

<b>Committee(s):</b> City of London School	<b>Date(s):</b> 19 June 2012	<b>Item no.</b>
<b>Subject:</b> PUBLIC REPORT OF THE HEADMASTER		
<b>Report of:</b> Mr David Levin, Headmaster	<b>Public For Information</b>	
<b>Ward (if appropriate):</b>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Executive Summary</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum Matters</li> <li>• Staff Departures July 2012</li> <li>• Staff Arrivals September 2012</li> <li>• Internal Appointments</li> <li>• Means Tested Scholarships to September 2012 entrants</li> <li>• September 2012 Admissions</li> <li>• Improvements to the School's Upper Playground</li> <li>• School Cleaning</li> <li>• Health and Safety Matters</li> <li>• Child Protection Issues</li> </ul>		

### **Main Report**

#### **1. Curriculum Matters**

An Academic Planning Committee (APC) has continued to meet over the last three terms to review curriculum and academic matters.

A review of the Curriculum from Old Grammar to Third Form has taken place. Old Grammar will have one fewer Maths lesson (still having four) and one fewer Music lesson and hence, one more Science and RS (giving RS parity with the other humanities – Geography and History). The First Form and Old Grammar will still have a choir period, but not as two entire year groups altogether. The Third Form PHSE Programme is going to move to the tutor periods and Swimming will now return to the Third Form.

Our existing 'Yellow Slip' system has been made electronic, so staff can report missing or poor work to tutors and Deputy Heads of Year. There is also the option to use it for repeated disorganisation and other issues, with teacher discretion being allowed, indeed encouraged. Each year has its own way of responding to the number of Yellow Slips, with some having Catch Up Clubs and other Heads of Year feeling that three slips merit a school detention. This has been most successful in ensuring that boys are applying themselves fully to their academic work and not

developing bad work habits. Obviously, the ideal would be that all boys do homework the night it is set (if appropriate) and should certainly always 'clear the decks' over a weekend.

At present there are discussions to trial a 'Red Slip' system to report repeated misbehaviour in the OG – Second Forms. This is under development and consideration.

The APC also looked at the reporting and grading cycle. We intend to alter reporting in the GCSE years – Fourth and Fifth Form – going from a two Parents' Evening and four reports schedule across the two years to a three Parents' Evening and three reports schedule.

Reporting and grading in the Fourth Form will now consist of:

- Grade card in October;
- Common tests in late November;
- First Fourth Form Parents Evening in December (but no end of term report);
- Second Fourth Form Parents' Evening early in the summer term;
- May half term grade card;
- Summer exams followed by an end of Fourth Year report;

Reporting and grading in the Fifth Form will henceforth comprise:

- October grade card;
- End of Autumn Term report;
- Mock exam results followed by a Parents' Evening in January preceded by an AS Choices Curriculum Address by the Director of Studies;
- Final report at the end of the Spring Term.

This new schedule should emphasise the importance of the GCSE years and the need for good habits, constant review and a clear appreciation of the importance of GCSE grades in admission to a prestigious University.

The APC will now review the GCSE and A Level years' curriculum. We shall also use The Cambridge Assessment Higher Education Research Programme Paper to help ensure that the Sixth Form to University transition proceeds without a skills gap.

## **2. Staff Departures – July 2012**

Mr Richard Blanch	Retirement
Mr Peter Brooke (History/Politics)	To take up a full-time place at KCL to study for a PhD.
Mr R Hubbard (Mathematics)	Retirement
Ms Elspeth Morgan (German with French)	On maternity leave until late summer term 2013.

Mrs Karen Sage (Alumni Relations Officer) To live abroad

### 3. Staff Arrivals July 2011

Ms Nirmala Bigden (Mathematics) from Merchant Taylors' School

Mr Matthew Chataway (History & Politics) from Haydon School

Mr James Clayton (English) from Walthamstow Academy

Mr Ian Emerson (German with French) from Gosforth Academy

### 4. Internal Appointments

Mr Andrew McBroom Head of Sixth Form

Miss Katherine Saunt Deputy Head of Second Form

Mr Andrew Bracken Deputy Head of History & Politics (one year appointment)

Mr Brendan Silcock Co-ordinator of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Mrs Victoria Hill Tutor in Charge of US and European University Applications

Mr Simon Brown Tutor in Charge of MUN

Assistant GCSE Administrator )

(Internal) School Photographer ) Yet to be selected

Editor, The Citizen Magazine )

### 5. Means Tested Scholarships to September 2012 entrants

A total of 18 full fee means tested scholarships have been awarded to pupils who are due to join the School in September 2012. Of these 6 are to pupils who will be joining at 11+ and 12 to those who will be joining at 16+. The latter are dependent upon the pupil's performance in this Summer's GCSEs but all are expected to achieve the grades needed to enter the School.

