

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the CURRICULUM COMMITTEE held remotely via Zoom at 5.00pm on Wednesday 11th November 2020

Present: Andrew Bonwick
Stephen Lawlor
Sarah Clements
Lauren Smith

Chair
Headteacher

In Attendance: Emma Ledwidge
Jo Cross
Michael Palmer
Mary Argent
Wendy Newton

Deputy Headteacher
Assistant Headteacher (T&L)
Assistant Headteacher (Head of Sixth Form)
Associate Member
Clerk

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. There were no apologies for absence to receive, all members were present.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. Lauren Smith declared that she was now an examiner for A level French for Edexcel. There were no other declarations of business interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2020-21 or of conflicts of interest or receipts of gifts or hospitality.

ITEM 3 – ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

3. **Decision.** Nominations were sought for the role of Vice Chair of the Committee for 2020-21. Andrew Bonwick proposed Lauren Smith for the position and this was seconded by Mary Argent. There were no other proposals and the Committee unanimously approved Lauren Smith as Vice Chair of the Committee for academic year 2020-21.

ITEM 4 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th June 2020 were approved as presented.

ITEM 5 - MATTERS ARISING

5. Item 4, Para 4 – Work Experience. The Head of Sixth Form summarised the current situation relating to work experience. A plan had been prepared for how Year 10 and 12 students would undertake the new requirement for work experience; but the final decision had been deferred as a result of the Covid-10 outbreak. It was currently unclear whether work experience would be possible in the Summer Term 2021, if it was not a form of virtual work experience would be undertaken.

6. **Decision.** It was agreed that the topic of work experience would be re-visited in Autumn 2021.

ITEM 6 – CHAIR’S ACTION

7. There was no Chair’s action since the last meeting to report.

ITEM 7 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

8. **Decision.** The Terms of Reference for the Curriculum Committee were presented for annual review and approved as presented.

ACTION

Clerk

ITEM 8 – PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS REVIEW

ACTION

9. The Public Examinations Review for 2020 was received for information and discussed. The Headteacher commended the Deputy Headteacher and the new Assistant Headteacher (T&L) for their exceptional work in the Summer Term in determining Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) required as a result of Covid-19. The Committee had reviewed the document and the Deputy Headteacher clarified questions put forward by the Governors. It was stated that it was not known if CAGs would be required again in Summer 2021, current DfE guidance only referred to taking exams. The Government plan for public examinations was summarised and it was suggested that the current plan was unworkable for schools. The concerns of students in the affected school years were noted. It was reported that the Year 9 school examinations planned for November had been postponed and that the gained time would be used for undertaking additional assessments for Year 11 and 13 students in case additional School data was required for CAGs later in the year.

10. Governors received a breakdown of Summer A level and GCSE examination results by grade and noted that GCSE results were higher than the previous year with 90% of results at Grades 7/8/9 (84% in 2019). A level results had also increased with 88.4% at Grades A*-B in comparison to 84% in 2019. An update of the Autumn resit situation was requested, A level resits had now been completed and results expected in November, GCSE resits were underway with results expected by the end of term. The Chair thanked all the teaching staff for their hard work in producing such excellent results in very difficult circumstances.

ITEM 9 – SCHOOLING & CURRICULUM UPDATE

11. Governors had received a full report on schooling methods at the recent Full GB meeting and the Headteacher stressed that the current School systems only worked due to the co-operation of the students and the professionalism of the staff. Details of how the blended learning system worked were explained. It was confirmed that student attendance had generally been at 95% or above since the start of term. Health & Safety protocols for Covid-19 had been prepared and had worked well when it was needed; a member of staff had been tested positive that day. It was stated that more positive cases of Covid-19 were to be expected in relation to both students and staff.

12. The Deputy Headteacher summarised details of what the School had initiated to address curriculum catch-up. There were three levels of intervention: (1) revision support for the Autumn Term examination resit students; (2) catch-up support for Year 11 and 13 who were due to take public examinations this academic year, and (3) support for specific students in the remainder of the School who had been identified as needing extra help in order to catch up with the rest of their cohort. There were 7 students receiving the most intense level of assistance. Various methods of support had been initiated by the School to address the issue. The system of assessing catch-up intervention had been intense and would be re-visited by staff after TA1 data had been produced. The Deputy Head agreed to keep an eye out for any patterns in the types of children requiring the greatest intervention. The Committee asked additional questions on the catch-up work which were clarified by SLT members. It was confirmed that many members of school staff were assisting with the catch-up work, including the SENCO, and that parents were also being involved in the process. The worries of parents were reported and noted. Governors queried whether there had been any correlation between the lack of ICT equipment and the need for catch-up interventions, it was thought not as the School had provided laptops to students who were in the most need. It was noted that it would be hard to compare future year-on-year examination results due to the effects of Covid-19 on schooling.

