

# CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## Minutes of a meeting of the CURRICULUM COMMITTEE held remotely via Zoom at 5.00pm on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Present: Andrew Bonwick                      Chair  
Stephen Lawlor                              Headteacher  
Sarah Clements  
Priya Rangaswamy  
Lauren Smith  
Aisha Sohail

In Attendance: Emma Ledwidge                      Deputy Headteacher  
Michael Palmer                              Assistant Headteacher (Head of Sixth Form)  
Mary Argent                                  Associate Member  
Wendy Newton                                Clerk

1. The Chair opened by welcoming Aisha Sohail and Priya Rangaswamy, two new Parent Governors, to the Committee. The Committee members then introduced themselves.

### **ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

### **ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

3. There were no declarations of business interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2020-21 or conflicts of interest or receipts of gifts or hospitality.

### **ITEM 4 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

4. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were approved as presented.

### **ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING**

5. Item 5, Para 6 – Work Experience. The Head of Sixth Form advised that in the current Covid circumstances work experience was not feasible this academic year. Some means of additional guidance into the world of work for Years 10 and 12 was being investigated by the School. Any external careers information received by the School was being forwarded to students. As agreed at the previous meeting, the topic of work experience was to be re-visited in Autumn 2021.

6. Item 9, Para 12 – Student Intervention. TA2 data will be analysed soon. Once analysed it would be possible to identify any students who needed additional Covid catch-up intervention or any subject-specific patterns.

### **ITEM 5 – CHAIR’S ACTION**

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

### **ITEM 6 – SCHOOLING**

8. The Headteacher gave an update on the current schooling situation. Years 10 to 13 had returned to School that week and Years 7 to 9 were due to return the following week. Students had undertaken the Government-recommended Lateral Flow Test (LFT) on arrival at the School and there had been no positive results. The organisation of the testing system by the Deputy Headteacher was commended and the participation of support staff and volunteer parents thanked. LFTs would be

### **ACTION**

undertaken again the following week for the lower year groups. Teaching was now being undertaken in class for Years 10 to 13 alongside remote teaching for students in Years 7 to 9 and any isolating students. The hard work of staff over the past year was stressed and it was confirmed that the wellbeing of staff was of utmost importance to the School. The health and welfare services available for staff were summarised. Overall it was considered a very good start back to more normal schooling.

### **ITEM 7 – 2021 SUMMER EXAMINATION CONSULTATION**

9. The outcome of the DfE consultation on Summer examinations had now been released to schools. No public examinations were to be held in Summer 2021 and all GCSE and A level grades would be decided by schools themselves, a Centre Assessed Grade (CAG); this would be similar to Summer 2020. The Headteacher summarised the CAG process and stated that students and parents had already received initial communication on the matter. As CAGs would reflect students' academic performance, the School was aiming to achieve the maximum teaching time before deciding the CAG. Formal teaching was currently planned to finish for Years 11 and 13 on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and the School was required to upload the CAGs by 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Governors queried the CAG system in relation to elements of subject areas which students may have missed and further explanation was received. It was stressed that it would be the work of the students themselves which would determine the CAG and only on content that has been taught. The Headteacher advised that the School had a very fair and robust system for assessing CAGs. The Committee were advised that no examination resits would be available in Autumn Term 2021 and that all Summer CAG appeals would be undertaken at school level.

### **ITEM 8 – YEAR 13 & YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMINATIONS**

10. The meeting was advised that Year 11 and 13 mock examinations had been undertaken, administered online via MS Teams and overseen by a series of invigilators. The process had been run through an external examination system, Exams.net, and had been rigorous and effective. The School had generally been very pleased with the mock results which would be included in the data used for CAG assessment.

### **ITEM 9 – AUTUMN 2020 GCSE & A LEVEL EXAMINATION RESULTS**

11. A small number of students had chosen to undertake public examination resits in the Autumn Term 2020 and a comparison between their Summer CAG and the Autumn resit grades was received for information and discussed. Fourteen A level students had sat 17 examinations, 58.8% had achieved a higher grade, 41.2% achieved the same grade and none had gone down a grade. Eight GCSE students had sat 18 examinations achieving 55.6% higher, 27.8% unchanged and 16.7% lower grades. It was suggested that there were no significant differences. The Committee discussed one student who had re-sat all 10 GCSE examinations and the effect it had had on her Year 12 studies at the time. The effect on the Year 13 students was also queried in relation to progression to university and the Head of Sixth Form advised that some of the students had deferred university places for September 2021 contingent on them receiving the required resit grade and that other students had put in second UCAS applications for entry in September 2021. Other July 2020 Year 13 students had intended to resit examinations in Summer 2021 but this was now not possible and were being supported by the School.

### **ITEM 10 – YEAR 9 & YEAR 12 OPTIONS PROCESS**

12. The Deputy Headteacher summarised the GCSE option process for Year 9 and how the information was disseminated to students and parents. Option choices were to be submitted via an online process which opened on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020. It was stated that there did not tend to be great differences in subject numbers year on year. The Head of Sixth Form explained the Year 12 options process had begun in October 2020 but that the process had been delayed by 5 weeks due to Covid and the Year 11 deadline for Year 12 options was now 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The meeting was advised that a lot of work had been undertaken on publicising the Sixth Form to external applicants and that

there had been a healthy number of applications from external students for entry into the Sixth Form in September 2021.

