

CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

4 March 2015

Calderhead High School

NOTE OF MEETING

LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS AND ATTENDEES

Board Members

Name	Organisation
Mike Corbett	NASUWT
Alan Johnston	Scottish Government
Larry Flanagan	EIS
Maureen Gore	Education Scotland
Ann McIntosh	AHDS
Bill Maxwell	Education Scotland
Bill Miller	CLDMS
Ken Muir	GTCS
Robert Nicol	COSLA
Fiona Robertson	Director of Learning (Chair)
Andy Smith	SLS
Ronnie Summers	SQA
Andrew Sutherland	ADES

Officials

Rachel Barrie	Scottish Government
Denise Brock	Education Scotland
Angela Davidson	Scottish Government
Craig Flunkert	Scottish Government
Jeane Freeman	Scottish Government
Jane Gallacher	Scottish Government

Apologies

Janet Brown	SQA
John Edward	SCIS
Iain Ellis	NPFS
Mhairi Harrington	Colleges Scotland
Grant Jarvie	Universities Scotland
Terry Lanagan	ADES
Graeme Logan	ES
Ann MacDonald	STEC
Damien Yeates	SDS

1. Welcome & apologies

1.1 Fiona Robertson (FR) welcomed Board members and thanked Linda Park, Headteacher of Calderhead High School, her staff and pupils for welcoming the Board to their school.

1.2 Apologies had been received from Janet Brown SQA, John Edward SCIS, Iain Ellis NPFS, Mhairi Harrington CDN, Grant Jarvie Universities Scotland, Terry Lanagan ADES, Graeme Logan ES, Damien Yeates SDS. Ronnie Summers was attending on behalf of SQA and Maureen Gore for ES.

1.3 FR introduced Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages to the meeting.

2. Conversation with Young People – Senior Phase: How does it Work for You

2.1 The Board met with a group of young people from Calderhead's S4-S6 to hear how the senior phase was working for them. The Board were keen to hear how the original vision of the senior phase was being realised in practice and considering what wider lessons – in terms of good practice and challenges – might be drawn out. The groups were split into groups to look at one of three themes: Skills for Work; Choices and Changes; and Moving Forward. Board members each split into one of the groups with the Minister spending time with all three. Annex A to this note captures the outputs from those discussions.

3. Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages

3.1 The Minister reflected on earlier discussions with young people within Calderhead High School. He had heard which aspects of the senior phase were working for the young people and which might be improved. The Minister challenged the Board asking if young people really know what opportunities exist for them, both in school and beyond.

3.2 It was noted that whilst the template of Curriculum for Excellence was the right one, there were still challenges around implementation both in primary and secondary schools. A number of issues were suggested as requiring further consideration including the role of internal and external assessment at N4/N5; the strengths of the workforce; and the need to focus on practical issues faced by headteachers. It was noted that it would be important to focus on how we cater for young people across the board and what the offer is for them.

3.3 Dr Allan was happy for these issues to be explored by the Board.

4. CfE Policy In Depth – Senior Phase

4.1 AJ introduced paper 4.1 for the Board. This invited the Board to consider the nature of learning and the approach to the curriculum within the senior phase, as well as the new qualifications. AJ reminded the Board of their intention to look at these issues through 3 lenses: the original intentions of CfE; the outcomes achieved; and the experiences for all involved.

4.2 There was discussion on whether the original vision of the senior phase was still valid, or whether it needed refreshing or reinvigorating. There was a general consensus that the original intention was the correct one. The following points were made in discussion:

- confidence (of practitioners and parents) had to be built up before some of elements of the senior phase vision could be more fully realised;
- parents need reassurance that universities, colleges and employers are comfortable with changes made under CfE;
- young people need to better understand the senior phase 'offer' and how the different elements of the system come together;
- there was a need to look at other ways of providing work experience;
- more could be achieved through effective profiling in S3 and the senior phase;
- there was a need to make more of real-life examples of how schools have dealt with practical challenges (e.g. travel/learner mobility) and highlight actual learner journeys, drawing on feedback from pupils and parents about what has and has not worked for them;
- there may need to be further debate about the place of Curriculum level 4 learning in S3, recognising that any move to formal certification of that learning could result in the BGE being squeezed. A reconstituted New Qualifications Steering Group could consider such issues, building on the longer-term recommendations of the Reflections process;
- this was not the time for major evaluation, but perhaps time to open up a conversation about any unintended consequences of implementation
- the vision needs aims that are measurable and evaluated on an on-going basis as with the Early Years collaborative, drawing on the improvement approach where appropriate;
- it is important that the breadth of the senior phase vision is maintained, recognising that 'attainment' is only one element;
- we need to consider the future role of Management Board, in the context of other groups such as the CLTA forums.

4.3 In conclusion FR suggested that it would be useful to return to the Reflections process, enabling key messages – both on qualifications and the wider senior phase – to be extended to the system. The Management Board should also reflect on its role in the context of the CLTAS forums.

Action: SG to consider further follow-up action to the 'Reflections' process;

Action: BM to provide paper on CLTAS forums for Management Board to consider in the context of their own role;

Action: SG to provide paper on profiling for a future Management Board meeting.

5. Note and Actions from last meeting

5.1 FR highlighted that there had been a formatting issue with the note and actions from the December meeting. FR asked that the correct version of the December note and actions be circulated and agreed by correspondence.

Action: JG to circulate December note and action points for sign off

6. CfE Implementation Issues

6.1 BM introduced paper 7.1 providing an update from the CfE Implementation Group.

6.2 FR invited RS to update on qualifications.

6.3 RS advised the Board that the SQA website had been revamped SQA has received fewer complaints as a result. They are producing monthly newsletters, subject update letters and are on track for the release of the remaining Higher and Advanced Higher documents. Subject Implementation Managers are also now in post.

6.4 The second bullet under 2.1 was raised [*“Clear signalling provided to teachers of existing key documents and resources, together with clearer indications of latest versions and when and why critical changes are being made”*]. MC said that the dissemination needed to go beyond Local Authority level; RS advised that the subject updates would be the vehicle for dissemination.

6.5 Further points made in discussion included the following:

- the request for additional resource made at the Education and Culture Committee was still being considered;
- Education Scotland now have a one-stop-shop website for teachers to get most up-to-date material;
- FR asked Board members to consider what messages should be given to the school sector, parents and pupils before the Advanced Highers, and if there were any issues members that should be highlighted now;
- the Tackling Bureaucracy Update Report had now been finalised, and would issue imminently;
- it was felt that the Implementation Plan for 2015/16 should be shorter and sharper, and be focussed around key priorities;
- the Board felt it would be important to a further media briefing session to set expectations ahead of August, as this had been important in the past year.

Actions:

- **Board members to consider key messages to share within the system before the Advanced Highers are introduced in 2015/16, and any issues that should be highlighted**
- **AJ with SQA and ES to put in place media briefing session to start setting expectations ahead of August**

7. AOB

7.1 FR highlighted to the Board that they would be receiving the next version of the OECD Report with challenges shortly and looking for comments quickly.

7.2 FR highlighted to the Board that the OECD Expert Team undertaking the review of Curriculum for Excellence would be meeting the Board on the 1st June 2015. FR suggested that it may be best to move the scheduled Management Board meeting to coincide with this visit.

7.3 FR in conclusion highlighted that it would be useful to bring follow-up work on the Reflections process 2, work on the OECD process, and the Developing Young Workforce agenda to the next meeting, if time allowed.

