

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 3rd February 2020 at 6pm in LCR

- Present:** Muir Mathieson (Chair), Stuart Wilson, Alison Campbell-Black, Chris Baldwin, John Gilbert (until 19:05), Eilis Cope, Rebecca Castledine, Andrew Wilson, Nigel Riglar (from 18:20) & Graham Ayre.
- Apologies:** Amanda Arrowsmith
- In Attendance:** Emma Gray, Glen Balmer, Steve Berry (until 18:35), Steve Farr (until 18:55), Rob Reid (until 19:00), Jane Dale (until 18:45), Andy MacDonald (from 18:20 until 19:30) & Hannah Kelly (Clerk)

Pre-meet

At 5:30, RR gave a presentation to available governors regarding data acronyms and terminology. EC, MM, CB JG, SW & BC were present

- *Item 17 was taken here out of turn*
- *Item 23 was taken here out of turn*
- *Item 18 was taken here out of turn*
- *Item 19 was taken here out of turn*
- *Item 20 was taken here out of turn*

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Amanda Arrowsmith. These were accepted by all.

2. Declarations of Interest

ACB declared an interest regarding the sound proofing of the East Campus, which was discussed at the last SDB meeting. There were no further Declarations of Interest.

3. Governor Resignations / Appointments

Rebecca Castledine was elected as Parent Governor. Her term of office will run from 18.12.2019 to 17.12.203. She was welcomed to the School Development Board.

SW & JG are currently meeting a few potential candidates – recommendations will be brought to the committee at the next meeting in March.

4. Minutes of the last two meetings dated 9th December 2019 and 13th January 2020 (strategy).

- *These were proposed for approval by JG; seconded by CB; agreed unanimously and signed by the Chair.*

5. Action Point Checklist

- LGB60:** Ongoing
- LGB62:** Ongoing
- LGB63:** Completed
- LGB64:** Completed
- LGB67:** Completed
- SDB11:** Completed
- SDB15:** Completed
- SDB16:** Completed
- SDB17:** Ongoing
- SDB18:** Completed
- SDB19:** Completed

- SDB20:** Ongoing
- SDB21:** Ongoing
- SDB22:** Completed

Q: Should there be a nominated E-safety governor?

A: To be discussed in item 16.4.

6. Governor Ratification of Email Decisions between SDB meetings

The following trips had been agreed by email:

- Educational Off Sites Visit Policy (19.12.19)
- In Year Candidate – Y9 recommendation (16.12.19)

A discussion was held about low level of responses to email ratification. Two actions were agreed to improve the situation:

- Governors need to actively reply to ratification requests, and not rely on *'nil response is approval'*
- Governors to copy clerk in on outcome of any decision, even if a prior email conversation has taken place without the clerk being copied in.

7. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

8. CBAT Update

SW and NR attended a mock interview on 31st January 2020 for a bid on a new school in Gloucester. The current situation is that we are waiting to see whether the DfE will invite us to interview. SW & NR remarked that it was an interesting and challenging experience.

SW is meeting the CEO of DGAT on Friday to discuss a mixed MAT agreement so that CBAT is able to sponsor Voluntary Controlled schools. This will result in some changes to the Articles of Association. The Trustees are aware and have reviewed them; the changes will be minor.

The CBAT Members met last week. They hold three meetings per year. They are very supportive of the current direction of travel.

There have been recent resignation on the Board of Trustees; NR & SW will be interviewing potential replacements soon.

9. Health & Safety

No incidents to report

EG met with CB, the new link governor for Health & Safety, today to discuss the way forward following the departure of the caretaker.

10. Wellbeing

There have been a number of wellbeing activities undertaken, but one of the key staff on the wellbeing committee has gone on maternity, so replacement is needed so that a wellbeing plan can be developed.

11. GDPR

No issues to report.

12. Financial Update

Confidential paperwork

The school budget and Outturn data for Period 3, December 2019 was circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. EG explained the detail.

Q: Is the school eligible for the supplemental pension grant?

A: Schools could calculate and apply for a supplemental pension grant if the DfE's calculations showed a shortfall in funding. The deadline for submitting a claim was 17th January. Marling was not eligible for any extra grant.

Q: Have you seen the ESFA's new schools resource management tool with the ICFP metrics populated from the budget return?

