

**Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary SDB Meeting
held on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 6pm using Google meet.**

Present: Muir Mathieson (Chair), Stuart Wilson, Alison Campbell-Black, Chris Baldwin, Caryn Roberts, Amanda Arrowsmith, Graham Ayre, Andrew Wilson, Rebecca Castledine, Glen Balmer & Emma Grey.
Apologies: Eilis Cope & John Gilbert
In Attendance: Hannah Kelly (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from EC and JG. These were accepted by all.

2. Full re-opening of Marling School from Monday 8th March 2021

2.1 Lateral Flow Tests (LFT)

There is a government requirement for each consenting student to have 3 LFTs in school, after which it is expected that students will move to home testing. SSW explained the challenges in meeting the DfE requirements and what steps had been put in place to achieve the target of testing 400 students per day. Using this process, nearly all consenting students should have completed their 3 tests within 9 working days.

From Monday 8th March, staff test at home.

Q: Who is paying for the tests?

A: The government. We also have all the PPE equipment we need.

Q: I understand the LFTs are not particularly reliable, are we just using the results from these tests as for confirmation of Covid?

A: No, the current advice still applies, if anyone develops symptoms, they should self-isolate and take a PCR test. We have been informed that the LFT is accurate for anyone with a high viral load; people who are not displaying symptoms and are particularly infectious should be picked up by these tests.

Q: What percentage of students have consented to the tests?

A: We believe it will be about 90%.

Q: What will happen if someone tests positive?

A: We will be contact tracing and then following PHE guidance.

Q: What are the reporting requirements if there is a positive test?

A: We log the test results with the NHS. Also, we have to keep a record of the test results ourselves. Officially, the NHS will do test and trace, but we will undertake our own contact tracing as well and take the appropriate measures.

Q: Are we just using our own staff to test students?

A: We are using some of our own support staff, some parent volunteers and some ex-Marling employees. We felt it was important that the people helping out are people we know and who know the school.

2.2 LFT and Re-opening Risk Assessments

2.2.1 LFT Risk Assessment

The risk assessment for the testing centre has not changed from the existing version. A thorough system has been set up for extending the testing facilities to students in much greater numbers. We expect there to be, at most, some minor tweaks to the system once it becomes operational tomorrow.

The advice is to keep test centre open, even after we move to home testing, so that if any students or staff cannot test at home then this facility will be available to them in school.

Q: Are we basing home testing on trust?

A: We are awaiting further instructions as to how this will work. The students will have to record results with the school, so we can monitor who is undertaking the tests. There will be a lot of admin work involved.

2.2.2 Re-opening Risk Assessment

The biggest change to the RA is regarding face coverings. The Government guidance is now for all staff and students (unless exempt) to wear face coverings 'in classrooms and during activities unless social distancing can be maintained'. Therefore, we will expect students to wear face coverings in the classroom as well as in the corridors and communal spaces where they cannot socially distance. They will be able to remove them when outside. However, this is Government guidance only and face coverings are not mandatory; the law has not been changed. Schools have been told they must adhere to the guidance and strongly recommend that staff and students wear face coverings, and we would expect our students to follow that recommendation.

The Risk Assessment has been shared with the Union Rep in school, and a few minor tweaks were made as a result of that meeting.

Q: When I was last in school, the cleaning team were doing a great job; are we happy that they have clear instructions and resources to cope with the re-opening?

A: Cleaning is key to everyone's safety. Cleaning team has been amazing; the school is completely covered and we are ready for a full return. We have additional daytime cleaners so that high-use items such as handles, bannisters and toilets are cleaned more regularly throughout the day. In addition, there is plenty of cleaning equipment in each classroom, so that staff can use this during the school day.

Q: Are there any more grants to help with the increase cleaning costs?

A: There was one grant which ran from March to August 20, but this turned into a Covid grant linked to remote learning. There have been additional costs incurred for cleaning over the last year, but this has been an essential spend.

2.3 School Operations from Monday 8th March 2021.

There is a period of blended learning at the start of the week, with some students in school and some remote learning. All students will be in school from Wednesday 10th March. From this point, we will fully revert to the Term 1 & 2 model for the school day to maintain the year group bubbles.

It was emphasised that the staff will continue to be the ones to change classrooms, whereas the students will stay in bubbles. Whilst this is more difficult for staff to manage, it does provide a high level of control where Covid is concerned.

The Pastoral team have been working with specific families who were recognised in the first lockdown as being those who struggled, and the support will continue to be there for any families who need it.

Our understanding is that we will be allowed to run more extra-curricular sport this time, so there will be a gradually increase this provision.

Q: How did you fair between September and December in relation to Covid cases, when compared against other schools.

A: There is no hard and fast data to measure against. However, in relation to schools we are aware of, we are probably within the bottom quintile in terms of disruption. Also, in Marling,

there was never any evidence of in-school transmissions, which must be in part, accredited to the procedures and systems we had in place.

Q: How are the staff feeling? I was expecting unions to push for vaccines before the return to school, has there been any mention of this?

A: I believe staff confidence has increased as there were no in-school transmission before Christmas. There were a few cases within school which were transmitted from their own families / communities. None of these were and were not passed on within the Marling community. Staff have been positive during this lockdown, and I believe they are looking forward to getting back into the classroom again. The vaccine issue has not been raised with us.

Q: What will happen if students are isolating? Will you do a mix of live and online learning?

A: Yes, again we will revert back to the same policy which was in place for Terms 1&2. There will be online provision for any students who are isolating.

Q: Will there be adequate school transport from Monday?

A: Yes, everything will be back to 'normal'.

Q: As you will not have seen students in person for an extended period, is there any provision for pupils to approach you if the need to disclose any information?

A: There is no special provision for this. With respect to child protection concerns, students tend to pick the adult they trust most rather than a nominated person, so we don't signpost them to anyone in particular, but they all know that the pastoral team are available.

Q: Are there any reminders to staff to be extra vigilant over the next few weeks?

A: GB will mention this to staff in the next update; the culture within the staff is such that they always keep an eye out for signs and would report any concerns.

*Having discussed the risk assessments and plans to re-open the school whilst protecting the health and wellbeing of the school community, MM proposed to support the full re-opening of Marling School from Monday 8th March 2021 and to ask the Trustees of CBAT to approve the school to open. This proposal was seconded by CR, and **unanimously approved** by members of the Marling SDB.*

The meeting ended at 17:51.

Post meeting addendum:

An extra-ordinary meeting of the CBAT Trustees was held on Wednesday 3rd March. Following a thorough discussion, it was proposed by GA and seconded by RH that:

Having discussed government guidance for the reopening of schools, the Headteachers' reopening plans and risk assessments, and any points raised by the trade unions and the NGA, Trustees are in agreement with the recommendation of the School Development Boards that the Trust's schools should reopen fully from next Monday, 8th March. Trustees have given detailed consideration to the mitigation actions set out in the risk assessments and believe that these will protect the health and wellbeing of staff, students, and visitors to the schools. This resolution was **agreed** unanimously.



29th March 2021