

# MEETING OF THE LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE

#### Monday 14 November 2022

6:30pm - 8:32pm

#### **MINUTES**

#### **Constitution and Attendance:**

Headteacher	LAC Me	embers
(1)	(9	))
Christian Kingsley Headteacher	Judi Dumont-Barter	Chair
	Jehangir Byramji	Vice Chair
	Elspeth Bracken	LAC member (staff)
	Jo Davies	LAC member
	Sarah Guerra	LAC member
	Clare Holley	LAC member
	Lucinda Merritt	LAC member (staff)
	Jacques Szemalikowski	LAC member
	Conrad Withey	LAC member

Apologies: Elspeth Bracken Clare Holley

Also in attendance: Louise Hake – Governance Professional

Parneeta Davis – Senior Deputy Headteacher

Jon Taylor – Deputy Headteacher & Director of Sixth Form

Rebecca Jackson – Deputy Headteacher

#### Papers issued for review:

- Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions
- CGA Self-Evaluation Actions
- CGA School Improvement Plan
- Headteacher's Report Autumn 2022
- Finance Link Governance Development Plan
- People Link Governance Development Plan
- Website Audit Checklist
- Finance Link Monitoring Report
- Health & Safety Link Monitoring Report
- CGA mandatory policies matrix
- CGA Admissions Policy 24/25
- CGA Behaviour for Learning Policy



BUSIN	IESS	ACTION
1.	COMMITTEE BUSINESS	
i.	Welcome and apologies for absence	
	The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting of the Chestnut Grove Local Academy Committee.	
	Apologies for absence were received in advance of the meeting and accepted as outlined above.	
ii.	Declarations of interest	
	When asked by the Chair, all LAC members confirmed there were no conflicts of interest related to the meeting.	
iii.	Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions	
	The minutes of the previous meeting held 26 September 2022 were agreed by the Academy Committee as a true and accurate reflection of discussion and were signed by the Chair.	
	The Chair talked through the status of actions, and the following was noted:	
	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 that a student had been identified and contacted, but there had been no reply. (ACTION) The Director of Sixth Form will act as intermediary to initiate this communication.	JT
	Action 3 from the previous minutes regarding setting up a meeting between the Headteacher and LAC members to discuss a Trust-wide Communications Strategy: This has been confirmed for Friday 25 November. (ACTION) The LAC member will report back at the next meeting.	cw
	Action 6 from the previous minutes regarding each link holder populating the Governance Development Plan template with priorities/objectives: three reports are outstanding. (ACTION) The links for Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and SEND/Inclusion to complete this task by 2 December 2022.	CH&CW/ JS/SG
iv.	Appointments, vacancies, and succession planning	
	Both Clare Holley (LAC member) and Elspeth Bracken (staff LAC member) advised they were resigning as members of the Chestnut Grove Local Academy Committee	



at the end of this autumn term 2022. The Chair thanked them both for all their hard work and insight in their roles over the years.

The Chair noted that there are currently vacancies for one parent and two community governors in the Chestnut Grove Local Academy Committee. She advised that the Head of Governance had started to recruit for the community roles, and there was currently a shortlist of three candidates.

A discussion ensued regarding whether another staff member was also required in the LAC. Whilst staff voice is important, are two staff LAC members needed under the 'flat' structure of the Committee? The Headteacher indicated that he could invite relevant staff members to attend when necessary to share their expertise. A staff member shared that she does not always feel fully involved in discussions, especially when policies/committee business are being discussed – but it is hoped that the link role holders will begin to share more insights that are more relevant to staff and pupil learning. In order to retain a varied member voice, it was decided to (ACTION) recruit a staff member from the support staff at Chestnut Grove Academy. Furthermore, this new staff LAC member should have a clear understanding of the role with properly delegated responsibilities and a clear mandate.

AA

#### v. Actions to take from the CGA Governance Self-Evaluation

The LAC member tasked to evaluate the Self-Evaluation feedback identified two main areas which needed focus. (1) The role of governance and its execution – what is good governance and what are its success criteria? The Committee was reminded that the NGA website has a list of questions that governors should ask – and these should always be borne in mind to retain focus. See also the discussion regarding training in section vi below.

(2) The second area on which to focus is engaging stakeholders: how best to engage with the school and its community? The Committee was reminded that school visits are of paramount importance (face-to-face talks with teachers, pupils and parents) – governors should make full use of any opportunities. A Trust-wide Communications Strategy would also make communication between all stakeholders much easier (see above in section iii for the date of this meeting).

