



## **School Development Proposal**

### The Faculty Structure

#### **Context**

- We have started to articulate, unpack and live a mission to develop and fortify our established vision (developing the leaders of tomorrow): a progressive grammar school community, committed to excellence in girls' education and empowerment.
- Our School is growing, with our six forms of entry expansion.
- We are determined to continue to build our student numbers in the Sixth Form, as our five forms of entry (and then six forms of entry) cohorts feed through.
- Our campus development project will provide an array of opportunities for students and staff, in terms of suiting subjects, strengthening subject brands, modern study spaces for Sixth Form students, and developing our extra-curricular offer. We other ideas to enable our campus infrastructure to serve our ambitions, i.e. a Sixth Form Centre.
- We have a rather dated Faculty structure, with some subject groupings making sense, with others not so. Our Faculty Leaders are senior middle leaders on TLR 1c salary levels.
- Their influence is constrained, due to the structure, to certain subjects and objectives. The current roles and the established protocols restrict the fundamental impact they can have on our core purpose: teaching & learning.
- The pandemic experience has caused much disruption to established educational practices and experiences. As part of our positive response to these challenges, with our remote schooling models and Covid-safe campus protocols, we should continue to be bold with broader institution reform, ensuring that our school development momentum remains steady and strong.

## Opportunity

- We have a chance to review and reform our current senior middle leadership & management structure to ensure that it is fit for purpose for an ambitious and progressive grammar school community, committed to excellence in girls' education and empowerment.
- The pastoral wellbeing and academic development of our students are our prime responsibilities.
- The objective of the pastoral system is to ensure that every student, across all year groups, is known, looked after and supported, with safeguarding first and foremost, and then with barriers to learning being consistently challenged. This is effective, with each year group having a specific Year Leader (who follows a cohort through from Y8-Y11, after a KS2-KS3 transition experience in Y7), with a designated/specialist SLT line manager.
- The objective of the academic system is to ensure that the curriculum is designed and implemented to inspire students to progress their knowledge acquisition, conceptual understanding and skill/attribute development. This is effective, with each subject area having a specific Subject Leader, who has an indirect link (via a Faculty Leader) to a designated SLT colleague.
- This indirect link is the issue. There is a need to ensure direct links between academic departments and SLT, as we have between year groups and SLT, to guarantee that clear, specialist, and thus effective, feedback is provided. This is no fault of the individuals involved; it is an outcome of the limitations of the structure as it currently exists.
- Therefore, there is an opportunity to reform the existing structure, including the Faculty Leader roles, to liberate these talented colleagues to have a greater impact on our core purpose: pastoral care and teaching & learning.

## Proposal

- Move away from the Faculty system and focus on Subject Departments, i.e. where teachers' interests and allegiances actually live.
- Faculty Leaders to become **School Development Leaders**. All of the current five Faculty Leaders are very strong practitioners. They could become the **School Development Team**, sitting above Year Leaders and Subject Leaders, as a group of specialist senior middle leaders. They should be deployed, as ASTs (Advanced Skills Teachers) used to be, to support and progress the practice of identified individuals. They could, and should, work both within and beyond their subjects. This would help to overcome the structural limitation at the heart of the Faculty system, with each individual Faculty Leader only having influence over a set grouping of subjects.
- For example, MCT is expert at Q&A/whole class discussions - which is central to all subjects. MRL is expert at planning and delivering focused and organised lessons - the essence of effective teaching & learning practice. JHA is an expert at running group work tasks - transferable across all subjects. HPO is an expert in marking and feedback - crucial to all subjects. GLO is expert at creative and novel approaches to engage and enthuse students - applicable to all subjects.
- Each term, the School Development Leaders would be strategically deployed by SLT, (with consideration to pastoral care and teaching & learning matters i.e. a 'holistic vision of education' – see Appendix 1 below for a linked development idea) to work with a small group of colleagues, depending on identified practice needs.
- In terms of leadership & management accountability and integrity vis-à-vis Departments, we should provide Subject Leaders with pro forma agendas for their Department meetings to ensure that the information flow back to their assigned SLT line managers is distinguished by precision and clarity. By so doing, SLT colleagues would be able to judge who to meet with on a regular or less regular basis, depending on issues and need, i.e. a dynamic process.

- This would also help create a direct link between Subject Leaders and SLT, just as we have a direct link between Year Leaders and SLT.
- School Development Leaders would meet regularly with assigned SLT line managers, to report back on practice development progress.
- As a growing and ambitious School, we must ensure that teaching & learning practice is as sharp (evidence-based) and modern (research-informed) as it can be, living our girls' education expertise – and an important way to do this is to elevate this as a focus across a reconceived layer of senior middle leadership to liberate and fully capitalise on their talents.

## Appendix 1

### A holistic vision of education for our students

*The pastoral wellbeing and academic development  
of our students are our prime responsibilities*

**Context** – our School vision and aims provide the language and concepts which inspire values (citizenship, distinction, challenge, duty, imagination, enlightenment and diversity) to direct and drive our core work: pastoral care and teaching & learning.

- Vision Developing the leaders of tomorrow – **citizenship**: *inspire future citizens to think for themselves and to act for others.*
- Aim The pursuit of excellence – **distinction**: *provide students with an outstanding education, with students doing their best in all endeavours.*
- Aim Fulfilling individual potential – **challenge**: *motivate students to acquire new knowledge & understanding and stimulate them to develop new skills & attributes.*
- Aim Contributing to the community – **duty**: *ensure students conduct themselves with civility and compassion at all times, supporting each other and looking beyond themselves.*
- English and Creative Faculties – **imagination**: *enable students to explore new ideas and empathise with the thinking of others, without limitation or risk.*
- Mathematics and Science Faculties – **enlightenment**: *equip students with the insight and determination to embrace new ideas, technology and innovation, enabling them to contribute to the ever-changing natural and physical world around them.*
- Humanities and Languages Faculties – **diversity**: *provide students with the tools to respect and celebrate the great diversity of cultures, backgrounds and beliefs, within and beyond the School, whilst recognising that we have more in common than that which divides us.*

**Opportunities** – With Jo now leading on teaching & learning and Fiona now leading on pastoral care, we have an opportunity to look afresh at these two core areas of our work as a School. Moreover, when Jo was interviewed, important points were made

about taking a broad view of teaching & learning. When Fiona was interviewed, important points were made about cohesion across the School.

**Proposal** – Now is the time to capitalise on the ideas and energy clearly evident amongst the team, and our ambitions to continuously improve. We would like Jo and Fiona, as the AHTs leading these two core areas, to meet regularly to discuss, establish and drive an initiative to develop ‘a holistic vision of education for our students’. We would like the values noted above, which are themselves amplifications of our established vision and aims, to animate this work. We suggest, as a starting point, concentrating on two key and inspiring initiatives already identified by Jo and Fiona:

1. *Academic resilience* – Jo
2. *‘Stand up, speak out’* – Fiona

Through collaboration, these two initiatives can form the start of a process of conceiving teaching & learning broadly and creating cohesion between areas of work. These are exciting times for our SLT, the staff and our students. With new colleagues on the team, with a growing student population and with our ambitious campus development coming to fruition (with new ideas already being discussed), we are blessed with an abundance of opportunities to move CCHS forward, together.