

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 23rd September 2021
at 6pm using Google meet.

Present: Amanda Arrowsmith (Chair), Stuart Wilson, Graham Ayre, Chris Baldwin, Caryn Roberts, Alison Campbell-Black, Eilis Cope, Rebecca Castledine, David Hayward, John Gilbert & Glen Balmer

Apologies: Andrew Wilson, Nick Lythgoe

In Attendance: Hannah Kelly (Clerk), & Emma Gray (to 19:37), Rob Reid (to 19:15),

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from NL and AW. These were accepted by all.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Governor Resignations / Appointments

Nick Lythgoe was appointed to the SDB on the 9th July by the Trustees. The governors welcomed him to the board, in his absence.

Andrew Wilson's term of office as staff governor ends 10th October and Alison Campbell-Black's term of office as a parent governor ends on 18th October.

Nominations have been requested to fill these vacancies. Deadline for nominations is Monday 27th September.

4. Minutes from the last meeting dated 30th June 2021

Subject to two minor typographical errors, the minutes from the last meeting dated 30th June 21 were proposed for approval by GA; seconded by BC; agreed unanimously and signed by AA as Chair.

5. Action Point Checklist

SDB41: Completed

SBD44: Completed

SBD45a: Ongoing

SBD45b: Ongoing

SBD46: Completed

SBD47: Completed

SBD48: Completed

SBD49: Completed

SDB50: Completed

Governors to supply photos for ID cards and use on governor website page.

- **Action (SDB51):** HK

6. Governor ratification of decisions by email between SDB meetings

The following decisions were ratified by governors between 11.05.21 and 30.06.21

- Recommendation to Trustees to appoint Nick Lythgoe as a Marling SDB Governor (SDB)
- Battlefields Trip Approval (SDB)
- Overage Candidate for September 23 entry (Admissions)

These were formally approved by governors.

7. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

- *Item 16 was taken here out of term. (RR left at 19:15)*
- *Items 11-15 were taken here out of term (EG left at 19:37)*

8. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

8.1 Election of Chair

AA was nominated as Chair.

- *This was proposed by JG; seconded by AG; and unanimously agreed.*

8.2 Election of Vice-Chair

JG was nominated as Vice-Chair.

- *This was proposed by BC; seconded by CB; and unanimously agreed.*

It was agreed that it would be prudent to have someone shadow JG for the next few months, as he will be leaving the SDB at the end of the year to focus on CBAT.

AA to speak to governors outside the meeting, to see whether anyone would be interested in becoming vice-chair after JG's departure.

- **Action (SDB52):** AA

9. Agree Roles and Responsibilities

Committee membership was agreed prior to the summer holidays. These changes were formally agreed.

Chair of Admissions: JG to continue as Chair until Christmas. EC to shadow, and then replace.

- *This was proposed by AA; seconded by CR; and unanimously agreed.*

Chair of Pay & Committee: AA to be Chair as this is part of the role of the Chair of SDB

- *This was proposed by JG; seconded by BC; and unanimously agreed.*

Link governors: Nick Lythgoe to take on Health & Safety; CB to discuss whether this role could be split. CB to take on the role of Pupil Premium link.

10. Terms of Reference

Subject to two minor amendments, the Terms of Reference were agreed by the committee.

- *They were proposed by AA; seconded by JG and unanimously agreed.*

11. Self-Evaluation Check

Governors were given the annual governing body self-evaluation check list for completion by the next FGB (06.10.21)

- **Action (SDB53):** All

12. Outcomes from the governance review (Confidential Paperwork)

The summary report was circulated to governors prior to the meeting. Chris Swan, from the Lionheart Academies Trust had been commissioned to carry out a review of CBAT governance. She was very positive about the Trust and the work being done.

SW has met with NR and DD to discuss a number of areas to develop. There were several ideas for how to free up governor time to focus on the school, one of which was for the Trust to consider who needs to review and approve policies and reduce the burden on the SDBs.

Q: Does that make sense from a policy point of view? As a secondary school, some of our policies will need to be different to the primary school policies.

A: No, they would not all be the same. They could be written by the SLT within a school and then approved by the Trust. There may be a small working party of local governors who look at the policies, but it would free up time within SDB meetings to focus on quality of education and provision rather than policy wording.

SW agreed to look at several models to understand different ways policies could be managed and reviewed within a MAT environment.

It was agreed that policies should be in alphabetical order on the website. HK to review.

