

Minutes of the James Rennie School Local Advisory Board
Held at James Rennie School, California Road, Carlisle CA3 0BU
On 29th January 2020 starting at 1:15pm

Present:

Michael Manley	MM	Chair of LAB
Kris Williams	KW	Head teacher
Brian Eaton	BE	Trustee and LAB member
Arthur Paynter	AP	LAB member
Jean Rhodes	JR	LAB member
Joanne Gill	JG	LAB member
Jonty Hanlon	JH	LAB member
Michelle Graham	MG	LAB member
Shane Byrne	SB	LAB member
Sophie Dowling	SD	LAB member
Also present		
Kerry Dunbobbin	KD	Deputy Head
Jan Cameron	JC	Clerk

Apologies

Sarah Edgar	SE	LAB member
-------------	----	------------

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
19/2019-20	Welcome, introductions and apologies MM welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
20/2019-20	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.	
21/2019-20	Minutes and actions from the last meeting. The minutes of the 17 th October 2019 were agreed and signed by MM as a true record. Actions <i>Ref 3/2019-20:</i> KD and JG had met but the technological problems persist and it has now become apparent that the software is not compatible for every device and as such will not be rolled out to all parents at this time. <i>Ref 6/2019-20</i> MG has made staff aware that management	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	issues should go to the appropriate senior staff member. 13/2019-20 Ongoing. 17/2019-20 Ongoing	
22/2019-20	Feedback from the Finance sub-committee - JH explained that all the Cumbrian Special Heads are now presenting a united front with regard to the revised bandings yet to be funded by the LA. - The increase in the employer's staff pension contributions was explained. - KW and JH are looking into IT systems, specifically cloud storage as opposed to a replacement for the current server. - Overall finances were tight but we are still operating within our means. - Contracts have been pared down as far as possible. - Staff have responded well to the absence management procedures	
23/2019-20	Feedback from the Pupils& Staffing sub-committee - KW informed members of some recent staff resignations. BE asked why this was happening. KW explained that it was just co-incidence and that they were leaving for various personal reasons. There was 1 person retiring but who would be willing to come back to do supply work, 1 person going travelling and another leaving the profession completely. JR asked if parents were aware of the staff changes and JG said that she had been approached by 4 different parents and the reasons behind the resignations has been explained. SE felt that workload might be an issue within the profession more generally and the need for support and to be able to work as a team was important. Interviews are to be held next week and one of the tasks will be a panel of 3 parents who will ask for advice on specific issues that affect them to see how well the interviewee responds. - The staff welfare group seems to be working well and was felt to be making a difference. The INSET day with Hexham had been very well received.	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
24/2019-20	Feedback from the Liaison Meeting MM had not been able to attend the last Liaison meeting.	
25/2019-20	Head's Report The Head's report brought forward from the Pupils & Staffing meeting was noted.	
26/2019-20	School Improvement Plans The School Development Plan was noted and KW highlighted the following: • Communication bands give a firm idea of what communication should look like for each pupil. An explanation of what eye gaze users need to communicate being given as an example. Strategies are used in context, for example teaching the more able pupils how to use the skills they have learnt outside of the school environment. MM was assured that the bands were broad enough. MM then asked if this formed part of the SOLAR system and it was confirmed that that it didn't. It was reported that the Makaton courses are full and that there are Makaton signs of the week posters in key places throughout school. In addition the signing choir has now started up. • To consolidate the impact of SOLAR there will be discussions in February around Maths & English. Other frameworks such as the Autism Education Trust are also being used by staff with strategic targets for what is needed to learn. PMLD pupils are now moving away from targets around Maths & English towards routes for learning, although this still contains an element of Maths & English; IEP assessments are bespoke to individuals. MM asked if KW felt confident with this approach and KW confirmed that he did. BE sought clarification that Pink Class was for just for Autistic pupils. • A working group has been set up to look at how sex/relationships are taught. The focus is predominantly on how to stay safe in personal relationships and on line. School is also collaborating with Hexham on this subject. • After a discussion about the Autism Education Trust, how it is funded and how it worked in practice it was agreed that KW would provide help to SB so that he could offer support to the Department of Works and Pensions. • The quality of teaching was reported as being really good. Some TA's however whilst really good at support have difficulty in articulating what pupils are learning as opposed to what they are doing. MM and AP shared their experience of going into	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	class. The visit was specifically to help TA's prepare for the new OFSTED framework. MM questioned