

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

Present:- Jane Exworthy (JE, Chair), Jules Godfrey (JG, HT),
Alison Campbell-Black (ACB, Vice-Chair), Katie Hughes (KH),
Ayo Jimmy (AJ), Andy MacDonald (AMacD), Jo Roberts (JR)

In Attendance:- Rachel Jenkins (RJ, Clerk), Louise Harris (LH), (until 7:58),
Catherine Lee (CL) (until 7:19 pm)

Apologies:- Duncan Cook (DC)

Key
*Governor support, questions, and challenge
**Responses

1. Welcome

JE welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from DC and these were accepted by all attendees. The meeting is quorate.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6. Digital Strategy Overview

CL has attended the ISDB meeting to present a Digital Strategy Overview. This agenda item has been brought forward to the beginning of the meeting and will be conducted prior to all other agenda items.

CL shared a document via Teams chat. This document is called Digital Strategy Overview and will be saved to the meeting file in GovernorHub. This document was explained by CL and discussed by governors. The salient points are as follows:-

Student Devices

This is a major project involving the option to lease devices in Years 7-9 or upgrade to the lease scheme in Year 10 if devices are no longer working. An option for BYOD (bring your own devices) has been put in place from September 2024 to offer flexibility for students who have their own devices.

There will be an adjustment to monitoring of student activity on these devices in order to facilitate BYOD. Key safeguarding measures will still be in place.

Staff Devices

Staff device roll out will be taking place over the summer holidays with docking stations being installed in classrooms to give teachers more flexibility when working across the school site.

WiFi Infrastructure.

WiFi infrastructure has needed significant investment for some time. There will be a comprehensive overhaul over Summer 2024 with phase 2 fibre upgrade planned for Summer 2025. This has been planned in stages due to significant cost across the whole project and CBAT are funding this.

Microsoft/Google Migration

The transition from Google Drive and Classroom is to bring Marling in line with other CBAT schools and allow Concerro to support IT more effectively and efficiently.

* A governor asked whether the digital initiatives detailed are going ahead or whether decisions are needed for them to proceed.

** CL confirmed that they are going ahead and are CBAT approved – CL was asked to give an overview to this meeting as to what is taking place.

* A governor questioned whether Windows 11 will continue to work given that the school is moving away from Chromebooks to Winbooks.

** CL confirmed that Windows 11 will continue to work on Chromebooks for the time being and will be migrated over in due course.

*A governor queried why current Year 10 (moving into Year 11) will not be offered their own new devices.

** CL explained that the thinking was that new devices for current Year 10 (moving into Year 11) would have to be on a 1 year lease only and would therefore be very expensive.

JG confirmed that there had a been a lot of discussion around this point and that Year 10 into 11 pupils will still have access to school devices; staff will work hard to ensure that no student is disadvantaged.

* A governor asked about licenses for Office 365.

**CL confirmed that all students have their own email address and password and can log into any device with these details for no additional cost throughout their time at school.

* A governor made the further point that we need to minimise the cost for the parents whilst maximising the opportunity for the students and to ensure that the correct warranties for the devices are in place.

CL confirmed that the policy is to try and future proof devices but there is little control over what decisions Microsoft will make. Concerro will provide the school with an annual review as to what the best and most up to date options are year on year.

* A governor wanted confirmation that there were enough devices in places for students to borrow rather than buy.

** Once there is a clear idea of how many Year 7's have signed up to lease devices, devices will be purchased to ensure that there are enough available for the new cohort.

Chair suggested collating any further questions and sending them to CL.

* A governor wanted to verify safeguarding with BYOD and how this will be managed.

** KH made the point that the main school and Sixth Form are different. In Sixth Form there will be more physical monitoring than digital monitoring.

* A governor queried the tethering of laptops to mobile phones.

** There are clear guidelines around students and BYOD and there will be a policy in place for students to sign up to this.

* A governor raised the issue of leases not being paid off and made the point that it would be useful for governors to see the statistics on this and consider if there is any undue financial exposure for the school.

* A governor wanted to check that leases are transferrable.

** CL confirmed that leases are transferrable.

Chair thanked CL for attending the meeting and presenting the digital strategy overview. All governors are to read through the Digital Strategy Overview carefully and put any further questions towards CL in September.

Action (ISDB65): ALL

Catherine Lee left the meeting at 7:19 pm.

4. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Minutes from the previous meeting dated 1st July 2024 have been circulated to the committee prior to this meeting.

- *Subject to some minor amendments outlined by JE and agreed by all governors, the minutes were proposed by AJ; seconded by ACB and unanimously approved.*

5. Matters Arising and Action Points

5.1 Action Points

ISDB27: Ongoing

ISDB41: Ongoing

ISDB44: Ongoing

ISDB45: Ongoing

ISDB46: Complete

ISDB48: Ongoing

ISDB56: Ongoing

ISDB57: Ongoing

ISDB58: Ongoing
ISDB60: Ongoing
ISDB62: Ongoing
ISDB63: Complete
ISDB64: Complete

6. Digital Strategy Overview

See minutes detailed above.

