year 11 were extremely focussed. Updates on the weekly revision sessions on offer were posted on the school website. Referring to the document entitled, Year 11 raising achievement strategy **an AIB member asked** if the dedicated Year 11 revision area on the school website had a hit counter. Matt Auger confirmed that there was a hit counter. All Year 11 pupils had revision guides which had been purchased through PP and Covid Catch Up funding. The pupils were engaged in the revision sessions on offer and there had never been a higher number of pupils accessing revision sessions after school. This could be attributed to Covid but also a testament to the huge effort made by staff.

The first round of mock exams had taken place and from next week full revision programmes would be introduced for the summer term. During the first week of the Easter holidays there would be revision sessions and staff had volunteered to run these sessions. **An AIB member asked** if staff would be paid to carry out these sessions. John Cowper replied that these sessions were run on a voluntary basis and staff were happy to do this. There was a planned timetable for English, maths and science revision sessions at the end of the day. Attendance was optional, but pupils were strongly encouraged to attend. There was a shift in culture and pupils were engaging in the opportunities provided. John Cowper added that there was a contingency of 20 hours directed time that could be factored in if it was required.

An AIB member commended the enthusiasm of the staff and how it was necessary to rely on their good will, when the majority of all teachers worked more than their directed time.

Matt Auger was thanked for his comprehensive report.

Update on Behaviour and Attendance

AIB members were referred to the Behaviour and Attendance report that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

It was agreed that comparing Spring Term 1 2021 with Spring Term 1 2022 had no value because the school had been shut during the former due to Covid.

The number of fixed term exclusions during Spring 1 2022 had been high but this reflected the collective raising of expectations. John Cowper explained that these figures could be lowered, by lowering expectations but that was not a long term solution. He continued that a number of Year 7 pupils were now causing concern and their needs were being carefully monitored. These young people and their families were being sign posted for support accordingly. **An AIB member queried** the issues. John Cowper explained that there had been vaping on the school site which resulted in fixed term exclusions, there had been disrespectful barging behaviour, refusing to follow instructions and general low level persistent disruptive behaviour.

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

Last Friday it had been necessary to permanently exclude a pupil. **An AIB member asked** where pupils went when they were permanently excluded. John Cowper replied the pupils would go to Chadwick High School alternative provision. Depending upon their age they would stay at Chadwick High School until they had completed their high school education or if younger they may be re-integrated in main stream schooling, but they would not return to Central Lancaster High School.

Attendance stood at 88.3% on 3 February 2022, which was close to the national average of 89.1%. Usually, the school was about 2% below the national average. This improvement was partly due to monitoring, compliance and national improvements.

An absence for Covid was previously recorded with an 'X', this had now changed to be recorded as an authorised absence. Unauthorised absences were still recorded at 'O'.

Pupil Premium Grant

The Pupil Premium Grant and the school led tutoring grant amounted to about £ ¼ m. At Central Lancaster High School this funding had been targeted to where it was specifically needed rather than being absorbed into the staffing budget which was the case in some schools. Matt Auger said that research by the Education Endowment Federation (EEF) had identified a course of action through cost impact and intervention. This research had been used by the school to target areas for specific intervention

An AIB member asked about the actions at the school and if they were whole school or Pupil Premium Grant pupils. Matt Auger replied that Year 7 maths intervention involved about 65% of the cohort so there was some flexibility.

An AIB member enquired how long the funding for intervention programmes would be in place. Matt Auger said the Covid aspect of the

intervention programmes would be until the end of this academic year. Established as part of the culture of the school was targeted support in literacy and numeracy for Years 7 and 8. As national testing had not taken place; the school had used Baseline GL assessments. This had flagged up that a significant number of Year 7 pupils did not have a firm grasp of phonics. The next layer of assessment included diagnostic details and clear intervention strategies to show the level of progress that was being made. Matt Auger said that during the week commencing March 7 all intervention programmes would be fully up and running.

An AIB member sought clarification on the details of the assessments. Matt Auger replied that the GL assessment had a pathway and took into account attitudes towards school and academic abilities. Attitudes had improved, there had been a shift in attitudes following significant investment and distinct intervention.