the staff on what the pupils were learning and what progress they had made as well as predicted progress. Feedback from staff had been very positive saying that they didn't realise that they had been questioned. It was confirmed that nothing had been prepared in advance and that nothing special had been on the agenda for the visit. AP had witnessed sensory integration and what pupils needed to do before they were ready to learn. The whole staff were able to talk about and give reasons for the sessions, understanding what was needed. AP is to send a written report. Overall both MM and AP had enjoyed their visit and were very impressed, feeling that staff did know the answers. • The Staff Welfare survey has been completed and new drop in sessions are to take place. MM confirmed that feedback from the group has been positive. The INSET day with Hexham had been very well received. MM asked MG for her view on staff morale and she felt that there were still perhaps some little niggles that hadn't been reflected in the survey. • Financial stability for extended schools was a concern for KW as it was totally funded via grants. There are currently 4 bids awaiting a decision. The core activities can be funded for the next 2 years but after that it was less certain. There was a real concern that there would not be enough funds to be able to run the play scheme this summer. JG asked about support from the PTFA. They do help with funding and have raised a large amount that will go towards the proposed new trampoline.	
27/2019-20	Pupil Outcome Data Is included in the SMI with agreed focus on behaviour, attendance, targets, and pupil progress.	
28/2019-20	SMI Data • The performance management observations had been dropped to good as it was felt that not all TAs had the ability to articulate what pupils were learning as opposed to what they were doing. There has been some discussion with the Trust regarding this who felt that KW was perhaps being a little pessimistic in his assessment. • The blip in student attendance was due to a virus that ran through the school. Although this has affected the figures they are still above average and they also include hospital admissions. • Although the data presented shows no exclusions 1	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	pupil was kept off school for 2 days for assaulting staff and threatening pupils over a 3 day period. This would have normally been classed as 'fixed term exclusion' but was felt in this instance it was an H& S issue. The days of absence were used to put support mechanisms in place. The pupil has returned to school and the situation has improved. However, after discussion with the Trust it was agreed that in future this type of incident should be recorded as exclusion. • There were no incidences of bullying but some moderation is to take place around the definition of the word. Some examples of what might have been seen by some as inappropriate behaviour was explained MM asked if staff had received training and although they had they had requested further clarification on the definitions of what is seen. • MM asked for an explanation on physical interventions. With help from various members of the committee KW and KD demonstrated the various techniques and explained the rationale behind them. • Although the data shows a slight increase on last year's staff attendance the figures are still good. MM asked about the types of sickness and it was explained that there had been some long term absence. However, the incidences of 1 or 2 days sicknesses had gone down. Staff had responded well to the back to work interviews. • Safeguarding remained the same. • There were no formal complaints this year as opposed to 2 last year.	
29/2019-20	Pupil Premium The intended spend and priorities for the Pupil Premium were highlighted in KW's report. It is intended that spend will be used for individuals as well as groups of pupils to help break down barriers to learning. The largest amounts will be used to improve attainment in literacy via reading intervention and support for modes of communication for our most vulnerable pupils. ICT resources, playground help boards, and Jessie's fund for communication through music were given as examples of expenditure.	
30/2019-20	Year 7 catch up KD presented the paper on the year 7 catch up grant which is to be used to support pupils who have made below expected progress in year 7 in the core subjects of Maths and English It is intended to support those pupils make better progress. Last year the grant had been spent on pupils for communication through the medium of music, staff training to enable this work to continue, and playground help boards. Spend this year will focus on a variety of ICT equipment based on the needs of pupils. ICT will be used as access to	

Ref.	Discussions and decisions	Action
	learning thorough a different medium. Specialist equipment and training will be purchased to support our pupils with the most profound needs. BE asked if the grant was intended to be spent on block and it was explained that it was based on the individual.	
31/2019-20	Any Other Business None	
32/2019-20	Date of Next Meeting 19th March 2020 at 1:15	

Meeting closed at 3:30pm

The Eden Academy Trust is a charitable company, limited
by guarantee, registered in England and Wales
Register number: 08036395
Registered office: Grangewood School, Fore Street,
Eastcote, Pinner HA5 2JQ

ACTION SUMMARY

Agenda item	Action	Who
--------------------	---------------	------------