7. Sixth Form Admissions Policy

LH explained that the Sixth Form Admissions policy has to be looked at in the year before it becomes due ie September 2026 needs to be considered in September 2024.

The key change being proposed is rather than an entry requirement of 48 points across 6 subjects, that this should increase to 50 points across 8 subjects. The reason for considering this is that it will increase the overall achievements of students entering Sixth Form.

* A governor asked what would have been the impact on current intake if this policy had been in place.

** LH confirmed that approximately 8 students might have been affected if this revised policy had been in place.

*A governor made the point that an increase in points required would have the dual effect of uplifting student performance as well as ensuring the right threshold for entry into the Sixth Form.

LH confirmed that this increase in points required would appear to be more in line with other Sixth Forms and Grammar Schools but that different A levels will still require certain grades at GCSE level.

The Chair asked whether this policy proposal was going for consultation or whether approval was now required. LH confirmed that approval is required by governors for it to go forward for consultancy.

- *Proposed by ACB; seconded by AJ and unanimously approved that this proposed policy change should go forward for consultancy.*

Louise Harris left the meeting at 7:58 pm.

8. Questions for Governors (Ofsted)

This agenda item is to be moved to the next meeting agenda as DC was unable to attend this meeting.

9. Safeguarding Audit and Action Plan Update

KH informed the meeting that since the last meeting there has been one new referral to the local authority within Swindon locality. A response has been escalated within this organisation. KH has been supporting the family and will continue to do so through the summer holidays.

* A governor asked what the school's responsibility is over the summer and how does this work.

** KH confirmed that the school should always have DSL cover and she will be available over the summer holidays for this purpose. The family in question will get education checks which will increase during the holidays.

KH feels confident that teaching staff are being professionally curious when it comes to safeguarding with an increase in the quality of reporting and CPOMs logs. This needs to be embedded in all support staff.

KH also reported that at 93%, attendance is above national average.

10. Trips Planning Process

KH is working on this process and is currently filtering information into a work flow chart.

KH has a list of trips and residential which need to be considered and agreed to.

*A governor made the point that in the past there was a summary paragraph for all trips with associated risks and rationale for the trip.

** KH confirmed that formal risk assessments are not written until the authorisation for the trip is given the go ahead.

* A governor emphasised that there is a need to look at all trips across the school year to ensure a range of affordability across the school.

** KH will input all details into a spreadsheet and send this out to all governors for comment by Friday 19th July.

Action (ISDB66): KH

* A governor queried whether SEN needs have been taken into account with the proposed trips.

** KH explained that until everyone is signed up for each trip it is not clear exactly what support is required. Once numbers and need is known for each trip, support requirements are flagged up and support needed is checked.

11. Policies

11.1 Health & Safety Information for Visitors Policy

The changes to this policy required at the last meeting have been made by JG and RJ and presented in the meeting folder.

* A governor made the point about Health & Safety Information for general parent events or open evenings.

** JG confirmed that the process for these events needed to be tightened up to ensure that the approach to visitors on these occasions is aligned with this policy.

The front page and footers need to be amended to read July 2024.

- *Subject to minor amendments, the Health & Safety Information for Visitors Policy was proposed by AJ; seconded by JR; and unanimously approved*

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Pastoral Changes

Chair would like to understand the pastoral changes that were mentioned in the Weekly Newsletter. KH has been working on these during the last term and explained the rationale behind this.

It was felt that the current system does not serve the students well with many pastoral roles over the whole site. The idea is to forge a new vision to carry Marling forward. Phase 1 is to replace Head of House and Head of Year with Heads of Learning so each house becomes a community with the focus on academic and pastoral excellence. Bennet will remain and drive this new approach forward.

Phase 2 will be looking at a student support model and making sure that the right staff are in specialist support roles.

KH explained that in Terms 1 and 2 all stakeholders would be involved in conversations about the value that their house embodies.

The wider vision will be shared this week in the Weekly Newsletter.

*A governor emphasised that this was a significant strategic change and as a governor would have expected to know about this in advance from a process point of view.

**KH explained that CBAT had been consulted on this and JG also elaborated that this decision had become a swift one with HR at CBAT advice had been sought.

12.2 Pay Committee

Chair asked whether a Pay Committee had taken place in Autumn 2023. There was a committee but it doesn't appear to have had a meeting. Pay Committee is to be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

12.3 Admissions Arrangements for 2026/2027

Clerk notified the meeting that there had been a letter from GCC regarding Admissions Arrangements for 2026/2027. The letter is in the meeting file and Admissions Arrangements for 2026/2027 will be put on the agenda for the next meeting in September.

Chair notified the meeting that there is a Trustees meeting on Friday 19th July. If there is anything of note that needs flagging up then please let Chair know by Friday morning.

Chair thanked the attendees for their service and emphasised how far things have progressed since October 2023.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 9th September at 6:30 pm, LCR in Marling School. All attendees need to be advised of this date and venue.

- *The meeting ended at 8:53 pm.*