There was a general discussion about the governance reporting structure. The Governance Development Plans are for each link role holder to set-out their objective/priorities for the year, and the Governance Monitoring Reports are to be used to report back on any meetings/visits. The Committee needs to concentrate on outcomes for students and their learning. The Chair shared that she finds the document '2022/23 Governance Link Role Planner' very useful because it lists all the tasks for each link role holder to consider each term.



#### vi. Governance training

All Committee members confirmed that they had undertaken their annual Safeguarding training, and that they had signed the two annual governance declarations.

With regards to safeguarding, a question was tabled: **Q: Are random DBS checks carried out on existing Academy staff?** *A (RJ):* Yes – 20% of staff have random DBS checks each year. Also, at the start of the year, all staff members are asked to fill out a disclosure form with any relevant information from the last year. It was acknowledged that the governing body should check that the random checks are being carried out.

The Chair reminded all Committee members that the annual Community Forum is on 13 May 2023, and details will follow. She also recalled what other training is on offer:

- (a) The NGA is a good source of learning you can choose which modules you would like to cover (<a href="https://www.nga.org.uk/Training-and-Development/NGA-Learning-Link-e-learning.aspx">https://www.nga.org.uk/Training-and-Development/NGA-Learning-Link-e-learning.aspx</a>). You will need to log in with your email and username.
- (b) On Teams, in the WLT Governance Hub, there is a 'Training' folder, where the Head of Governance signposts relevant training.

2.	ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT	
i.	Chestnut Grove Academy Self-Evaluation Form	
	The Headteacher explained that this report is not yet completed because the data for public exams has only just been published and the CGA Senior Leadership Team need time to evaluate the results. ACTION: the SEF will be distributed for discussion at the next LAC meeting in Spring 2023.	СК
ii.	Headteacher's Report	
	Questions were sent in advance of the last meeting, and the Governance Professional has circulated all the answers (see Appendix). The Headteacher invited any further questions, but there were none.	
iii.	Staffing/recruitment	
	In the Senior Leadership Team, a member will be leaving at the end of term, which has led to actions to secure the strength of the existing team. It is intended to create more Associate Assistant Head posts, and applications were invited from across the school. This promotion will have a minimal cost impact (although in the longer	



term, the new Assistant Head will need to be given more time to fulfil their role). There have been nine applicants, and they have been asked in what area they are interested. In order to create a strong and vibrant Senior Leadership Team, some team re-shuffling (according to personal interests), might be needed. In addition, up to three new Deputy Headteachers will be recruited from the existing pool of Assistant Headteachers. External recruitment is problematic at this time of year, because no school can recruit until after Easter.

The Wandle Learning Trust have engaged a company called Edurio to undertake a full (and anonymous) staff survey, to be disseminated by each school headteacher. This analysis will be provided at both Trust- and school-level, giving some nuanced knowledge (for instance, results from staff with different levels of teaching experience can be analysed). The results will be produced next term (Spring 2023).

#### iv. Finance update

The CGA budget was balanced. However, a pay increase of 5% for support staff has created a deficit. The Headteacher shared that he hopes to reduce this deficit by reduced energy consumption (reduced heating hours) and savings that can be achieved when new staff are recruited.

Looking towards next year, there are going to be budgetary challenges: CGA needs additional staff in certain areas, and the number of SEND children enrolled in CGA is increasing every year. However, on the flipside, the total increase in pupil numbers will translate into an extra £360 thousand next year.

A LAC member made the following suggestion **Q: Could CGA make use of Apprenticeships and the Graduate Teacher programmes in order to reduce staff spending?** A (HT): This is not something we are currently involved in, but we will explore such avenues. Another LAC member tabled a question regarding staffing at CGA **Q: Do you feel you have enough diversity within your staff at CGA?** A (HT): Yes, I think we have achieved this.

#### v. CGA School Improvement Plan

The Senior Deputy Headteacher at CGA delivered an insightful presentation on the Tier Model for School Improvement and 2022 performance measures data (recently received with Progress 8 updates). She underlined that Chestnut Grove Academy, and its LAC, need to concentrate on the areas of learning that will deliver the most impact for the school and its pupils. Two areas have been defined as needing attention: the improvement of outcomes for disadvantaged pupils; and a Key Stage 3 plan for progression.