An AIB member asked where the intervention would be targeted. Matt Auger replied that initially the primary focus was Year 7 and Year 8 and Year 11. Year 11 was for exams and Year 7 and Year 8 was to address low basic skills. These year groups would be prioritised first although it was recognised that Year 9 and Year 10 may need intervention later.

An AIB member queried who had written the programme of support. John Cowper replied that he and Matt Auger had written the programme which had been led by Amy Newsham. (Currently, she was on maternity leave.) Matt Williams had been operational lead and Anne Rickards had provided excellent input in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). John Cowper added that Anne Rickards's support was provided through Trust funding.

John Cowper said the library was up and running and had opened that week. **An AIB member enquired** if the library would have an increased book supply. John Cowper confirmed that would be the case and assistance had been provided from Ripley St Thomas CoE Academy on the infrastructure as a functioning library. He continued that the functioning library was a huge asset to the school.

Parental Voice Questionnaire

John Cowper explained that a parental questionnaire had been carried out during the last academic year.

An AIB member commented that it was important to carry out the parental questionnaire for current views on the school community, homework, behaviour, learning in lessons, safety and communications.

After some discussion **AIB members agreed** that it would be appropriate for parental questionnaire to be conducted on an annual basis in half term 6 and analysis of the comments could be made at the end of the summer term and before the start of the next academic year. Internal staff and pupil questionnaire would be conducted in-house in October on an annual basis.

By carrying out the questionnaires on an annual basis at the same time each year it would be possible to carry out like for like comparisons.

Going forward John Cowper said, he hoped to move towards wider consultation opportunities by liaising with primary schools and opening communication with parents and pupils in Years 3,4 and 5.

An AIB Member asked about the views of the School Council. John Cowper replied that there was a Pupil Wellbeing group and this was aimed at improvement rather than a means for complaint. This approach was linked with the staff wellbeing.

Staff Wellbeing

Staff wellbeing meetings minutes, staff workload/wellbeing actions and an Edurio staff working conditions and wellbeing survey were shared with members of the AIB. These had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The staff workload/wellbeing actions included a list of actions implemented to address workload/wellbeing since September 2022. Consultation feedback had meant that lesson observations continued, but work scrutiny and pupil voice had been paused.

The Edurio survey did not offer an opportunity to state that the school responded to the Unions.

An AIB Member asked how many staff had completed the survey. John Cowper replied that there had been 29 responses which was about a third of the staff. There had been lots of change over 6 years and greater accountability with increased expectations were now in place. The structures and provisions were in place to support colleagues. Directed time was in line with appropriate levels together with teacher appraisals. A programme of CPD and improved practice were areas to address. A revision to the marking schemes had been devised to support wellbeing. Reviews last year had focussed on behaviour, safeguarding and SEND.

Where lesson observations had highlighted areas to develop, videos and resources to address the gaps had been signposted, together with links to the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) website. The reality and perception of CPD by some staff was very different. **AIB members noted** that there were a couple of staff who had responded negatively to the survey but on the whole the survey was balanced with some good points.

An AIB member sought clarification about a reference to knives and weapons. John Cowper responded that it referred to a historical permanent exclusion. He continued that should there be any risk to staff appropriate action would be taken immediately.

An AIB Member enquired if an action plan would be produced in response to the staff survey. John Cowper confirmed that it would and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

**John
Cowper**

22.20 Safeguarding

John Cowper confirmed that three members of staff had completed Designated Safeguarding leadership training and this was refreshed at least every two years. The safeguarding and child protection policies were in place, reviewed annually and actively shared with staff. A record of staff safeguarding training had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Sally Kenyon the CEO of the Bay Learning Trust had carried out a safeguarding audit earlier in the day. A checklist had been compiled and this would be shared with members of the AIB.

**John
Cowper**

Matt Williams had carried out a safeguarding audit in June/July 2021. On the recommendations in his report, monitoring and actions had been put in place. Victoria Crossman was the named DSL, with Deputy DSLs trained and identified as Mike Aldren and Matt Williams.

Members of the AIB were grateful for the update on safeguarding and approved the updated Safeguarding Policy.

22.21 Unavoidable School Closures

There had been no unavoidable school closures since the date of the last meeting.

