

Meeting of Cranbrook School and Association of Boarders at Cranbrook (ABC) Thursday 18 March 2021 at 6pm (via Teams)

Attendees:

School: Will Chuter (Head - WC) Kirstie Burnett (Director of Boarding - KMB)

Karen Radford (Bursar - KR) Peter Rogers (Asst Director of Boarding -PR)

ABC reps: Andrew Nadin (President - AN) Georgina Stephenson (V-President - GS)

Alan Murphy (AM) Michelle Gollan (MG)
Folake Wright (FW) Stuart McCallion (SM)
Fiona Wilson (FW) Ben Thomson (BT)

Guy Bignell (GB)

Jonathan Joseph-Horne (JJ)

Uchenna Ugha (UU) Stella Patel SP)

Edward Stone (ES)

Item		Action
1.	Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 8 January 2021 The minutes were approved.	7 (011011
2.	 (a) Covid testing: The school is following Government guidelines. Students are now testing at home and in boarding Houses. Forty students are still abroad, more are returning. Hong Kong has a 42-day isolation period, which is problematic. (b) Wifi: An IT Strategy Group has been set up, with meetings currently focussing on the return to school and blended learning. The 1Gb upgrade has allowed for much faster and better video streaming. Technology in classrooms has also be updated. The next goal is long-term future proofing. The school is keen to talk to parents with relevant IT skills. A remote learning survey of students and parents was completed, and the students still working at home are being surveyed for feedback. (c) Phone charter: No further progress on this. The policy is still in place. (d) Food: KR and Graeme Edmonds had a good meeting with ABC members. Discussions centred around food provision during Covid and food after Covid. GE is open to suggestions and very accommodating. (e) Boarding fees breakdown: The Head, Bursar and SM met. The breakdown was prepared and provided to parents. 	
3.	Head's update (a) Lockdown B: There has been a family feel in boarding which we are keen to continue as more students return. Trips are planned at Easter. (b) There have been communications with SM and AN regarding fees	
	 etc, building a positive and supportive relationship. (c) The CSPA needs to have boarding representation, including a presence at induction and open mornings. (d) Around 30 students will be in Scott House over Easter, with activities scheduled for those not in quarantine. 	WC/AN/KMB KMB

	(e)	Development plan with ring-fenced funding: Boarding parents will be contacted with an invitation to join a year group Focus Group to meet with Heads of House to discuss what they would like/what they would improve about boarding. A plan to be published at the end of the summer term. There will be an annual reminder of how funds are used. The ABC expressed thanks for points being taken on board. SM is now on the Governors' Finance and Property Committee.	WC
	(f)	Improving communication: A gulf has developed between boarding parents and at governor level over past years. The CSPA will provide a better interface moving forward. They would like to invigorate House reps across all Houses. WC to take to HOBH, who should be involved in the selection of their reps. Can there be a list clearly published on the school website of who is responsible for what, with e-mail addresses? The aim is for parents, in the first instance, to approach the tutor about academic matters and their chief point of contact should be the HOBH. They then liaise with relevant colleagues on issues raised. If a further response is then required, the matter could be taken to the Director of Boarding and then the Head. Communication with HOBHs has been excellent regarding	WC
	(g)	pastoral support. It would be nice to see the parent representatives face to face, as there are some KMB has only been able to meet occasionally in the past few years. PR has tried to organise face to face drinks receptions, and House reps have had variable success with events.	
	(h)	The ABC could support the school with these. Electronic communication: This is very good, with a consistent	
	/i)	response to e-mails.	
	(i)	Director of Boarding's role: KMB and WC are discussing if she has enough time. It has been particularly difficult during Covid.	
	(j)	Tutors: We aim for them to start with students in Y9 and then follow through to Y13, so that they know their tutees well, and vice versa.	
4.	Impro	oving Communications	
		would the ABC like?	
	(a)	Parentmail is fine and is read.	
	(b)	Social media: The Facebook boarding pages are very important for	
		overseas students. They are good for keeping in touch.	
	(c)	Discussion was had around the relative merits of whole-school	
		letters coming direct from HOBHs. No decision made on this - it	
	(८)	was not felt to be a problem. Rearders' Bulletin: There was one before helf term, but KMP said.	
	(u)	Boarders' Bulletin: There was one before half term, but KMB said there were concerns that it duplicated what was on Facebook	
		pages. Boarding parents like to see what is happening in general, as	
		well as in the individual Houses. The bulletin goes down well with	
		grandparents and keeps them informed. WC confirmed that the	
		school will reinvigorate this, perhaps using a different publishing	KMB
		package.	
5.		essional resources within the parent body	
	(a)	There is a huge resource of professionals at all levels which the school could tap into more than it does. The school could target	
		parents when their children join the school, to see if they are happy	
		to opt into sharing their particular skills and expertise. As long as	
		GDPR is not an issue, it was agreed that this would be useful. This is	
		·	

