

## MEETING OF THE LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE

Monday 23 January 2023

6:35pm – 8:39pm

### MINUTES

#### Constitution and Attendance:

Headteacher (1)	LAC Members (8)
Christian Kingsley      Headteacher	Judi Dumont-Barter      Chair
	<b>Jehangir Byramji</b> Vice Chair
	Jo Davies      LAC member
	Sarah Guerra      LAC member ( <i>arrived 6.47</i> )
	<b>Lucinda Merritt</b> LAC member (staff)
	Danielle Morley      LAC member
	Jacques Szemalikowski      LAC member
	<b>Conrad Withey</b> LAC member

<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Jehangir Byramji</b>	<b>Lucinda Merritt</b>	<b>Conrad Withey</b>
Also in attendance:	Louise Hake      –	Governance Professional	
	Parneeta Davis      –	Senior Deputy Headteacher	
	Jon Taylor      –	Deputy Headteacher & Director of Sixth Form	

#### Papers issued for review:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions</li> <li>● Governance Candidate's Statement (DM)</li> <li>● CGA Self-Evaluation Form</li> <li>● CGA Link Inspector Report</li> <li>● Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stakeholder Governance Monitoring Report</li> <li>● Updated WLT Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>● WLT Data Protection Policy</li> <li>● WLT Governance Allowances Policy</li> <li>● WLT Health &amp; Safety Policy</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

<b>BUSINESS</b>		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>COMMITTEE BUSINESS</b>	
<b>i.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting of the Chestnut Grove Local Academy Committee, with a special welcome to Danielle Morley elected by parents for a four-year term of office effective from 8 December 2022.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received in advance of the meeting and accepted as outlined above.</p>	
<b>ii.</b>	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>When asked by the Chair, all LAC members confirmed there were no conflicts of interest related to the meeting.</p>	
<b>iii.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held 14 November 2022 were agreed by the Academy Committee as a true and accurate reflection of discussion and were signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The Chair talked through the status of actions, and the following was noted:</p> <p>Action 1 from the previous minutes regarding identifying a student with an interest in journalism to interview the Chair and write an article for the school newsletter. The Chair reported this was an ongoing project.</p> <p>Action 4 from the previous minutes regarding bringing in pupil books (for different subjects and different abilities) in order to demonstrate the new teaching pedagogy plans would happen at the March meeting of the Local Academy. The Maths lead teacher would also present on exam results (including disadvantaged pupils) at the March meeting of the Local Academy.</p> <p>The Governance Professional took an <b><u>ACTION: to add these ongoing actions to the next LAC meeting agenda.</u></b></p> <p>The Chair reported that she was working on a flowchart to illustrate the workflow for each link role holder in the LAC. The Chair said she would <b><u>(ACTION:) present on the Information Flow   Governance Monitoring &amp; Development Plans, when completed.</u></b></p>	<p>LH</p> <p>JDB</p>
<b>iv.</b>	<p><b>Appointments, vacancies, and succession planning</b></p> <p>Danielle Morley was welcomed as a new committee member. The Chair noted that there were currently two vacancies for co-opted academy committee members. She advised that the Head of Governance had started to recruit in a Trust-wide initiative and interviews were being held in February.</p>	

	<p>A discussion ensued regarding whether the LAC could recruit another staff member, and it was queried whether there was related guidance in the WLT Terms of Reference. The Chair took an <b><u>ACTION: to investigate whether the recruitment of another staff member to the Academy Committee was permitted within the Trust's governance arrangements.</u></b></p>	<b>JDB</b>
<p><b>v.</b></p>	<p><b>Governance training</b></p> <p>The Governance Professional shared that a Trust document 'WLT Governance Training Programme' would be launched shortly. This would set out training and development opportunities available to LAC members, including a series of centrally delivered sessions alongside the NGA's eLearning offer.</p> <p>It was explained that each school in the Trust would host a training session, to share experience, information, and showcase best practice. All trustees and LAC members would be invited to attend as an opportunity to network with other governance stakeholders. The dates of these walks were yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>All LAC members were encouraged to attend the Data Protection Training on 21 February at 6pm on Teams.</p>	