22.22 Educational Visits

The Principal reported details of the following proposed educational visits which were considered and approved;

Type A Visits

- 21 March 2022 Dukes Theatre, Lancaster – 19 Year 9 pupils (Arts Awards)
- 24 March 2022 More Music, Morecambe – 10/15 Year 9 pupils
- 1 November 2022 – Palace Theatre, Manchester – 40 pupils.

22.23 Self Evaluation Summary

The self evaluation summary was in the process of being rewritten with the help of Phil Walmsley. This together with the School Improvement Plan would be shared with Board Members at the next AIB meeting to be held on 26 April 2022.

**John
Cowper**

22.24 Update from Anne Rickards on Virtual Schools Enquiry

In the absence of Anne Rickards, it was agreed that this item would be added to the agenda of the next meeting.

clerk

22.25 Risk Register

Board Members agreed to review the documents below prior to the next AIB meeting, where they would be discussed and approved subject to any amendments.

- Lockdown Procedure
- Business Continuity Plan for Disaster Recovery in the event of a Critical Incident.

**All
Members**

Currently, the risk register was being updated to include site specific information together with telephone lists and room plans. A Lockdown procedure practice would be carried out and reported to the Board Members at the meeting to be held on 26 April 2022.

**John
Cowper**

22.26 Finance Compliance

In Year monthly accounts

Natasha Bilsborough referred to the document, Month Ending January 2022.

She made the following observations;

- The second payment of £8k of Pupil Premium Grant had been received.
- The school led tutoring payment of £8k was expected
- Recover premium was £31,828
- Lettings were busy with a potential new weekly letting from The Pauline Quirk Academy, that would run for 44 weeks of the year.
- A new software called school hire.co.uk had been purchased. This was used by other schools in the Trust. The new software would free up office staff time. Payments would be made online before the bookings took place. The software company took 4% of the booking fee.
- Investigations into the site team hours would begin to look at receiving value for money and a more efficient way of managing lettings.
- Catering income was down and running at a loss due to a number of factors such as pricing, costing of meals, theft and staff training.
- The original catering budget had been set at £115k, to date it was £19k. There was a forecast of a further £35k income for the rest of the year. The budget would be missed by a total of £60k.
- Peripatetic music income was down. The actual income to date was £1,700. This was due to the rise in pupil premium children taking the lessons. A portion of this had been budgeted for in the pupil premium plan. The original budget had been set at £12K.
- There had been a cross over period from Jayne Thompson leaving to Danielle Wynne commencing employment as the Finance Assistant. This cross over had meant there were some payments to chase up, amounting to approximately £4K up until Easter.
- The budget had been increased to allow for 5 permanent exclusions at a cost of £25K in reduced revenue.
- Supply insurance claims, from the current claims being processed, had been estimated at approximately £10K. The long term supply positions were not cover for absence staff. It had been estimated to

achieve budget of £25K, depended upon meeting the conditions of the insurance, such as teaching staff being off for more than 10 days.

Expenditure

- Catering costs budget was £75K with an actual cost to date of £39K as of January 2022. An additional spend of £51K had been forecast. This would be over budget for the rest of the year. Currently the ratio was £7.5K per month with £4/5K income.
- Supply costs were overspent. The budget had been set at £40K, the actual spend to date at the end of January was £67K. Some of this would be offset by staff savings.
- Supply bills, not including VAT were as follows;
 - November £19K
 - December £16.5K
 - January £29K
- Supply was in high demand and different suppliers were being used and the fees varied.
- Based upon supply to date, a further £135K had been forecast for the year. The core spend was driven around five long term teaching positions.
- Energy costs were also rising and additional expenditure was being forecast. Increased costs in electricity in November amounted to £5k based on September/October to January monthly bill of £8.5k. This was likely to increase further.

It was likely that the in year deficit would be £195K, when added to the brought forward deficit of £114K this would give a carried forward deficit of £310K.

Catering Report

The document entitled, Catering report Based on Financial information at January Month End had been circulated prior to the meeting. **A Board Member enquired** if the review was still on going. Natasha Bilsborough confirmed that the audit had been carried out by Rachel Myers, of RPJE Group, Facilities and Foodservices Consultancy.

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

Matt Williams had organised the introduction of the National School Breakfast programme which was going well. At this stage there was no data available on the uptake and whether it was having an effect on reducing the number of lates.

