**Public Minutes of the Personnel and Curriculum Committee Meeting**

**of Sir John Cass’s Foundation and Red Coat**

**Church of England Secondary School & Sixth Form**

**held on 3rd December 2019 at 5pm at the school**

**Present:** Ann Slater Sir John Cass’s Foundation (Chair)

Angela Hancock Parish of St Dunstan & All Saints Stepney

John Thurley Area Dean of Tower Hamlets

Nicki Regan Staff Governor

Paul Woods Headteacher

**In attendance:**

Shereka James Deputy Headteacher

Ben Siaw Deputy Headteacher

Nick O’Brien Deputy Headteacher

Katherine Rowley-Conway Assistant Headteacher

Janice Faldo Education Space – Clerk

1. **Opening Prayer**

The meeting opened with a prayer led by John Thurley.

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Committee and those in attendance were welcomed to the meeting. An apology was received from Julia Clarke.

1. **a. Election of Chair**

The Clerk acknowledged the self-nomination of Ann Slater and called for further nominations for the position of Chair of the Personnel and Curriculum Committee.

**DECISION**

* As there were no further nominations, Ann Slater was unanimously elected as

Chair of the Personnel and Curriculum Committee for one year.

1. **Election of Vice Chair**

The Chaircalled for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Personnel and Curriculum Committee.

**DECISION**

* John Thurley was proposed and seconded and unanimously elected as

Vice Chair of the Personnel and Curriculum Committee for one year.

1. **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest on any agenda item.

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2019 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendment: -

**Min 8b** – remove 3rd bullet point from the minutes.

1. **Key Stage 5 Teaching and Learning Strategy**

Katherine Rowley-Conway advised that three main pieces of research have been carried out to create the strategy to improve the quality of KS5 teaching and learning which are:

* **R Coe et al,** Sutton Trust Meta Study 2014 - ‘reviewing previous learning, providing model responses for students, giving adequate time for practice to embed skills securely progressively introducing new learning (scaffolding) are also elements of high-quality instruction
* **T Sherrington,** Rosenshine’s Principles in Practice(2019)–this underpins the five steps that have been created.
* **H Fletcher Wood,** Responsive Teaching (2019) – a focus on ensuring staff are responding to the needs of students

The strategies to be used to support this include improving the quality of homework through a clear ‘pre-reading’ expectation, ensuring teachers use metacognition strategies within lessons, through the introduction of a low stakes check each lesson, improve the level of challenge in lessons by ensuring a focus on analysis and application within lessons, improve the amount and quality of student talk in the classroom and prepare KS4 students for KS5 lessons by introducing elements of the KS5 Teaching and Learning Plan at KS4.

**Questions arising from the presentation**

Q. Can you define what you mean by low stakes checks in lessons?

**A.** A teacher checking understanding but not in a test format so that the students understand and are not afraid to make a mistake. Evidence suggests that when you put high stakes on a test, students don’t take on board feedback in the same way.

Q. How are staff being prepared to take on the new challenges, as this is more than teachers have been used to doing?

**A.** Whole school CPD (Continued Professional Development) took place with eery single member of staff. The following week, departments used department time to create their own version of the strategy. This is because KS5 teaching is nuanced, as an excellent KS5 Maths lesson will not necessarily look the same as a KS5 History or Biology lesson, although there will be some commonality. Departments have been further supported by SLT. When staff expressed concerns about workload, they were further supported through an additional CPD briefing, attended by all staff. This showed them how to conduct pre-reading in a simple way.

Q. How will you know if the strategy has been a success?

**A.** Learning walks have been carried out showing 50/60% of teachers are setting and using pre-reading in every lesson. Further learning walks will be carried out to identify the number of staff members who are following the plan. SLT will continue to monitor and reflect and refine the plan on the findings.

Governors challenged the figure of 50 to 60%, stating that this was not indicative of a successful programme.

