

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the CURRICULUM COMMITTEE held at the School at 5.00pm on Wednesday 16th May 2018

Present:	Mike Worboys Nicole Chapman Sarah Clements Lee Palmer Lauren Smith Mary Argent	Chair Head Associate Member
In Attendance:	Stephen Lawlor Michael Palmer Wendy Newton	Deputy Head (Curriculum) Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form) Clerk
Apologies:	Nicholas Minnican	Assistant Head (Teaching & Learning)

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Nicholas Minnican, Assistant Head (Teaching & Learning).

ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of interest other than those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2017-18.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th February 2018 were approved and signed as a true record.

ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING

4. Item 4, Para 6 – STEM Activities. The Deputy Head advised that Mark Rowell had not yet looked into Weizmann Institute placements. We have well-established participation in a number of schemes to provide students with STEM-related study and work experience. Details of the other STEM opportunities already undertaken were summarised and discussed. The Head outlined the plans for a re-designed Technology workroom where STEM activities would take place and how the two Technology Technicians would be utilised for extra-curricular clubs and projects, particularly in KS3.

ITEM 5 – CURRICULUM MONITORING

5. The Year 10 Group Review dated January 2018 was reviewed and the Deputy Head summarised the content. The meeting were reminded that a Year 10 Group Review had been undertaken in the last academic year, but that with student workload concerns relating to the new reformed GCSE 9-1 courses it had been decided to undertake a further review of a Year 10 cohort. Student feedback had been very positive overall with minor comments on the frequency of tests and how they sometimes fell at the same time; the issue had been noted by SLT. Governors noted that next year the new Year 10 year group would be taking one less subject which should help alleviate the pressure on students. It was also noted that this particular Year 10 group was the first cohort to sit the CEM entrance test.

ITEM 6 – DATA

6. An updated DfE Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) dated 26th March 2018 was received, along with two explanatory guidance documents. The Deputy Head reminded the Committee that the KS4 data had been reviewed at the last meeting and that new KS5 data had now

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been inserted. It was explained that the Government had set an accountability floor standard of (-0.5) and (-0.25) for coasting schools, where the value one relates to one whole examination grade level. The School Progress 8 figure for KS4 was +0.8, i.e. students achieved four-fifths of a grade higher than their similar ability peers nationally. The report data showed KS5 to be weaker at (-0.4), the reasons for this were explained and had been expected by the School. The difficulty of increasing the value added score even further in KS5 after a high value added figure in KS4 was acknowledged. Governors reviewed the data and questioned the figures for specific subject. The Head gave additional explanation for these subjects. It was noted that A level General Studies was taken for the last time in 2017 and that it had been now replaced by the optional Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

ITEM 7 – SUBJECT OPTIONS

7. The subject option figures (student and group numbers) for Year 10 in September 2018 were received and discussed. The Committee were reminded that the GCSE subject offer had been reduced to 10 courses and that the 'Creative' subject group removed. The effect on subject choices was discussed with particular reference to the creative subjects. It was reported that a few changes in subject numbers had occurred, but nothing significant. The School confirmed that the benefit of taking a creative subject at GCSE had been stressed throughout the Option process and that 115 out of 150 students had chosen to study at least one creative subject, with 8 students choosing two. The meeting discussed the variations in subject numbers in relation to previous years. It was noted that the total number of groups for Year 10 was 28, similar to previous years, despite it being a larger student cohort, thereby achieving a reduction in staffing costs.

8. The student subject numbers for Year 12 were reviewed. It was reported that A level Computing, Classical Civilisation and Mandarin would not be running in Year 12 across the 2018-19 academic year. The high number of external applicants applying to study the Sciences and Mathematics was noted. The requirement to study Chemistry at A level in relation to certain students wishing to study Medicine at university was discussed. A reduction in the total number of groups was noted, which would benefit staffing costs. The Committee were reminded of the admission system for external Year 12 students in relation to subject choices. Governors questioned Sixth Form group sizes and it was confirmed that A level science groups had a maximum of 18 students and that most of the remainder ranged between 20 and 25 students.

ITEM 8 – YEAR 9 OPTIONS

9. Further to the information received earlier in the meeting, the Deputy Head explained the Year 9 GCSE Options process. Students had made their selections using an online system and new IT software had been used to assist the subject allocation process. Every Year 9 student had been given the option choices they had requested. This has been confirmed to students and their parents.

ITEM 9 – TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

10. The Head summarised the School's staffing actions in relation to covering the Technology lessons for this academic year. The Deputy Head explained that external markers (both qualified teachers or examiners) had been found to undertake the marking of the GCSE Technology coursework and the marking and moderation process was discussed.

ITEM 10 – EXAMINATION POLICY

11. A totally new Examinations Policy was presented for review and approval. The Deputy Head (Curriculum) advised that the policy was based on an external template which covered all the necessary JCQ requirements. The thoroughness of the content of the policy was commended. Three areas requiring additional School input were noted and discussed. Governors queried the content of the documents behind unseen hyperlinks within the document. It was explained that this provided a unified document, which could be continually updated. It was explained that the Deputy Head and Examinations Officer trained Subject Leaders in relation to the new internal assessment requirements and that this new procedure had worked well.

12. **Decision.** The Deputy Head agreed to ask the Examinations Officer to make minor amendments. The Examinations Policy was approved with annual review.

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Dep Head

ITEM 11 – SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

13. It had been agreed at the Full GB workshop held in April that each GB sub-committee would discuss content for the new School Strategic Plan. The Head advised that SLT had been working on the issue and that a draft document was to be presented to the Management Committee for their initial review the following week. It had been agreed that breadth of curriculum was critical and that all current subjects should remain if at all possible. The accreditation of the Artsmark was also suggested to be a second item for the Strategic Plan but with the possible inclusion of a STEM strand. The Committee discussed the topic at length, including the issue of student retention after Year 11. Governors stressed that measurable SMART objectives with actual figures were required in order to be able to assess the progress in three years' time, certain measurable concepts were put forward by the School. The ability to assess a student's potential against her final outcome was debated in relation to it being a measurable objective.

14. **Decisions.** It was agreed that the draft Strategic Plan document would be emailed to Committee members after review by the Management Committee on Monday 21st May 2018.

Clerk

ITEM 12 – RISK REGISTER

15. **Decision.** The curriculum-related section of the CCHS Risk Register was received for termly review. It was agreed that no amendment was necessary.

ITEM 13 – INFORMATION ITEM

16. **Item 13.1 - Student Voice & Sixth Form Council Minutes.** The Committee received extracts of curriculum-related items from the minutes of the Student Voice meetings held on 21st January and 14th March 2018 and Sixth Form Council meetings held on 25th January and 7th March 2018. Contradictions in comments concerning the availability of student textbooks was noted and the Head explained the situation concerning textbooks.

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17. **Careers.** Lauren Smith raised the new obligation to provide work experience and asked how the School intended to incorporate it into the curriculum. The meeting was advised that the Head of Careers was currently working on the new Government requirements with the Asst Head (Head of Sixth Form) and that the issue was due for SLT discussion in the near future.

18. **Decision.** It was agreed that additional Careers information would be presented at the next Committee meeting.

Asst Head
(Head of
Sixth Form)

ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19. **Decision.** The dates for next year's GB meetings had yet to be prepared.

Clerk

The meeting closed at 6.55pm.

Agreed as a true record

M Worboys, Chair
14th November 2018