

Minutes of the School Development Board Meeting
 held on Monday 25th November 2024
 at 6:30pm at Marling School

- Present:-** Alice Bailey-Yip (ABY), Sandra Barber (SBa), Simon Begbey (SBe), Maria Fuente (MF), Will Gosling (WG) (**online**), Martyn Hewett (MH), Jo Roberts (JR), Maureen Shearman (MS), Helen Tilly (HT)
- In Attendance:-** Duncan Cook (CEO, CBAT), Rachel Jenkins (RJ, Clerk), Andy MacDonald (APM, Vice Principal)
- Apologies:-** Mwai Daka (MD), Jules Godfrey (JG, Principal)

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

Link governor roles to be filled

Experience of governors and structure of SDB

Policies still to be approved

SDB back up and running with Co-Chairs in place

Successful Ofsted

1. Welcome

DC (as acting Chair for this meeting) welcomed everyone and invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

2. Apologies

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

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Minutes from the previous meeting dated 21st October 2024 have been circulated to the committee prior to this meeting.

- *The minutes were proposed by SBa; seconded by JR and unanimously approved.*

5. Matters Arising and Action Points

5.1 Action Points

ISDB27: Complete
ISDB41: Ongoing
ISDB44: Ongoing
ISDB45: Ongoing
ISDB56: Ongoing
ISDB57: Complete
ISDB62: Complete
ISDB67: Complete
ISDB69: Complete
SDB1: Complete
SDB2: Complete
SDB3: Complete
SDB4: Ongoing
SDB5: Complete
SDB6: Ongoing
SDB7: Complete

6. Chair's Update

DC gave an overview of the Ofsted inspection. This was a fully graded two day inspection with a phone call of two and half hours. It was clear that the Inspectors knew the school and its background very well.

The first day of the Inspection focussed on T&L, the quality of education and was a busy day for middle leaders and class teachers. Children worked well and were responsive to the environment.

The second day focussed on staff, SLT and governors and given all the changes over recent months this was a more challenging day. DC thanked the three governors who were part of this day. A lot of pupil groups were conducted on this second day focussing on RSE, PHSE, behaviour and attitudes.

From the Inspection there are two key action points which are around all forms of communication and the development of middle leaders. There are lots of strengths in the school in terms of behaviour, attitudes and personal development. The Sixth Form is a real strength. Ofsted had concerns about one or two subject areas where there has been staff absence. APM outlined how the school had managed this and although Ofsted felt the school had done all it could, it had had an impact on students.

JR made the point that the visit was a good outcome given the amount of change and upheaval. The improved data from last year speaks volumes about the people on the ground.

Moving on, DC talked about the Trust and gave a synopsis of where the Trust is currently. In terms of an overview, CFO finished at the end of July and the CEO finished on 31st October. The Trust now has a new Chair in Chris Brierley who has talked about the landscape of the trust.

DC will be CEO until the end of the academic year and is currently looking at other secondary schools to join the Trust. Things are improving and there has been an external governance review led by the Confederation of Schools Trust ie Stewart Harper.

Hannah Kelly is bringing together the systems to run things more smoothly with a view to bringing governor boards together and looking at governance excellence across the trust.

***A governor asked if the Trust were looking at more secondary schools to join the Trust.**

****Trustees preference is to work with one or two schools joining the trust. CBAT needs a partner secondary school to share expertise and this is the Trustees priority. Gloucestershire is full of single academy trusts and CBAT could be made to go into whatever group.**

DC confirmed that SBa and JR have agreed to be Co-Chairs of the SDB.

➤ *This was proposed by MH; seconded by SBe and unanimously approved.*

MH has been confirmed as Safeguarding Link Governor and SBa has been confirmed as T&L Link Governor. Careers, H&S, SEND and possibly Pastoral Link Governors are required and all governors need to consider these as a matter of priority.

ACTION (SDB8):- ALL

7. Principal's Report to Governors

Principal's Report to Governors is in the meeting file on GovHub.

APM presented this report on behalf of JG and asked whether there were any questions on the report.

***A governor asked if there is still 12% non-contact time built into the curriculum for all teachers?**

****10% is the minimum non-contact time and Marling provides 12% non-contact time. There have been two disaggregated Inset Days spread over the school year as twilight working to ease pressure on staff.**

Principal's Report to Governors will be provided for each long term.

8. SDB Committees

This agenda item will be carried forward to the next SDB meeting on 13th January 2025. There is an expectation that each governor will have a link governor role or a role on the committees.

DC confirmed that governor monitoring visits and Link Governor visits into school are a very important part of governance. Ideally there should be a Link Governor visit per long term ie three times a year. Finance is handled at Trust level and the school's budget is prepared once a year.

9. Safeguarding Update

Safeguarding Update is in the meeting file on GovHub.

KH is absent from this meeting but a Safeguarding Update is produced and presented by KH for every SDB meeting. If there are any specific queries on this update, please contact KH direct.

***A governor asked about the house system.**

****KH is working hard on how praise is recognised across the school and Ofsted picked up on this. The revised Behaviour Policy reflects this reward system but the profile of giving out rewards still needs to be higher.**

There needs to be greater consistency of awarding points across the school with this process being embedded with the use of Bromcom. Alongside this, student leadership opportunities are being introduced lower down the school.

