

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 10th May 2023
6pm in Room SB00, Marling School

Present: Glen Balmer (Head), Chris Baldwin (Chair), Holly Bedford, Clare Steel, & Nick Lythgoe, Becky Castledine, Alison Campbell-Black (from 18:10)
Apologies: Rob May, Graham Ayre & Ian Townsend
Absent:
In Attendance: Hannah Kelly (clerk), Chris Williams (until 19:15), Clare Johnson (until 18:56), Kim Wilson

1. Apologies

Apologies have been received from IT, GA & RM. These were accepted by all. Kim Wilson, the newly appointed CBAT CEO was welcomed to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Governor resignations / appointments

David Hayward resigned from the SDB on 09.05.2023 due to an increase in work commitments.

Graham Ayre has rejoined the SDB. He was nominated by the SDB and appointed by the trust for a 4 year term starting on 24.04.23. Unfortunately, he was unable to make this meeting due to prior commitments.

Recently, GB & CB have met with several potential governors, some sourced through 'Inspiring governance' others through a communication to the School community. GB explained the aim is to recruit new governors who have the most complimentary fit with the skills sets on the current governing body.

4. Minutes of the last meeting dated 23rd March 2023

➤ *The minutes for the meeting dated 23rd March 2023 were proposed by NL; seconded by BC and unanimously agreed.*

CB signed the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Action Point Checklist

SDB77b: Ongoing (CS to email safeguarding certificate to HK)

SDB95: Ongoing

SDB96: Ongoing (merge with action 110)

SDB108: Ongoing (action point updated)

SDB110: Ongoing (merge with action 95)

SDB114: Ongoing (action point updated)

SDB118: Ongoing (to be arranged once new governors have been appointed.)

SDB119: Completed

SDB120: Completed

SDB121: Completed

SDB122: Completed

6. Governor ratification of decisions by email between SDB meetings

The following decisions were ratified by governors between 24.03.23 and 09.05.23

- Nomination of Graham Ayre as governor (SDB) 21.04.23

7. Matters Arising

There were no further matters arising.

- *Item 13 was taken here, out of turn.*
- *Item 11 was taken here, out of turn.*
- *Item 12 was taken here, out of turn.*

8. Risk Register (confidential paperwork)

CB explained that the risk register has been populated. The next step is for CB to assign a governor 'owner' to each of these risks in line with governor skill sets.

- **Updated Action (SDB108):** CB

9. Governor Visits (confidential paperwork)

The Literacy Visit report by Gill Hickling (Carter Educational Consultant) following her visit on 11th January 2023 was circulated to governors prior to the meeting. The visit had been discussed in a previous SDB meeting; there were no further questions.

10. Policies

The E-safety policy was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting. A new Digital Learning Lead is being recruited and the incumbent will be required to undertake a thorough review of the policy. Therefore, no changes to the current policy are being made at this stage. A comprehensive policy review will be completed in the Autumn.

- *The policy was proposed by CB; seconded by NL and unanimously approved.*

11. Health & Safety Update (confidential paperwork)

This item was taken out of turn.

A summary of accidents in April was circulated prior to the meeting. This is in line with the year-on-year comparison.

The fire alarm system was serviced at the end of March. There are no outstanding inspections due to be undertaken.

Q: What is the situation regarding 'headers' in football – are these still allowed?

A: Yes. There have been several updates for schools regarding this, all of which have been incorporated into plans. The PE staff follow the appropriate guidance for sporting activities. All staff involved in coaching and teaching sports have also been updated on latest concussion guidance.

12. Finance Update (confidential paperwork)

This item was taken out of turn.

The April outturn was shared with governors prior to the meeting.

Q: Are we expecting lettings income to pick up throughout the summer? Are we maximising our ability to let?

A: The sports hall cannot be let out during exams and mock exam periods, so income is lower. This picks up from summer when there is approximately £10k of lettings booked in.

Q: When are we expecting to see pay rises?

A: We are basing the budget on the current pay offer from the government,

Q: Why are the education equipment and exam costs so high? Are budgets monitored and challenged with departments here?

