

# CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## Minutes of a meeting of the CURRICULUM COMMITTEE held at the School at 5.00pm on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018

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

1. The Chair opened by welcoming Sarah Clements to her first meeting of the Curriculum Committee and informed the Committee that Mark Rowell had now moved to the Facilities & Finance Committee.

### ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Nicole Chapman.

### ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

3. 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

4. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

### ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING

5. Item 4, Para 9a – STEM Activities. An updated list of School STEM activities was received. A few new activities plus the number of students involved in each activity had now been added. It was confirmed that the STEM list would be kept as a live document and updated as required.

6. Decision. The Deputy Head agreed to ascertain if Mark Rowell had investigated Weizmann Institute placements as actioned in the previous minutes.

7. Item 9, Para 19 – KS4 Curriculum. It was confirmed that Year 9 students and their parents had received information on the importance of choosing Creative subjects in their GCSE option choices.

8. Item 7, Para 14 – Mandarin. The Asst Head (T&L) confirmed that Pre-U Mandarin course was now being used with current Year 12 class. .

### ITEM 5 – CURRICULUM MONITORING

9. The Year 13 Year Group Review dated November 2017 was reviewed and the Deputy Head summarised the content. The report referred back to two previous reports: the IB Year 12 & 13 Report undertaken in January 2015 and the Year 13 A2 Report undertaken in January 2014. Many positive things had happened since the last reports. The key finding was that all subjects were currently dealing with new courses, in terms of both content and assessment arrangements, and that refinements would be made by teachers as their experience of the new courses develops and as new

### ACTION

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materials are provided by the examination boards. Governors queried the cycle for reviews and were advised that reviews did not now follow a set timetable but were undertaken in response to the needs of the School, following examination results, staff changes, curriculum reform, etc. It was noted that unless there are particular reasons, the School aims to review one year group from each key stage annually. It was also noted that specific year group matters are also addressed within subject reviews, which can have a specific key stage focus.

10. The Government & Politics Review dated November 2017 was reviewed and the Asst Head (T&L) summarised the findings. It was noted that this was only the second year of a new course and that the subject was only taught in the Sixth Form. The aim of the review was to get an insight into how the course was progressing. The quality of lessons was generally very good, but some inconsistency with essay marking was reported; this issue had been taken up with the subject leader and further marking audits were to be undertaken. Overall the review had gone very well. The issue of only using History teachers for teaching the subject was discussed by the meeting. It was stated that the content of the course was strongly History-based, i.e. contemporary history. It was also noted this same staffing approach was taken in most secondary schools.

11. The Chemistry Review dated December 2017 was reviewed and the Asst Head (T&L) summarised the findings. It was stated that the review specifically focused on KS5. Most findings of the previous review had now been addressed where possible and relevant. There had been a slight improvement in AS Chemistry results, but a big difference in AS results was evident between internal and external Year 12 students although the gap narrowed by A2 results. Additional access support lessons had been suggested for all Year 12. Governors queried whether mandatory attendance at extra subject clinics was possible and the issue was discussed. It was noted that Chemistry was an enabling subject for certain university subjects, many additional students chose to take the subject for this reason rather than having ability in the subject. The meeting noted that the School achieved good grades at GCSE Chemistry, but that this did not follow through to A level results. All observed lessons were very good and there were no concerns with the teaching of the subject. The concept of sharing best practice was being undertaken by the Department. It was reported that there was a pronounced requirement for Maths within Chemistry and that students who also studied Maths tended to do well at Chemistry. This was becoming more evident with the content of the new course.

