

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

held in the School and via Microsoft Teams at 8.00am on Friday 29th September 2023

Present:	Steve Miles Svetlana Warhurst Stephen Lawlor Andrew Bonwick Richard Brown	Chair of Governors (via Teams) Vice Chair of Governors (via Teams) Headteacher Chair of Curriculum Committee (via Teams) Chair of Facilities & Finance Committee (via Teams)
In Attendance:	Jo Cross Fiona Harrison Melissa Mulgrew Wendy Newton	Deputy Headteacher (Academic) Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) Business Manager Clerk to Governors
Apologies:	Sarah de Souza-Ingle	Chair of Staff & Student Matters Committee

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah de Souza-Ingle and accepted.

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 2023-24, or conflicts of interest, or receipts of gifts or hospitality.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2023 were **agreed** as a true record.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING

4. All actions from the previous minutes had been completed or were to be covered in an item later in the meeting.

ITEM 5 – CHAIRS' ACTION

5. A summary of chairs' actions taken since the last Full GB meeting held on 8th July 2023 was received and the actions noted.

ITEM 6 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

6. **Decision.** The terms of reference for the Management Committee were received for annual review and **approved** as presented.

ITEM 7 – FINANCIAL UPDATE

7. The Business Manager advised that a revised budget for 2023-24 and 2024-25 had been produced following the receipt of final student numbers for 2023 and changes to DfE funding. It was reported that the School was likely to be close to breakeven for the next two years. The revised budget was to be reviewed by the Facilities & Finance Committee the following week prior to presentation to the Full GB on 13th October. The audit options available within the Juniper 2023 Internal Scrutiny Programme were presented for consideration. The Business Manager proposed that the Banking audit (Financial) and HR Policies audit (Non-financial) would be most beneficial for the School and confirmed for Governors that there were no complaints with the Juniper service.

8. **Decision.** The Committee **agreed** that the Juniper Banking audit and HR Policies audit should be undertaken during 2023-24.

ACTION

M Mulgrew

ITEM 8 – NEW YEAR 7 PARENTS’ EVENING

ACTION

9. The new Year 7 Parents’ Welcome Evening had taken place the previous evening and the Chair and Headteacher voiced their thanks to the Governors who had attended. The Headteacher reported that the event had gone well with a good parent turnout and that very positive feedback had been received from parents as they departed. It was stated that next year’s event was likely to start a little earlier in order to give parents more time to speak to each other at the end of the evening. The Chair asked for his thanks to be passed on to all School staff involved in the event.

ITEM 9 – PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS REVIEW 2023

10. The Public Examinations Review 2023 and summaries of A level and GCSE grade breakdowns were received for information. The Headteacher reminded Governors that whilst other parts of Great Britain had continued to make post-pandemic modifications to their public examinations, England had not, thus making the CCHS results even more pleasing. There was an 84.68% A*-B grade success rate at A level and an 88.26% 9-7 grade success rate at GCSE for Summer 2023, this was a 0.68% and 4.26% increase respectively on the last formal public examinations taken in 2019. Comparative data was received on the results of local grammar schools and national SSGS schools and discussed. The Committee was advised that the CCHS Achievement Strategy had been revised for 2023 and drew attention to where each year group had been in March 2020 at the start of the pandemic. School staff were mindful to the different effects the pandemic had had on each year group and would incorporate pastoral and academic interventions as required. It was stated that the 2023 public examination results were a testament to the hard work undertaken by all school staff in relation to Year 11 and 13 students. The lack of a national post-pandemic education recovery plan was noted.

11. The Headteacher confirmed that whilst the overall results were excellent, issues had been identified in a few subjects, which would be analysed and additional support provided as necessary. It was reported that the A level History and English examination results had raised marking concerns which were being challenged with the exam boards. It was reported that the School’s Department Self-Evaluation (DSEF) process of the examination results had started and would be completed by every Subject Leader with their department colleagues. The process would result in an individual subject action plans, followed by half-termly reviews with SLT. Governors raised questions on specific results and additional clarification was received from members of the SLT. It was confirmed that: comparative subject data had yet to be published by KEGS; the previous staffing issues of the Chemistry Department had been addressed and two new staff teachers had joined the Department in September; and that the variation between A level and GCSE Music results were being investigated as there were possible exam board marking concerns. Governors thanked the School for producing excellent examination results, which exceeded those achieved pre-pandemic and which were well-above the national average, other local schools and most SSGS schools. The Headteacher advised that the School was addressing this year’s low Oxbridge entrance success and now planned to encourage any students interested in Oxbridge entrance from an earlier stage in the Main School. It was noted that this work had already started.