A: Education equipment is front loaded, so the 95% is unlikely to change as all the equipment was bought at the beginning of the year/terms. Regarding exams, cost increases from

suppliers have had an impacted. All budgets are monitored and investigated regularly. Inflationary pressures have also increased costs.

Q: Have 'credits due' in utility costs been accrued for, or is this receipt still to hit the numbers?

A: We are waiting for the receipt of credits. Should be within the next 2 months.

Q: Could we please obtain an understanding of what we are getting from the Trust going forward?

A: Traded Services, HR/Payroll, RPA insurance, Leadership, Finance, and IT, amongst others.

Q: Are DFC costs going to be incurred later in year? I can see it is matched with the income but want to ensure it will be spent.

A: This will be spent with the summer work plans, to include new walls, doors, plumbing work, and hall heating.

CW to review air conditioning units in line with advice from ACB re changing cylinders.

- **Action(SDB 119):** CW

➤ *CW left the meeting at 19:15*

13. Trips Update (**confidential paperwork**)

This item was taken out of turn.

Clare Johnson joined the meeting to share the work she has undertaken on how Marling can be more strategic with trip planning. Nikki Embling has been recruited as the trips and visits co-ordinator to help manage the practicalities.

Aspects which have been considered are:

- Awareness of current financial climate – need to ensure a range of opportunities for differing budgets.
- A published plan will allow families time to choose trips in advance with time to budget.
- Review the imbalance of level of opportunities for different year groups.
- Impact of missed curriculum time, and staff / students missing certain key dates in the school calendar.
- Reviewing the imbalance of trips between subjects.
- SEND issues.
- Simplification of the trip organization process.
- Avoid over-crowding of trips at certain points within the school year.

Key benefits will include:

- Simplified process for staff, paperwork (including risk assessments will be done at the start)
- A 7-year plan will be communicated to parents so they can plan and budget.
- Questions such as affordability, inclusion, cultural capital, curriculum impact, sustainability etc. will need to be considered at the start of the trip planning process.
- Information will be kept online, on one document, managed by Nikki Embling, so there will be no version control issues. Risk Assessments will be done at the beginning of the trip and will be included with this.
- Clear timescales: a ten-week lead time for day trips and twelve months for a residential trip.

Q: Will anything be done about filling in the gaps for year groups who missed out on opportunities due to Covid?

A: This year and next year, trips have been opened to wider year groups. Additional trips cannot be added to the calendar as it will become too crowded. Not all the shortfall can be made up.

Q: What are you doing about affordability?

A: We have lots of different price points for trips; higher tariff trips must be balanced with lower value trips for the same year group. We are hoping that with a 7-year plan, families can see what trips their child could potentially go on and then have plenty of time to budget for that. The Marling promise also helps PP students access some of the trips.

Q: Do you track to see who is going on these trips and whether they are being accessed by the wider audience you are hoping for?

A: We haven't done this before; we will do with this new process.

Q: Are extra funding opportunities flagged to parents?

A: There is standard wording in the letters, but we can put some more focus on that and perhaps signpost different, external opportunities.

Q: Will this change the governor trip approval process?

A: This should reduce governor involvement once the plan has been approved. There will be changes to the plan, and trip detail may change from year to year which might require governor review, but hopefully governor questions should be answered by the initial paperwork which will be provided with the approval request.

Q: Are there any plans for a summer enrichment week?

A: Marling hasn't done this for a long time. There are pros and cons; for example, it might help solve some calendar crunch times, however for a school wide programme to be a success, the activities need to be relevant and beneficial to all involved, which is not easy. It is possible this, or a halfway house model, may be explored in future years.

➤ *Clare Johnson left the meeting at 18:56*

14. Staff Wellbeing & Workload

GB & HB gave an update on the work undertaken by the Staff Wellbeing & Workload committee. The aim is that their outputs are sustainable and deliverable. The 'staff voice' processes are right and are working; these feed views feed into the committee meeting.

HB has reached out to staff and from their feedback, collated a list of links to support and training on a wide range of issues.

A staff audit has been undertaken to see whether members of staff would be interested in leading in-school support in areas where they have knowledge or expertise, for example BAME or mums in school

HB emphasised the importance of this being embedded into school culture rather than it just being a poster on a door and gave some examples of how this might be achieved.

