

CHELTENHAM
LADIES'
COLLEGE

Bayshill Road, Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 3EP
tel +44 (0)1242 520691
enquiries@cheltladiescollege.org
www.cheltladiescollege.org

Principal *Eve Jardine-Young* MA

Martin Chandler
Development Management (Applications) Team Leader
Cheltenham Borough Council
Municipal Offices
Promenade
Cheltenham
GL50 9SA

6th November 2015

Dear Mr Chandler

CHELTENHAM LADIES' COLLEGE

We would like to respond to the points made by Mr and Mrs James with regard to their submissions concerning the use of the existing floodlit pitch based upon Mr and Mrs James observations of usage of the floodlit pitch during September/October 2015.

There are two key points which we believe need to be considered.

Accuracy of the data

We are concerned that the observed use schedule submitted by Mr and Mrs James does not accurately reflect actual full usage.

In the afternoons we have scheduled curriculum PE running from 2.15-4.15pm to cater for all year groups. As it currently stands we regularly have to curtail PE sessions early due to the lack of light towards the end of the afternoon. Our school "club sessions" utilise the pitches from 4.45 onwards.

Our records show that in the preceding half term the existing floodlight pitch is scheduled for use by hockey as shown below and we have retained our registers of attendance at these sessions.

Floodlight Astro turf Pitch ~ Hockey (4.45 – 6.20pm)

- Monday 14th, 21st, 28th September, 5th, 12th October – U12/U13 Hockey Club
- Tuesday 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th September, 6th, 13th October – U15/ Hockey GK Club
- Wednesday 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th September, 7th, 14th October – Senior Hockey Club
- Friday 11th, 18th September, 2nd, 9th October – U14 Hockey Club

Non-light ('Old') Astro turf Pitch ~ Football (4.45-6.20pm)

- Friday 11th, 18th September, 2nd, 9th October



The registers show that these club sessions catered for 104 pupils on average each week.

We are uncertain how the analysis presented by residents has occurred because we most definitely have greater pitch usage during Sept than their data suggests.

During the next half term we will utilise Thursday evenings as well to cope with displacement of activity from other unlit areas. On Thursdays we are trying to accommodate 63 pupils on the same (single) pitch doing lacrosse. It is impossible to produce quality coaching in such circumstances.

Currently we are having to restrict the number of pupils who can access some of these sessions to maintain the quality of the experience. Pupil demand is consistently outstripping our capacity to supply.

In summary we would dispute the James' assertion that the current pitches are not used and the accompanying assertion that additional capacity isn't necessary.

One possible reason for the discrepancy between our data and the data provided by Mr and Mrs James' is that if the reported observations of the pitch took place around 4.30 then they may have occurred between the end of curriculum PE (4.15/4.20) and the start of club sessions (4.45).

The relevance of the analysis

Irrespective of the accuracy of the data aspect, we need to make the point that the residents' analysis of the use of the artificial floodlit hockey pitch during September /October is not representative of the hours of floodlit space required for all sports during the winter terms (Autumn and Spring). The additional sport capacity that lighting would create is primarily required from late Oct through to April.

To understand the issue of capacity it would have been more relevant to analyse the activities undertaken on our sports facilities as a whole (both grass and artificial surfaces) during September/October when natural light allows use of both the grass sports fields and Well Place. Evidently the requirement for floodlighting increases once the clocks are changed to daylight saving hours.

As set out within our justification statement (pages 9 and 10) there is considerable displacement of activity once light is lost during darker months. During the period that was analysed by Mr and Mrs James there were multiple lacrosse pitches and outdoor netball courts in operation at Well Place and at the Sports Centre that provided activity for 280 pupils (approximately 33% of the whole school). When the lack of daylight renders these spaces unusable the activities in the unlit spaces have to be cancelled or relocated with a corresponding negative impact on the College's ability to provide for all required sporting activities which can take place during daylight hours, but are curtailed during the dark winter months. For example:-

- The football club has to come off the old astro pitch and share the floodlit pitch with the U14 hockey club on a Friday night
- Badminton club has to stop completely because junior lacrosse club comes indoors
- On a Friday evening we have 3 different clubs taking place in 1 sports hall – basketball in half a hall, volleyball and trampolining in the other half. Space restrictions means we play volleyball on a small court with a temporary net and basketball has to play across court.

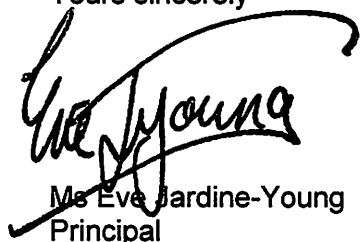
- All netball clubs have to come indoors which means we have multiple teams trying to train on just 1 netball court.
- No after school tennis can be facilitated at all

The examples above demonstrate that the whole shape and scale of the CLC sport programme currently has to drastically change and reduce in both quantity and quality during the winter period. Data collection is only meaningful if it considers the whole problem and not one element in isolation. Analysis of the use of the astro pitches in September /October does not provide a valid representation of the total capacity issues currently experienced by CLC.

Summary

Without the additional floodlights the space available to CLC, even with an additional sport hall, will be insufficient to allow CLC to run a sport activity programme commensurate with the needs of the pupils, the expectations of parents and the standing of the CLC in the Independent School sector.

Yours sincerely



Ms Eve Jardine-Young
Principal