	a desire also expressed in a recent CSPA meeting. The school will	
	action this.	WC
6.	Catch-up learning Parents enquired how this was being addressed. (a) Schools have been given £80 per child by the Government for Years 7 to 11. The school has used this to support exam year groups and will now broaden this out to other year groups and prospective parents in Year 6. The summer holidays are not being shortened, nor will there be Summer Schools. The majority of students are in a good place with their learning due to good progress on Teams. They are bright and motivated and have adjusted well to online learning. Teachers and tutors are looking for where the gaps are in learning and seeking to target those.	
7.	After-school activities A parent felt there was not enough for their child to do after school. (a) There are plenty of after-school activities on offer (sport, societies, CCF, DofE, Music ensembles) but some have been stymied by Covid restrictions and bubbles. (b) It was agreed that HOBHs should monitor more closely what students are participating in and keep records of this, compelling students to go where necessary. This sort of approach would ensure children are away from screens as much as possible. (c) Sport: We are in the process of re-building cricket and rugby, and fixtures will be established as soon as we are able to safely next term. This depends on government guidance. For Super Saturday, we can look at more mixing of Houses for sport, when this is allowed. Some activities are mixed: basketball, netball and hockey. (d) The school is planning to use the Coach House more for boarders when bubbles allow.	PR
8.	 Mobile Phones Parents were concerned about the amount of time their child is spending on their phone. (a) Research suggests that these should be switched off at least 30 minutes before bedtime. School policy is that Years 9 and 10 hand in phones at prep. Year 11 are trusted to used them for work purposes in prep. All lower school mobiles are handed in at 9.45pm and 10.15pm for the night. Sixth Form students are encouraged to manage their device time as they prepare for university. Staff will remove them if they are in use at inappropriate times, but the aim is to establish trust. (b) Wifi is turned off at 11pm at an appropriate moment. The school will review the mobile phone policy, consulting with staff, students and parents. The Wifi delivers what is needed educationally, but this was queried, given the various ways students can use video or audio streaming to support their learning. The school will undertake an audit to identify any issues, and then review. 	WC
	Breakfast Parents felt that breakfasts in Houses were poor.	

 (a) Breakfast in House was popular last term and through lockdown. I remains very popular with students as it provides what they need (cereal, toast, fruit, pastries) plus more time in bed! (b) However, full cooked breakfast in the Dining Hall will resume next term and students will be able to choose where they eat. (c) Some students have been missing breakfast and this should not be allowed. KMB to remind HOBHs that all should be in breakfast. 	t KMB
10. Any other business	
 (a) Opening boarding houses for the May Bank Holiday and half term. The plan is to remain open to help overseas parents. We need to discuss with the HOBHs and their teams, before confirming with parents. (b) All students are happy being back – thank you! (c) Boarding numbers next year in general look solid - strong in Year 9, with some concern over Year 11. Currently leavers look to be in line with the average of recent years. (d) The ABC Committee expressed its thanks to the school for the quality of interaction. 	KMB
Date of the next meeting	
To be confirmed.	