<b>2.</b>	<b>ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<p><b>i.</b></p>	<p><b>Chestnut Grove Academy Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)</b></p> <p>The Headteacher explained that this report was a snapshot of the school's current position, was useful to outline the school's strengths and weaknesses, and fed into the School Improvement Plan. He noted it was an especially useful report for Ofsted, because it could be used to form the basis for further discussion and contextual information. Academy members acknowledged it was a lengthy document, but understood it pulled together all aspects of school improvement (including, for example, curriculum, behaviour, school values, exam results, teacher training, leadership, accreditations, student profile data, staffing levels, quality of education, etc).</p> <p>The Head of Sixth Form shared he was working on a version of the SEF for the Sixth Form, concentrating on raising standards and capturing student voice.</p> <p>The Leadership Team invited questions concerning the CGA Self-Evaluation Form from the LAC:</p> <p><b>Q: How is the evaluation data gathered?</b> <i>A (Senior Deputy Headteacher): We gather both qualitative data (e.g., staff and pupil voice) and quantitative data (e.g., number of exclusions) for this report. The monitoring activities are continuous and we would like as many stakeholders as possible to give input. For example, reports from Governor's visits are included in the analysis.</i></p>	

	<p><b>Q: Can comparisons be made with last year's SEF?</b> A (HT): Comparisons with last year are difficult and of limited use because there have been no exam CAG results since 2019 (pre-Covid). We are later than usual producing the SEF because we have been waiting for the 2022 public exam results to be published.</p> <p><b>Q: Who is the primary audience for the SEF?</b> A (Senior Deputy Headteacher): The report provides a narrative that everyone can use to describe the school to Ofsted. By summarising the strengths and weaknesses of the school, all stakeholders can work towards improving the school and its outcomes for all pupils. The overview and listed awards on page 1 are particularly useful for governors, because it states the ethos of the school and it outlines exactly how this is achieved. Page 5 is also key information, covering the quality of education and areas for development. When the Maths teacher visits the next LAC meeting in March, you will see how these points are put into practice.</p>	
ii.	<p><b>Ofsted Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR)</b></p> <p>Referring to the IDSR, the Academy Committee congratulated the Headteacher on the school's strong performance and noted that Chestnut Grove Academy was positioned in the top 20% of schools nationally across all areas. It was noted that the IDSR did not include KS5 data.</p>	
iii.	<p><b>Link Inspector Report</b></p> <p>The report from the external advisor focused on the post-16 provision, and a summary of findings was given by the Head of Sixth Form. He talked about the approach and structure of the Link Inspector visit and reported that a range of evidence was used to validate the quality of teaching and learning practice and its impact on student progress and outcomes.</p> <p>The Head of Sixth Form was pleased that pupil numbers were increased, and that KS5 outcomes were improved (almost 30% are A*). He invited questions concerning the Link Inspector Report from the LAC:</p> <p><b>Q: How has the tuition fund been used?</b> A (Head of Sixth Form): The tuition fund is worth about £12.5k and has been traditionally ringfenced for low attaining pupils, and this has been effective because re-take scores in English and Maths have been good. We have also used this small group tuition format to help Oxbridge applicants gain confidence, and to offer support to pupils with mental health needs. We feel that all these uses of the fund are reflective of the intake at Chestnut Grove Academy.</p> <p><b>Q: Are T-Levels being offered by the school?</b> A (Head of Sixth Form): We have a cautious approach to T-Levels because we want to know that they are credible qualifications. We feel that there is still some ambiguity regarding whether they will replace the BTEC qualification, and whether they can be used for university admission. We also need more buy-in from employers regarding work experience. There is a worry that, if the scheme is abandoned, then the pupils are left with no relevant qualification. <b>Q: If more T-Levels are offered, what impact will this have on staff resources?</b> A (Head of Sixth Form): It is difficult to judge this without</p>	