12. **Decision.** The Chair agreed to write a letter of thanks to staff about the examination results.

Chair

ITEM 10 – YEAR 12 ADMISSIONS

13. A Year 12 Admissions summary was received; 39 students had chosen to leave CCHS at the end of Year 11 and 35 new students had joined Year 12. It was reported that Year 12 numbers had eventually settled at 150 students. This was lower than the target of 160 and less than last year’s Year 11 cohort size of 154. It was reported that this year’s Year 12 admissions process had been brutal and very volatile with students holding multiple sixth form offers, making late arrangements and even choosing to change schools three weeks after the start of term. The hard work undertaken by CCHS staff to attract and maintain 150 Year 12 students was commended by the Headteacher and noted by the Governors.

14. The Deputy Headteacher (Academic) gave a summary of the problems encountered during the Year 12 admissions process. Numbers had peaked at 184 but fallen as choices of school were finalised. The Committee discussed the issues raised and noted that the problem was not specific

to CCHS. It was reported that up to 10 students leave CCHS each year for understandable reasons e.g. home location or subject availability, and the others leave because they think they would achieve better A level results at other establishments. Governors queried the educational ability of the recent external Year 12 students whose GCSE grades had been based on other schools' CAGs and TAGs. It was confirmed that CCHS had received students whose very high GCSE results did not seem commensurate with their actual ability. The Committee were advised that the Average Point Score of this year's Year 12 new students was only slightly lower than that of the returning students and was not deemed to be a concern. The Headteacher reported that problems tended to arise from the differences in breadth and quality of educational experience between the returning and new Year 12 students, but that the School worked hard to address the differences through catch-up work and pastoral work to help the new students settle into the school.

ITEM 11 – KS5 CURRICULUM

15. The School presented a written proposal to revise the KS5 (Sixth Form) curriculum. It was stated that the KS5 curriculum had already been adjusted since ending the IB and A level teaching hours had been increased to match the national norm. Following the receipt of comparative curriculum data from a recent GSHA curriculum survey, the School had reviewed its current KS5 curriculum offering against the number of subjects offered at A level. Currently, all Year 12 students start by taking 4 or 5 A levels and then have the option to reduce to 3 or 4 A levels at the end of Year 12. The proposal was that there would be an option for some students to begin Year 12 by taking 3 A levels (plus the EPQ and Community Service). It was noted that across a six-year period, just under 70% of the Year 12 cohort drop down to 3 A levels at the end of Year 12.

16. The Deputy Headteacher (Academic) gave full details of the proposal and the rationale behind the change. It was stated that investigation had found that some potential new Year 12 students had chosen not to join CCHS as they had considered taking 4 A levels too much. Governors questioned the effect of the change on university acceptance and the general loss of subject breadth and were answered in full. It was suggested that the new subject offering was more current and more inclusive for students. The meeting was advised that the proposal had been discussed with the Extended SLT, Sixth Form Year Leaders and the Higher Education Adviser and had received positive feedback, and that it had also been passed to the teaching staff, with an invitation to pass on feedback through the line management system.

17. **Decision.** It was agreed that the KS5 curriculum proposal could commence with effect from September 2024 as presented.

Head

ITEM 12 – PAY POLICY 2023 & STAFF PAY INCREASES

18. The proposed CCHS Leadership and Teachers Pay Scales for September 2023 were presented for approval in principle. The Teachers' Pay Review Board had recommended a 6.5% increase to all pay spine points and TLRs, with the exception of M1, the lowest point on the Teachers' Pay Scale, which had a 7.1% increase in order to achieve the Government's promise to have £30,000 minimum wage for teachers. The pay award was to be put before Parliament in mid-October and would be passed on to CCHS teaching staff as soon as possible after the formal Government approval. There was still discord between the three support staff unions in relation to the April 2023 pay award, however the final employer offer of an additional £1,925 on every point of the Support Staff pay scale was likely to be accepted by two of the three unions and therefore agreed by majority vote. The flat-rate award represented a Support Staff pay increase ranging from 9.42% at Point 1 to 4.04% at Point 44 and above. The Headteacher advised that the NASUWT teaching union whilst accepting the pay offer still remained on an industrial action footing. This affected 12 out of the 78 teachers in the school and could have a small effect on teacher participation for the rest of the academic year. The CCHS Pay Policy 2023 had been revised to reflect the expected pay scale changes and was presented for approval.

