

Minutes of the Interim School Development Board Meeting
held on Monday 19th February 2024 at 6:00pm on Microsoft Teams.

Present: Jane Exworthy (JE, Chair), Steve Kneller (SK, Interim HT), Ayo Jimmy (AJ), Jo Roberts (JR) & Alison Campbell-Black (ACB, Vice-Chair)

In Attendance: Hannah Kelly (HK, Clerk), Andrew MacDonald (AM), Katie Hughes (KH) (from 18:25 to 19:48)

Apologies:

Absent:

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

1. Welcome

JE welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them of the confidential nature of what is discussed in ISDB meetings.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies – all committee members were present.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Agreement of minutes from the previous meeting

Minutes from the meeting dated 29th January 2024 had been circulated to the committee prior to this meeting. The minutes were agreed to be an accurate representation of the meeting.

➤ *The minutes were proposed by JR; seconded by AJ; and unanimously approved.*

5. Matters Arising & Action Points

5.1 Action Points

ISDB04: Ongoing – NB to raise at Trustees meeting on 22.02.24

ISDB12: Ongoing – KH safeguarding audit and action plan to be presented to Trustees at meeting on 22.02.24 and shared with ISDB members

ISDB13: Ongoing

ISDB14: Ongoing

ISDB15: Ongoing

JR offered to draft an advert to recruit local governors for the ISDB, particularly with Safeguarding / SEN background.

- **Action (ISDB16):** JR

5.2 Matters Arising

At the last meeting the committee has requested feedback on the following actions:

- *SK to provide an update on the relocation of resources to this building and impact of this change* - There have been a few practical issues with the relocation of the SEND and Pastoral teams to School House. It is anticipated that the move will happen during the Easter break.
- *An update on staffing and progress with freeing up additional time for CW.* - An English teacher has now been recruited, allowing CW to have additional SENCO time she requires.

- *Update on Y11 SEND data* – a written update to be provided by CW for the ISDB at the meeting on 18.03.24
 - **Action (ISDB17):** CW
- *Outcomes for KS3,4 and 5 for attendance, performance and progress* to be provided to the ISDB at the meeting on 18.03.24
 - **Action (ISDB18):** SK
- *SK to provide data on involvement of SEND in enrichment activities* including school trips and PE activities by 18.03.24
 - **Action (ISDB19):** SK
- *Data for SEND Y11 mock and data progress.* Rob Reid to attend the meeting on the 18.03.24 to share this information
- SK to provide an update on how CW is using her additional time to check that teachers are meeting need.
 - **Action (ISDB20):** SK

6. Curriculum Update from SRIP Actions (Confidential Paperwork)

Andrew MacDonald attended the meeting to update on progress in the curriculum model with a particular focus on certain subjects following the external review. Paperwork was shared prior to the meeting outlining questions raised from the review and what steps are being taken to address these. AM gave further details on changes which have been implemented already and those still in progress.

**A governor questioned whether is there a concern that departments are too dependent on one key member of the team if there is an inspection as a HoD was not in school on the day of the external review to discuss the curriculum in depth?*

***AM answered that other departmental staff do have this knowledge. In this case, staff were ready to answer any questions during the review. However, the reviewer just looked at the paperwork in isolation and didn't speak to any of the subject teachers. Curriculum design and sequencing is discussed within teams.*

**A HoD left at Christmas and has not yet been replaced. If there was an Ofsted, what interim steps are in place to ensure that curriculum design and sequencing questions can be responded to?*

***The HoD left at Christmas, and there was an advert for an Easter start. This was not successful, so there will be a second advert for a September start which should attract a stronger field. In the meantime, there are two members of staff covering this role; they have all the knowledge needed for an inspection. Their input wasn't asked for in the external review.*

**Governors asked whether it would be possible to request another review to check that staff feel sufficiently prepared in case of an inspection.*

*** SK and AM proposed to arrange a mock inspection conversation with the team to prepare them in case of an inspection before a new HoD is employed.*

- **Action (ISDB21):** SK/AM

**A governor asked whether the difference in uptake of French versus German & Spanish was a teacher issue, or students' perception of the teachers?*

*** SK advised that regular student voice activities are undertaken which show no evidence that it is a teacher issue; the GCSE French teacher is a strong teacher.*

Possible reasons for language preferences were discussed.

*Governors wondered whether the fact the French exchange was stopped a few years ago had an impact on uptake as there are options for German and Spanish.

**AM advised that the extra-curricular experiences are comparable for all languages, as a trip to Paris for French students is replacing the French exchange.

AM has explored the KS3 curriculum offering to see whether there is an appropriate balance of breadth and depth. Work in this area was shared.

*A governor asked whether there is the right balance of language lessons compared to Science, Maths and English in KS3&4

** AM explained the curriculum allocation in Years 7,8 &9. In KS4, Maths outcomes are very good; there is no evidence to show more curriculum time is needed. Science has a lot of curriculum time in KS4 as many students choose single science options. English has 7 hours per fortnight in Y9 & 10. This increased to 8 in Y11.