	<p><i>knowing how many pupils would sign up. There is a need for not only teaching staff, but also back-office support (to organise the work placements, etc).</i></p> <p><b>Q: What are your priorities going forward?</b> <i>A (Head of Sixth Form): The high achieving pupils are doing really well, but the middle attaining pupils need more help. Some of the TAG results were inflated, and consequently, some pupils are now struggling. We are implementing Accelerated Learning, which involves a pupil completing a personal learning checklist. This identifies what a pupil has mastered, and what knowledge/skills are still missing. The pupil and teacher can then concentrate on the latter until it is mastered, and progress is made. We are also concentrating on making all students more independent in their studies – and we have implemented a silent study space, which is strictly monitored.</i></p> <p><b>Q: On the learning walks, the Inspector praised some outstanding practice, with rigour and pace in the learning. This is fantastic, but will you look at consistency in teaching throughout the Sixth Form?</b> <i>A (Head of Sixth Form): I am aware that teaching in some subjects is more dynamic and challenging than other subjects and I have discussed this with all Heads of Departments. I will implement intervention for any individual student if it is deemed necessary. A LAC member suggested that test results could be examined by individual class rather than the whole year group, and this might reveal where the average teaching is occurring. The Senior Deputy Headteacher commented that the new pedagogy approach used in the lower school will filter through to the upper school, which will improve both the teaching and the pupils' results.</i></p> <p><b>Q: Page 2 of the report states “GCSE results have improved . . . The progress score has improved . . . This is well above the national average however sits below the . . . average score for Wandsworth” – can you confirm that this is correct?</b> <i>A (HT): Yes, it is correct. We have some very good schools in Wandsworth. We are always striving to improve.</i></p>	
<p><b>iv.</b></p>	<p><b>New staff roles at SLT level</b></p> <p>The Academy Committee heard that in order to strengthen the Senior Leadership Team at Chestnut Grove Academy, three Deputy Headteachers and three Associate Assistant Headteachers had been appointed.</p> <p>The Associate Assistant Headteachers were appointed on a temporary basis until the end of the academic year. They would each lead on key areas of school improvement. It was suggested that these Associate Assistant Headteachers could present at the end of the summer term on their key areas and talk about the impact on school improvement.</p> <p>The Headteacher drew attention to the teacher strikes, which were due to happen on Wednesday 1 February and three subsequent dates. He advised that staffing levels would be very low, so the majority of students would have online Maths and English to complete at home. The most vulnerable students would be invited into</p>	

	school and a hot lunch would be offered for those students who received free school meals.	
<b>v.</b>	<b>Questions for the Headteacher</b> <i>Questions were sent in advance of the meeting, and these are addressed at the end of these minutes (see Appendix).</i>	

<b>3.</b>	<b>REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	
<b>i.</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding (Re-launch of the CGA Behaviour Policy)</b></p> <p>The Senior Deputy Headteacher described a re-launch of the Chestnut Grove Academy Behaviour Policy. For context, she shared that poor behaviour had been a concern post-Covid as students returned to the classroom and readjusted to meet behaviour expectations. In particular, there were complaints from students and parents that levels of low-level disruption in the classroom were too high. Staff also complained that the admin needed to log all incidents was too cumbersome. The current restorative approach worked for some students and for some misdemeanours, but feedback from pupils and teachers was that behaviour sanctions needed more value and needed to be more effective.</p> <p>The re-launch of the CGA Behaviour Policy had reinforced the message that there were many reasons as to why a student was unable to meet behaviour expectations. Academy Committee members were told about the series of sanctions available to staff and the steps for escalation. Although restorative sanctions would still be used, there would be increased use of pupils receiving academic work to complete in a detention.</p> <p>Members of the Academy Committee were reassured that issues around staff workload had been resolved by adjustment to the logging software. Automated messaging had been implemented to inform parents when their child has been awarded for positive behaviour and when their child has been sanctioned for behaviour which failed to meet expectations.</p> <p>A question was tabled, <b>Q: Have you had any feedback from parents or pupils about this Behaviour Policy re-launch?</b> <i>A: (Senior Deputy Headteacher) The changes have only been implemented since Christmas, but so far they have been received well by pupils and parents. I have seen pupils working hard in their detentions and choosing to take home their learning because they feel a sense of accomplishment. But we have had to clarify certain areas of the Policy – for instance, we have had to make clear to teachers that detention cannot be given to a big group from one class.</i></p> <p>A LAC member commented that she felt that this re-launch segued completely with the feedback she received as a result of staff interviews, where common themes were around time-consuming admin and poor behaviour in the classroom. She was reassured these issues were heard and addressed.</p>	



