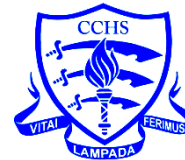




Chelmsford County High School for Girls



Trustee Visit Report Form

Trustees are reminded not to make any reference to any specific staff members or students by name.

Name of Trustee:	Melanie Gulliver
Date of Visit:	15.07.24
Focus of Visit:	Creative subject observation Meeting with HOD English ,prompted by an item at Curriculum Committee about the introduction of a new text ' <i>Purple Hibiscus</i> ' by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche to the year 9 curriculum, which sparked my interest to find out more.
Lessons/Areas visited:	Drama yr 12, Art yr 9, Music yr 8, English yr 9 Meeting with HOD English, STEM lunchtime exhibition

Summary of activities undertaken: (eg observing classes, talking to staff and pupils, looking at resources)

Lessons observed as above

Meeting with HOD English, looking at year 9 curriculum in detail to understand the changes made and how the new scheme links to Year 7 – 11 curriculum.

General Comments:

Students and staff were in fancy dress in preparation for a charity event in the afternoon. As expected, this had no impact whatsoever on behaviour or learning.

Year 12 Drama – Students had recently seen a play as part of the course and were invited to reflect on their experience and relate it to their own practice and knowledge of drama theory. Students are working on a play of their own devising, based on a key practitioner chosen by them. One group had chosen Brecht and the other Artaud. They were asked to work on performing a short 'moment' in the play. The result was a very 'edgy' piece, which deliberately made the audience (the teacher and myself) feel quite uncomfortable!

Year 9 Art – Students were finishing their termly projects on the theme of 'Home'. There was a huge variety of media in use, including needlework, model making, computer generated art as well as watercolours, acrylics and pencil work.

Year 8 Music – Students were working in pairs, on a project composing a piece of electronic Bhangra music. The teacher presented some features of the software that they had not used before, 'filter' and 'reverberation' to add interest to their piece. Students then worked independently with the teacher circulating and offering individual support and advice.

Meeting with HOD English – The Head of Department explained the rationale behind a complete overhaul of the year 9 curriculum and how it relates to the rest of the Key stage 3 and 4 curriculum. He provided copies of the schemes of work, dept handbook and overview of the programme for year 9. He was tremendously enthusiastic about, and proud of, the enormous quantity of work carried out by the whole department working collaboratively. Each teacher contributing to the programme and sharing their own interests and specialisms to produce the final programme.

Year 9 English – The class was working on an excerpt from the novel *‘Purple Hibiscus’* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche. They were applying technical literary terms to specific example of language in the text. This is a skill in preparation for the GCSE course next year.

STEM Exhibition – Students who had participated in a range of competitions through the year were displaying their innovations, and also their awards and medals, in an exhibition in the School Hall. Their creativity was a joy, as was their ability and confidence to explain their projects to me.

Points Relevant to School Development Plan (if applicable):

Summary of what was learned:

I was impressed by the creativity of all students across the curriculum areas

I was taken by the links between subjects, as follows

- The amazing breadth of knowledge and skills required for staff, given the wide variety of creative theories and techniques in their subject.
- The importance of the role of teacher as facilitator in providing guidance and support to individuals working on their individual projects
- The breadth of experiences in the creative arts, offered to the students
- The fact that students enjoy and value these subjects, but when choosing GCSE and to a greater extent A level subjects, they may not choose a creative subject, feeling that they can continue in their leisure time, participating in extra-curricular drama and music etc.
- However, of those who do continue to A level, they very often do so because this is what they want to study in Higher Education. All 3 of the A level drama students intend to go to Drama School or similar.
- The amount of time and energy that teachers spend on providing extra-curricular activities across the school in their subjects.

Students in all the lessons observed were working independently, there was very little teaching from the front beyond a short introduction and a pulling together of the learning/activities.

All of the staff encountered were very pleased to see a Trustee showing interest in their work.

A point to consider – Technology and space limit the extent of what is possible.

There are 18 computers in the music room. The year 8 class worked in pairs, but GCSE classes are 20/21 and students must work independently. Headphones break and the HOD has acquired a set of cheap ones to replace the broken ones, but headphones for this subject, really should offer a high quality of sound.

In the Art room, space was very cramped for 30 students working on 30 different projects.

Signed:M Gulliver.....

Name in Block Capitals:Melanie Gulliver.....

Date:01.10.24.....