*Governors questioned how this compares to curriculum division in other grammar schools.

**AM explained that it is broadly similar.

6.1 Challenge

AM explained some of the review work being undertaken on the curriculum intent statement.

*A governor questioned whether, as curriculum is critical, the work being undertaken now, is robust enough that the new HT will not want to change it?

**AM explained that the proposals have been discussed with the incoming HT; she is happy for SK & AM to continue with the work in its current format. Tweaks may be made, but the team are confident of a strong starting point upon which she can build.

6.2 Departmental self-evaluation

AM requested support from the ISDB over the coming terms to help support with departmental self-evaluation activities. The proposal is to look at one or two subjects per small term. A team of 4-8 will support the HoD – it is hoped that a member of the ISDB will join this team.

AM to share a timetable of when the subject self-evaluations are likely to be undertaken.

- (Action ISDB22): AM

ISDB members to contact AM if they would like to take part in any of the reviews.

- (Action ISDB23): AM

6.3 Allocation of Hours

This was discussed as a confidential item.

7. Safeguarding Update

KH gave views on emerging picture at the last meeting. Since then, she has undertaken a full safeguarding audit. SK to share this with the ISDB.

- Action (ISDB24): SK

Themes are emerging linked to the culture within the school; these were shared. A comprehensive action plan will come from the audit. SK to share this with the ISDB.

- Action (ISDB25): SK

KH explained that the aim is that by Term 6 Marling should be not only showing good practice but best practice.

*A governor asked whether 'mop up' sessions were run for any staff who miss the briefings. Do you do mop up sessions for staff who miss briefings?

** KH explained that everything she does is revisited on a regular basis and not just once. Days for briefings will alter, so staff who may not work on a certain day will have the opportunity to hear the message face-to-face.

*Governors asked KH whether she is getting everything she needs. Is there anything further the ISDB can do to support her?

**KH explained that she would love a safeguarding link governor for support and challenge. A discussion was had about recruiting a safeguarding specialist on the board.

KH added that supervision for staff to support them after they have been dealing with difficult safeguarding issues is key. Usually, this would be the line manager, but some are better than others.

*A governor questioned whether current staff members need to be upskilled, or whether these skills need to be brought in.

** KH replied that it is likely to be a combination of upskilling line managers and also bringing in some external supervision.

SK to understand the feasibility and costs regarding external supervision. It was highlighted that some supply insurance comes with free confidential counselling which might be an option.

- **Action (ISDB26):** SK

Finally, KH asked how much safeguarding training governors have had, and whether they would be interested in any. Governors have undertaken some safeguarding training but would welcome any further offers.

KH agreed to deliver safeguarding training for governors for 20 minutes during a meeting. SK & JE to agree an appropriate meeting when this would fit with the agenda.

- **Action (ISDB27):** JE/SK

- KH left the meeting at 19:48

8. Parent Concerns

8.1 Feedback from Parent Engagement Meeting

SK, JE and ACB shared their thoughts about how the parent engagement meetings went. SK has collated the information and shared the main themes with the ISDB. This will be shared with SLT later this week. SK explained that following the online meeting, he plans to write a document for parents to show: 'You said..., so we plan to do...'

Governors thanked SK and the SLT for their time and support with these meetings; it was agreed that it is important to open lines of communication with parents, and show that their opinions are being listened to. It was also highlighted that this was the first time some Y7&8 parents had come into school.

Governors agreed it is important to review the output from these meetings, and actions taken as a result. SK to feed back at future meetings.

- **Action (ISDB28):** SK

8.2 Mobile Phones

A potential parent has contacted school asking about the mobile phone policy, and this was also a key topic at the Parent Engagement Meetings. There was a range of opinions, but it was estimated that 70% of parents were in favour of more restricted phone use.

*A governor asked whether there are any intentions to change the policy.

**SK explained that changes to the policy are needed. There is guidance from the DfE which suggests that phones should be banned, however schools can decide to what degree this is possible. The policy will need to be changed in a measured way, and there is a separate conversation to be had about 6th form use. SK proposed to review use during the summer term – engaging with staff, parents and pupils, and then implementing a new policy from September.

Governors felt that a total ban would not be possible, as many students travel long distances to school and a phone is necessary for personal safety and logistics. Ideas how to tackle this issue were discussed at length.

8.3 Bus Route

AJ thanked the school for their recent communications regarding an issue around a bus route that was being stopped. He explained that school support helped families find alternative providers as a matter of urgency.

9. Policies Update

The following policies had been circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

- Admissions Policy 2025

➤ *The Admissions Policy was proposed by ACB; seconded by AJ and unanimously approved.*

9. AOB

There was no further business.

The meeting ended at 20:20

Meeting Schedule

- Monday 4th March – in School Curriculum Holly Bedford – SEF & Draft Interim Development Plan
Steve Kneller
- Monday 18th March – on Teams - Mock Exam data Rob Reid (SEND data from Carrie Wittke)

All meetings to start at 6:30pm