ii.	<p><b>SEND</b></p> <p>The Chestnut Grove Academy SEND Information Report for Parents (to be included on the CGA website) would be finalised before the next meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the next link network meeting for SEND would take place on 9 February.</p>	
iii.	<p><b>Trust-wide Communications Strategy</b></p> <p>A LAC member had shared a written report on his governance monitoring visit to the school which focused on stakeholder engagement. The report flagged there was a need for a centralised communication system. The use of apprenticeships might be considered.</p>	
iv.	<p><b>Verbal feedback on the Race Conversations meeting</b></p> <p>This meeting, held on 11 January 2023, was attended by the Chair of the LAC, the Headteacher and two CGA parents. It was felt that there were three areas for the Academy Committee's attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication – clarity on how school decisions are made; the need for parent and pupil input; more sharing of information/regular updates</li> <li>• behaviour – the use of mentors</li> <li>• rewards – the current point system is too arbitrary and demotivating; the need for more detailed feedback.</li> </ul> <p>A parent suggested that a formal working group could be convened to look at this area in more detail. A discussion followed to explore the purpose of such a group. It was noted that both the monitoring of race issues and diversity/equality, and the inclusion of stakeholder voice, were the remit of the Academy Committee. It was acknowledged that transparency in decision-making and increased stakeholder voice might both be improved with a better communication system (as discussed in Agenda Item 3iii).</p>	
v.	<p><b>Chairs Group update</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that two schools in the Trust were inspected by Ofsted during December 2022. She informed colleagues that positive discussion and experience shared at the recent meeting of the Chairs' Group Committee demonstrated that membership of the Wandle Learning Trust was beneficial in terms of inspection outcomes, sharing good practice and overall alignment in vision, values and ethos.</p> <p>The Chair underlined that the Trust Board was accountable for the financial management of the academies, and there was limited input from a local perspective. She advised that the LAC should use financial information to contribute to strategic discussion and to query areas of concern.</p>	

<b>4.</b>	<b>REPORTS FOR NOTING</b>	
<b>i.</b>	<p><b>Updated WLT Scheme of Delegation</b></p> <p>The updated Scheme of Delegation was shared as a link to the WLT website. The Governance Professional signposted to the minor changes recorded on the front cover page. She confirmed that headteachers and chairs were consulted on the changes and no objections were raised.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>POLICIES, REVIEWS, AUDITS</b>	
<b>i.</b>	<p><b>Receive Health &amp; Safety report</b></p> <p>The academy member linked to health and safety informed colleagues he was monitoring progress against the audit recommendations. He voiced concern that some points highlighted as 'high priority' had possibly not been addressed during the past six months because the report had been received over 6 months after the audit had been carried out (in July 2022). The main concern was that WLT should query this delay with the company who had carried out the audit.</p>	
<b>ii.</b>	<p><b>Receive Trust Policies</b></p> <p>For information, the Academy Committee received the following policies adopted by the Trust Board in the period since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Protection</li> <li>• Governance Allowances</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety.</li> </ul>	
<b>iii.</b>	<p><b>Share plan for policy management</b></p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that the Head of Governance was tasked to carry out a Trust-wide policy audit to identify opportunities for centralisation and to test that the Trust's overarching vision and values were reflected. The audit would address the confusion related to levels of governance policy approval.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>EVALUATION OF IMPACT</b>	
<b>i.</b>	<p><b>Summary report to the Trust Board</b></p> <p>The Academy Committee was asked to reflect on the impact of discussion on school improvement and to matters for reporting to the Trust Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The success of Chestnut Grove Academy in achieving results that are in the top 20% of schools nationally.</li> <li>• The successful implementation of the re-launched CGA Behaviour Policy.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the SEF and IDSR reports are useful snapshots of the school’s strengths and weaknesses, which will enable the LAC members to feel more confident in their conversations with Ofsted.</li> <li>• That the Race Conversation is still being discussed.</li> <li>• That a communications strategy from the Trust would be welcomed.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair noted each point and took an <b><u>ACTION: to prepare and submit the summary report to the Trust Board.</u></b></p>	<b>JDB</b>
<b>ii.</b>	<p><b>Dates of visits and school events</b></p> <p>The following dates were noted, with all LAC members invited to attend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Y11 Parent’s Evening                                      Tues 17 Jan</li> <li>• Data Protection Training                                      Tues 21 Feb, 6pm on Teams</li> <li>• LAC meeting    Mon 6 March, 6.30pm</li> <li>• Governance Community Forum                                      Fri 12 May, morning</li> </ul>	
<b>iii.</b>	<p><b>Closing the meeting</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked all LAC members for their contributions which made an active and vibrant meeting.</p>	

