



MINUTES

Llanidloes Schools' Federation Governing Body Meeting; Wednesday 7th July 2021, 6.30 pm via Teams on Hwb

PRESENT

Margot Jones, Daniel Owen, Elen Chennetier, Kelly Hawkins, Lauren Morris, Karen Swann, Dan Craig, Lorna Morris, Christoph Schultz, Jamie Jones, Gareth Morgan, Adrian Foulkes, Ruth Davies, Phyl Davies

IN ATTENDANCE

Lisa Ashton (primary school deputy headteacher), Catrin Taylor (secondary school deputy headteacher), Richard Williams (secondary school assistant headteacher), Jane Jerman (secondary school assistant headteacher), Helen Rees (clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Clare Bound, Linda Broughall and Diane Jones-Poston.

The meeting was quorate, therefore business proceeded.

The chair commented that governors had received a very large volume of information in advance of this meeting but that it reflected the impressive amount of work being undertaken by the schools, including on the new curriculum, the new ALN bill and post-16 transformation.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/BUSINESS INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made relating to items on this agenda.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The chair welcomed the new LA governor, Councillor Phyl Davies to the governing body.

It was noted that the terms of office should end in September for three governors, Ruth Davies, Dan Craig and Lauren Morris. Welsh Government guidance was that, as elections could not be held safely during the pandemic, with the agreement of the full governing body, these governors could remain in post until such time as the situation normalised and elections could take place. Governors agreed that all three should stay in place until elections could be held.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of the governing body held on 28th March 2021 were confirmed and will be filed in the schools' file.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT INCLUDED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that this item be minuted as confidential.

6. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Governors received the confidential minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Finance committee held on 21st April, the draft confidential minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Finance committee held on 23rd June and the draft minutes of the Curriculum and Strategic Planning committee held on 11th May.

Governors asked whether use of the new 3G pitch had been agreed and were told that a timetable had been drawn up but was currently paused during the secondary school's activities week and would resume in September.

7. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT, PRIMARY SCHOOL

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that part of this item be minuted as confidential.

The headteacher told governors that the report contained many embedded documents but that this reflected the incredible amount of work undertaken by staff. The headteacher was very proud of the Support Visit 2 report which reflected this work. Wellbeing had been a strength and continued to be a focus. A few pupils had stated that they had had enough wellbeing provision and wanted to concentrate on their learning again, but some still required the additional provision. Attendance remained high, with the previous two-week average at 95%, and nearly 100 pupils achieving 100% attendance. More Able and Talented provision had been identified as the next area to focus on, especially as the existing policy did not fit well with the new curriculum. The headteacher asked if any governors would be interested in joining a working group, for which Karen Swann volunteered.

Lorna Morris joined the meeting

The school continued to work towards implementation of the new curriculum with staff training on understanding progression steps and assessment.

The Support Visit had identified as good practice the formal one-to-one tutorials that the headteacher had held with every Year 6 pupil. These tutorials explored each pupil's individual pathway towards further education and career. Pupils had prepared in depth and had enjoyed exploring their aspirations and options. The headteacher had recorded each discussion in a formal report. Governors commented that it could be useful and interesting to track these as the pupils progressed through secondary school.

The Challenge Adviser had commented on the positive impact of the strong SLT team, and the school had appreciated the high level of support provided by the Challenge Adviser.

Governors commented that the detailed impact assessments compiled by the SLT were very impressive and that the presentation provided great clarity. Each member of the SLT had had a very busy term and was in their own class bubble but had shown that they understood the whole school, what the school had delivered and the

impact on pupils. Listening to Learners had been carried out with specific groups of pupils: English as an Additional Language (EAL), More Able and Talented (MAT), entitled to Free School Meals (eFSM) and Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Taking the example of Foundation Phase maths, the headteacher explained to governors that the standard had generally declined in lockdown and that it had been difficult to teach effectively online. As a result of Listening to Learners, it had been found that maths was a favourite subject in many classes, that only a minority felt that they struggled and most enjoyed the subject. A few felt that MAT pupils had more reward time on computers – this was not in fact true, but it was the perception of pupils and would be addressed. In spite of this, there had been a noticeable change in the attitude of pupils towards maths since lockdown with comments such as ‘I’m no good at maths’, ‘I can’t do maths’ and ‘I’m really good at numbers but no good at maths’. Pupils had been asked what the one thing was that they would like to change about maths. Replies had included that it could be more fun, that they should stop writing in maths lessons and Year 1 pupils had commented that Nursery provision should be improved so that they were ready for their learning.