A: Yes, we have seen it. We had already done this exercise long hand using the self-assessment tool, so we need to have a look at what the differences are. This is one of many tools we use to benchmark.

Q: How do we compare to other schools in relation to our expenditure?

We benchmark using the GASBM secondary benchmarking tool, which is most useful as it includes the other grammar schools in the county. We also use the ESFA tools and Kreston Reeves report which is taken from audit results from a consortium of accounting firms which includes Bishop Fleming.

Q: Has the level of staff absence increased the supply costs?

A: There have been two staff members with longer periods of absence, but generally there has been nothing unusual this year.

Q: Would it make sense for us to pay a flu jab - at roughly £7 each for 120 people would it be a good investment?

A: It was agreed that this could be something the wellbeing group could investigate.

Q: Could we have a breakdown of the ring fenced funds such as 16-19 Bursary and Pupil Premium?

A: Yes. This will be added to the report. Uptake of 16-19 Bursary has been very good this year.

There were no further questions.

13. Educational Visits

There were no visits to approve at this meeting. There will be a sporting trip approval required by email before the next meeting.

14. Safeguarding

Nothing to report at this meeting. Marling's annual safeguarding audit is currently being completed. The results from the audit will be shared at the next SDB in March.

15. School Improvement Plan

There have been no link governor visits since the last SDB meeting. NR will be making his visit on 7th February. GB advised that we are now half way through the school year; staff and student questionnaires have been completed and these are feeding into staff Inset meetings. The next few weeks are concerned with assessment review.

16. Policies

16.1 Admissions 2021 Update

This policy has been through consultation, which has now closed. No comments or questions were received. This policy will be taken to the Admissions Committee on 10th February for ratification.

16.2 Pupil Premium Expenditure Plan 2019-20

The policy has been approved by the SDB on 04.11.2020. The expenditure plan was brought to the SDB for information.

16.3 Attendance Policy

Minor amendments were proposed. The policy was approved subject to the amendments being made.

16.4 E-Safety Policy

A number of comments and questions were made about this policy. Written feedback was submitted by EC & JG, which will be passed on to AMD. CB to email his comments.

The policy will be redrafted and then circulated to the SDB for ratification by email.

- **Action (SDB23): AMD**

C: How often does all the useful information go to parents? E-safety is a minefield to parents; it should go out in the Y7 packs and at other suitable opportunities.

Q: Should we have a separate link governor for E-Safety or does it fall within Health & Safety?

A: CB offered to take it on as part of his H&S remit, to see whether it fits. Otherwise it might be an area for a new governor to take on.

16.5 Educational Off-Site Visits Policy

Q: Do we automatically ensure volunteers are DBS checked for trips abroad?

A: Yes

C: That is not clear in the policy – the wording should be amended slightly to clarify that point.

EG to redraft the sentence in this policy to clarify that volunteers will be DBS checked.

- **Action (SDB24): EG**

➤ *The Attendance Policy was proposed for ratification (subject to minor amends) by JG; seconded by EC and unanimously approved.*

17. Stem Report 2018/19 and 2019/20

Steve Berry was welcomed to the meeting to report on STEM activities within the school. He circulated a copy of the STEM enrichment report November 2019 and expanded on all the activities that have been done in the school over the last year to enrich Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computing, Mathematics and Design Technology.

59% of Marling students went on to follow STEM related degrees last Autumn.

Q: What is that figure, nationally?

A: I don't know – we have looked for comparative data, but haven't found any. It feels like a high percentage though.

Q: Have you sent this to all the partners you have worked with?

A: It should go out to them, and other local businesses to promote what we do; it might help form new links with local industries.

EC to liaise with SB to ensure that the information within the enrichment report is circulated to appropriate local businesses to help promote the school and encourage potential future partnerships.

- **Action (SDB25):** EC/SB

18. Sixth Form Update

Confidential Update

19. League Tables / Predicted outcomes 2019/20. Progress for departments under review.

Confidential Data

RR updated the committee on KS 4 performance tables.

RR shared the comparison to other schools in Gloucestershire, 164 grammar schools nationally and schools in England. These rankings were discussed by the committee.

The GCSE mocks finished recently and data has just been collated. This was shared with the committee. There will be an additional round of predicted grades at the end of February / March for internal use only – these will not be communicated on to parents.