19. **Decisions.**

- a. The Committee **approved in principle** the CCHS Teachers and Leadership Pay Scales for September 2023 as presented and **agreed** that the School could implement and backdate the pay award to 1st September 2023 once formal approval was received from the

M Mulgrew

Government in the form of the School Teachers Pay & Conditions Document (STPCD) 2023. Back pay was to be processed in the School's November 2023 pay run.

- b. The Committee also **approved in principle** the CCHS Support Staff Pay Scale for April 2023 as presented and **agreed** that the School could implement and backdate the pay award to 1st April 2023 once formal agreement had been made, hopefully by the School's November 2023 pay run.
- c. The CCHS Pay Policy for September 2023 was **approved in principle** as presented, subject to publication of the STPCD 2023.

ACTION

M Mulgrew

Head

ITEM 13 – GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

20. **Item 13.1 – Full GB Meeting Agenda - Decision.** The proposed agenda for the Full GB meeting to be held on Friday 13th October 2023 was reviewed. With an amendment to one item, the agenda was **approved**.

Clerk

21. **Item 13.2 - GB & Sub-Committee Membership.** Details of the current GB terms of office and sub-committee membership were reviewed. The Clerk advised that Melanie Gulliver was now in place as a Nominated Governor and had received the standard Governor induction information. Following the removal of employee governors at the end of last term, the GB was running light by two governors plus one Nominated Governor position also remained vacant. Richard Vass was coming to the end of his term of office in October 2023 and due to leave his role as a Governor at the end of the current term, this would produce a second Nominated Governor vacancy. The Chair reminded the Committee that Richard Vass had kindly offered to take up one of the new Company Member positions when required.

22. **Item 13.3 – Academy Structure.** The Clerk advised that the DfE had been chased at the start of the September in relation to the School's revised Articles of Association and Funding Agreement but that there had not yet been a reply from them. Nothing further could be done about the change of Company structure until Secretary of State agreement had been received.

ITEM 14 – POLICIES

23. **Item 14.1 – GDPR Policies - Decision.** Five GDPR policies were presented for re-approval as follows: (1) Data Security Handling, (2) Information Governance Strategy, (3) Data Protection, (4) Data Breach, and (5) Biometrics Policy. The Business Manager advised that they were all ECC IGS-model policies with only minor wording changes. All the policies were **approved** with a 2-year review apart from the Information Governance Strategy which was **approved** with an annual review.

24. **Item 14.2 – Whistleblowing Policy - Decision.** The Juniper-model Whistleblowing Policy was presented for annual review with one minor Juniper HR amendment and **approved** for presentation to the Full GB for formal approval.

ITEM 15 – RISK REGISTER

25. **Decision.** The Management Committee section of the CCHS Risk Register was reviewed and **approved** as presented.

ITEM 16 – COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS

26. The Headteacher reminded the Committee that compliments were now incorporated into the Parent & Student Feedback section of the Parents' Portal on the School website. The Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) advised that the School situation was quite steady at the current time. Many verbal compliments had been received from the new Year 7 parents following the Welcome Evening the previous night. It was suggested that more parents wanted to be involved with their child's education and, as a result, now seemed to request more contact with year leaders in order to talk through their concerns. This was especially true of the new Year 7 cohort parents. Overall, it had been a very positive start to the academic year.

ITEM 17 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27. No other items of business were raised.

ITEM 18 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28. **Decision**. The date of the next meeting, proposed as 8.00am on Friday 1st December 2023, was discussed in relation to Governor availability. The Clerk **agreed** to survey Committee members for an alternative date in order to achieve the highest level of attendance.

The meeting closed at 9.35am.

ACTION

Clerk

Steve Miles, Chair

December 2023