- **Action (SDB54):** HK

13. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- There have been no Riddor reportable accidents or incidents since the last meeting.
- There are a number of students who require a risk assessment this year.
- EG has been working with some students to understand the best way to facilitate wheelchair access and accessibility. There are only two classrooms that cannot be accessed by all, so these will not be timetabled for any students who require this facility
- Covid testing went well at the start of September. There were 6 positive LFT cases as a result. There have been some further positive cases within the School community since then, including a small spike in Y11. The necessary authority was approached to confirm protocols, and they confirmed that we had the right protocols and procedures in place.

Q: What is our approach to the 12-15yrs Covid vaccination programme rollout

A: We have put dates forward and are waiting for confirmation from the NHS.

The NHS are providing the vaccination and the staff to administer it. They will deal with the issue of consent, non-consent and conflicting consent. Any communication to parents is from the NHS; we only distribute it on their behalf. Marling will provide a venue.

We have received communications from various pressure groups, but as a School we are only facilitating the process by allowing the NHS to use our facilities. The students and their parents decide themselves whether to have the vaccination, we are in no way involved with that aspect.

Q: What should governors say if we are asked about it?

A: The vaccination programme is being delivered by the NHS. We have no further information at the moment. Governors can be copied into any communications, but they will be provided by the NHS – our role is to send them out on their behalf.

Q: Are you happy with the legal cover you have and what can potentially happen.

A: We have been advised by our legal team, and the Local Authority that there is no risk to HT or senior leaders. It is a Government rollout of a national programme, and consent is given by the parents and students. Marling has no involvement with whether people choose to have the vaccination or not.

14. GDPR

GDPR training was done with staff at the inset day. There have been no breaches yet this term.

15. Risk Register (**Confidential Paperwork**)

There are no new risks from the last meeting, except the potential protest risk regarding the vaccine.

Q: When a child is ill and leave a message on the absentee helpline. What is the protocol to ensure that this is actually the parent?

A: We don't currently ask for identification.

EG to look into the types of systems which would help cover this gap and register absenteeism with the parents.

- **Action (SDB55):** EG

16. Finance and Facilities Update (Including Budget Update) (Confidential Paperwork)

EG explained that the budget is from August (year-end), but pre-Audit, so there is the potential for change. She then gave an overview of the key figures and the year-end figure. There was a healthy end to the year, income and expenditure were as forecast. It has been a tough year, so we are pleased with where we are.

Q: Has summer school helped with budget?

A: We claimed what we were entitled to. We are still waiting to hear whether we will be fully funded or whether it will be capped.

Q: Are we still eligible for the 16-19 exceptional growth funding due to the rate the 6th form is growing, or are we back to lagged funding?

A: SW to check the figures

17. Educational Visits

September is a fresh start on Educational visits – all previous trips have been reimbursed to parents; there is nothing outstanding.

New trips: Y7 camp happening today, the Battlefields trip in February '22 has been approved by governors.

Staff are beginning to submit trip proposals which will be sent to governors for approval.

➤ *EG left the meeting at 19:37*

18. Safeguarding (Confidential Paperwork)

- Records for Y7 students have been transferred from primary schools
- SD is undertaking a manual check to ensure all transfer records for external pupils coming into 6th Form are received.
- SCR – AO did manage the SCR, but left during summer. Sharon Walker has taken it over this responsibility. SW, EG & RR will have training on the SCR.
- Two related students are on Child Protection Plans, and three non-related students are on Children In Need Plans.
- There has been one referral to MASH.
- Prevent Training will be done in October for Heads of Year, Heads of Key Stage and some support staff.
- One of the recommendations from the Summer Audit was to visit students educating offsite. RR to make a visit next week to a pupil being educated offsite.
- ACES training – RR to undertake this training with a view to rolling it out to staff and CR as Safeguarding governor.

19. School Improvement Plan (Confidential Paperwork)

There have been no changes since the late draft at the end of June.

Governor visits and monitoring for this year will fit in with the SIP
Five external consultants are coming in over the course of the year to work on the 4 Ofsted strands.
Governor visits will allow triangulation and external monitoring of the output from the external consultants.

The plan for link governor visits is to have one visit each month (Oct to July), where possible, in the second week of the month.

If governors would rather come in for two half day, then this is possible, but they would have to be across a calendar month

HK to get preferred 'month' from governors

- **Action (SDB56):** HK

20. Link Governor Update

Link governor reports have been received from ACB, CR & EC. These will be discussed at the next meeting HK to ensure this is an agenda item at the SDB on the 6th October.