Dep Head

ITEM 10 – SUBJECT NUMBERS AT KS4 & KS5 AND SIXTH FORM SUBJECT OFFER

13. The data for September 2020 KS4 and KS5 subject and group sizes was received and discussed. Governors queried if there were any specific trends. It was reported that A level Chemistry in Year 12 had increased this year to five groups but that there was a decline in the take up of creative subjects despite encouragement by the School to study creative subjects. Languages and the humanities remained similar to previous years. It was suggested that comparison data from previous years would be useful, although the effect of different cohort numbers would skew data. It was confirmed that there were no particularly weak subjects. The Committee discussed subjects

with lower student numbers, those whose student update did not warrant running, and subjects not currently offered at A level. The issue of weak subjects was to be kept under review but Governors noted the School's desire to maintain an offering of subjects appropriate to the school even if there were low numbers. The capacity of the timetable and the required student uptake numbers were explained.

ACTION

ITEM 11 – POLICIES

14. **Item 11.1 – Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Policy.** The RSE Policy was presented for approval. The document had been amended to reflect current Government policy on the subject. It was reported that some subject areas in the policy were now outdated and that the subject shift had moved to relationships. Governors noted a reference to religious backgrounds and were advised that the School was always mindful of different religious backgrounds within the School when teaching the subject.

15. **Decisions:**

- a. The Deputy Headteacher agreed to forward the current Government guidance on RSE to the Committee for their general information.
- b. The RSE Policy was approved as presented with a 3-year review subject to confirmation from the Chair and Vice Chair post receipt of Paragraph 15a.

Dep Head

16. **Item 11.2 – Examination Policy.** The Examination Policy was presented for approval. The Committee were advised that it was an external model policy amended to reflect CCHS and which covered the usual examination situation within schools. Governors noted that there was no reference to the effect of Covid-19 in the policy and were advised that a separate emergency document had been prepared last Summer which had covered the situation and which had been well received by students and parents. It was noted that if there was a need next Summer, the additional Covid-related document would be added to the policy as an annex and would need further review.

17. **Decision.** The Examination Policy was approved as presented with an annual review.

18. **Item 11.3 – Educational Trips Policy – Decision.** The Educational Trips Policy was presented for approval with minor administrative changes. The Headteacher advised that some curriculum day trips for Biology and Geography had been undertaken this term, fully adhering to DfE Guidance in relation to Covid-safety arrangements and behaviours

19. **Decision.** The Educational Trips Policy was approved as presented with a 3-year review.

ITEM 12 – RISK REGISTER

20. The curriculum-related section of the CCHS Risk Register was received for termly review. It was suggested that the risk levels were not valid in the current situation and the issue was discussed.

21. **Decision.** It was agreed that SLT would revise the Curriculum risks which would then be circulated to Governors for approval by email.

**Head
Clerk**

ITEM 13 – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

22. The School Development Plan (SDP) for 2020-21 was received. It was noted that one glossary definition was now out of date and would be corrected. The Head advised that a few items had been carried over from last year's SDP and that there were items relating to the change@cchs project throughout the document. It was agreed that fuller Committee discussion would be undertaken after the SDP Mid-Term Review had been undertaken in February 2021.

23. **Decision.** The Clerk agreed to investigate the possibility of moving the next Curriculum Committee meeting to after the publication of the SDP Mid Term Review in February 2021.

Clerk

ITEM 14 – INFORMATION ITEMS

ACTION

24. **Item 14.1 – Inspection Data Summary Report (ISDR)**. The DfE ISDR School performance report for 2018-19 was received and noted. It was reported that a 2019-20 document was not being produced in the same way. The headline figures had all been received previously by Governors.

25. **Item 14.2 - Student Voice & Sixth Form Council Minutes**. The Committee received curriculum-related extracts from the minutes of the Student Voice meeting held on 30th September 2020 and Sixth Form Council meeting held on 23rd September 2020 and noted the comments. The Headteacher advised that these important student forums were still being undertaken and that the School attempted to address their issues as fully as possible.

26. **Item 14.3 – Enrichment Calendar**. The calendar of student enrichment activities for Autumn Term 2020 was reviewed and the number of student activities still continuing in the current schooling situation were commended by Governors.

ITEM 15 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27. The Headteacher noted that this was the first meeting for the new Assistant Headteacher (Teaching & Learning), Jo Cross, and she was welcomed to her first Curriculum Committee meeting. It was also the first meeting for Andrew Bonwick as Chair of the Committee. The Chair thanked the School staff for all their efforts over recent months.

ITEM 16 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28. **Decision**. The Clerk agreed to revise the date of the next meeting until later in the Spring Term.

Clerk

The meeting closed at 6.35pm.

Agreed as a true record at the Curriculum Committee meeting held remotely on 10th March 2021 and signed electronically due to the Coronavirus situation.

A Bonwick

Andrew Bonwick
Chair

10th March 2021