	<b>PART II</b>	
	The Chair reported she was dealing with a Stage 3 complaint and gave assurance that policy and procedure was being followed.	

<b>DETAIL OF NEXT MEETING:</b>	
<b>Local Academy Committee</b>	<b>Monday 06 March 2023 6.30–8.30pm</b>

Signed: .....



Date: 20/3/2023 .....

## Appendix: Headteacher's Questions and Answers

Question from Committee member	Answer from Headteacher
1. How is WLT being clear about its offer to schools and what will this mean for staff with WLT overarching roles in terms of how they support schools?	Headteachers are aware of all offerings from WLT.
2. How are T-Levels being explored by the school?	This was covered in Agenda Item 2iii.
3. Though we will hear more at the March FLAC about the pedagogic planning – how is the information being cascaded to parents and is there extra support for disadvantaged pupils and their parents?	This will be covered at the March FLAC meeting.
4. Thank you for the School Evaluation Plan (SEF), I am delighted to see many areas of proposed improvements. In November 2022, I submitted a governance monitoring report on staff appraisal, well-being and CPD in which I highlighted the need for expanding the staff appraisal process to include recognition of staff efforts rather than being purely target driven and to establish clearer definitions of roles and responsibilities and career progression. Can you confirm whether these have been incorporated into the leadership and management plans? (Refers to page 13 on staff well-being and workload.)	All appraisals are underway, and staff have clear job specs with career progression paths, although career progression is more limited for support staff.
5. Another point raised by staff during the monitoring visit was too much time spent on restorative approach and pastoral administration and not enough resources on internal exclusions. You mention, on page 13, that there is a new behaviour system which helps to reduce staff workload – please expand.	This was covered in Agenda Item 3i.
6. Page 9 – Personal Development/Wider curriculum and enrichment: Would students benefit from external/internal mentoring programs? Any opportunities to invite inspirational speakers to inspire career choices and further education and/or establish a new mentoring program for the sixth form? Are you satisfied with the current system of career/university advice within CGA?	We have had, and continue to have, many inspirational speakers – aimed at pupils throughout the school (from Y7 to 6th Form). The SLT are happy with the career advice opportunities offered at CGA – and this is mirrored in the student voice. Pupils feel qualified to choose between university and apprenticeships as a future pathway.

## Summary of Actions: CGA LAC Meeting: 23/01/23

Action No	Item No	Action	Responsible	Timescale
1.	1.iii	Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact between the student with an interest in journalism and the Chair, in order to set up an interview and write an article for the school newsletter</li> </ul>	JDB	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring books (in different subjects and from different pupil ability) to demonstrate the use of the new teaching pedagogy plans</li> </ul>	PD	Next meeting
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that books from disadvantaged pupils are scrutinized in governor visits</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To invite the Maths lead teacher to present on exam results, with special mention of disadvantaged pupils, at the next LAC meeting</li> </ul>	CK	Next meeting
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To present on the Information Flow   Governance Monitoring &amp; Development Plans</li> </ul>	JDB	Next meeting
2.	1.iv	Appointments, vacancies and succession planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate the possibility of recruiting a new LAC member from the support staff at CGA</li> </ul>	JDB	Spring Term
3.	6.i	Summary report to the Trust Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To prepare and submit the summary report to the Trust Board by 6/3/23</li> </ul>	JDB	By 6/3/23