Natasha Bilsborough was thanked for her presentation.

22.27 AIB Training

As agreed at the beginning of the meeting, AIB members would complete the Skills Audit form and email the completed form to the clerk who would compile

**All AIB
Members
Clerk**

a summary of the returned forms. The email address for the returned forms was confirmed as grahamf@baylearningtrust.com

22.28 Any Other Business

John Cowper mentioned that he was looking to implement a programme of work to improve the fabric of the buildings to make the school site look cleaner, tidier and more appealing. **A Board Member enquired** if the National Schools rebuilding programme had been approached. It was confirmed that the school had registered with the programme.

22.29 Confidentiality

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

It was agreed that parts of item number 22.19 and 22.26 were deemed to be of a confidential nature and were minuted as such.

22.30 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The pattern of proposed dates and times for future meetings had been circulated prior to the meeting.

**All Board
Members
Clerk**

Summer Term

- **Tuesday 26 April 2022 at 3:45pm**
- **Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 3:45pm**

The chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input and closed the meeting at 6:10pm.

CENTRAL LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT BOARD

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Minutes of the meeting of the Academy Improvement Board held at the school on Friday 21 January 2022 at 3:45pm.

22.19	School Improvement Plan (SIP)	
	<p>An AIB member enquired about Ebac. John Cowper explained that the government had an ambition for 75% of the national cohort to follow the Ebac pathway. This was made up of English, maths, science, MFL and humanities. Ofsted inspections would look at the Ebac details but would make no judgement. Universities did not specify that Ebac was a requirement. The school was focussed on providing the right advice and guidance for pupils and their individual success was a priority. The Ebac uptake was quite low at 4% in 2019 and 6% of the current cohort.</p>	
	<p>Phil Walmsley was working with John Cowper to update the SEF. One area that had been identified was to ensure the MFL curriculum was fit for purpose and engaged the pupils. Currently the uptake for MFL was low. An AIB member queried the specifications for MFL. Matt Auger replied that the requirement was a modern or ancient language. Spanish would be acceptable, but the cost implications were too high and the school was not in a position to offer Spanish, available resources were necessary elsewhere at the moment.</p>	
	Update on Behaviour and Attendance	
	<p>The fixed term exclusions data for September to February 2021/2022 included 57 pupils being excluded on 177 occasions.</p>	
	<p>An AIB member asked if the message about behaviour expectations was getting through to the pupils. John Cowper explained that the situation was improving but external factors were a challenge, also the pastoral structure needed adjustments. John Cowper said that he was exploring a model of non-teaching Head of Years, but this had cost implications and often this shift in responsibility was not always welcomed.</p>	
	<p>Some teachers found some pupils much more challenging than their colleagues did and when there was a disconnection in class the situation was eased when the pupils were out of the classroom. This reflected in the use of non-negotiables where colleagues were consistent with non-negotiables the situation was eased.</p>	

ACTION

	The focus on behaviour was six months into an 18 month journey. Progress at the start had been very good but the momentum needed to be continued and a cultural shift was required so that behaviour for learning was fully embedded and teachers were consistent with good behaviour expectations. This was not just a matter for the Senior Leadership Team, but the teachers too.	
	The systems for good behaviour were in place and it was up to the staff to use them correctly. MFL was a hot spot area and younger pupils worked the behaviour system to be able to leave the class. As mentioned earlier the MFL curriculum needed to be fit for purpose to engage the pupils.	
	A number of Year 7 and Year 8 pupils had had such a disruptive education due to the pandemic that their reading abilities were extremely poor. This vulnerability caused them to demonstrate disruptive behaviour so they could leave a lesson they found difficult to access. Teachers in the classrooms had to be persistent with non-negotiables to support the pupils and help them access the curriculum.	
22.26	Finance Compliance	
	Catering Report	
	As mentioned at the previous meeting it was possible that Kirsty Gray, the catering manager was not quite the right person for the position. It was possible that an alternative role of catering assistant managed could be offered to Kirsty Gray and this would provide an opportunity to recruit a new catering manager.	
	A Board Member suggested it would be worth approaching Lancashire County Council with a view to out-sourcing the catering. For three years. Natasha Bilsborough agreed to look into this suggestion and provide a report at the next meeting.	Natasha Bilsborough