In order to deliver high-quality teaching, each subject has devised its own pedagogy plan following the questions: What does good/outstanding teaching look like? What do students need to do to achieve outstanding learning? Each subject area has therefore



produced a plan/checklist of all the skills needed for a pupil to achieve secure knowledge and expert knowledge. A pupil and parent can therefore know exactly where they need to acquire/improve on specific skills and knowledge. These lists are also useful for pupil revision. The LAC looked at an example of a plan from the English department.

A LAC member queried **Q:** Is this pedagogy embedded into actual practise in the classroom? The question was referred to a staff LAC member to comment, *A (LM):* Yes, the checklists are useful in a practical manner – I can tick off when a pupil has mastered a skill and I can see where they have gaps in knowledge. I can then plan lessons accordingly and design the whole course around what needs to be covered. It makes assessment much easier. A LAC member noted that feedback should be sought from teachers and pupils.

Another LAC member probed further **Q**: Is there an element of cross-knowledge between subjects, to limit the disruption of staff turnover? A (PD): CGA staff have formed links between certain subjects (e.g. the humanities) in order to share knowledge, and this level of collaboration has made staff meetings more dynamic. The STEM subjects need to do the same. In general, CGA has a stable middle leaders group, and they have enjoyed having the freedom to design their own curriculum and feel proud of the result. The whole pedagogy has therefore embedded well. Staff have found the framework especially useful post-Covid because they can clearly observe any gaps in learning for specific pupils.

Q: Do parents like this new pedagogy? A (PD): We have shared all the checklists with parents via our website, but we have not had any feedback. A LAC member suggested that sharing this pedagogy in parents' evenings would make it more concrete, especially if parents could see actual examples of its use in their child's workbook. Also, could these lists be used in the pupils' reports? A discussion followed about how best to engage parents with their child's learning. How can CGA empower parents to help their children? A parent LAC member suggested that she would find it useful if CGA could indicate what resources are 'useful' and what are 'crucial' so that she can prioritise what to buy. In addition, it was noted that some of the terminology used in these plans is advanced and so should they be written in more simple language? Q: Is this pedagogy accessible for less-educated parents and SEND pupils? A (PD): Yes, and the best way to demonstrate how user-friendly and accessible these plans are is to show you actual examples. An action was passed to (ACTION) bring books from three different pupils to the next meeting (these books to be in different subjects, and from different pupil abilities).

Q: Whilst these pedagogy plans are impressive, can the results be measured? Do the plans include targets to track progress/improvement? A (PD): Yes. We do not have time to look at this much depth in this meeting, but I can show you the full action plans and targets for KS 3,4 and 5. An action was passed

PD



## to (ACTION) post full action plans and targets on the Teams LAC channel for further examination by the Committee.

PD/LH

As well as high-quality teaching, two other areas are included in the Tier Model for School Improvement: targeted academic support and wider strategies. The Headteacher reported that Chestnut Grove Academy is working with Chesterton Primary School on a new phonics system which will be used to diagnose any reading issues. This pilot scheme will be used across KS3 and it starts in January 2023. There was one question relating to the wider strategies, **Q: How is attendance at Chestnut Grove Academy this term?** A (HT): Attendance is currently 93%, but there is no national data to use for comparison at the moment.

The Senior Deputy Headteacher moved on to a short presentation on the data for disadvantaged outcomes at Chestnut Grove Academy. The gap between disadvantaged pupil outcomes and other pupil outcomes widened in the Covid pandemic, and CGA is still performing below-average in this area. One of the reasons for this is that CGA offers mostly academic subjects (as opposed to BTECs), and EBacc uptake is strong. Looking at the data by subject area, it can be seen that CGA disadvantaged pupils are performing well in English, but not in Maths. For this reason, CGA have appointed another Maths teacher in order to add focus. In addition, CGA have allocated more tutor time to disadvantaged pupils, so that these pupils have more time to practise skills in order to catch up. With approximately 35 disadvantaged students in each year group, CGA is making it a priority to personalise their learning more. The LAC took an ACTION: to ensure that disadvantaged pupils' book are scrutinised in governor's visits. Furthermore, the Committee decided to monitor and track Maths results next term, with an emphasis on disadvantaged pupils. ACTION: the lead teacher in Maths will be invited to present at the next LAC meeting, and Committee members will examine the mock exam results for Maths.

ΑII

CK/AII

In the Sixth Form, disadvantaged pupils achieve an average of C+, whereas other pupils achieve B-. In order to close this gap, the Director of Sixth Form is taking a holistic approach. He wants to build confidence in Sixth Form pupils, and he hopes that the confidence, communication and inner resolve skills learnt on the school trip to the Surrey Outdoor Learning Centre will be transferred to the pupils' studies.