#### **ITEM 6 – DATA**

12. The new DfE Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR), dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018, was received along with an explanatory article, and the Deputy Head summarised the report, which contained data on ethnicity, exclusion, absences and examination outcomes. It was noted that this report only reported data for KS4 and that a separate report for KS5 will be published by DfE. The meeting was informed that the School's Progress 8 score in 2015 had been 0.63 and now stood at 0.76. A Progress 8 score of 0.76 means that our students achieved, on average, just over three-quarters of a grade higher than their similar ability peers nationally. The School was very pleased with the KS4 data which was very strong. It was reported that in relation to SSGS schools, CCHS stood at 11/20 for Progress 8, 2/20 for Attainment 8 and 1/20 for EBacc. The meeting reviewed the data in the report and discussed the figures. The use of the Progress 8 figure for bench-marking was explained and it was noted that the group of disadvantaged students (4 students) in the cohort had an average Progress 8 figure of 0.72, very little difference to the figure of 0.76 for the whole cohort. It was agreed that the Data Summary was a useful report.

#### **ITEM 7 – UPDATE ON CURRICULUM 2017-18**

13. The meeting was reminded that following the phasing out of Technology at KS3 extra teaching time had been allocated to English and Maths and it was reported that early information suggested that the additional time was having a positive effect. In addition, a new subject, Philosophy, had been introduced for Year 7 students. Details on the content of the Philosophy course were received and discussed. It was hoped that the course would encourage students to speak out more freely and assist them in articulating their arguments in other subjects in higher years. Governors asked if other School staff were aware of the content of the Philosophy course in order that there might be cross-curricular gain, it was confirmed that information on the course would be passed to other staff in the Summer Term at the end of the first presentation of the course.

## **ITEM 8 – RISK REGISTER**

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

## **ITEM 9 – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

15. The Mid-Term Review of the School Development Plan 2017-18 was received for discussion. The Committee was informed that an additional column was to be added in order to be able to track the changes more easily. The content of the document was noted and were SLT thanked for their update.

## **ITEM 10 – INFORMATION ITEMS**

16. **Item 10.1 - Student Voice & Sixth Form Council Minutes**. The Committee received extracts of curriculum-related items from the minutes of the Student Voice meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and Sixth Form Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017. A comment on only one student attending a Chemistry clinic was noted and discussed. The Deputy Head advised that there was now much more impetus to contact parents to encourage their daughter's attendance at extra subject clinics and that the School does need parental support for such additional intervention to be effective. Governors hoped that parents would welcome extra clinics to assist their daughters and would encourage their daughters to attend. It was noted that students cannot be forced to attend and the issue was debated.

17. Governors queried a comment relating to missing textbooks and were advised that the situation had now been resolved. It was reported that had been some delay in publishers producing textbooks for the new exam courses or that teachers were awaiting a better book. It was stated that sufficient textbooks or school-prepared resources were now available for all students. The Deputy Head noted that the quality of teacher/department produced resources, as evidenced through Year Groups Reviews over time, is very high.

## **ITEM 11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

18. **Careers Guidance**. The Head of Sixth Form informed the Committee that DfE had recently published new guidance on Careers. The Head of Careers was to review the document to assess the changes and convene a meeting with relevant School staff in the Summer Term. Her findings would be reported back to the Curriculum Committee in due course. It was reported that there were specific requirements which the Governing Body needed to ensure were being covered by the School and that the concept of work experience for students was raised in the document. The School is required to adhere to the new regulations by 2020.

19. **Decision**. The Clerk agreed forward the new DfE Careers document to Committee members.

20. **PHSE**. The Deputy Head informed the meeting that PHSE was being reviewed by the Government. It was reported that as an Academy the School is not currently obliged to teach PHSE, but had chosen to do so as it is good practice. The Government now wants the teaching of PHSE mandatory in the future (from September 2019). The School was now undertaking its annual review of PHSE provision, some elements of which were likely to become mandatory. Further information would follow in due course.

## **ITEM 12 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

21. **Decision**. The date of the next meeting was changed to be 5.00pm on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018** - not Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May as previously published.

The meeting closed at 6.20pm.

Agreed as a true record

M Worboys, Chair

16<sup>th</sup> May 2018

## **ACTION**

Clerk

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