

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of the Governing Body Conference held at the School at 9.00am on Saturday 26th January 2019

Present:	Steve Miles Peter Cook Nicole Chapman Mary Argent, Richard Brown, Sarah Clements, Ros Cornish, Ruth Neave, Jason Oster, Mark Rowell, Lauren Smith, Richard Vass, Yvonne Wickers, Mike Worboys	Chair of Governors Vice Chair of Governors Headteacher
In Attendance:	Stephen Lawlor Maria French Melissa Mulgrew Wendy Newton	Deputy Head (Curriculum) Deputy Head (Pastoral) Business Manager Clerk to Governors
Apologies:	Duncan Stevens	

ITEM 1 - INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

ACTION

1. The Chair opened by thanking Governors for their attendance and outlined the programme and aims of the Conference. The new Business Manager, Melissa Mulgrew, was introduced to the Governing Body and welcomed to the School. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Duncan Stevens due to ill health.

ITEM 2 – SELECTIVE SCHOOLS EXPANSION FUND (SSEF) IMPLICATIONS

2. The meeting was advised that whilst the School had been informed that its bid for £6.4million from the SSEF had been successful, the timescale for receiving the finance and written confirmation of the full amount had not yet been confirmed. The Head summarised the background of the SSEF application and stressed that the funding was directly linked to the School increasing the number of children from disadvantaged backgrounds sitting the entrance test and joining the School. It was believed that the proposed change to the Admissions Policy for 2020 was a significant reason why the SSEF application had been successful. DfE paperwork had been received that indicated that there would be close auditing of the grant expenditure and monitoring to assess how well the School succeeded in increasing the number of disadvantaged children entering the School. A DfE quantity surveyor had recently visited the School to view the current building situation and had raised concerns over the School's average cost per pupil; the high figure being quoted was thought to be due to a miscalculation by the project manager. The Business Manager reported that the CCHS SSEF project required additional work such as building demolition which increased the costs when comparing it directly to the projects of other schools.

3. **Item 2.1.1 - School Admissions Policy 2019 – Second Determination.** The Deputy Head (Pastoral) reminded the meeting that the 2019 Admissions Policy had been formally determined by Governors at the GB Conference in January 2018 and that a member of the public (with no connection to the School or area) had subsequently put in a formal objection to the policy with the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA). As required, the OSA had reviewed the policy and published its adjudication in December 2018. Details of the objection and the adjudication were summarised and the mandatory OSA changes which the School had been required to make to the policy were explained. The main objection related to references to long-term letting tenancies which had now been removed. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) stressed that in-depth checking of proof of permanent residency was undertaken by the School in order to check true home addresses in relation to the priority area allocation. Questions raised by Governors were clarified.

4. **Decision.** With one typographic correction and the addition of an extra definition, the Admissions Policy for entry in September 2019, revised in line with the OSA adjudication, was re-determined (re-approved).

3. **Item 2.1.2 - School Admissions Policy 2020.** The Admissions Policy 2020 had been presented to Governors at the Full GB meeting on October 2018 and formally approved by email in December 2018. The policy had been put out for public consultation from 8th December 2018 to 18th January 2019 and the 14 responses received were reviewed by the meeting. There had been 9 responses for the policy, 4 against and one with neutral opinion. The Clerk advised the meeting who had been included in the consultation process and Governors discussed the public responses. It was suggested that there were no particular responses which affected the proposed policy.

4. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) advised that in addition to the originally proposed increase of the Year 7 published admissions number to 180 students and the priority changes for pupil premium students, the changes required by the OSA adjudication of the 2019 Admissions Policy, which had been received after the start of the 2020 consultation, had also now been added into the proposed 2020 Admissions Policy. The meeting discussed the content of the policy and noted the new amendments. It was stressed that the School would need to receive final confirmation of the full SSEF allocation before formally publishing the 2020 policy, the deadline for publishing both the 2019 and 2020 Admissions Policy on the School website is 28th February 2019.

5. **Decision.** Pending notification of the full SSEF allocation, the Admissions Policy for entry in September 2020 was determined (approved) as presented.

6. **Item 2.1.3 - School Admissions Policy Priority Area.** It had previously been suggested that the use of the current 12.5 mile priority area in the current Admissions Policy should be reconsidered for various reasons including: the changing demographics of Chelmsford; the fact that some students have a choice of multiple grammar school options; some more local girls have no viable access to grammar schools; and the inconsistency between the work the School currently undertook to encourage more disadvantaged local girls to apply to CCHS against accepting an extra 6 in each year group from 2020 from outside the priority area. The various changes relating to the Admissions Policy since 2013 were highlighted and the School suggested that there may be an impact on the School's reputation if another change was to occur and that a period of stability might be judicious.

7. An alternative concept of using post codes in the Admissions Policy had been investigated by the School and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) presented information on the various post code areas from which students gain places to the School along with the areas prioritised by other grammar schools in their vicinity. The Conference reviewed the current 12.5mile priority area and the Chair highlighted the areas of overlap with the priority areas of other grammar schools which were outside the priority area to the Southwest (Chigwell, Ilford, Romford) and inside the priority area to the South East (Rayleigh, Rochford). It was noted that Colchester grammar school does not have a priority area. The geographical areas of Essex which were currently not covered by a grammar school were noted as Harlow, Bishops Stortford and the Dengie Peninsula. The meeting were reminded that student participation in school events had been a major consideration in 2011 when the priority area was first introduced and that the effect of travelling on a child was very important.

8. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) presented information on the CEM entrance test, Year 7 CAT test and average GCSE scores for the previous three years broken down by inside and outside priority area and post code areas. The meeting discussed the information presented and it was noted that whilst there was correlation between the CEM and CAT scores there was none with the Year 11 (2017) average GCSE scores. It was stated that the 'CCHS effect' raised the outcomes of all the students to around the same level by the end of Year 11 and therefore the area the students came from was irrelevant. Information on home area to Year 13 results was not known but it was noted that the student population changes in Year 12. Governors queried student involvement in School activities in relation to home addresses and the historic findings on the issue were summarised. The alternative priority area options considered in 2011 were listed for the newer Governors. The effect of making a further change to the Admissions Policy at this time was discussed in relation to the other major changes currently being undertaken by the School.

9. **Decision.** By a majority vote of twelve to one, it was agreed that the subject of changing the priority area would be set aside for three years ie Admissions Policy 2023.

10. **Item 2.2 – Campus Development**. The Head gave a presentation on the strategic implications of the SSEF-funded expansion to six forms of entry. It was stressed that the timeline for the project relied upon when final notification of funding was received from DfE but that it was due in the near future. The timeline included: appointing a project manager, obtaining planning permission, appointing a building contractor, devising an H&S plan, demolition and construction. It was hoped the project would start in the summer of 2019 and finish by September 2020. The meeting was advised that if the works contract exceeded £4.4million there would be a need to undergo a European public procurement process and that this may take around four months and frequently longer if challenged. The building plans for the new Sports Hall and Teaching Block were reviewed and explained by the Head. It was reported that the construction of the two new buildings would allow the re-purposing of the current Gym into a Library and Sixth Form study area and the current Library into an additional Art room and general teaching room. Governors queried the involvement of School staff in the planning stages and the method of undertaking the legal work involved in the project. It was reported that ESFA may insist that they run the project in view of the large amount of funding and the costings presented, but this was not considered to be beneficial for the School and the implications of the issue were discussed.

10.45am – 11.00am – The Conference adjourned for coffee.

11. **Item 2.3 – Outreach Work & Partnerships**. The Head reminded the meeting that the success of the SSEF bid was dependent upon the School's statement that it would make a difference to disadvantaged girls. The outreach work already undertaken by the School was summarised and further information on how this work would be boosted in the future explained. It was reported that some local primary schools had up to 60% of students on free school meals. Governors noted the outreach work undertaken and the extra work required by School staff. The need to track the results of the School's extra outreach work was noted in order to quantify results for the ESFA-monitored audit trail. The ways the School intended to assist disadvantaged primary school girls with the requirements of the entrance test and their parents with the application process were summarised. Governors put forward additional ways of encouraging girls to apply. The importance of recording how the additional School work increased successful applications from disadvantaged girls was stressed by Governors. The meeting was informed of the current interaction with local primary school teachers and the additional ways of attempting to increase contact with them in the future explained. It was noted that there were difficulties in getting some primary schools to interact with CCHS although the social problems having to be addressed in some primary schools were understood.

12. **Item 2.4 – Operational Issues**. The Head summarised the operational issues that would need to be addressed by the School in relation to the expansion to six forms of entry. Some elements, such as the new one-way system in the corridors, had already been introduced and been effective in increasing traffic flow. The issues covered: staffing, pastoral care/SEN, classroom suiting, the house system, assemblies, lunch arrangements, teacher duties, enrichment and extra-curricular activities, and whole school events. Governors noted that some of the operational issues would need to be considered and implemented in advance of the commencement of the construction work. General questions on the SSEF funding were raised by Governors and clarified by the Head.

3 - SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

13. The meeting reviewed the current 2018-2021 Strategic Plan in light of the SSEF expansion and the discussions of the Conference. It was noted that a number of revisions were required and some amendments suggested by Governors.

14. **Decisions**. It was agreed that:

- a. The Strategic Plan revisions would be collated and presented for review at the next Management Committee meeting and then presented for approval at the Full GB meeting on 26th March 2019.
- b. The Strategic Plan would be extended to cover academic year 2021-2022 and would be reviewed annually on a rolling basis at the Spring Term GB meeting or Governor Conference.

Head**Clerk**

11.55am – Stephen Lawlor, Mark Rowell and Sarah Clements (Staff) left the Conference, all of whom had previously undertaken the School Safeguarding which followed.

4 - SAFEGUARDING

15. Maria French, Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Designated Safeguarding Lead, presented an annual refresher session of Safeguarding and Prevent training to the Governors. Details of the new MyConcern electronic safeguarding reporting system now being used by the School were received.

5 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ACADEMY TRUST.

16. At this point in the Conference, the AGM of the Academy Trust was held and is minuted separately.

12.20pm - The Conference concluded.

Agreed as a true record.

S Miles
Chair of Governors

29th March 2019

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