

**MEETING OF THE
LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE
Monday 22 May 2023: 6:30pm–8:02pm
MINUTES**

Constitution and Attendance:

Headteacher (1)		LAC Members (11)	
Christian Kingsley	Headteacher <i>(left at 7.45pm)</i>	Judi Dumont-Barter	Chair
		Jehangir Byramji	Vice Chair
		Mo Asif	LAC member
		Alex Dixey	LAC member
		Jo Davies	LAC member
		Sarah Guerra	LAC member <i>(arrived at 6.38pm)</i>
		Lucinda Merritt	LAC member (staff)
		Danielle Morley	LAC member (elected parent)
		Emma Oliver	LAC member
		Jacques Szemalikowski	LAC member (elected parent)
		Conrad Withey	LAC member

Absent with apologies: Judi Dumont-Barter

Jo Davies

Mo Asif

Absent without apologies: Alex Dixey

Danielle Morley

Also in attendance:

Louise Hake

Governance Professional

Parneeta Davis

Senior Deputy Headteacher

Rebecca Jackson

Deputy Headteacher

James Wildman

Associate Assistant Headteacher

(in attendance for Item 1 only)

Papers issued for review:

- Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions
- School Improvement Plan (22/23)
- Self-Evaluation Form (May 2023)
- PowerPoint slides from the SEND Trust training
- Combined Governor Action Plan

BUSINESS		ACTION
1.	ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT – Part 1	
	<p>Presentation: CEAIG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) at CGA</p> <p>The Associate Assistant Headteacher lead for CEAIG gave an insightful presentation regarding how Chestnut Grove Academy had embedded Careers Education in a whole-school approach. This was in-line with the curriculum intent that students ‘succeed at university, thrive in employment and lead fulfilling lives’.</p> <p>He outlined that two tools were used to judge the effective delivery of CEAIG in schools: The Gatsby Benchmarks and The Bakers Clause. Within the Gatsby framework, there were eight benchmarks that Chestnut Grove Academy aimed to achieve, and the Associate Assistant Headteacher explained exactly how CGA was meeting these benchmarks in practice. He further explained that The Bakers Clause stipulated that schools must allow training providers to visit schools to discuss non-academic routes. The Associate Assistant Headteacher listed some visits from companies that had taken place at CGA.</p> <p>The presentation concluded with a summary of areas that the Associate Assistant Headteacher intended to develop further, including: training Heads of Departments to link CEAIG to the curriculum more clearly; strengthening CEAIG for SEN pupils; and organising a Careers Fair in October 2023.</p> <p>A LAC member commented that LAC members may be able to help with sourcing career-themed visitors and Fair contributors. A question was tabled, Q: Is there an industry area where you particularly need help with sourcing speakers? A (JW): <i>I would value any help with positive role models for girls within the STEM and engineering sectors.</i></p> <p>The Vice Chair acknowledged that the presentation was especially timely at this LAC meeting because the priorities for CGA in 2023/24 were being discussed, and he noted that meeting The Gatsby Benchmarks had been listed as a school development objective.</p>	

2.	COMMITTEE BUSINESS	
i.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>The Vice Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting of the Chestnut Grove Local Academy Committee, with a special welcome to Emma Oliver, who joined the LAC as a new co-opted member.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were accepted as outlined above. It was noted that, although the Chair was unable to attend due to illness, and the Headteacher needed to leave early, the meeting had not been postponed because local input on strategic planning was needed in order for the Trustees to review the draft budgets.</p>	
ii.	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>When asked by the Vice Chair, all LAC members confirmed there were no conflicts of interest related to the meeting.</p>	
iii.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting and status of actions</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held 6 March 2023 were agreed by the Academy Committee as a true and accurate reflection of discussion and were put aside to be signed by the Chair on her return to health.</p> <p>The Vice Chair talked through the status of actions, and it was noted that all items had been addressed or were included in the meeting agenda, with the following comments:</p> <p><i>Action 2. To invite a teacher from a non-Maths curriculum subject to present on progress for disadvantaged pupils.</i> It has been decided to invite a Science teacher to deliver this presentation at the next LAC meeting. The Governance Professional took an <u>ACTION: to include this item on the next LAC meeting agenda for SU2.</u></p> <p><i>Action 3. To ensure a review of the SCR check.</i> It was noted that the link role holder for Safeguarding had carried out the necessary checks and circulated his report. He confirmed that there were no problems to address, and the LAC tabled no questions.</p>	LH
iv.	<p>Appointments, vacancies, and succession planning</p> <p>The Vice Chair noted that the Trust-wide recruitment drive had been successful, and final appointments had now been made for the Chestnut Grove LAC.</p>	
v.	<p>Governance training</p> <p>The LAC was reminded that the governance self-evaluation exercise had been launched. The output from the four short questionnaires will help to strengthen governance practice by planning the governance objectives for the year ahead. The LAC took an <u>ACTION: to complete the questionnaires by Wed 8 June 2023.</u></p>	All