SLT responded by clarifying that in fact over 80% of staff were regularly using pre-reading but that the aim of the strategy was to improve and develop the quality of the pre-reading task and its implementation in the classroom to facilitate high order learning.

Q. How well has it gone down with staff?

Staff have generally been very positive. Many have commented that this has cemented for them what good teaching should look like.

Q. How will you ensure that 100% of staff are setting pre-reading, and how will you monitor to make sure it is the most effective it can be, for every teacher?

Every department will need to feed back to SLT to let them know what pre-reading has been set in every single KS5 class. SLT will also monitor student planners will identify what pre-reading has been done. The students enjoy the pre-reading strategy and this will be communicated to staff with a short film that SLT will create.

Q. Governors asked for further clarity on how you will know that there will be better A Level results as a result of this strategy?

SLT will use student voice, learning walks and what is seen in the classroom, as well as and student outcomes as an evidence base. This will triangulated to formulate an evaluation as to whether this strategy has been successful. At this stage SLT are conducting the monitoring of the plan as staff become more familiar with it.

**Q.** Are there any barriers to this strategy?

**A.** There shouldn’t be any barriers.  16-19 Bursary money has been used to purchase textbooks for every student. As SLT we need to ensure that teachers are be well placed to understand what the students learn from their pre-reading and respond and adapt their teaching accordingly. We also need to ensure that staff are setting the appropriate level or pre-reading to ensure students don’t make misconceptions. This has already been addressed, to some extent, through the CPD that has been delivered.

**Q.** How are you ensuring that teachers know what the A grade looks like?

**A.** This is part of the work that we have identified as fundamental to success at KS5, through discussions and CPD, we are working with teachers in not only developing their understanding of their specifications but how they should be interpreted so that they understand what response is required from the student at the highest level.

There being no further questions, Committee thanked Katherine Rowley-Conway for her presentation.

*Ms Rowley-Conway left the meeting at this point.*

1. **Year 13 Mock Analysis**

Committee were advised that this round of mock examinations represents a realistic and authentic picture of Year 13 achievement to date. All students sat synoptic assessments with 2 or more papers fully reflecting the rigour, content and challenge of terminal exam papers. This process now means that the intervention plans in place will effectively address gaps in knowledge and ultimately improve students’ grades in the summer examination series.

1. **Update on Curriculum Review**

Last year the school started work on developing a rich curriculum that will translate into outstanding outcomes at every Key Stage. The new curriculum will take 3 years to be fully established and embedded. Phase 1 of this strategy (2018-19) addressed the increase in subject content and demand in the new specifications at KS4 and KS5, with KS3 supporting the knowledge and skill development needed for success later on. The curriculum will establish a minimum standard of classroom practice based on best practice teaching strategies that are known to have greatest impact. Much of the philosophy and ideology has been created in line with some of the leading current educational thinkers. This work is timely, as it coincides with Ofsted’s new focus on curriculum and its content. The proposed new Ofsted framework includes:

* + - removal of teaching, learning & assessment judgement
    - removal of pupil outcomes judgement
    - replacing the above with an overall quality of education judgement.
    - teachers as 'experts in their field’.
    - greater focus on 'what' is being taught, and how this fits into the wider intention the school has for students' learning.

The development of the new curriculum is a collaborative piece of work that all stakeholders are contributing to. The central pillars of the curriculum are:

* Academic Literacy
* Coherence
* Consistency
* Challenge
* Deep Learning Experience

The key characteristics that we will develop in our students are:

* KS3 – Independent Thinkers
* KS4 – Subject Maters
* KS5 – Critical Scholars

This year we are focussing on greater synergy between the work on curriculum and learning and teaching. A new Quality of Education working party has been set up to connect the work of these two areas and help develop a single Quality of Education Policy. This work has been further supported by calendared half termly curriculum rationale meetings, where the scope, coherence, rigour and quality of sequencing of the curriculum is explored and challenged with Heads of Department by the Headteacher and Deputy headteacher. These meetings serve as a quality assurance mechanism, ensuring that each discipline is constructing a curriculum that is aligned to the whole school vision.

