

DRAFT
Minutes of the
Curriculum Meeting
held on 22nd
September at 5pm
(Upper School)

Present:

Mr John Brown (JBR)
Mrs Penny Catt (PCA)
Mrs Laura Dawson (LDA)
(elected as vice Chair)
Mr Phillip Halstead (PHA)
Mrs Lynda Johnson (LJO)

Mrs Shirley Lawes (SLA)
(elected as Chair)
Mr Mark Lynn (MLY)
Mrs Lucy Monk (LMO)
Mr Trevor Jarman (TJA)
Mrs Linda Fearn (LFE)

Clerk: Mr John Malkin

Item		Action
1	Apologies; Mrs Yvonne Jenkins (family commitment)	
2	Declarations of Interest: none	
3	Elect a Committee Chair and Vice-Chair; SLA kindly volunteered her much-appreciated services, but stated her wish that this would be her last year. She was unanimously elected (proposed by JBR, seconded by LJO). LDA agreed to take on the position on the understanding that she would represent the Chair at Cabinet, should SLA be unable to attend. LDA sought advice as to whether her present position might be construed as a conflict of interest, but the unanimous feeling was that this was not the case. Proposed by SLA, seconded by MLY – LDA was elected unanimously as Vice Chair.	
4	Approve Minutes of the Curriculum Meeting held on June 22nd, the factual content was agreed, but item 5 needed a small change of wording to make proper sense.	Clerk to change
5	Matters Arising; none	
6	Report from new SENCO - deferred from June 24th. Mrs Linda Fearn distributed a document to all Governors present and talked them through the work of a SENCO. Her role is to identify, include and support any girl with the full spectrum of special needs, She paid tribute to the 19 TAs, whose enthusiasm and expertise were vital, and training was on-going. 229 girls have special needs of varying degrees, and 11 have statements. Helenswood builds on early identification in primary schools. Outside agencies help can be haphazard, but LFE felt that this year the good contact established had paid undoubted dividends. The Lodge caters for small timetabled groups and is proving successful, with Bridging the Gap providing the equivalent in the Upper School. Literacy provision – info comes from testing and staff advice, and can lead to withdrawal. Part-time students are eased back into full integration. New initiatives such as “Achievement for All” have meant more teachers, and a bid for 4 more staff for SEN provision in yr 8 and 10 is on-going. LMO paid tribute to LFE’s work, and LFE confirmed how much she is enjoying the challenge of the post.	
7	Exam Results 2009: LMO distributed a pack containing the overview of KS3 and KS4 results. KS4: All at Helenswood were thrilled at the recent GCSE exam successes 75% 5 A* -C and 63% 5 A* - C including English and Maths. Targets and general expectations were exceeded and ongoing discussion with HODs are planned to build on this momentum. LMO alluded to some significant reasons for the success: good information, advice and guidance in the options process in 2007 leading to little change of courses in Year10; accurate analysis of mock exams; supported study mechanism in one option block; use of flexi-days for coursework catch-up; Year Team focus on attendance; revision sessions; inclusion strategy. LMO urged caution with regard to other KS4 cohorts – the current Yr 10 didn’t go through such a rigorous options process, and the current Yr 11 is not as able. The assertive mentoring process will continue to help students, with data collected every 6 weeks. Yr 11 HOY is looking at behaviour and attendance, and baseline targets are in place for all Yr 11 students. LMO paid tribute to JBR’s Department work, with early delivery of GCSE course with the current Y cohort.. LJO felt that the results would have done staff confidence much good, and JBR felt that the challenge is now to replicate the results with future year-groups. PHA praised the significantly improved results and stressed that Governors need to think how best they can support the learning process – it was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the next cabinet meeting. PHA also urged that a letter be sent to Matt Dunkley at Lewes to point out the obvious benefits of the focus on learning, in terms of results, and even more help would be appreciated. LMO agreed to write. KS3: The picture here is less positive, and efforts are being made to improve standards with underachievement on all targets. Leadership team is looking at whether the balance of the	Clerk to organise Cabinet agenda item LMO to construct letter

	<p>curriculum is the most appropriate. LMO confident of speedy improvement with the implementation of APP supporting student use of target setting. A sound KS3 underpins eventual performance in KS4. Discussion ensued as to how to combat the “dip” in performance at the start of KS3, and it recognised that there is room for improvement in primary/secondary school liaison – students doing 1066 in both Yr 6 and Yr 7 was cited as an example. PHA stated that primaries sometime struggle with Yr 6 in the period between May (SATs) and September – there is scope for improvement here. MLY asked about a similar examination of the period between Yr 11 and 12 – LMO replied that this is more complicated without GCSE results, and, perhaps, older students’ “need” for a break.</p>	
8	<p>Review Curriculum Committee Terms of Reference; this was unanimously agreed, with the proviso that the name of the school be changed to “Helenswood School” SLA proposed adoption, seconded by LDA.</p>	<p>Clerk to change his copy for the future</p>
9	<p>Policy Reviews; SLA reminded members that the committee is responsible for updating policies, and the committee went through them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions statement: Adopt and accept. • Sex Education: Page 2 item 7 all references to individual names should be removed to read “they should contact the Citizenship Coordinators.” • Both Sex Education and Worship policies need the date to be changed at the bottom. • Longer policies –it would be useful to have as page numbers eg Page 1 of 17 • Homework policy - delete “an” on third line. With this correction having been completed, the policy was accepted. • Arts Policy – remove Arts and Textiles at the top, (The policy was originally thus worded as it was needed for the Artsmark Gold application.) • Educating Children with medical needs is a county policy and can not be amended, but was ratified (SLA proposed, LJO seconded). <p>The Teaching and Learning, and Assessment and Marking policies were circulated at the previous meeting and both were adopted – proposed by SLA and seconded by LJO in both cases. It was agreed that the wording: “Governors will monitor and review the implementation and development of this policy” would be put at the bottom of each non ESCC policy.</p> <p>Teaching and Learning page 12 – do we still have exit Governor interviews, but that the actual policy is contained within a Safer Recruitment policy, and would be considered by Personnel (now contained within the Resources Committee. Update of the Teaching and Learning policy is an ongoing piece of work and it will be ratified at the next Curriculum Meeting.</p>	<p>LMO to make all necessary amendments</p> <p>Clerk to ensure that it an agenda item in December</p>
10	<p>Agree Focus for Curriculum Meetings 2009/10. LMO circulated a document outlining the new SEF questions and asked Governors to study it, and it will be an agenda item for December’s meeting. She urged Governors to pick out a few items which they think should take priority. A few priorities were, however, mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMO mentioned that attendance had not been viewed in “her time” –the school had been “flagged up”! as having a persistent absence problem (contested in its barest form by LMO). • SLA and LMO agreed that the next department to be reviewed would be the English Department – including an overview of the impact and progress of Literacy across the curriculum since the presentation from EHC in 2008. • It was also agreed that the impact of SEN initiatives on student progress should be an agenda item for the next meeting. <p>MLY questioned the accuracy of attendance registers, and LMO said that admin staff undertake this task as promptly as possible. SLA stated that absence can also be for very good reasons, even if, regrettably, the system treats it as absence, with its negative connotations. LMO agreed to send out the SEF outline to all members of the committee electronically so that they can annotate and pass to SLA for further discussion at the next committee meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk to ensure it is an agenda item in December</p> <p>Attendance and Review of English department - December</p>
11	<p>Date of next meeting: 1st December 2009 1700 at the Lower School</p>	

The meeting closed at 19.15.