Governors asked whether there was a gender difference in achievement in maths and were told that the traditional difference was still there to a small extent. The focus on maths had decreased the gap, especially for younger pupils. There was no gap at all in Years 3 and 4, with all pupils very confident and identifying the subject as their favourite. However, a small gender difference had been found in Years 5 and 6 and would be monitored.

Governors were told that there would be an impact assessment on the spending of the Accelerating Learning Grant (ALG) and that the Professional Learning Grant (PLG) would be used for training around the new curriculum.

The headteacher had met with other primary headteachers of schools with specialist centres, Geraint Rees, Caroline Rees, Mari Thomas (finance officer) and Nancy Owen (finance officer) to discuss inequities in the funding formula specific to schools with specialist centres. The meeting had been very positive and it was hoped to secure a redress in the balance, possibly in the form of bespoke funding for unique schools. An additional £5K of funding in the current year for schools with specialist centres had been agreed.

8. HEADTEACHER’S REPORT, SECONDARY SCHOOL

The headteacher told governors that his autumn term report would focus on direct feedback from pupils and Listening to Learners.

The headteacher paid tribute to the immense amount of work undertaken by all staff in the Centre Determined Grades (CDG) process. Systems had been implemented to ensure that no pupils were disadvantaged and staff had managed authentication of the assessments very accurately. The rigour of the procedure could be evidenced by the fact that only one Stage 2 appeal had been made by one parent in one subject. Standards achieved had been exceptionally high and pupils were delighted. Value added data had been shared with governors within the report. It was noted that there had been a national upward inflationary pressure on grades.

Governors commented that it was impressive that nearly all parents and pupils had been satisfied with the process and that pupils had worked hard to achieve their results. Staff were thanked for their considerable amount of work. It was recognised that each member of staff had taken on the responsibility of the role of the exam board for which governors were grateful. Governors asked that the exceptional dedication and contribution of staff be recognised, possibly in the form of individual letters expressing appreciation and gratitude for their commitment to all pupils.

Governors asked the headteacher whether the paradigm shift in the balance of teaching and assessment might result in a permanent change. Governors were told that the CDG process would be reviewed nationally and that there was an unprecedented opportunity for change. However, even within the school opinions differed, with some staff wanting to see a return to the consistency of formal exams set by exam boards and some preferring the CDG process that was more onerous for staff but benefitted all learning styles.

The Challenge Adviser had found that the school was well prepared for the introduction of the new ALN Act in September 2021. The ALNCo had produced a narrated PowerPoint presentation for governors which would be circulated.

The headteacher thanked governors who had joined the post-16 working group and provided valuable ideas and feedback. The LA had taken a collaborative approach and engaged with schools regarding post-16 transformation. The now LA planned to retain post-16 provision as it existed in each secondary school but with a new governance structure of two Operational Management Boards (OMB) and one Strategic Management Board (SMB). The OMBs would agree curriculum and funding proposals for the north and south of the county which would be considered by the SMB. Governors were pleased that all post-16 provision was to be retained and that the LA had considered the views of schools. It was noted that there was a place for a representative governor on the SMB. Governors asked if the work of the post-16 group had now finished as, although the original objective had been to bring about this outcome, it could usefully continue with a different focus. It was agreed that the group would continue to meet in the new academic year.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY, INCLUDING COVID-19

The primary school staff had met to consider which aspects of the current risk assessment that they would like to see continued in September. The headteachers would attend a meeting with the LA Head of Education the following week to receive an update on arrangements for September. Final WG guidance would be released at the end of August.

10. GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

Governors were asked to continue to notify the clerk of any training completed.

11. DOCUMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AND/OR CLERK

There were no such items.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT CONSIDERATION

There were no such matters.

13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was resolved according to The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, Section 48 that the headteachers' reports, item 5 and part of item 7 be minuted as confidential.

14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Qualifications offered by the secondary school.

15. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Full Governing Body

Wednesday 22nd September 2021, 6.30 pm

The chair thanked the headteachers and staff of both schools for their continued hard work under very difficult circumstances.