**Q.** Are Heads of Departments able to talk about intent?

**A.** Yes, quite confidently. The curriculum rationale meetings really focus in on sequencing, coherence, scope and rigour. The kinds of questions we ask heads of department are about how their curriculum provides appropriate levels of challenge and how they assess students learning over time.

**Q.** How is the new curriculum being received by staff?

**A.** Staff are very positive and have fedback that it is helping them to hone and develop their own practice and that is because we see this curriculum development work as a 3 year project. We are not rushing staff to complete tasks; we are asking them to make informed and considered decisions about their curriculum. This is supported by regular CPD.

**Q.** Have Heads of Departments had CPD on leading change?

**A.** A bespoke training package has been created for middle leaders on how to lead and manage change effectively.

There being no further questions, Committee asked for their thanks to be passed on to staff for all their hard work in relation to the changes in the curriculum.

1. **SEND Structure**

Committee were advised that the number of students on roll with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) has risen considerably in each year group. There are currently 71 EHCP plans and 2 more current applications in progress. As the school's success grows so too are the outcomes for students identified with special needs or disability (SEND). As a consequence, Sir John Cass is fast becoming the school of choice for students with EHCP plans. The school is committed to inclusive practices and ensuring that students of all abilities achieve the highest rates of progress. It is important however that we are as strategic as possible in how we deploy resources. Although students with plans come with funding, this funding does not cover the full cost of support the school commits too. In addition, some of the needs exacerbates students’ behaviours which are a considerable challenge. A further challenge is those students without a plan who have either been mis-diagnosed or not diagnosed at all at primary school or they are waiting for a diagnosis.

As this level of need continues to increase there is an imperative to change strategy and re-organise the SEN department to ensure we meet the needs of both students with EHCP plans and those without who present learning difficulties which create significant barriers to their learning. We have created an outstanding provision in the Cass Learning Centre (CLC) working with our most challenging students. Of the 80 referrals to the CLC last year only 8 have been re admitted with 72 going back into mainstream with a support package. In addition to the change in SEND team structure we will look to possible expansion of the inclusion provision to include the Cass Hub which will focus on long term placements within the CLC, therapeutic work, small group withdrawal work for SEND and previous School Action plus students.

**Q.** At what point will the increase in demand for SEN places impact on the budget?

**A.** The school judges if it can meet the needs of individual students. Every child comes with funding; however, committee should be aware that the school cannot meet the needs of all students.

Committee acknowledged the excellent skills of the SEN team and how they respond and support students to flourish and achieve to the best of their ability.

**10. Policies**

There were no polices to review or adopt.

**11.Governor Visits and Training**

**a.** John Thurley reported that he was very impressed with the new maths lead and his vision for the department. He also visited to look at English and happy with how they are progressing.

**b.** Angela Hancock visited the History department. All staff have responsibility posts which they are finding challenging to fit in with their teaching responsibilities. She advised that she will be carrying out a visit to review Prevent this term.

**c.** Ann Slater met with the Year 8 link to review the plan to tackle attendance and persistent absence, she also looked at pupil premium. She will meet with the Year 10 this term.

**12. Any Other Matters for Consideration**

There were no further matters to be considered.

**13. Meeting Dates**

Committee noted the following meeting dates for the remainder of the academic year.

**Spring Term**

Tuesday 28th January 2020 at 5pm **(*apologies accepted from John Thurley*)**

**Summer Term**

Tuesday 5th May 2020 at 5pm

1. **Approval of Confidential Minutes**

This item was discussed confidentially in the absence of staff members and staff governor.

1. **Headteacher’s Confidential Item**

This item was discussed confidentially in the absence of staff members and staff governor.

**The meeting closed at 6.10pm.**