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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM AND TEACHING COMMITTEE OF TRING SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 JANUARY 2011

PRESENT:

Mrs J Donald (Chair), Mrs G Davies, Miss J Harding, Mrs S McGregor, Mr J McMunn, Ms N Sayer, Mrs J Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs S Ambrose, Mr A Hencken, Mr S McEvoy, Mr B Scarth, Mrs P Sutton (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2011

Agreed

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Chair confirmed that David Rowland (KS4 Co-ordinator) would be invited to attend a C & T Committee Meeting, but not until he had been on a training course at Stevenage regarding Intervention Strategies and reported back to the Leadership Team.

Action: Agenda item for meeting on 9 March 2011

Regarding the Gifted and Talented Policy, Mrs Donald asked when this was to be updated. The Policy is currently under review and Ana Nicola will bring a draft to a future meeting. He confirmed that Adrian Stephenson had relinquished responsibility for G & T, so this fell solely with Ana Nicola now, without added payment.

Action: AN to attend a future meeting when the draft Policy is ready

5. HOMEWORK AND IMPROVING LEARNING (SM)

Mr McEvoy reported to governors the following points regarding homework:

- It was a requirement to put in the Policy 'pressure points' times when students had extra workloads due to examination modules and coursework etc. This had been done.



- In order to make this happen, departments had given their particular 'pressure point' times to SM. Subject Leaders would then be responsible of reminding their staff at these times to consider the amount of homework set, etc. All departments had individual Homework Policies, which had all been agreed.
- A Homework Club would be starting on Wednesday 19 January 2011, which would be run by Stephen Dutch (student) and Mrs Avril Walters (teacher).

Governors then asked Mr McEvoy a number of questions regarding the Homework Club including whether certain students were being encouraged to attend. He replied that that was the case and that he would be considering formalising Homework Club for every night of the week as homework had been an issue for many years and a Club could well help students considerably. Mr McEvoy also confirmed that he would continue to visit tutor groups regularly and check student planners to see what was being set by which department, and when.

Mrs Davies asked how much marking was being done and whether Mr McEvoy was aware that students were marking each others work? He reported that he was aware of that and that the Directors of Learning positively encouraged peer assessment. Teachers were unable to mark everything that students did, but there needed to be a reasonable amount of marking carried out.

(Mr McEvoy left the meeting)

6. REPORTING TO PARENTS – YEAR 7 FIRST IMPRESSION AND UPDATE ON OTHER YEARS (AFH)

Mr Hencken passed around to governors a copy of the Year 7 First Impression Report which was recently published to parents. He reported that the Year 8 report about to be completed by staff would be in a similar format, but it would contain a Tutor Report. This type of reporting marked a huge step forward for the school and had received a very positive response from parents.

(Mrs McGregor arrived at the meeting)

This style would be the first step in improving reporting and Mr Hencken had been hugely encouraged by the response of tutors. Eventually, he would hope that reports would be online so parents could choose to print them off or not. However, quality control and checking were very important.

Long discussions followed between governors regarding the new reports and they generally agreed that this was the way forward.

(Mr McMunn arrived at the meeting)

The Chair asked about the number of reports that would be issued each year and Mr Hencken explained that that would vary depending on the year group concerned. He confirmed that continual evaluation would take place in order to keep improving what was being produced and when.

7. YEAR 11 MOCK ANALYSIS – HEADLINES (AFH)

Mr Hencken reported to governors that the Mock Results Day was on Friday 14 January 2011. He stated that the overall percentage for 5 A*-C was 72.5%, an improvement on last year. He also reported that the percentage of 5 A*-C including

English and Maths had also improved to 50%. AFH went on to inform governors of the results of various departments and the possible outlook for the summer results. Mrs Davies pointed out that the mock results were difficult for some students to understand and that they found them confusing. Mrs Ambrose stated that Year 11 students were told of the importance of the mocks, study leave, the Mock Results Day, etc., so they were very well informed and this was a step forward from last year and encouraged independent study time.

The governors discussed all aspects of the different subjects and what exams student took; whether they took three Sciences or double Science, etc. and the implications of that.

Mr Hencken confirmed to the Chair that the mock analysis was not yet complete. He reported that the quality and consistency of the mock exam papers was still a problem.

Mrs Smith pointed out that four years ago the English Department was a major concern and that the department had moved ahead with excellent results that hopefully other underperforming departments would follow by example. The Chair confirmed that she was very impressed with the results of the English Department and that this was down to hard work and dedication.

8. WHITE PAPER IMPLICATIONS:

(i) CURRICULUM (SAA)

Mrs Ambrose told governors that the information on the proposed curriculum (English Baccalaureate) was currently changing all the time and that at the moment the school were still unsure which way the curriculum would go. Basically, the School was awaiting confirmation from the Government. At the Year 9 Options Evening last week parents and students were informed of the current situation and told to make their choices on the current Option Form, which would lead to the English Baccalaureate as it was proposed at the moment. There could be some major changes and many possible outcomes, but SAA would keep staff, parents, students and governors informed as soon as information was available.

Much discussion took place between Mrs Ambrose and the governors about the implications of the White Paper.

Mr Hencken pointed out the problems of the curriculum suiting all abilities of students. The White Paper does not appear to support less able students.

(ii) MEASURES OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (AFH)

Mr Hencken reported to governors that the DfE have not as yet confirmed all future academic measures. We have recently seen the English Baccalaureate introduced but are awaiting clarification regarding the weighting attached to this. In addition, we currently report on expected progress in English and Maths between KS2 and 4 but had been warned to prepare for a 'good' measure, which is as yet undefined.

Performance tables for 2009-10 show KS4 at 999.0 up from 990.2 in 2008-09, with indications suggesting that the school is set to break through the 1000 barrier next year. KS5 CVA is 1016, which is a slight fall from the previous year (1026), but still an excellent performance.

(iii) BUDGET AND (iv) HUMANITIES (AFH)

Mr Hencken stated to governors that the implications regarding the changes to the budget from the White Paper were still unclear, but that, for example, the Humanities specialism money would no longer be ring fenced, sixth form funding would be allocated differently (down £280 per student) to create parity between 6th Form Colleges and schools, as well as a number of other significant changes.

9. SCIENCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Please see Confidential Appendix 1.

10. D & T DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Please see Confidential Appendix 2.

11. HUMANITIES GB OBJECTIVES (GD)

Mrs Davies confirmed to governors that this item was still on the Agenda for the Full Governing Body meeting on 3 February 2011. There would be a workshop and Mrs Jacqueline Chapman (Director of Learning responsible for Humanities) would attend the meeting. The landscape had changed regarding the Humanities Specialism because of the White Paper. She also confirmed that even without the specialism the school needed to continue to monitor the Humanities subjects as English, Geography and History would be included in the English Baccalaureate (not RE).

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs McGregor asked Mr Hencken about the recent RE issue. He reported that the Leadership Team had had a long debate about the poor results in the Year 11 mocks for RE and that parents often told their children not to worry about RE results and RE was not valued by students. However, as a Church of England School, the teaching of RE needed to be good quality and the diocese had provided a proposed Code of Conduct on the RE course for LT to debate and decide how to move forward. Mr Hencken reported to governors that there were concerns regarding this whole area.