**ACTION**

### **ITEM 11 – CURRICULUM & TIMETABLING**

13. The Deputy Headteacher reminded the Committee that the School did not currently include GCSE PE in the formal GCSE option blocks but that it was taken as an additional GCSE taught within the core PE lessons. It was suggested that with the completion of the new Sports Hall it was an ideal time to introduce GCSE PE as a formal GCSE option and would start in September 2022. A second change to the curriculum was the intention to re-instate the 9<sup>th</sup> teaching hour to A level Mathematics and the Science subjects starting with Year 12 in September 2021 and rolling forward from there. This change had been requested by subject leaders for some time in order to give them more curriculum time. The concept would possibly extend across all subjects but would need to be a staggered process over time as it increases the number of taught lessons and therefore affects teacher numbers. Governors queried how the increased teaching would affect the students' timetable, and it was reported that students would lose one study period per fortnight for each subject taken. It was also confirmed that the increase could be accommodated for Sixth Form students taking five A levels.

14. A query had been directed to one of the new Parent Governors which suggested that it may be useful to survey CCHS parents on A level subjects not offered by CCHS in comparison to subjects available at other schools, particularly KEGS. The issue was discussed and the Committee advised that CCHS had tried a few new A level subjects over recent years but that student take-up had not been sufficient to warrant running the course. It was noted that CCHS did offer some A level subjects not available at other schools. It was suggested that additional information on missing subjects would be useful and noted that A Level PE at KEGS was a draw to some students.

15. **Decision.** Priya Rangaswamy agreed to try and obtain further information on missing A level subjects.

Priya  
Rangaswamy

### **ITEM 12 – OFSTED VISITS**

16. The Committee were advised that Ofsted visits had re-started with a big focus on the curriculum, the quality of education and the provision of remote education during the Coronavirus pandemic. Ofsted visits seemed to be following the structure of Section 5 inspections and schools were not being re-graded based on these visits. The School could be visited at any time and may still require Governor input. It was stated that the School was fully prepared for Ofsted at any time.

**Item 13 was debated with Item 16 later in the meeting.**

### **ITEM 14 – POLICIES**

17. The former Gifted & Talented Policy had been re-written as the More Able & Talented Policy and was presented for approval. The content of the policy was noted as being sound. It was reported that the policy had been approved by the National Association of Able Children in Education (NACE), an internationally recognised association whose framework was used by the School.

18. **Decisions:**

- a. The Clerk agreed to incorporate revisions and publish the policy on the School website.
- b. With the revisions of Paragraph 18a, the More Able & Talented Policy was approved with a 3-year review.

Clerk

### **ITEM 15 – RISK REGISTER**

19. The curriculum-related section of the CCHS Risk Register was received for termly review. The issue of the current Coronavirus pandemic had been discussed at the last meeting and the need for

a revision proposed. The Headteacher explained the revised document which now included a specific addendum relating to Covid-19 and the Committee discussed the new entry.

**ACTION**

20. **Decision**. The Curriculum Committee section of the CCHS Risk Register was approved as presented.

### **ITEM 13 – CHANGE@ & ITEM 16 – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

21. The Mid Term Review of the School Development Plan (SDP) 2020-21 was received for review of curriculum-related items. The first objective related to the Change@CCHS project. The Spring Update on the Change project had been received by the Committee and the Deputy Headteacher summarised the actions taken in recent months, these included: a revised Equalities Policy which gave a clear reporting process for any equality-related issues, curriculum reform within all subjects but in History and English in particular, additional diverse Library resources, staff training on diversity and new Change Prefects. It was noted that there would be delays to curriculum changes in some subjects as the timescale was governed by examination board changes and could take up to 3 years. The Committee were advised that much of the discussion and actions within the Change project were student-led. It was reported that the concept of having a charter or framework was still being considered by the School. A Governor reported that the link to the Black History Month reading list in the Spring Update was not working correctly. The Committee noted the updated entries in the Mid Term Review of the SDP 2020-21. One query was raised concerning a reference to BAME in lesson observations and the Headteacher explained the comment more fully.

22. **Decision**. The Deputy Headteacher agree to correct the hyperlink in the Spring Update.

**Dep Head**

### **ITEM 17 – INFORMATION ITEMS**

23. **Student Voice & Sixth Form Council Minutes**. The Committee received curriculum-related extracts from the minutes of the Student Voice meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and Sixth Form Council meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and noted the content of the minutes. The Headteacher advised that both of these meetings had continued to be held virtually during the School closure and stressed the importance of the forums for student feedback and information flow.

### **ITEM 18 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

24. No other items of business were raised.

### **ITEM 19 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

25. **Decision**. The date of the next meeting was agreed as 5.00pm on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

**All**

26. The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the new Committee members for their attendance and commending all School staff for their hard work over the past year which was much appreciated by the Governors. The Headteacher added his own personal welcome to the two new Parent Governors confirming that their presence on the Committee and their views as parents were very important and greatly appreciated.

The meeting closed at 6.24pm.

Agreed as a true record

Andrew Bonwick  
Chair

12<sup>th</sup> May 2021