Looking more generally at the Progress 8 by Attainment Group data, it was noted that the high attainment group is strong, which reflects CGA's high-quality curriculum. But the middle attainment group is below average – hence the new Tier Model pedagogy will be especially useful for tracking and improving progress. The low attainment group is above average. A LAC member was especially impressed with the strong results of the high attainment group and felt that CGA should share this good message with the wider community in order to attract more applicants from this group. The whole Committee agreed that inviting back alumni that have strong success stories is inspirational for current pupils.



3.	REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING	
i.	Safeguarding	
	There were no further comments to make regarding safeguarding.	
ii.	Governance monitoring reports for discussion	
	The Committee Finance Link confirmed that his governance development plan focussed on pupil outcomes and school priorities, rather than the minutae of the school budget. The Committee People Link invited any feedback on her governance development plan. It was noted that if the school focuses on disadvantaged pupils, then all outcomes will improve. Both Committee link members invited any questions and there were none.	
	Governance development plans that are to follow are: Safeguarding (the link role holder is new to the task and needs a little longer to complete the plan); SEND; and Health & Safety. The H&S link role holder shared that he has not yet seen a Trustwide audit that took place in the last summer term. The Headteacher took an ACTION: to chase the results of this H&S audit.	СК
iii.	Governance monitoring reports for noting	
	The LAC member who carried out the website audit will ACTION: discuss the audit results with the Headteacher at the Communications Strategy meeting taking place on Friday 25 November. A LAC member thought it was important to keep the website simple to navigate, and also crucial to keep it up to date.	CW/CK
	The Finance and H&S Link Reports were insightful. There were no questions.	
4.	POLICIES, REVIEWS, AUDITS	

4.	POLICIES, REVIEWS, AUDITS	
	It was confirmed that there were no changes made to the CGA Admissions Policy. It was also confirmed that the Behaviour for Learning Policy is on the CGA website. Both policies were approved by the LAC and will be reviewed in one year.	

5.	EVALUATION OF IMPACT	
i.	Summary report to the Trust Board	
	The Academy Committee was asked to reflect on the meeting and suggest items to report to the Trust Board.	
	The need for a support staff governor to join the LAC.	



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	_	ged Students at Chestnut Grove Academy will be		
	an area for priority examina			
		ill a work-in-progress for the LAC.		
	Could a central repository be a central repository because be a central repository be a central repository because because be a central repository because becaus	be set-up in which to house all links for training?		
	The Chair noted each point and took an <u>ACTION: to prepare and submit the</u> summary report to the Trust Board by 28 November 2022.			
ii.	Dates of visits and school event	s		
	The following dates were noted, w	ith all LAC members invited to attend:		
	Presentation Evening	Thurs 17 Nov at 6.15pm		
	Y8 Parent's Evening	Thurs 1 Dec		
	Winter Concert	Wed 14 Dec		
	Community Forum	Sat 13 May		
iii.	Thank yous			
	The Chair thanked all LAC members and vibrant meeting.	ers for their contributions which made an active		
	PART II			
	FARTII			
	It was confirmed that current acconcluded.	tions at Chestnut Grove Academy have been		
	DETAIL OF NEXT MEETING:			

		NFXT	

Local Academy Committee Monday 23 January 2023 6.30–8.30pm

Signed:

Date: 7/2/2023



## **Appendix: Headteacher's Questions and Answers**

Q	uestion from Committee member	Answer from Headteacher
So	chool Development/Improvement Plan:	
1.	Please can we have an update on the review budget process to remove dependency on lettings income and also an update for fundraising opportunities.	At the moment we have continued to factor the lettings income into the budget due to financial pressures. This will be reviewed at a later date.
2.	What steps have CGA taken to deal with the sharp rise in costs of living? How do we propose to cover the rise in energy bills and catering costs?	<ul> <li>We are on a fixed energy price so we have some protection from immediate rising costs.</li> <li>The Trust is working on a sustainability plan where we collectively try to reduce energy consumption.</li> <li>The cost of food in the canteen has been increased as result of rising food prices.</li> </ul>
3.	Should we conduct a review in long-term energy savings at school premises?	I think this is a good idea but will be part of a wider Trust initiative.
4.	The introduction of EBacc has marginalised creative subjects such as music, drama, and art and also restrictions to do only one language: what can CGA do to ensure the creative subjects continue to thrive?	The government's ambition is that 90% of students study the EBACC at KS4. Last year we had 70% entered for the EBACC and retained GCSEs in two Art subjects, Drama, Dance and Music. Whilst the number of creative subjects that a student can choose is limited, they can all study at least one creative subject and language specialists can study two languages.
5.	Staff Mental Health is included right at the end; however, would it better sit within "Promote staff well-being with a focus to reduce workload"?	I think it can sit in either area. The important thing is that it's included. We are about to launch a Trust-wide staff well-being survey.
6.	I am not clear on the "how" we are going to "Grow the academy through a sustained expansion programme"; the points raised are just different expressions for what we wish to achieve.	The "how" is increasing the PAN in Y7 for the next 2 years and increasing numbers in the sixth form (we are almost at our limit). This is about recruitment and maintaining numbers at a time when pupil numbers across London are falling.
7.	Glad to see our Resources conversations have fed into the actions around ensuring that CGA is financially self-sufficient.	Great.
Н	eadteacher's Report:	
1.	School numbers: In your Headteacher report, there are lots of missing students in the Ethnic composition table.	We don't list every ethnicity. Just the main ones.



•	The Number on roll by English as an Additional Language is less than 200. In the safeguarding report, it is 315. Which is right? In fact, a general walk-through of the numbers would be useful, as some of the other % ages and numbers are hard to follow.	I will need to check, but the reports are dealing with different periods. Safeguarding was 2021–2022 and the Heads report is 2022–2023.  Noted.
2.	Finance: I think we would benefit from a more strategic lens and narrative associated with the financial reporting.	The strategy really does sit with the Trust board. I can see that more narrative would be useful, and I will speak with Tom about how we can provide that – whether it comes from the Trust or me.
3.	Professional Development: It would be good to understand the broader training undertaken by staff. In my Head of Department 1-2-1 interviews, this came out as something they wish their people could do more of.	This is always the case but there are time and budgetary pressures. I could ask Violeta to produce an overview for the next Heads report. There are a lot of fantastic CPD opportunities available for staff both in-house and externally.
Sa	nfeguarding Audit:	
1.	It has been a positive and constructive review with useful recommendations. How do CGA ensure that same message is communicated to parents and stakeholders?	Good point. That could go in the newsletter. I have fed back to staff.
2.	Regarding the process to DBS/safeguard for people that hire/lease the building, especially as there can often be our children present who are not signed up to the specific offer: I am aware of off-site provision and oversight and have challenged letters on file but I've not done the same with those using the building.	This is being put into the safeguarding policy. We aim to get letter of assurances from the companies that hire school-based venues.



## **Summary of Actions: CGA LAC Meeting: 14/11/22**

Action No	Item No	Action	Responsible	Timescale
	111	Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions		
1.	1.iii	Director of Sixth Form to act as intermediary to initiate 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	JT	Priority
		<ul> <li>LAC member to report back on the Trust-wide Communications Strategy meeting with the Headteacher taking place in Nov 2022</li> </ul>	CW	Next meeting
		<ul> <li>The link role holders for Safeguarding, Health &amp; Safety, and SEND/Inclusion to populate Governance Development Plans with priorities/objectives</li> </ul>	CH&CW/JS/ SG	By 02/12/2022
2.	1.iv	Appointments, vacancies and succession planning		
		To recruit a new LAC member from the support staff at CGA	AA	Spring Term
3.	2.i	CGA Self-Evaluation Form		
0.		To distribute the SEF at the next LAC meeting in Spring 2023	СК	Next meeting
4.	2.v	CGA School Improvement Plan		
		<ul> <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> <li>To post the full action plans and targets for the new pedagogy on the Teams LAC channel</li> </ul>	PD/LH	Priority
		<ul> <li>To ensure that books from disadvantaged pupils are scrutinized in governor visits</li> </ul>	All	Ongoing



		To invite the Maths lead teacher to present on exam results, with special mention of disadvantaged pupils, at the next LAC meeting	СК	Next meeting
5.	3.ii	Governance monitoring reports for discussion     To chase the results of the Trust-wide Health & Safety audit carried out in the summer term 2022	СК	Priority
6.	3.iii	Governance monitoring reports for noting     To discuss the CGA Website Audit results at the Communications Strategy meeting in Nov 2022	CW/CK	25/11/2022
7.	5.i	<ul> <li>Summary report to the Trust Board</li> <li>To prepare and submit the summary report to the Trust Board by 28/11/22</li> </ul>	JDB	By 28/11/22