

Minutes of the School Development Board Meeting
held on Monday 13th January 2025
at 6:30pm at Marling School

- Present:-** Alice Bailey-Yip (ABY), Sandra Barber (SBa), Simon Begbey (SBe), Mwai Daka (MD), Maria Fuente (MF), Jules Godfrey (JG, Principal), Martyn Hewett (MH), Jo Roberts (JR), Helen Tilly (HT)
- In Attendance:-** Rachel Jenkins (RJ, Clerk)
Holly Bedford (HB, Assistant Principal) (left meeting at 8:15 pm)
Louise Harris (LH, Assistant Principal and Head of Sixth Form) (left meeting at 7:00 pm)
Katie Hughes (KH, Vice Principal)
Andy MacDonald (APM, Vice Principal)
- Apologies:-** Will Gosling (WG), Maureen Shearman (MS)

Key
*Governor support, questions and challenge
**Responses

Budget
Concero
Health & Safety and premises

Policies still to be approved
Training still to be completed

Committees set up
Compass Careers Report
Link Governors appointed

1. Welcome

JR welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed Co-Chairs would take it in turns to chair SDB meetings. JR will chair this evening’s meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from WG and MS 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 25th November 2024 have been circulated to the committee prior to this meeting.

- *The minutes were proposed by SBA; seconded by MH and unanimously approved.*

5. Matters Arising and Action Points

5.1 Action Points

ISDB41: Ongoing
ISDB44: Ongoing
ISDB45: Consolidated with ISDB44
ISDB56: Ongoing
SDB4: Complete
SDB6: Ongoing
SDB8: Complete
SDB9: Ongoing
SDB10: Ongoing
SDB11: Complete
SDB12: Complete
SDB13: Ongoing
SDB14: Ongoing
SDB15: Complete
SDB16: Ongoing
SDB17: Complete

6. Admissions Policy Sixth Form Entry

The consultation period for the suggested amendment to entry points detailed on the Admission Policy 6th Form Entry has now closed. There were few responses and some of these were not considered relevant to this particular amendment.

**A governor asked what support is put in place.*

*** LH confirmed that this is the support that is provided to students every day.*

**A governor queried the research and asked what this refers to.*

*** Internal research has been conducted and a change in entry criteria would not have a disproportionate effect on girls.*

**A governor made the point that it would be interesting to consider the effect of out of county applicants.*

***Other schools are currently considering this and Marling have an opportunity to see the effect of this over the next year.*

Governors felt that it might be worth looking at this in June 2025 for September 2027 entry.

Action (SDB18): RJ

*A governor questioned why the entry point has been raised to 50 points rather than 48 points (as some other schools have done).

** Other schools have an entry point of 50 points and there is the opportunity to accept less than this.

HT reflected that prospective pupils select their sixth form place based on the institution concerned and the subjects offered rather than the entry criteria. LH also made the point that there is a huge amount of movement between schools and subjects on results day. The impetus behind increasing the level of entry is to improve outcomes and the way to do this is to improve the standard of intake. In addition, the slight increase in points across a broader range of subjects will help ensure that pupils maintain effort across all subjects up to GCSE level. JR agreed that monitoring Sixth Form numbers is crucial - and increasing number and quality of students is key.

- *The Admissions Policy Sixth Form Entry for September 2026 was proposed by ABY; seconded by MF and unanimously approved*

LH left meeting at 7:00 pm.

7. Link Governors

7.1 Careers Link Governor

WG has expressed an interest in the Careers Link Governor role.

- *WG as Careers Link Governor proposed by JR, seconded by SBe and unanimously agreed*

7.2 H&S Link Governor

MF has expressed an interest in the H&S Link Governor role.

- *MF as H&S Link Governor proposed by SBe, seconded by JR and unanimously agreed*

SEND Link Governor

MD has expressed an interest in the SEND Link Governor role.

- *MD as SEND Link Governor proposed by SBa, seconded by MH and unanimously agreed*

Clerk to put Link Governors in touch with appropriate members of staff in school (Holly Bedford for Careers, Richard Dangerfield for H&S and Carrie Wittke for SEND).

Action (SDB19): RJ

8. SDB Committees

8.1 Admissions Committee

Admissions Committee to be made up of 3 governors, Principal and Admissions Officer (3 scheduled meetings per year in November, February and June plus a time critical short notice Y11 results meeting in early September. Ad hoc when required eg In Year Test Results).

SBa, ABY, HT to be governors on Admissions Committee along with JG and Nicola Barrow. In Year Test Results can be considered via email and then ratified at SDB meeting as and when required.

8.2 P&C Committee

P&C Committee to be made up of 3 governors, SDB Chair and Principal (2 scheduled meetings per year in November and March following appraisal round. Ad hoc when required eg flexible working requests).

SBa, SBe and MH to be governors on P&C Committee along with JG.

8.3 Curriculum & Standards Committee

Formation of this committee is to be postponed until next academic year. Clerk to add to agenda for SDB meeting in September 2025.

Action (SDB20): RJ

8.4 Finance & Premises Committee

Although formation of this committee was not on the agenda, it was considered imperative to have a committee with oversight of this. SBa and JR are talking to CBAT about the school budget and have some sight of this. It was decided to form a committee and hold committee meetings once a long term ie three times a year and this can be conducted on Teams. JR will email Hans Copas and invite him to attend the next SDB meeting.

SBe, MF and JR to be governors on the F&P Committee along with JG.

