

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a Meeting of the STAFF & STUDENT MATTERS COMMITTEE held at the School at 5.00pm on Monday 11th July 2022

Present:	Sarah de Souza-Ingle Stephen Lawlor Jenny Fowle Funmi Osilaja Jason Oster Svetlana Warhurst	Chair Headteacher
In Attendance:	Jo Cross Fiona Harrison Wendy Newton	Assistant Headteacher (T&L) Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) Clerk to Governors
Apologies:	Erin Cameron Sophie Dulake	Student Rep - Chair of the Student Voice Student Rep - Chair of the Sixth Form Council

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the two Student Representatives, Sophie Dulake and Erin Cameron, who were away on a School field trip.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of business interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2021-22, or conflicts of interest, receipts of gifts or hospitality reported.

ITEM 3 – STUDENT ISSUES

3. The minutes of Student Voice meetings held on 23rd March & 18th May 2022 and Sixth Form Council meetings held on 24th March & 16th June 2022 were received for information and noted. The Committee queried specific items in the minutes and additional explanation was provided by the Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers. It was confirmed that the School was legally obliged to register student study leave as absence and that it did affect the School's attendance statistics. Governors noted a negative tone to some comments, this was not deemed usual. All items raised by students were followed-up by the School and feedback received at the next meeting. It was suggested that the outcome of meeting actions could be recorded in the minutes, as opposed to being given only verbally at the next meeting. Governors queried whether a WiFi upgrade had been completed and were advised that it had not as the relevant IT equipment was stuck in China; this was a global issue and changing provider would not improve the situation.

ITEM 4 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2022 were approved as a true record.

ITEM 5 - MATTERS ARISING

5. Item 19, Para 24 – Single Central Record. The Safeguarding Link Governor advised that she had not reviewed the Single Central Record as guidance stated that she was only required to ensure that it was complete and kept up-to-date by the School which she could confirm.

ITEM 6 – CHAIR'S ACTION

6. No Chair's Action had been taken further to those received at the recent Full GB meeting.

ACTION

ITEM 7 – GENERAL SCHOOL UPDATE

ACTION

7. The Headteacher gave an update on the current School situation. Public examinations had been completed and the School had been very satisfied with the attitude of both Year 11 and Year 13 students. There had been a few incidents concerning public examinations nationally, but the exam boards were aware of the issues and results would be adjusted before there was any negative impact on students. The end of term was approaching and there were a number of activities going on across the School. There was a new Covid spike within the School causing high staff absence - 10 members of staff were currently absent with Covid and a further 6 staff members were unwell. This was causing organisational challenges for the School, some classes were to be taught together in the School Hall, but overall the School was managing the situation. Student attendance remained good. Governors queried if the School had plans in place for the Autumn Term in case the spike in Covid continued and were advised that the School would follow the Covid-systems used previously as required by the situation at the time. It was confirmed that there had been no DfE guidance relating to Covid in the Autumn Term.

ITEM 8 – STAFFING

8. The Headteacher reported that the School was fully staffed for September despite two late resignations for which temporary solutions had been found. Staff workload was high due to the Covid situation and the additional exam requirements for this year. Some changes had been taken by the School to help and be responsive to staff needs. The use of a staff wellbeing survey was queried, a formal survey had not been undertaken during Covid but the Headteacher reported that staff wellbeing was on the SLT agenda weekly and information was also received from line managers. The annual staff, parent and student surveys were to return in the next academic year.

ITEM 9 – STAFF DEVELOPMENT

9. The Assistant Headteacher (T&L) presented a Staff Development Report dated July 2022 and summarised the content of the report. The very high level of CPD was highlighted, both for in-person and online courses. There had been a high level of investment in mental health training relating to both students and staff. The designated School Development Leaders had been working on their own individual projects during the year and had shared information with other teaching colleagues in twilight CPD training sessions, this will continue next year. Governors queried if all staff had the opportunity to engage in CPD and it was confirmed that all staff had the opportunity to do CPD and that the School had a sound CPD budget. CPD was encouraged through line managers and training was available to all staff. A bank of CPD training resources was kept on Teams for staff reference.

