

Colyton Grammar School

Minutes of the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee – Part One

Date of Meeting: Thursday 6 November 2014

Venue: Headteacher's Office

Present:

Governors	Dr C Bastin, Mr G Davis, Rev H Dawson, Mr A Eaton-Hart, Mr P Evans, Mrs S Hopkins, Mrs L Linnell, Mr R Scott and Mrs V Wells
Staff	Mrs L Fitzhenry (Item 8 only) and Mr A Gregson
Visitors	None
Secretary	Mr S Cook

1. Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs S Burns-Price.

3. Election of Vice Chair

Proposed by Mrs Hopkins, seconded by Mrs Wells and unanimously agreed that Rev Dawson be elected as Vice Chair for the academic year 2014/15.

4. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 5 June 2014

These were approved and signed.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 2 October 2014

These were approved and signed.

7. Matters Arising

(a) Item 6: Proposal to Change 11+ Test Providers from GL Assessment to CEM

In response to Mrs Wells, Mr Evans indicated that he had not come across any specific concerns with dyspraxia in relation to the CEM test, but agreed to ask CEM about this matter.

There were no other matters arising.

8. SEND Report and SEN Policy

Mrs Fitzhenry briefed the Committee on the new Code of Practice and its implications for the school. She then drew the attention of the Committee to the SEND Report and SEN policy which had been circulated prior to the meeting. She explained the new requirement for an annual SEND report to governors, and outlined the very significant changes to arrangements for SEN provision, focusing on the following:

- The change to an age range from 0 to 25 if the child is in education or training
- Children and their parents to be more involved in decision making
- The "Personal Budget" and implications for funding
- The requirement for a "Local Offer" and a "Provision Map"
- An increased emphasis on Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Changes to SEN status, with School Action and School Action Plus replaced by one group "SEN Support", although students are still separately identified within school

- The replacement of the “Statement” with the “Education, Health and Care Plan”, although Devon have also introduced an intermediate “MyPlan”
- Changes to “Areas of Need”, with Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) replaced with Social, Mental and Emotional Health (SMEH)
- Increased teacher responsibility and accountability for teachers in relation to those with a SEN. An online Pupil Needs Register in Colyton, with staff required to confirm that they have read and understood the needs and support required for individual students. Teachers also are clearly identified as having responsibility for Learning Support Assistants in their lessons.
- A “graduated approach” to identifying special needs as part of monitoring and the requirement for detailed records.

Mrs Fitzhenry then drew the attention of the Committee to the SEND Annual Report to Governors for 2013/14. She focused on the implications for the admissions test. Mr Evans briefed governors on the revised draft Admissions Policy for 2016 Entry (see Item 11), focusing on the section dealing with SEN.

In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Evans confirmed that the provision of “up to 20%” additional time provides a necessary degree of flexibility.

Mrs Fitzhenry then briefed governors on the range of SEN within the school. She indicated that contact with CAMHS has increased. In response to Rev Dawson, Mrs Fitzhenry indicated the speed of response from CAMHS is variable. She also confirmed that the school will not necessarily know if a student is using CAMHS services.

The report shows that there is no significant difference in attainment for those students with a SEN.

Mrs Fitzhenry then outlined the training undertaken by both her and Ms Taylor, and also the whole staff. She emphasised the value of the support provided by Ms Taylor.

Mrs Fitzhenry concluded her report with a summary of the work undertaken in 2013/14, the list of agencies with which the school works, and plans for 2014/15.

In response to Mrs Hopkins, Mrs Fitzhenry confirmed that additional funding is not available for specialist equipment, and that the school has to purchase services from e.g. the Educational Psychologist. The school purchases a number of notebooks/laptops for students’ use.

It was agreed that Mrs Wells would serve as the SEN Governor.

Proposed by Mr Davis, seconded by Mrs Linnell and unanimously agreed that the revised SEN policy should be approved.