These scholarships have been made available due to the generous support of

- a) Wolfson Foundation
- b) HSBC

- c) Man Group
- d) Brevan Howard
- e) The Bonita Trust
- f) Chart Group (Mr Geoffrey Granter)
- g) The Ogden Trust
- h) A donor who wishes to remain anonymous

The School is grateful to these organisations for their support which will enable pupils to attend the School whose parents would not otherwise have been able to contemplate private education for their sons.

The award of these scholarships brings the total number of full fee scholarships awarded at the City of London School since the launch of the sponsored scholarship scheme in November 2000 to 182. In addition 17 scholars have been awarded substantial bursaries by HSBC covering the majority of their school fees.

## **6. September 2012 Admissions**

The Admissions Round for this year has again been very successfully completed.

### **Group 1 (10+)**

In many ways this entry point has become our most successful and certainly the easiest to administer owing to the lack of competition from other schools and the parents' ability to pay. This year we again had a record number sitting the entrance examinations (110 compared with 99 last year) and this increasing popularity of the 10+ intake has meant that we have now settled into taking two classes in Old Grammar as a matter of course. Despite the large number of applicants we still wished to limit the year group to 40, in order to maintain a high academic standard, but the take up rate of full fee places was so high (86% compared with last year's 76%) that we have filled 45 places, without taking any boys from the Reserve List. Four Academic Scholars and one each of Music and Sports have enriched the quality of the intake.

### **Group 2 (11+)**

The computerised screening test for boys applying for Sponsored Awards has again been a boon, successfully reducing the number of candidates from over 270 to a more manageable 55, for means-testing purposes. After the further filtration of candidates through their written entrance examinations and interviews, we now have 6 boys, who will be starting with us in September on 100% Sponsored Awards, which includes 2 from the Reserve list.

The take up rate among those offered 11+ full fee places was disappointing this year (22.2% compared with 32.5% in 2011) and is perhaps a comment on the economic environment. We thus took 7 boys from the Reserve List.

However, the take up rate of Academic Scholars this year was hugely encouraging (if slightly alarming) with a record 41.8% compared to a rather low 23.6% in 2011. We have thus recruited 18 excellent boys in the face of enormous competition,

though it is at considerable financial expense. We are looking forward to some very good results in due course from these boys.

This year our recruitment of Music Scholars has been something of a disappointment, especially for the Music Department who put so much energy into the process, with only 2 boys (including one in OG) on the books for September. However, plenty of 'normal' recruits have musical ability on their CVs, so all is not lost.

The Sports Scholarship route continued to be a popular one for parents, and particularly for those who were after any means by which to reduce the fees. We again tried to filter applications by 'toughening up' our literature to dissuade time-wasters but still received over 100 applications. Many failed to qualify academically for the School, but nearly 40 attended our sports trials and eventually 7 Sports Scholarships were offered (including two 10+ and two 13+), with 3 being accepted overall, which augurs well for the future of sport in the School.

### **Group 3 (13+)**

It has been a strange year at the 13+ entry point. More boys than ever before sat the entrance examinations (205 compared with 165 in 2011, which was itself a record), but it was harder to recruit.

Of the 8 Academic Scholarships offered, half took up the places (50% compared with 62.5% in the previous year) and the take up at full fee level was 58.6% compared with 67.1% in 2011.

Westminster & St. Paul's continue to scoop up the top day boys in this sector and, as ever, there were a number of last minute 'swerves' on the part of parents, who said they were set on City right up to the point at which the waiting list place from one of the above schools dropped on the mat. One parent paid his deposit and then promptly stopped the cheque on hearing of an offer from a few miles up river.

However, we are recruiting 42 boys, including 3 Reserves, and are happy with their academic standard.