Data was then shared for KS5, Level 3 value added comparisons for the same groups of schools.

These rankings were discussed by the committee.

A level mocks are still to be completed, so RR reminded the committee of the tracking data from before Christmas. This will be updated after the results' data has been collated.

Finally, RR shared the data concerning the departments that needed to improve on last year's results. The majority of the data shows an improvement from last year – there are only three areas where predicted grades are weaker. Teachers in these areas have been approached for the narrative behind the data.

Q: Do you know the reason why German is still looking weaker than other subjects?

A: There are not many students – it is small numbers, so each student is worth a higher percentage. We would need to look at the data at student level and that will take place at the oversight meeting

MM summarised what he felt were the key messages from the presentation:

- The value added scores for A-Level are fantastic and Marling should feel very proud of these results.
- Our position is good on a national level, but average compared to our G7 counterparts.
- We are ahead on data for most departments that needed to improve on last year's results.

20. 3-5 year IT plan – action from previous SDM meeting

Confidential Paperwork

Following an agenda item at the last SDM meeting, governors asked to see IT budget information going forward. EG circulated a budget plan for the next 5 years which also includes staffing.

The plan is based on securing the finances that we think we will get from the DfE and the numbers we think we will get in the 6th Form. It might need to be adjusted dependent on the level of our actual income. These figures represent an increased injection of finance into IT, as it had to be cut back in recent years because financial constraints on the school.

Q: The proposed IT support technician – is this a new role?

A: This was a role which we cut back about 4 years ago, when we had to work with tighter budgets.

Q: What capacity and capability does this plan give us in different ways of doing Teaching & learning? You are proposing a £400k capital investment over 5 years – is that sufficient or generous? Are we investing enough? Will that expenditure take us to where we feel we should have been if we hadn't had to be careful with budgets in previous years, or does it take us to where we want to be? Do we have a view on how we want to be teaching in five years; does the investment converge with that and future proof us?

A: The background infrastructure is very strong. The front-line is the area where we have been careful with finances. Compared to other schools, our network is robust and reliable. Our classroom technology is on the high end of what teachers are used to. We can't fully future proof our IT, because we don't know what IT will look like in education in 5 years' time.

Q: Is IT funded by GAG funding?

A: Yes, there are no capital funds for IT.

Q: For the budget what are we basing our 6th form numbers on?

A: Is it based 160. Our IT plans are based on what we feel to be our minimum requirements over the next 5 years.

Q: More students will increase the income, but it will also increase the usage.

A: We may need to add to this plan with any increased income to allow for additional numbers in 6th Form.

It was suggested that when EC undertakes the second half of her link governor visit, that she meets with the same staff to see whether they have noticed any improvements in IT since first meeting.

21. Headteacher's Summary Update

Confidential Paperwork

The summary update had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting. SW explained that this is the last year before the additional growth from Y7 expansion has moved through. Next year, the school will be at capacity.

SW discussed the admissions data in terms of preferences. It was felt that the Crypt's decision to become co-educational has had an impact on applications for single sex schools.

Q: Has there been a recent change in PAN across selective schools?

A: No. Not for the last two years.

Q: Are we now the largest Grammar School?

A: We will be for a while. We will probably end up being the second largest.

22. Teaching & Learning / Teaching School Update

Jane Dale gave a mid-year review on the Teaching School and Teaching and Learning:

22.1 Teaching School

- Recruitment for ITT continues to be popular. We have currently 12 applicants waiting to be interviewed across primary and secondary and 5 trainees with CETA places. We are on track to increase numbers of 18 from last year. Our training schools at primary level are increasing as we have been approached by schools to be part of the scheme. At Marling, we see the benefits in recruitment: for example, this term we have recruited an English teacher who was a CETA trainee last year and when recruiting a maths teacher a strong field is provided by three of our current trainees.

- We have had 3 sessions of training for Aspirant Leaders. There are 26 participants across secondary and primary, with 3 Marling participants. This is a real collaboration between school partners and Bristol University.
- We are also providing training courses for Teaching Assistants, Newly Qualified Teachers, and Recently Qualified Teachers, which are again delivered by our secondary and primary partners.
- Mental Health First Aid course is being run by Andy Wilson, who is a qualified trainer, over a full day and twilight sessions. This is so far proving popular, as it is an area requested by both secondary and primary partners. The plan is to develop as far as possible over the next year.
- We have a speaker now for our Business Leaders Conference. This will follow a similar format to last year. From this, we hope to launch a sustained course using the same model as our Aspirant Senior Leaders – which is a course that other teaching schools do not seem to offer.
- Governor’s Training and tea has been offered by Emma Gray, looking at the financial role of governors.

