

Committees:	Dates:
Education Board	28th April 2022
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 4, 8, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Subject: Head's Report on City Junior School	Public
Report of: The Head of City Junior School	For Information
Report authors: The Bursar of City Junior School The Head of City Junior School	

Summary

The report provides a further update on the City Junior School due to open at Gray's Inn in September 2022.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the information in the report.

Main Report

1. Introduction

Preparations ahead of the opening of City Junior School are coming together well, with 147 days to go at the time of writing. Relations with Gray's Inn are positive, parents of incoming and existing pupils are up to speed and the staff are excited and motivated by the upcoming change. Meetings have gone ahead with members of the Camden Board of Education. They too are looking forward to welcoming our school to their borough.

2. Admissions

The admission process has now closed successfully with sufficient offers made and accepted to ensure that the school has 149 pupils for September 2022, derived from new entrants and existing pupils moving over from CLSG. The original target pupil

number was 150, and it is anticipated that during the summer period a few additional pupils may drop out, with a few additional entrants accepted by the school.

As part of the admission process, two means tested bursary pupils were accepted for September 2022 at 7+ entry, funded from school fees. Longer term the School has an aspiration to grow the bursary offering to widen access and encourage diversity. However, at present the school has very limited funding and little or no external funding, so will need to develop its fund raising if more means tested bursaries are to be offered in future.

School fees have been set by the Board of Governors and school budgets agreed. Parents were informed of the fee level (£7,295 per term, inclusive of lunch) in April 2022. These fees were set slightly above the school's original budget and, together with slightly higher than expected registration fee income, are expected to lead to higher than originally budgeted revenues.

3. Governance

The CJS Board of Governors has now been constituted as a sub-committee of the Boards of CLSG and CLS, with decision making powers for the school. The Board's first meeting took place in February 2022. Decisions on school policies, the license application and budgets/school fees have been key areas for Governors' decisions. Critically, to be able to make a school license application, details on a suitably qualified Chair of the Board of Governors is required and this first Board meeting allowed this important regulatory step to be met.

Recruitment of additional co-opted governors is now underway following a skills review, and it is expected that at least one further co-opted Governor (from Grays Inn) will be recommended to the May 2022 Board for decision.

4. License and regulatory matters

The DfE license application for the school was drafted and signed off by the Board in February 2022. The application included the core policies of the school, its curriculum and details on ownership and governance. The DfE is now processing this application, and has asked for clarifications on certain points, which are being dealt with by the Head and Bursar.

Once the license application is underway the DfE will inspect the school building to ensure that it is fit for purpose. However, as the construction programme at Grays Inn is scheduled to be completed only by Friday 5th August 2022, this will be the first date that the physical inspection can take place. We understand that if passed, a license will then be issued within 28 days and if the inspection can take place immediately on Monday 8th August this would suggest the earliest date for a license to operate on Monday 5th September. The school term start date has been set as 12th September 2022. As such there is a continued risk that the construction process will be delayed leading to the School not opening on time.

5. Contingency planning

The relatively tight timeline to open CJS on site at Gray's Inn by September 2022 with a full complement of pupils includes certain risks. One key risk is the need to obtain a Department for Education License to operate, which can only happen if the building is ready.

The School continues to review contingency options if there is a delay in building or licensing the new school building. Four main options have previously been outlined as detailed below and after further consideration option b) is considered most viable from a practical and cost perspective:-

- a) Refuse to admit pupils – this is not considered to be a viable option.
- b) Utilise CLSG's space – A consultant (Ben Moreland timetabling) was hired during winter 2021/22 to review CLSG space usage, allowing CLSG to draw up a low cost plan to accommodate the existing and extra CJS pupils and staff for the autumn term if required. This is the preferred option given the minimal change and disruption to pupils and staff, and relatively low cost.
- c) Use another local school – possibly COLPAI, north of the Golden Lanes estate and close to CLSG, for one term. This is not the preferred option given the likely upheaval and cost of moving the school to an alternative location for a short period of time.
- d) Hire an office building in the City for a term or more. This is considered unfeasible due to high cost, need to gain license and planning consent, and potential cost of construction.

Option b) will be considered further within the school and presented to the various Boards in the summer for decision.

6. Staffing

Alongside the Head, Bursar and Registrar, the Deputy Head (Lucy Szemereni) will be joining CJS from South Hampstead High School, GDST, in April 2022, and two additional teachers have additionally been recruited for September 2022. This completes our immediate full-time teaching recruitment. Recruitment of teaching assistants are expected to take place in the summer alongside the necessary support staff. However certain key support staff management roles have been agreed on an interim basis from CLSG staff (in IT and Finance).

7. Curriculum & Timetable

Work is well underway on designing a curriculum that is challenging and engaging for all learners. In addition to the National Curriculum, the pupils will enjoy lessons in Speech & Drama (through LAMDA), Critical Thinking and Classics. Children will learn a different language (MFL) in each year, the aim being to introduce them to a range of cultures and languages in a fun manner so that they are enthusiastic and ready to begin language learning in greater depth at Year 7. There will be specialist teachers for music, drama, MFL and art.

Sport will also be taught by specialist staff from CLSG. Lessons and clubs will take place both on site in our hall and studio space and off site, at CLSG, CLS and Coram's Fields.

Further enrichment will come through our lunchtime and after school club programme which will introduce children to robotics, linguistics, textiles, archaeology, British Sign Language and philosophy amongst other areas of wider learning. An artist in residence will support children and teachers in creative learning endeavours and displays across the school.

Work has also begun on creating a bespoke junior 'Duke of Edinburgh' style programme which children will work on over their four years at CJS. They will collect badges having demonstrated various 'life skills' such as public speaking, budgeting, cooking and so on.

8. Estates

Neilcott are well underway in the construction project overseen by City Surveyors. All of the main planning consents have now been received. The programme is largely on track for completion as contracted on 5th August 2022, although two areas are behind schedule and causing concern: namely the window installation (by Gray's Inn) and steel structural works on one side of the building (by Neilcott), in both instances delays are caused by supply chain issues. Nevertheless, Neilcott have used this time to move ahead with the classroom build on the opposite side of the building and remain confident that they will meet the 5th August deadline. The school has agreed fixtures and fittings for the internal layout of the school, and furniture and decorations. Regular site visits take place with Surveyors and the School in attendance.

Soft service provision is under active consideration. Catering is to be provided by Grays Inn's facilities and contracts have been drafted and under negotiation between the City and Grays Inn's lawyers. Cleaning and facilities management services are expected to be initially be provided under the City's current contracts, which we understand will be retendered in spring 2023.

Contacts

Rachel Thompson, Head, City Junior School
r.thompson@cityjuniorschool.org.uk

Charles Griffiths, Bursar, City Junior School
c.griffiths@cityjuniorschool.org.uk