Action (SDB21): JR

9. Governing body organisation, expectations and role

JR on behalf of both Chairs wishes to reiterate the purpose of the governing body, what governors are for and what governance obligations are. It is important for the governing body to remain strategic and adhere to the school's vision, ethos and strategy. The SDB are responsible for holding leaders to account and overseeing financial performance. The commitment of the governors is to ensure that as governors they are meeting their commitments, have done all the requisite training and undertaken any reading prior to each SDB meeting. Confidentiality is to be observed at all times and during Link Governor visits the ethos is to look, not judge.

With regard to Link Governors, there is Link Governor training which should be undertaken for specific areas of interest. Clerk will send training links as appropriate. In terms of Link Governor visits, the SDB guidance is to make three visits per year ie one per long term.

Action (SDB22): RJ

SBa reported that she had made a T&L Link Governor visit and had covered everything of note within 2 hours with APM and HB. It might be that there is a need to make more Safeguarding and SEND Link Governor visits but this is up to the Link Governor and Link contact in school to decide on this.

SBa and JR had attended the Marling School Carol Concert which was a wonderful occasion. It would be good if governors were a presence at other school events at least once or twice a year. It would

certainly be positive if governors were seen around school and for school events. HB to send calendar of events to Clerk for circulation.

Action (SDB23): HB/RJ

10. Governor Training Update

Clerk to send HB all governor email addresses so that HB can add these to the National College for training purposes.

Action (SDB24): RJ/HB

SBa has had a look at what training governors have completed. Co-Chairs wish to emphasise that it is really important that all governors complete Induction for Academy Governors and Safeguarding for Governance as soon as possible and The Prevent Duty by 15th February. Other training will be required as the academic year progresses but these three courses are necessary and need to be completed.

11. ADP Overview and school budget

JG explained that the ADP (Academy Development Plan) is based on Ofsted criteria. With these areas of focus in mind, the school will look at what needs to be improved on during the year. This will then get RAG rated. The idea is to continually review this document and use it as the structure of SDB meetings going forward. The ADP should be presented prior to each meeting for governors to read.

***A governor queried the number of items on the ADP.**

**** JG confirmed that the number of items on the ADP was about normal for a school of the size of Marling. There is both breadth and focus with many things to work on.**

12. Safeguarding Update

Safeguarding Update is in the meeting file on GovHub.

There have been no permanent exclusions and one 3 day suspension since the last SDB meeting on Monday 25th November. There have been no referrals made.

There has been a bereavement in Y13 of a pupil who has been at Marling since Y7. Arrangements have been offered for pupils and staff to attend the funeral service on 24th January.

13. H&S Update

JR asked JG for a headline of H&S concerns. The Hall and Bell Tower have been closed and the closure of this area of school has reduced capacity to do a number of things this year. Students have had to be rerouted into and out of school across two car parks which increases risk. Due to the cold weather and the amount of hardstanding across school icy conditions have caused problems. Buildings have antiquated heating systems which do not work properly causing leakages. There are problems with ceiling tiles and venting systems in the dining room. There are a number of broken doors and fire

doors. The buildings are generally in a very poor state of repair and loose masonry has now been removed. There is no hot water and therefore no showers in the Sports Hall as the heater is not working and has been turned off.

*A governor asked how this site compares with other sites.

** Never been on a site in such a poor state of repair.

*A governor expressed concern as to whether there was a risk of injury.

**JG confirmed that there is a weekly H&S walk around the entire site and things have been made safe.

*Governors queried how to go forward with all of these issues.

** There is an action to list everything that needs to be done and then to RAG rate this.

Action (SDB24): JG

All governors agreed that there was an urgent need to address the poor state of the school site and fundraise. This is one of the biggest priorities for the school.

*A governor asked whether there was allocation of additional funds to look after an older building.

** There is no provision made for this.

*A governor asked what capacity the ground staff have.

** There are currently two full time and one part time member of ground staff – and they are overstretched.

JG confirmed that a bid has been submitted to the DfE to repair the hall roof and this will be confirmed in May. MF as H&S Link Governor and JG will get together with Richard Dangerfield to discuss the many other things that need attention.

Action (SDB25): MF/JG/RD

14. Policies

All governors have read through and commented on policies submitted at the last SDB meeting on Monday 25th November 2024.

- *The Relationships & Sex Education Policy was proposed by JR; seconded by SBa and unanimously approved*

KH confirmed that she is working on the Attendance Policy (which has a lot of queries and amendments) and the Educational (Offsite) Visits Policy. These will be submitted for inclusion in the next meeting folder to be read before the next SDB meeting on Monday 3rd March and ratified at that meeting.

Action (SDB24): KH

- *The Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy was proposed by JR; seconded by MH and unanimously approved*

HB confirmed that the data provided on Provider Access Arrangements (CEIAG) was not correct. HB will obtain the correct data, amend the document and send a revised copy to Clerk.

Action (SDB25): HB/RJ

- *Subject to amendment of data, the Provider Access Arrangements (CEIAG), was proposed by JR; seconded by SBa and unanimously approved*

HB reported to the meeting that she had completed a Compass Careers Report evaluating careers activity against the Gatsby Benchmarks. She has interviewed a number of Old Marlingtonians in order to complete this.

15. RAG Rating

RAG rating from this meeting was discussed, agreed and added to the beginning of these minutes.

16. Any Other Business

MH brought to the meeting's attention that JG has been awarded her doctorate. Congratulations to JG on this achievement.

17. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 3rd March 2025 at 6:30 pm, LCR in Marling School.

- *The meeting ended at 8:20 pm.*