Q: I understand the central funding goes on for one more year, what then?

A: We are now becoming more business-minded, previously we have been focussing entirely on providing excellent training; From now on, we will charge a reasonable amount for that so we can become self-reliant. They are reviewing the decision on funding Teaching Schools all the time, so we might not lose the funding in 2021/22.

22.2 Teaching and Learning

- T&L is central to all we do and at the heart of our INSET programme.
- This year has been centred upon curriculum intent with the work of departments looking at their curriculum and evaluating schemes of learning and associated assessment in the light of long term retention and made adaptations as they see appropriate.
- Researched, trialled and shared teaching and learning strategies associated with long term retention of knowledge and skills. This has been done through departments and cross curricular groups. In a staff survey 90% of staff agreed that their practice in regard to supporting student’s long term retention of knowledge has developed in the academic year.
- Provided updated departmental documentation linked to curriculum intent and implementation. This will then be uploaded to the curriculum area of the school websites.
- Lesson observations structures have changed. We now have a balance between being developmental but maintaining the accountability. Reflecting OFSTED processes, grades are no longer allocated for parts of the lesson. In the first observation Heads of Department join with a member of SLT to observe the lesson – which promotes discussion and debate – as well as with the member of staff being observed.
- Looking to the future we want to provide support for all staff to ensure their practice can be outstanding. We have a group of curriculum leaders who are looking to provide a Marling lesson framework which will be a guide as to what will constitute outstanding practice, as well as planning training session for next year.

23. Physical Environment

The caretaker left at the end of December 2019. There was a solution in place for straight after his departure; we have agency and temporary staff in place whilst we are building a solid team around the new caretaker.

This change in personnel has been added to the Risk Register and will be discussed further in Item 24.

24. Risk Register

Confidential Paperwork

The following areas were brought to governors' attention:

- 3.3 Key Person: Long term absence of loss of key personnel impacts on school or financial performance.
- 3.8 Premises: Failure to adequately maintain premises results in injury, damage and/or financial loss. Unfit for purpose or growth.

These items were discussed as a Confidential Minute.

There have been no other residual risk changes since the last meeting. The following pre-existing risks were then discussed:

5.1 Demand / 5.2 Competition

Currently one of the highest residual risks, however it feels to be an improving position from the data we are receiving regarding interest in the 6th Form.

3.2 Information Technology

We have agreed a 5 year budget plan, so that we can see things are moving in the right direction. The SDB agreed that it is too early to reduce the risk levels, but felt it was important to highlight that the steps being taken look positive and acknowledged that these will reduce over time.

4.3 Safeguarding

Again, it was discussed that with such an open site, it is not feasible to fully mitigate the risk, and the impact of any incident will always be high.

C: If we think we have a risky site, we need to ensure that we are allowing money in the budget to start to address key safeguarding risks. We need to have a strong narrative; if budgets are no longer as tight as they were, we need to do some work on tightening our security.

Q: What are Ofsted views on an open site?

A: Some inspectors are very critical of sites like ours, but others don't mention it. There is not a consistent approach. It was not raised in the last Ofsted inspection.

Q: Is our safeguarding affected by becoming co-educational in the 6th Form?

A: No, because we affected a co-educational 6th Form beforehand, even though they were SHS girls, they shared the same facilities.

It was agreed that the site risk assessment should be an agenda item for the next meeting

- **Action (SDB26):** HK

25. Complaints and Compliments

There have been three concerns raised since the last meeting which were dealt with at level one; none of them became formal complaints.

There was a discussion about compliments, as there is not the same system of logging the information that there is for complaints. It was agreed that it would be a good idea to capture any compliments for inclusion on the website.

26. Any other Business

26.1 NGA

It was asked what the NGA membership entitled governors to.
HK to find out what level of support governors can get from NGA.

- **Action (SDB27): HK**

The meeting ended at 20.35

Dates of the next meetings:

SDB: Monday 30th March 2020