3.	ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT – Part 2	
i.	<p>Staffing/recruitment/retention at CGA</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that he had undertaken a thorough recruitment drive, and that he was pleased to announce both that Chestnut Grove Academy was fully staffed for September, and that the staffing budget was balanced. The LAC members congratulated him on this result, especially when considering the current difficulties in teacher recruitment in London.</p> <p>The Headteacher disclosed that there were two major changes to the Senior Leadership Team: Rebecca Jackson was moving to a Trust-wide role for Safeguarding, and a new Deputy Headteacher for Behaviour Management had been recruited. The Headteacher confirmed that a range of teachers in specific subjects had been recruited in response to the increasing intake in the Lower Years and the Sixth Form at CGA.</p> <p>Questions were tabled:</p> <p>Q: Are teachers who are leaving CGA moving to local schools or are they moving for lifestyle choices? <i>A (HT): Teachers are making large lifestyle changes post-Covid – they want to live in the countryside or even a different country. I feel confident to say that teachers are not leaving because they feel they would be happier in another London school.</i></p> <p>Q: With a high number of new staff, has CGA still got an effective mix of experience in the teaching staff? <i>A (HT): I have to balance the budget, so I need to recruit a mix in levels of experience in my teaching staff. I try to balance each department: I have the most experienced staff in Maths and Science, but English probably has more less-experienced teachers because it is particularly difficult to recruit for this subject.</i></p> <p>Q: How can you mitigate the risk for teaching quality in a department with less-experienced staff? <i>A (HT): Early career teachers (ECTs) are assigned to a mentor within the department to help train, track progress, and offer support as needed.</i></p>	
ii./iii.	<p>Reflect on CGA’s strategic vision by evaluating the SIP and the SEF</p> <p>The Senior Deputy Headteacher (SDHT) prefaced the discussion by underlining that the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) was an honest appraisal of the school’s strengths and weaknesses that would be shared with Ofsted. The areas for development were then looked at more closely in the School Improvement Plan (SIP).</p> <p>The SDHT drew the LAC’s attention to page 3 of the SIP, which illustrated the Tier Model for School Improvement in Key Stages 3 to 4 in 2022–23. She explained that by examining this model from last year and updating the information, it would help to shape a list of priorities for this coming year, since many development strategies</p>	



take more than a year to plan, introduce, embed, and evaluate. The model was divided into three improvement areas:

1. High Quality Teaching

The SDHT reminded the LAC that the Maths Lead teacher had presented to the Committee in March 2023 to further explain and illustrate the new subject-specific pedagogy. The SDHT reported that this new pedagogical practice had translated into high quality teaching at CGA with the effective use of questioning to probe pupils' understanding. Successful implementation factors also included: the use of pedagogy coaches to help teachers to develop specific skills as required (e.g., effective behaviour management); and the integration of assessment into the curriculum so that progress could be tracked effectively. The SDHT reported that areas for further development were the need for: (1) a range of evidence to measure student experience; and (2) the close examination of work from disadvantaged pupils in order to establish a consistent application of knowledge and cognitive strategies.

A question was tabled, **Q: How are you resolving inconsistencies in delivering high quality teaching for all students, especially the disadvantaged and SEN groups?** *A (SDHT): The new pedagogical practice is very clearly structured, and this aids our inexperienced teachers, especially those in Key Stage 3. The new practice also tracks student progress, so struggling students can be identified and interventions put in place. But as I have outlined, CGA needs to prioritize the assessment of disadvantaged pupils' work so that we can ensure any inconsistencies in learning are resolved. As regards SEN provision, a new Deputy SENCo has been recruited to help with delivering an effective provision.*

2. Targeted Academic Support

The Headteacher reported that reading was an Ofsted focus for all secondary schools, and CGA was currently trialling a bespoke phonics programme with the Wandle Learning Trust, i.e., Little Wandle Letters & Sounds Revised. All Year 7 pupils have undertaken a phonics test so that the school can target extra reading support to those pupils with a lower reading level. In this way, CGA aimed to remove a barrier to accessing the full curriculum for all students. The SDHT also confirmed that the National Tutoring Programme would continue next year, despite the reduction in government funding. This Programme would target disadvantaged pupils, and vulnerable students impacted by Covid.

3. Wider Strategies

The SDHT reminded the LAC that she had presented to the Committee on the relaunch of the CGA Behaviour Policy in January 2023. The more defined use of corrective sanctions and detentions had been targeted at pupils exhibiting low-level disruption in the classroom. The SDHT reported that the strategy now needed reviewing to ascertain its effectiveness.



Other strategies that needed prioritising so that pupils were able to access the curriculum were reported as: (1) to relaunch the CGA Attendance Policy with the aim of achieving pre-Covid attendance levels; and (2) the delivery of an effective SEND provision.

