

Minutes of the Interim School Development Board Meeting
held on Monday 15th January 2024 at 6:30pm on Microsoft Teams.

Present: Jane Exworthy (JE, Chair), Steve Kneller (SK, Interim HT), Ayo Jimmy (AJ) & Jo Roberts (JR)
In Attendance: Hannah Kelly (HK, Clerk), Katie Hughes (KH Deputy Headteacher).
Apologies: Alison Campbell-Black (ACB, Vice-Chair)
Absent: Nicki Wadley (NW)

1. Welcome

JE welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them of the confidential nature of what is discussed in ISDB meetings.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from ACB due to illness. These were accepted by all. As this was a Teams meeting, ACB requested that the meeting be recorded so she could watch it at a later date. This was agreed by all, and the meeting was recorded for ISDB member information only.
NW was absent from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Agreement of minutes from the previous meeting

Minutes from the meeting dated 13th December 2023 had been circulated to the committee prior to this meeting. The minutes were agreed to be an accurate representation of the meeting.

➤ *The minutes were proposed by AJ; seconded by JE; and unanimously approved.*

JR abstained from approving the minutes as she was unable to attend the last meeting.

5. Matters Arising & Action Points

ISDB04: Ongoing

ISDB10: Complete

ISDB11: Complete

ISDB12: Ongoing

ISDB13: Complete

6. Safeguarding Update from SRIP Actions Confidential Paperwork

A written summary of progress against the SRIP was circulated prior to the meeting. SK expanded on the points within the document.

Q: Will the outstanding actions regarding Fire and lockdown be completed before the next external review?

A: The date of the external review depends on HT recruitment. We would like to hold the external review in the first couple of weeks of their arrival in post, to give a start point. We will hold fire drills before Easter, but other aspects are more medium term.

Q: Regarding fire safety, owing to the structure of the site, one issue access to safe spaces being past 'corridors' between buildings. What is being done to address this issue?

A: When the East block fire alarm sounds, students will gather on the mini field between the music and science blocks. Students in the West and South Blocks will continue to meet on the playing fields. It is not perfect, but a better alarm system will not alter the position of buildings, so we have to find away to work around that. Once we have the ability to register students

simultaneously, we will decide where the best place is for students to gather. The improved systems will allow staff to register students quickly and safely which will give us more flexibility.

Q: How is progress on improving road safety following the recent accident?

A: The immediate measures are working well. Kim Wilson has spoken to the council and Siobhan Baillie to see what else can be done to support student safety along the road. KW is pursuing this, but it is unlikely that anything will happen soon.

Q: How is the new signing in and out system for staff bedding in?

A: There appears to be a willingness to conform to this request and it is working, barring a couple of occasions when people have forgotten or there has been a glitch with the WiFi. The rationale has been explained to the Unions and they have accepted this, and we had a staff meeting on Tuesday and I explained why it is necessary and mandatory.

Q: Has the restructuring of pastoral and SEND teams been completed?

A: The new ways of working are in place and weekly 'high-risk' meetings are taking place. The physical relocation of the teams has not happened yet – the IT infrastructure needs to be altered to accommodate the changes. This should be completed before February half term.

Q: What is the status of the SCR?

A: It is compliant. We have highlighted a couple of areas which we could make some improvements and we are looking at them now. Lorraine Pengilly (Interim PA to Interim HT) is doing some training on the SCR next week and Katie Hughes has taken ownership of it.

Q: Regarding site safety and the 6th formers driving and parking. Are you seeing good behaviours from staff and students following briefings. Are spot checks showing an improvement?

A: The number of 'lates' have significantly reduced. The undertaking of registers is much improved despite some glitches in the wifi. Kyle Brand, the Attendance Officer is working hard in these areas and making good progress. Students have said they have noticed more duty members of staff in hi-vis at break, lunch and either end of the school day. Regarding 6th form driving and parking, students have started to gather in their cars on Beards Lane to chat and play music which, obviously, the residents don't like. This is difficult to manage, as it is a public highway and off-site. However, we are talking to students about the importance of community relations and working with local residents to support them.

SK acknowledged that it has been a huge piece of work that has led to a massive increase in the student safety, thanks to the hard work to the SLT and other members of the staff. The governors also passed on their gratitude to all involved.

Katie Hughes the new Deputy Headteacher (from 08.01.24) and DSL attended the meeting. She gave an update on her initial thoughts on Safeguarding at Marling, her immediate plans and some more medium-term plans.