9. Examination Review

Mr Evans drew the attention of the Committee to the Examination Review which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

He outlined a number of issues relating to the Year 13 results, including the significant number of students who had required additional support throughout their sixth form careers to develop as independent learners, particularly in the context of some large subject sets. In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Evans indicated that the school is now prepared to put in a range of interventions more quickly, but this has not so far proved necessary with subsequent years.

Year 12’s AS results reflected the slight national decline, probably as a result of the loss of the January modules.

Mr Evans then briefed the Committee on the Year 10 GCSE results, focusing on the following issues:

- Major changes to the examination specifications, including in-course changes to e.g. English coursework
- Significant movements in grade boundaries
- More stringent marking and moderation

In response to Mr Eaton-Hart, Mr Evans reported that the Enquiries After Results period has now closed. The school submitted enquiries in specific circumstances such as where the rank order appeared to differ significantly from school expectation

At GCSE 214 scripts were remarked and 63% had marks changed, including 28% where this led to an increase in the grade result. Members of the South West Academic Trust (SWAT) are writing collectively to the Secretary of State expressing loss of confidence in the quality and reliability of marking. Mr Evans focused particularly on the very large number of significant negative adjustments made to the Extended Project, in contrast to the very positive feedback received in previous years. He gave the example of a girl who had an A* result reduced to a U. Her project had been peer-reviewed by Birmingham Medical School, and is now being used nationally by the NHS. The school applied for re-moderation, but the exam board essentially stood by the summer results. The school has now submitted a Stage One Appeal which can only focus on process, focusing on the contrast by the advice given in previous years and the contrast with the criticisms made this year. It is now planned to move to a Stage Two Appeal. A change of board is also being seriously considered.

Mr Gregson gave some further examples of unsatisfactory responses from the Board.

In response to Dr Bastin, governors agreed that the example of the student who was moved from A* to a U had to be challenged. He indicated that the processes are clearly faulty if such wide swings are possible. Mrs Hopkins pointed to the impact on the following year.

Finally, Mr Evans drew attention to the list of Year 13 destinations, which shows that an individual level the vast majority of students gained places at their institutions of choice.

In response to a question from Mrs Linnell regarding Cambridge University's recent announcement about AS Levels, Mr Evans reported that following extended discussions at SLT, there had previously been a decision not to take AS exams. He indicated that the decision will be re-visited at next week's SLT meeting.

He also reported that Ofsted have been told that it is not possible to compare 2014 results with previous years, and RAISEonline will clearly show a break between this year's results and those of previous years.

10. Interim Admissions Report

Mr Evans drew the attention of the Committee to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

He focused on the following:

- 376 applicants tested
- 130 applicants have gained eligible status
- Results letters to parents have included a sentence for those children who were in Category B up to the 124th place, indicating that it would be expected that they would be offered a place

Mr Scott drew attention to the 13% of applicants from private education backgrounds, which is significantly lower than many people think.

11. Approval of Admissions Policy for September 2016 Entry and Consultation

Mr Evans drew the attention of the Committee to the draft Admissions Policy for September 2016 Entry which had been circulated prior to the meeting, and outlined the arrangements for consultation which will run for 8 weeks from 12 November.

Mr Evans confirmed that he has sent out a brief explanation of the changes in 2015 to all local primary schools, but has not to date had any response

Proposed by Mrs Wells, seconded by Mr Davis and unanimously agreed that the revised Admissions Policy for September 2016 Entry should be approved.

12. Set Admissions Limits for Years 7 and 12

See Item 11.

13. Arrangements for Independent Admissions Panel

Mr Cook reported that the school currently has sufficient trained members for the Independent Appeals Panel. He agreed to confirm that the existing Clerk is prepared to continue in his role.

14. School Counsellor Report

Mr Scott drew the attention of the Committee to the School Counsellor Report which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In response to Mrs Wells, Mr Evans indicated that the uptake in support reflects a greater openness about issues, and perhaps a willingness to seek support earlier. Mr Evans also reflected on issues to do with students having unrealistic expectations of the grades which they should be achieving at the Year 11 stage of the sixth form programme.

Mr Eaton-Hart pointed out the fall in the average number of sessions attended by students.