Ofsted are impressed with what the school is doing but it needs time to embed. MS substantiated this.

***A governor asked how easy it was to input rewards points on Bromcom.**

**** HT reported that it isn't as straightforward as it could be and there needs to be a simplified system.**

DC asked HT to email him directly about this for his meeting with Bromcom on Wednesday 27th November.

ACTION (SDB9):- HT

APM also confirmed that Celebration Assemblies which are held six times a year are also key to the process of raising the profile of the reward system.

MH advised that he is planning to make a Governor Monitoring visit into school as Safeguarding Link Governor. He will get in touch with KH to arrange this.

MH also asked about the school counsellor. MS confirmed that a school counsellor will start in January 2025. In the interim, pupils are being supported by the pastoral team and signposted to TIC and TIC+ services. The pastoral team have taken on a lot of pupil support but hopefully this will ease once the in house counsellor is in place. There is a backlist of pupils who need support but the team know who these pupils are, and where they are on the list of priorities. The school have also looked at supervision to support staff. JG updated MS last week that this is in process and the school has reached out to GCC to provide this supervision.

10. H&S Update

There is RACC on site and the bid for funds to manage this is being reworked. The funding from this bid should come through. The Trust is also looking at a fully funded bid for work to the school hall and this is in excess of £1M.

*A governor asked what would happen if the funding for the school hall didn't come through.

**DC confirmed that alternative funding streams would have to be looked at. A lot of work is being done on this but it will not happen quickly. The Trust is hoping to put some capital together as this will improve the strength of any funding bids. MS suggesting thinking about any support Historic England might be able to provide.

11. Policies

*There was a governor question as to where the Inclusion Policy is situated.

** MS will check this with Hannah Kelly.

ACTION (SDB10):- MS

All policies are to be read within the next 2 weeks and any feedback given to the Clerk. The policies can then be ratified at the next SDB meeting on 13th January 2025.

ACTION (SDB11):- ALL

*A governor queried the Complaints Policy and asked whether it was a Trust-wide policy or a Marling School policy.

**As the process of escalation is the same across the Trust it is the same policy.

12. CBAT Policies

All governors to read CBAT policies in the GovHub meeting file.

ACTION (SDB12):- ALL

13. Trip Approvals

APM presented four trips to governors which have been approved by SLT.

Science trip to Florida for half term in February 2026. No impact on T&L as it will take place in half term week. It is an expensive trip hence the long lead time. 32 students to be taken from Y8 and Y9.

Trip to Sicily for 4-5 days at the start of the Easter holidays in April 2026. No impact on T&L as it will take place in the Easter holidays. This is to be offered to students from Y9 to Y13 inclusive.

*Governors questioned whether teachers were happy with the mix of year groups for this trip and a governor asked how many staff members would travel with the group.

**Staff were happy with the mix of students and 4 staff members will accompany the trip.

Ski trip to Europe in Easter 2026. 50 students from Y8 and Y9 and at the moment it is not clear whether there will be any SEND students participating in the trip.

Spanish trip to take place over a long weekend 25th to 28th September 2025. This will be for Y10, Y11 and Y13 Spanish students. On balance SLT were comfortable with this cohort missing two days of school as they are keen to support language trips.

*A governor asked whether trips need to be signed off by SDB.

**DC confirmed that this is requirement especially if children are being taken abroad.

*A governor asked if there were an overall calendar of trips to show what is happening when.

**KH is working on this along with Nicky Embling and governors requested that this be presented to SDB.

ACTION (SDB13):- KH

*A governor asked what the position was if trip costs change.

**It was confirmed that once a trip has been agreed, costs for the trip are locked in.

DC highlighted the importance of safeguarding around overseas trips to MH as Safeguarding Link Governor. MS suggested MH link in with pastoral unit regarding pupils, safeguarding and overseas trips.

ACTION (SDB14):- MH

DC made a point of wanting to thank all staff who give up their time to organise and travel on these trips.

14. RAG Rating

DC explained that Trustees have asked for a short summary of each SDB meeting by RAG rating the headlines of the meeting at the beginning of each set of minutes.

For this meeting the following was agreed:-

Link governor roles to be filled

Experience of governors and structure of SDB

Policies still to be approved

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15. Any Other Business

APM reported that a Duke of Edinburgh reviewer is required. Once students complete the different elements of their award, a reviewer needs to review their evidence to corroborate that the school has done everything that they need to do.

A number of governor were potentially interested in this role but required more information. APM will send more information onto the Clerk who will forward onto to all governors.

ACTION (SDB15):- APM/RJ

*A governor asked whether it was possible to see the parents' survey from Ofsted.

**DC confirmed that only the Ofsted Inspectors were able to view this.

JR asked about the Risk Register which is a specific register of localised risk. CFO Hans Copas and Hannah Kelly have been talking about the best way of taking this forward. Clerk to make enquiries.

ACTION (SDB16):- RJ

SBa attended the Grammar Schools Governors' Conference a week or so ago and will send out a bullet point list of the information that she gathered from this.

ACTION (SDB17):- SBa

SBa and JR asked whether there was a way in which governors can show their appreciation to staff following Ofsted. DC confirmed that staff would greatly appreciate this. A number of ideas were discussed.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 13th January 2025 at 6:30 pm, LCR in Marling School.

➤ *The meeting ended at 8:20 pm*