A question was tabled, **Q: With regard to the Behaviour Policy, how can you influence pupils' behaviour in practice?** A (SDHT): *The Head Teacher set out behaviour expectations at special assemblies. Tutors then reinforced this message with specific students, as needed. All teachers now have a clear pathway to correct low-level disruptive pupils, using positive corrective language for warnings, and escalating to work-based detentions. Children need to be taught how to meet behaviour expectations, especially after the disruption of Covid.*

A member further probed, **Q: How can improved behaviour be measured?** A (SDHT): *There are qualitative measures, such as visiting the classrooms and observing how behaviour is managed, as well as by talking to students to find out their opinions. And there are also quantitative measures, such as examining data on the number of fixed-term exclusions and noting if there is a decrease.*

The Headteacher shared a flowchart with the LAC, which illustrated the structure and responsibilities of the new enlarged Senior Leadership Team for the next academic year. This prompted some follow-up questions from LAC members:

Q: Do Assistant Heads still teach? A (HT): *Yes, they teach about 50% of the time.*

Q: Do you think these structural changes will be welcomed by all staff? A (HT): *Yes – I don't think this plan is very different to the current SLT structure. I'm not expecting any objections from staff. Chestnut Grove Academy has grown significantly over the last 10 years, so this re-structure and growth of the SLT is a more effective use of resources to manage the increase in student numbers. The need for more SEND staff has been particularly apparent, and the Trust SEND Lead has been very effective at procuring government grants for these pupils. The growth of the Sixth Form provision means we are also advertising for an Assistant Head in this area. I think the creation of new leadership roles is a positive factor in staff retention.*

A LAC member further probed, **Q: Do you provide training in order to build on leadership skills for those staff who are promoted?** A (HT): *Yes, the Trust promotes professional development and supports teachers who want to undertake NPQs (National Professional Qualifications) and NPQHs (National Professional Qualifications for Headship). The Trust is also investing in RSL (an innovative vocationally relevant qualification) for the teachers in the Lower School.*

The Headteacher asked the LAC members to reflect on the SIP priorities already discussed at the meeting, and to suggest any other priorities that members felt would be beneficial for school improvement.

	<p>A Committee member proposed that the LAC should continue to track stakeholder engagement. The Headteacher noted that this academic year, stakeholder voice had been captured with the piloting of the Trust-wide staff wellbeing survey, pupil surveys which were currently being completed, and governors' attendance at parent evenings. A LAC member remembered that some discussion was had regarding improvements to the school management information system (MIS), and its standardisation across the Trust, and he questioned, Q: Is the new MIS system imminent? A (HT): Yes, we are moving to Arbor in September, and this will connect across all Trust schools with an App used for all communications. It was acknowledged by all LAC members that this was much needed in order to simplify parent communication at CGA.</p> <p><i>[The Headteacher left the meeting at 7.45.]</i></p> <p>A Committee member pointed out that the anticipated Ofsted inspection had not yet been discussed. The Governance Professional revealed that the Headteacher intended to hold a separate meeting to prepare for the Ofsted visit, but that a date had not yet been decided. She also signposted that there was a useful Trust-wide training offering 'Preparation for Inspection' on 6 June at 6pm on Teams and she encouraged LAC members to attend.</p>	
iv.	<p>Assess Link Governor Development Plans</p> <p>Due to timing restrictions and key member absences, it was decided to review this document at the next LAC meeting. The Governance Professional took an <u>ACTION: to ensure an assessment of the Link Governor Development Plans is on the agenda for the next meeting.</u></p>	LH
v.	<p>Future FLAC themes</p> <p>The Science Deep Dive had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. An update on the new roles of the Associate Assistant Headteachers is scheduled for the next meeting, and the Governance Professional took an <u>ACTION: to add this short presentation to the agenda for the next meeting.</u></p>	LH

4.	EVALUATION OF IMPACT	
i.	<p>Summary report to the Trust Board</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"> The Headteacher is to be congratulated in regard to the fact that CGA is fully recruited for the upcoming academic year, and the staffing budget is balanced. <p>Further, the Committee agreed that key priorities and areas for development for Chestnut Grove Academy and LAC members were:</p>	



DETAIL OF NEXT MEETING:

Local Academy Committee

Monday 19 June 2023 6.30–8.30pm

Signed:

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Date:

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22/6/23

Summary of Actions: CGA LAC Meeting: 22/05/23

Action No	Item No	Action	Responsible	Timescale
1.	2.iii	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To invite a teacher from the Science Department to present on progress for disadvantaged pupils. 	CK	Next meeting
2.	2.v	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To complete the governance self-evaluation exercise. 	All	By 08/06/23
3.	3.iv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the Link Governor Development Plans at the next LAC meeting. 	LH/JDB	Next meeting
4.	3.v	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To invite one of the newly appointed Associate Assistant Headteachers to present on the progress of their role. 	CK	Next meeting
5.	4.i	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare and submit the summary report to the Trust Board by 06/06/23. 	JB	By 06/06/23