15. School Development Plan

Mr Evans drew the attention of the Committee to the draft School Development Plan for 2014/15 which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Proposed by Mr Eaton-Hart, seconded by Rev Dawson and unanimously agreed that the sections of the School Development Plan for 2014/15 which fall within the Terms of Reference of the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee should be approved.

16. Supported Department Self Review Report

Mr Gregson drew the attention of the Committee to the Supported Department Self Review reports for Biology, Chemistry, PE and Physics which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In response to Mrs Wells, Mr Gregson described the recent changes in Chemistry.

Mrs Linnell commented on the variation in the level of detail in the reports. Mr Davis emphasised that the purpose of the report is for departments to undertake a self-review, rather than writing for another audience, and Mr Gregson pointed to the common format.

Mr Scott and Mr Eaton-Hart drew attention to the ideas within the reviews for small-scale fundraising projects. Mr Scott also emphasised the value of the report.

17. Succession Planning Statement

Mr Scott reminded the Committee of the need for each committee to consider how they were planning for the training and development of members to ensure effective succession arrangements are in place. Mr Cook pointed to the increased emphasis on governing bodies ensuring they have the relevant mix of skills.

The following issues were agreed:

- To aim to change the Chair after 3 or 4 years
- The need to ensure that the Vice Chair is in a position to take over, with a new Vice Chair being elected
- To consider rotating Link Governors
- To take into account recent guidance on governor skills profiles that are being used in the current re-constitution of local authority schools

18. Curriculum Presentations to the Board 2014/15

The following curriculum presentations were agreed for the 2014/15 academic year:

Thursday 11 December 2014 – ICT Changes (Mr M Cronk)

Wednesday 25 March – Changes to Science Specifications (Mr M Smith/Dr S Usher)

Thursday 9 July – Year 11 Mini Projects (Mr A Gregson)

19. Policies for Review

Proposed by Mrs Hopkins, seconded by Mrs Linnell and unanimously agreed that the following policies which had been circulated prior to the meeting should be approved, subject to the changes noted below:

(a) E-Safety Policy

A number of typographical errors to be corrected.

(b) Emergency Procedures

(c) Management of a Drug-Related Incident

To add a reference to “so called ‘legal highs’, gases” to point 3 under the definitions of drugs.

To clarify the two statements in relation to the police.

(d) Monitoring and Supporting Students

To add an explicit reference to developing independent learning to the Aims section.

(e) Sanctions Policy

(f) Sex Education Policy and Statement

(g) Work Related Learning

20. Approval of Residential Activities

Proposed by Mr Eaton-Hart, seconded by Mrs Hopkins and unanimously agreed that the following residential activities should be approved:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Teacher In Charge</i>	<i>Students Involved</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Choir Tour	3-8 July 2015	Mr D House	Y9-13 Choir members	Nuremburg	£575
WW2 Battlefield Trip	15-17 October 2015	Miss J Solomon	63 x Y9	France/Belgium	£215
Berlin	11-15 February 2015	Mr A Gregson	Y13 History and MFL	Berlin	£450
WW1 Study Visit	4 days/3 nights in September 2015	Mrs F Harvey	Y12 English	Belgium	£200
Watersports Trip	2-9 August 2015	Mr J Robinson	96 Y8-11 students	France	£705
Ski Trip	27 March to 4 April 2016	Mr J Robinson	Y7-11 x 40	USA	£1,499

It was also noted that a request from Mr Stidwell for a second visit to Iceland for 21-25 October 2015, open to Sixth Form students studying Geography and costing £720 had been approved following an email consultation.

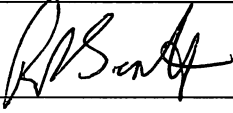
21. Any Other Business

(a) Parents' Evening Rota

Mr Cook circulated the rota for governor attendance at Parents' Evenings, and also agreed to circulate the rota with the Minutes.

22. Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 March 2015 at 6.30pm.

Signed:		(Chairman of Committee)
Date:	11. 3. 2015	