15. Headteacher's Summary Report (**confidential paperwork**)

The Headteacher's summary report for CBAT was circulated to governors prior to the meeting.

Q: There seems to be an anomaly in the bullying incidents data on page 3 of the report?

GB to check this data and confirm detail to governors.

- **Action (SDB120): GB**

Q: For the Y8 into Y9 options, seven students were unable to take Food as a DT options. How are these 7 decided upon?

A: At this point, it is a mini options process for music, drama, DT and a second language. It allows students a little bit of personalisation. We guarantee 2 out of their three choices and that students can access any subject where study in Year 9 is a prerequisite for GCSE study, for example all students who want to study a language will be able to do so. If there

is oversubscription for a subject, the order of preference students have selected the course is used as the first discriminator. Where several students have the same preference level, names are selected at random.

Q: Numbers for Y12 German look low for next year. Will you run this subject?

A: We are reluctant not to offer German for A Level as it is a core subject. Until we know definite numbers, we are unable to make a decision. The trend for German at GCSE and in Year 9 is upwards so we do not expect the low uptake to be a long-term trend.

Marling is currently below our absence target; there remains a lot of seasonal illness absence. However, this seems to be a wider issue as the data is still above the national average.

Q: Can you show a split by gender on the 6th form absence data?

A: GB to provide this information in future Headteacher governor reports

- **Action (SDB121):** GB

Q: There has been some concern about the installment of CCTV in some toilets. If communications had gone out beforehand explaining the rationale, it might have been a smoother process?

A: All students were informed in assembly which led to two parental concerns being raised. All parents will be directed to the school's CCTV code of practice in the next newsletter. We had to install them as, whilst we are generally very fortunate when compared with other schools, there are a small number of students who do damage school property. As a result, we had to remove hand dryers and soap dispensers from certain toilets. The school council had also raised that students feel less safe in the toilets and want to see an improvement in these facilities.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) states that the use of CCTV has to be reasonable and we must have tried everything else. The CCTV has been installed following the appropriate guidance and points at the sinks, not at the toilet area. It is not being installed in all toilets, just those which have experienced repeated vandalism; this means that we can reinstall soap dispensers and hand dryers in them. Since its installation, there has been no further vandalism.

We will continue be reviewing their introduction with the student council.

16. Report on Staff Absence

GB has yet to receive the data from HR.

GB to request this again for discussion at the next meeting.

- **Action (SDB122):** GB

17. SDP 2023-2026

In recent years, there has been an annual cycle of SDP, however, GB now feels a longer-term focus is also required. A 3-year plan on how to 'inspire excellence' is being developed; this will include what it looks like for each of the SDP strands and how is it measured.

It was felt that the SDP needs to have more time devoted to it than it being an agenda item in an already busy meeting.

CB & GB to discuss whether to arrange an extra-ordinary SDB meeting to discuss the SDP, or whether to reduce the agenda items at the next SDB on the 29th June to devote more time to this subject.

- **Action (SDB123):** CB

18. Complaints & Compliments

No complaints or compliments have been received since the last meeting.

19. Any other Business**19.1 CBAT Trust Governor meeting**

Nicki Wadley has offered to lead a meeting of all the CBAT SDBs, to discuss the role of governors, any challenges and barriers to success and how CBAT can help. Nicki will then report back to the board so that a plan can be developed.

The meeting will be in a neutral venue in the Stroud area. The meeting is proposed to run from 6pm to 8pm.

Governors were asked for their availability in early June. Two possible options are Thursday 8th or Wednesday 14th June. CB to feedback these dates to NW.

➤ **Action (SDB124):** CB

19.2 Vaping

Q: Some parents are very concerned about the levels of vaping with teenagers. What is the stance in school?

A: It is discussed in assemblies and life skills groups. In terms of sanctions, it is treated like smoking used to be and has led to suspensions. Advice has been sent home to parents, along with an update about what we are doing in school.

The meeting ended at 20:15

The next School Development Board meeting is on Thursday 29th June 2023 at 6pm in School



29.06.2023