### **Group 3 (13+) Pre-test**

We reported last year that among the top London schools the 13+ entry procedure has undergone something of an upheaval. Pre-testing at the age of 10 or 11 (which is now usually 'final' testing in all but name) has become common. Thus, this year for the first time we tested candidates a full two and a half years early for their 13+ places in September 2014.

Doing this has put us in line with Westminster & St. Paul's, much to the indignation of a couple of North London prep schools, and gives us an opportunity to have the best candidates sitting our 13+ entrance examinations, not simply the boys who have not got firm offers from our two prestigious rivals, or indeed from UCS, who have been pre-testing for years, or Highgate who recently have succumbed.

Time will tell as to the success of our decision but certainly we were not short of candidates. The Pre-test day saw 254 ten year olds sit the examinations, many of whom were the very brightest at their prep schools, and 81 have accepted the places. With the major deposit due to be paid in September 2013, the number of acceptances should reduce and no doubt there will be still further adjustments as parents have second thoughts. However, we are hopeful that will recruit 45 or so very good quality candidates for 2014, provided they pass their Common Entrance, which for the first time, teachers at City will be marking.

## **Sixth Form**

We have continued to use entrance examinations in the Autumn Term, instead of simply interviews, and the process has continued to work well. Last year proved in the end to be something of a disappointment, however, in that 80 boys sat for entry but only 8 eventually joined from the 18 who were offered places.

This year 105 candidates sat the examinations (a record) with 13 being offered full fee places and 14 Sponsored Awards. Time will tell how many will actually join us but we are confident that the quality will be high.

## **Summary**

There is no doubt that the School has an excellent reputation and continues to attract very large number of applicants in all the entry age groups. There is also no doubt that recruiting the very best candidates continues to be a challenge in the hugely competitive London market and particularly so when the financial environment for many parents is so worrying.

We can, however, regard this year's Admissions round as a real success, with 144 boys joining us in Old, First and Third Forms and 27 due to join the Sixth Form.

## **7. Improvements to the School's Upper Playground**

A proposal to make extensive improvements to the School's Upper Playground in Summer 2013 will be made to the Corporate Projects Board on 20 June. If this is approved the next stage under the City's Project Procedure will be for an Outline Option Appraisal to be presented to the Board of Governors and this will be done at the next meeting.

## **8. School Cleaning**

At their last meeting the Board expressed their concerns about the standard of cleaning at the School under the new corporate contract.

The School has been working closely with both the Corporate Contractor, MITIE, and the City's Cleaning Contract Manager to resolve these problems. An unannounced inspection was undertaken on the evening of 12 March and the results recorded. These were discussed with MITIE who, to their credit, accepted that the findings were unacceptable. The School's facilities team and the relevant MITIE staff have met regularly since then and have worked very hard to implement a number of changes in cleaning procedures and practices.

The School is pleased to report that cleaning standards have improved since then and was particularly pleased by the standard and quality of periodic works which were undertaken during the Easter holidays. However, a remaining concern is the high level of absences among evening cleaning staff which it is feared may lead standards to fall to an unacceptable level again. This issue has been raised with MITIE who have promised to address it as a matter of priority.

## **9. Health and Safety Matters**

1. The Health and Safety Committee has met twice since the last Board of Governors meeting – on 6 March and 1 May.
2. The European Safety Bureau conducted their regular inspection of the School's Catering Facilities on 19 March. An overall score of 95% was obtained. This is a very good pass but, of course, the School and the Contractor are seeking to address the relatively minor recommendations made.
3. All school departments have reviewed their risk registers.
4. An extensive fire risk assessment has been carried out at Grove Park by Healthy Buildings Ltd. The major recommendations are to replace some doors and one ceiling. These are being addressed as a matter of priority.
5. In conjunction with the School Catering Contractor a School Packed Lunches Policy has been produced in order to comply with Food Hygiene Regulations. Advice was received from the School's Independent Catering consultant in preparing this policy.
6. A fire drill was held on 24 April. This had gone relatively well but had also identified some issues which are being addressed. These concerned the printing out of electronic registers and technology malfunction.
7. The only major injury of note occurred when a pupil hit his head when retrieving a ball from under the climbing wall structure near the Courtyard. The area has been fenced off to prevent repetition.

## **10. Child Protection Issues**

An annual review of child protection issues has been undertaken by the Second Master and Child Protection Governor and the content of this appears in the Non-Public section of the agenda.

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