ITEM 10 – TEACHING & LEARNING

10. The Assistant Headteacher (T&L) reported that much of the School CPD was aimed at teaching and learning and covering: what was happening in the classroom, what was being done for disadvantaged and SEND students, and making sure that teaching practice was up to date with new research and best practice. The School Effectiveness Partner had visited on the last INSET Day and gave a training session to teaching staff. Lesson observations were continuing to the end of term and there had been a special focus on SEND students. A new lesson observation platform was being used and feedback from staff had been good. School trips were returning and a Year 12 residential Geography field trip to North Yorkshire had left school that day. It was stated that the School was returning to normal practice in the classroom and pre-Covid normality in general.

ITEM 11 – CARE & GUIDANCE REPORT

11. The Care & Guidance Report dated July 2022 was received and its contents noted. The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) reported that Year 11 had now left the School and that things had been very busy with welcome meetings and a taster day for the new Year 7 in September. A Year 5 Summer School had been held for the CCHS partner primary schools and primary outreach visits had been undertaken recently. It was noted that the School had a robust transition system from primary school into Year 7. Governors noted the current lack of a School Nurse and asked if this

presented problems. Students could be referred directly to the School Nurse team and it was hoped that a new School Nurse would be in place for September. A query was raised as to whether the Care & Guidance report was shared with parents, it was confirmed that it was not but that much of the positive information was received by parents via the School's weekly update, newsletters, the website and via Twitter messages. The Headteacher reported that information on the website was currently being reviewed and expanded. Governors noted the student counselling waiting list and that counselling was increasing from 10 to 15 hours per week next year, this was believed to be comparable or better than other schools. The additional in-house mental first aid, mental health drop-in clinic and art therapy options were also noted.

ITEM 12 – SEND

12. A written SEND Update from the SENDCo dated July 2022 was received for information. There were currently 33 students on the SEND Register (up from 27) including 2 students with an EHCP. The SENDCo and her new assistant were busy and now preparing for two additional SEND students in the new Year 7 intake in September. There had been an increase in referrals for ADHD. The Headteacher reported that, in addition to the new SENCo Support Assistant, one of the School Development Leaders was a SEND expert and was to be part of the SEND team next term. New provision map software had been trialled by the School and was now to be rolled out to PPG and SEND students in the next academic year.

ITEM 13 – PUPIL PREMIUM

13. A summary of Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) spending from 1st September 2021 to 30th June 2022 was received showing expenditure totalling £20,562. The sum of £26,565 had been carried forward from 2020-21 and anticipated income for 2021-22 was £31,791. The meeting reviewed the PPG expenditure and discussed the areas in which it was being spent. It was reported that the School Finance Officer was to attend a PPG conference in the near future to aid her in her PPG work.

ITEM 14 – SAFEGUARDING

14. The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) advised that the School was currently very busy with safeguarding issues. All except one of the year leaders were currently off school but two members of staff taking up year leader roles next term had kindly agreed to help out. There had been 35 new concerns raised on MyConcern since the last meeting and one Sixth Form student had been referred to social care. Fifty-five tasks had been passed from the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) to year leaders for action. It was stated that students were reaching out and talking which was to be celebrated. One social care worker had been helping the School and had been very supportive. Safety plans were now being used throughout the School when required. There had been an increase in eating-related issues during and since the end of the pandemic which had also occurred nationally. Support was being given by the School as and when required, and the open-door system was working. It was deemed an interesting but busy time.

15. The methods by which students can get assistance were explained and it was confirmed that students were willing to pass concerns about their peers on to the safeguarding team. Governors queried whether parents were informed of the safeguarding issues addressed by the School and it was confirmed that parents were always involved unless it was inappropriate to do so. The subject of eating disorders was discussed and details of how the School handled the issue were received. It was noted that there had been an increase in cases post-Covid but it was only a very small minority of students. The meeting was informed that a new Police foot patrol had recently begun covering CCHS and neighbouring schools, and that there was a very strong network of Designated Safeguarding Leads amongst local schools who passed information on between schools.

