



Tring School *a specialist humanities college*

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM AND TEACHING COMMITTEE OF TRING SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY HELD ON TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2011

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs S Ambrose, Mr A Hencken, 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

It was agreed that Ana Nicola needed to be invited to a future meeting when the draft Gifted and Talented Policy was ready for discussion.

Action: AN to be invited to bring G & T Policy to next meeting

5. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES (DR)

In his absence, a Report was handed out to governors from Mr Rowland regarding Intervention Strategies for Year 11 students [*copy filed with signed copy of these minutes*]. He would be happy to answer any questions from governors arising from the report by email (drowland@tring.herts.sch.uk).

The Chair asked whether any analysis of last year's interventions had taken place and Mrs Ambrose reported that this had been done, but that Mr Rowland had that information. She pointed out that last year's interventions were based on C/D borderline students for Maths and English and looking at underachievers and this year's intervention included all abilities of students.

Action: Analysis of those Year 11 students who have been mentored (AFH)



6. CURRICULUM MODEL – UPTAKE FOR NEXT YEAR (SAA)

Mrs Ambrose informed governors that the uptake for the Sixth Form 2011-2012 was currently 188 internal and 42 external students, giving a total in Year 12 of approximately 230 students (10 – 15 would probably drop out). These are very high numbers and could cause problems with rooming, etc. Ms Gent and Mrs Ambrose had looked very carefully at numbers to make groups viable and she confirmed that they had decided on a minimum group size of 12. Mrs Ambrose went on to inform governors about the numbers for different subjects and whether these could run or not. The Sixth Form was looking very healthy. Discussion took place amongst governors regarding the complexity of meeting the needs of all students.

(Mr McMunn arrived at the meeting).

Mrs Ambrose went on to explain to governors that some Year 10, 11 and 12 Art lessons were being taught at lunchtime to accommodate lessons in specialist Art rooms instead of using normal classrooms. This had worked well and often enabled students to have a double lesson using lunchtime and period 5. She explained that she was always looking at ways to maximise learning space.

Mrs Davies asked about the use of student's own laptops in school and Mrs Ambrose confirmed that the Network Manager was looking at ways to make this possible as it would enhance teaching, but students would need access to Firewall from the school server first.

Mrs Wynd told governors about the huge amount of work done by both Ms Gent and Mrs Ambrose on the curriculum and what a huge impact this had had on the budget. This had been done by looking at the timetable earlier in the year and would result in a large saving for the school.

Regarding the Year 10 provision and the introduction of the English Baccalaureate, 70% of students on the top pathway had chosen options that would lead them to achieve this and 30% had not. The numbers for the lowest pathway showed that 22 out of 36 students had also opted for the options leading to the English Baccalaureate.

Mrs Ambrose went on to explain to governors about group sizes for different departments and that some areas had had very low uptake (five for Electronic Products and five for RE). Some parents were very upset about this and Mr Fudge, Head of RE, had offered to do the course with the students at lunchtime.

It was clear that the College courses offered were still the right choice for some of our students, as these students did better attending school for 4 days a week instead of five.

There were only nine students in Year 9 who were unable to do their first choices.

The governors asked Mrs Ambrose questions regarding the different options available to the students and she explained the alternatives to them.

7. ASSESSMENT CALENDAR FOR NEXT YEAR (AFH)

Mr Hencken handed out to governors copies of two Assessment, Recording and Reporting calendars, one for 2010-11 and a proposed one for 2011-12 [*copies filed with signed copy of these minutes*]. He explained to governors that this was a difficult task to undertake because of the timings and dates of certain events in the school year, and went on to explain decisions on timings of Parent Evenings and the issuing of Reports for different year groups. Governors questioned him on various aspects of the proposals and Mrs Wynd confirmed that this calendar would be discussed with the Unions, along with the whole school calendar, for agreement.

The governors then had an interesting and in depth discussion regarding college courses, the Woolf Report and the school leaving age.

8. REVIEW OF C & T OBJECTIVES IN THE SCHOOL PLAN (AFH/SAA)

Mrs Ambrose gave governors copies of the paperwork for both 2010-11 and 2011-12 [*copies filed with signed copy of these minutes*]. Both Mr Hencken and Mrs Ambrose went through the information on the sheets with the governors and answered their questions relating to their specific areas (AFH – Reporting, Recording and Assessment and SAA – Curriculum planning).

9. REVIEW GOVERNORS' SCHOOL PLAN OBJECTIVE - HUMANITIES

Mrs Davies handed out to governors paperwork relating to the above [*copy filed with signed copy of these minutes*] and she explained that each committee had one objective to review. The C & T committee had to establish a Humanities objective and that the first step was for governors to understand the full meaning of 'Humanities' and where it fitted within Tring School. Discussion took place between governors about that issue and it was decided that the full Governing Body needed a common understanding in order to redefine the objective and make it wider and clear.

Action: JW to invite Jacqueline Chapman (Director of Learning responsible for Humanities) to the next full governing body meeting to establish the meaning of a Humanities College status

10. SCIENCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Please see Confidential Appendix 1.

11. D & T DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Please see Confidential Appendix 2.

12. MFL DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Please see Confidential Appendix 3.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair asked Mrs Ambrose about the draft Teaching and Learning Policy and she agreed that that would be an agenda item for the Summer 1 meeting. Mr Hencken would look at the Assessment Policy, which also needed updating.

Action: SAA to bring a draft Teaching and Learning Policy to the next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 4 May 2011 at 6.15pm.

CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Mr Hencken gave out a timetable of the Science Department Review days for Wednesday 9 March and Friday 11 March 2011 [*copy filed with signed copy of these minutes*].

He told governors that significant progress had been made in some areas, but the staffing for Chemistry was a real issue. Mr Andrew Muchunga had resigned and it was proving extremely difficult to find specialist staff to cover his lessons. Mr Martin Powell was covering KS3 lessons for Mr Chris Evans, who was still on long term sick leave and had been referred to Occupational Health.

The proof of progress within the department would be in the students' exam results.

CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 2

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Mrs Ambrose reported to governors that the D & T Department continued to make progress. A visit was planned to an outstanding D & T school in Lincoln in two weeks time, when Mr Andrew Dobberson, Mr Steve McEvoy, Mr Brian Reid and Mr Bob King would be attending, to see if they could share some of the good practice to move the department forward. The Schemes of Work needed updating as some of them are very out-of-date and hopefully the visit will help with this area of development too.

Mr Scarth reported that he had visited the D & T Department last Friday and they were cohesive as a unit of staff and Mr Reid, Head of D & T, was aware of the short falls. Mrs Ambrose told governors that there was a concern that Mr Reid was doing too much himself and that he needed support from the Assistant Subject Leaders.

CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES UPDATE

Mrs Ambrose reported that Ms Louise Fabre, Head of MFL, was looking at active learning, sharing good practice within the department and leading meetings in order to avoid a RAP (Raising Achievement Plan). Ms Fabre was working very hard for the department and reviewing lessons. Mrs Ambrose told governors that this department was comfortably staffed for next year's curriculum.