Governors questioned KH about CPOMS, how it is currently being used, and how it's effectiveness can be improved.

7. SRIP Update

Curriculum & Teaching

SK, along with Andy McDonald and Holly Bedford are planning ongoing review and scrutiny exercise, which along with external input will enable a rewrite of the curriculum statement. Following this, individual departments can write their curriculum intent. Departments who did not have the opportunity for an Ofsted deep dive type discussion during the external review process will be able to experience this level of scrutiny for development. We are undertaking this work to assure ourselves of the quality of the curriculum and train

the teachers in advance of an Ofsted visit. Bespoke curriculum work will be undertaken, prioritising MFL and Geography following outcomes from the external review.

SK assured governors that a whole curriculum review will have been completed by the end of term 5; issues are being addressed and plans are in place for a new curriculum to be in place for September 24.

HB is working with a group to identify well researched elements of learning to inform practice and to build an aide memoire as to what best practice might look like. SLT will undertake 'drop-ins' to classes to provide informal review.

Leadership & Management

As SK is an interim Headteacher, he will not review the Vision & Values, but additional phrase 'Be Kind – Be Ready – Work Hard' has been introduced to sit alongside the existing V&V.

Leadership expectations are improving in terms of upholding high expectations (ie challenging uniform infringements) and role modelling (ie pick up litter - don't walk past)

The SEND & pastoral team are being re-aligned to work more closely with each other.

A review on Pay & Conditions for UPS3 and who aren't middle leaders to ensure sustained and significant impact.

Communications has been an ongoing issue for a long period time. It has not been effective. There have been quick wins, such as the weekly parental newsletter, weekly staff update, reviewing staff briefings, and student communication. However, further work is needed, such as streamlining communications through one source updating and improving the website and the social media profile.

Q: If Ofsted arrived tomorrow, how would you feel compared to the situation a few months ago?

A: Marling has come a long way with safety and safeguarding and some aspects of Leadership & Management. It would depend on the Ofsted team and which subject areas they see. There are some incredible elements of teaching and learning but also some which needs improvement. We are in a much better position than we were, but there is still work to be done especially around curriculum intent and implementation.

Q: During your time here, what have you seen that Marling isn't doing that Ofsted could pick up on?

A: There is a lack of urgency. Some staff have made the changes and quickly, but there are still staff who don't seem to understand that change is needed. There are some classes where you don't feel the dynamism. You don't sense enough of a buzz... There are some classrooms where you definitely do, but not in enough classrooms. This is why Holly Bedford is doing the work to improve urgency and inspiration. We don't have the challenging behaviours that other schools do, so we have the freedom to really excel in this.

Q: The communication to parents has been abysmal, as an example, Y11 have mock exams in three weeks and we don't have a timetable for these yet, it is hard to help our son's to revise if they haven't got a target. We don't know the summer exam timetable either. Other schools have given parents all the information they need for both mocks and the real exams, but we have nothing at all.

A: You're right. We need to be better. It is that sense of urgency which is missing.

C: Consistency in communications is needed as well as in teaching. 6th Form communications are better, the lower school needs bringing up to their standard.

8. Safeguarding Report for Trustees

As NW, who is leading this piece of work, was not at this meeting, it was agreed that this should be discussed at the next ISDB meeting on 29.01.23.

9. Policies Update

The In-Year Admissions Protocol had been circulated prior to the meeting. An amendment to the wording regarding the pass mark criteria had been agreed in the Admissions meeting (30.11.23) and this had been incorporated into the protocols.

➤ *The In-Year Admissions Protocol was proposed by JR; seconded by AJ and unanimously approved.*

10. AOB

10.1 In-Year Test Results

Results from an in-year test will be shared with governors on Thursday 18th or Friday 19th January, along with the HT recommendation. Governors were requested to be aware that a quick response is required.

10.2 HT interviews

The HT interviews are being held on 17/18 January 24. There were 10-12 applicants (a good number in the current climate). Four have been shortlisted for the first, full day and then a shortlist will attend the second day final interviews. Kim Wilson was pleased with the quality of the candidate applications.

The meeting ended at 20:00

Meeting Schedule

- Monday 29th January – in School - SEND – Carrie Wittke
- Monday 19th February – on Teams - Curriculum – Andy MacDonald / Holly Bedford
- Monday 4th March – in School
- Monday 18th March – on Teams

All meetings to start at 6:30pm