- **Action (SDB57):** HK

21. Policies

21.1 Marling Policies for Ratification

The following policies were ratified by the SDB committee:

- Assessment 21-23
- Drug Controlled Substances 21-23
- Relationships and Sex Education 21-23
- School Uniform 21-22
- Types of Behaviour and Likely Sanctions 21-22

The School Uniform policy is non-discriminatory, therefore should be applicable if there are any transitional students

Q: What are the guidelines for 6th Form uniform?

A: This is more complicated as wording of 6th form uniform polices in general can be seen as gender biased due to the list of girls' requirements being longer than for boys. Therefore, we have a pictorial guide of the kinds of outfits that would be seen as appropriate.

6th Form school uniform code to be an agenda item for the meeting on the 1st December.

- **Action (SDB58):** HK

Q: Are we making any proviso for the new uniform law?

A: GB to check with EG and respond

- **Action (SDB59):** GB

It was agreed that where a policy states 'Parents', this should be amended to 'parents / carers'

- *Subject to the minor amendments proposed, JG proposed the five policies; EC seconded them and they were unanimously approved.*

21.2 CBAT Policies

The following, recently approved CBAT policies were shared with governors:

- Bullying and harassment

- Capability
- Code of conduct for all adults
- Disciplinary procedure relating to misconduct for all adults
- Disciplinary rules for all employees
- Grievance procedure
- Whistle-blowing

22. Review of outcomes for previous year GCSE and A Levels 2021 (Confidential paperwork)

22.1 GCSE

RR gave a headline of the outcomes and explained why grade inflation has happened.

The results were broken down into different student groups with Value Added given. A breakdown by subject area was also provided

22.2 A level

This is the first year of co-educational A Level results. There are also more students than in previous years.

The students new to Marling in the 6th form, all performed well. Again RR broke down the results into different groups SEN, PP, race, gender and subject area.

22.3 Areas of Concern

RR explained that the areas of concern in 2019 may no longer be true as results have been based on teacher assessed grade. He advised that it will be prudent to continue to consider them as such, as some of the factors in the exams will come back and measures such as Progress 8 will be used again

The governors recognise that the conditions for GCSEs and A Levels this year provided an unfair amount of pressure on staff and wanted to acknowledge an outstanding job in difficult circumstances.

Q: Were any mock exams externally validated or was it all in-house?

A: The series of exams including the mocks were internally marked but then double marked by another teacher; in most instances, the second teacher marked a number of questions rather than the whole paper, owing to the volume of work. We used exam board generated material so that we could use the marking scheme from the exam board. They were the most rigorously assessed internal exams we have ever done. Some of these processes can be put in place in future.

Q: Did you have any challenges from external moderators or parents?

A: There were some appeals from students and parents. As expected, some small random samples were taken by exam boards. There was no request for additional information from external exam boards and our grades were upheld

Q: How many external A level candidates came from selective schools?

A: About a third of the external candidates.

Q: Did the number of students obtaining the EBacc drop from last year?

A: Approximately 55% of students qualified. It is usually the language element that prevents it, as a number of students don't take an MFL at GCSE. To qualify, students have to have a range of subjects. If students don't chose the broad range needed, then no matter how high their grades, they will not get it.

Q: I understand the government's target for next year is 75%. What are your expectations in Marling?

A: We have the potential to be in the low to mid-70s based on subject choices, but it would depend on grades achieved.

➤ *RR left the meeting at 19.15*

23. School Development Plan

This was covered as part of item 19 – School Improvement Plan

24. Pupil Premium Plan and Review

AMD is preparing the policy and expenditure plan for this year. This will be shared with governors at the SDB on the 6th October.

25. Complaints and Compliments

25.1 Complaints

One complaint has moved to Stage 3 and there are two at Stage 1

25.2 Compliments

26. Any other Business

26.1 Canal Field

Q: Have you sold the land?

A: No, we are looking at several different options.

26.2 HT recruitment

➤ *GB left the meeting at 20.02*

Marling is currently recruiting a Headteacher. The advert is running in the Times Education Supplement AA thanked governors who had who confirmed availability for the selection process. AA will send a brief overview of what it will entail, but the interview process will last for 2 days. Governors will be involved or leading activities on day one, and several governors with key link areas of responsibility may be required for a panel interview on day 2.

AA thanked governors for giving up their time; it is a key appointment and we want to make sure we can bring the best people we can for this role. We want to give everyone a fair chance and get the best possible candidate from the process.

Q: Has there been any interest?

A: Yes, I have had some interest, some phone calls and visit requests. The advert is still live.

The meeting ended 8.10pm

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6th October at 6pm in the LCR



01.12.2021