ITEM 15 – ADMISSIONS

16. The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) gave an update on the Year 7 entrance test to be held the following term. It was to be the School's biggest entrance test to date with 1278 applications completed and 1221 girls sitting the test at CCHS in September 2022 for entry in September 2023.

Some of the current Year 7 students had returned to their former primary schools to undertake outreach talks. There had been applications from 46 PPG students in total and this included 10 from the CCHS partner primary schools, an increase from 2 last year. The next entrance test was to be held on a Monday for the first time which would allow School teaching staff to assist with the administration of the test. It was reported that the current CEM entrance test was being withdrawn by the company and that alternative entrance tests were being investigated. The Committee received details of the schools of applicants who sat the Year 7 entrance test last year and who would be entering CCHS in September 2022. The meeting discussed the information and the breakdown of primary schools involved. Governors noted the large number of students who had applied from a specific maintained primary school and suggested that parents should be made aware of such information in relation to Fair Access.

ACTION

ITEM 16 – POLICIES

17. **Decision.** Eight School policies required approval. Seven policies were reviewed and some minor amendments were proposed. The Clerk **agreed** to amend the policies in line with the comments made. With the agreed amendments, the Committee **approved** the policies with the review period shown below:

Clerk

- a. Attendance & Punctual Policy – statutory, new ECC-model policy, annual review,
- b. Child-on-Child Policy (renamed Peer-on-Peer Policy) – statutory, annual review,
- c. SEND Policy – statutory, 2-year review,
- d. SEND Information Report - statutory, 2-year review,
- e. Whole School Food Policy – non-statutory, 4-year review,
- f. Communications & Consultation Policy – non-statutory, 3-year review,
- g. Time Off in Lieu Policy – non-statutory, new policy, annual review.

18. **Decision.** The e-Safety & Data Security Policy had erroneously been omitted from the meeting agenda pack, the Clerk **agreed** to send the policy to the Committee for approval by email.

Clerk

ITEM 17 – RISK REGISTER

18. **Decision.** The Staff & Student Matters Committee section of the CCHS Risk Register was presented for termly reviewed. The Headteacher proposed the addition of 'Staff Voice and line manager meetings' to the control procedures of Risk S16, with that addition the document was **approved**. The Clerk **agreed** that the Staff Voice minutes would be added as a regular item under 'Staffing' on future Staff & Student Matters Committee meeting agendas.

Clerk

ITEM 18 – INFORMATION ITEM(S)

19. **Item 18.1 – Disclosure & Barring Service Checks.** A summary of DBS and Barred List checks undertaken from March to June 2022 was received for information and noted.

20. **Item 18.2 – School Development Plan.** The Final Review of the School Development Plan 2021-22 had erroneously been omitted from the meeting agenda pack but the document had been received and discussed at the Full GB meeting the previous week.

ITEM 19 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

21. **SEND Link Governor Role.** The Chair advised that, in light of her other Governor duties, she was looking to relinquish the SEND Link Governor role. New Committee Member Svetlana Warhurst was happy to take on a Link Governor role and the Committee discussed the options available. Post-meeting, Svetlana Warhurst **agreed** to take on the role of SEND Link Governor role and arrangements were now in place for a handover.

S Warhurst

22. **Committee Membership.** The Headteacher advised that with the change of SLT appointments in September 2022, Jo Cross, Assistant Headteacher (T&L), was to become the SLT Lead on the Curriculum Committee and therefore this would be her last Staff & Student Matters Committee meeting. The Chair thanked Jo for her attendance and input into the meetings and wished her well

in her new role. The Assistant Headteacher (Head of Sixth Form), Michael Palmer, was to join the Committee in place of Jo Cross next year.

ACTION

23. Safeguarding Training. It was noted that all Governors were in need of safeguarding training and the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) advised that training would be given early next term, most probably by an online training session.

ITEM 20 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

24. Decision. The date of the next meeting was agreed as 5.00pm on Wednesday 23rd November 2022.

All

The meeting closed at 7.05pm.

Sarah de Souza-Ingle
Chair

23rd November 2022

DRAFT