Actions:

- **JG to circulate OECD report and challenges to Board on 12th March**
- **JG to explore possibility of moving June CfE MB**
- **CF to consider items for June agenda**

8. Date of Next Meetings

Monday 1st June 2015

CLOSE 16:00

Summary of Actions

- **SG to consider further follow-up action to the 'Reflections' process**
- **BM to provide paper on CLTA groups for Management Board to consider in the context of their own role**
- **SG to provide paper on profiling for a future Management Board meeting**
- **JG to circulate December note and action points for sign off**
- **Board members to consider what messages that should be given to the system before the Advanced Highers are introduced in 2015/16, and any issues that should be highlighted**
- **AJ with SQA and ES to put in place media briefing session to start setting expectations ahead of August**
- **JG to circulate OECD report and challenges to Board on 12th March**
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**THE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE AT CALDERHEAD HIGH
SCHOOL AND THE CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE MANAGEMENT
BOARD, 4 MARCH 2015**

**“SENIOR PHASE: HOW DOES IT WORK FOR YOU?”
NOTES**

Issue 1: Skills for work

Positives	Points for improvement
Some develop skills for work via part time jobs – can build on this	Could widen work experience beyond 1 week in S4 and tailor to future aspirations (eg no motor mechanic placement if you want to go into construction!)
Range of opportunities to develop skills. Leadership courses help to improve our team work and communication. Hospice Ambassador role supports our skills in communication/marketing. Other opportunities for volunteering.	More opportunities for non-prefects?
Value the independent link course with college. Also good to have opportunity to study subjects like Higher Dance, even though it involves travel	Wider course choice and options for taster sessions?
Appreciate careers advice and events – including organisations like Focus West coming into school	More information about non-university pathways would be appreciated, including modern apprenticeships
The new school building and positive environment helps to facilitate learning/development of skills more generally	Want to better understand what skills are required by local employers and potentially help/support in finding work – more employers coming into school?

“SENIOR PHASE: HOW DOES IT WORK FOR YOU?”

Issue 2: Choices and changes

Positives	Points for improvement
Liked the opportunity to prep for exams	Teachers still lack confidence in new system - comes through to pupils. Need to find more ways to improve confidence/awareness of all of the options
Good feedback on strengths - which helps us with subject choice	Better quality and better timed information about choices
College links – for example, psychology course	Some courses can't run - because of small numbers of pupils. Opportunities to link up even better with other local High Schools?
Improving range of college courses available via the school	Science assessments quite stressful
Good link between career aims and what you do - e.g. sports coaching	Lack of exam practice. The exam “jump” between National 4 and National 5 still feels too big. Some interested in exams at National 4 – as prep
Opportunities out-with qualifications - personal development, sports coaching leadership	Communication between development officer and school could be better
We have opportunities to build relationships and influence how this is done	Disagree with change to appeal rules
Head teacher is strong advocate for school - we see this every day	Needed more info on appeals through teachers
National 4 could be route in to qualifications for those not 'made' for exams	National 4 could be an even better route in to qualifications for those not 'made' for exams

“SENIOR PHASE: HOW DOES IT WORK FOR YOU?”

Issue 3: Moving Forward

Positives	Points for improvement
We get to learn some life skills through various channels i.e. buddy work with S1 children and leadership courses	We would like more practice in skills for life and work, for example, preparation for interviews and CV writing
We like opportunities for group work and different ways of working	It is sometimes hard to identify your own skills and strengths
Regular progress profiling/tracking is happening and learners are involved in the process	Evidence captured for the progress profiling/tracking is not issued to learners until it is time to take it home to parents.
Pathway flexibility gives you options for the future	There sometimes appears to be a focus on qualifications in order to increase options for learners in the future rather than planning and aiming for an end goal
We are always clear about the learning intentions of each lesson	Inconsistent approach to how teachers share learning intentions. We like when these are displayed and presented in the context of the whole course
PST content is wide (and flexible)	S6 are allowed time for private study and this is not allowed for other year groups even though we are sometimes in the same classes
We like having the freedom and responsibility to choose what we do for our portfolio work	We are not clear where cross curricular learning is taking place
Good communication in school. Teachers know who needs to be let out of class for an assessment via a bulletin	There is a sense of a heavy assessment load even at National level
Careers service advice available	Careers service relies on learners to proactively seek advice
The great facilities at the school provide more opportunities for learning i.e. good sport facilities	