

**GREAT CHESTERFORD [CoE] PRIMARY ACADEMY
 LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024**

Membership	Type	Office	Term
Andrew Farrimond	Foundation		01/09/2024
Vacancy	Foundation	Incumbent	Ex-Officio
Laura Saunders	General Member		15/06/2027
Jayne Greenwood	General Member	Chair	01/09/2024
Wazz Mughal	General Member	Vice Chair	01/09/2026
Nick Patterson	General Member		01/09/2026
Andrew Pickering	General Member		01/09/2026
Jonathan Macdonald	Parent		29/10/2027
Joe Edwards	Parent		14/05/2025
Sarah Mitchell	Co-Headteacher [Joint]		Ex-Officio
Amy Sargeant	Co-Headteacher [Joint]		Ex-Officio
Natalie Starbuck	Staff		21/02/2025
* <i>Signifies absence</i>			
Others in attendance			
Tom Bennett	Clerk		

20/24 Apologies for absence

None.

21/24 Notification of urgent AoB

None.

22/24 Declaration of business interests

No governor declared a potential conflict of interest with any items to be discussed at the meeting or that they had received or given any gifts or hospitality that could be perceived to compromise their impartiality when dealing with matters for the Academy. Nothing was declared for listing in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

MAIN BUSINESS

23/24 Risk Management

The meeting received and noted the updated risk register.

Sarah Mitchell reported the Risk Register had been reviewed by the Finance and Premises and Teaching and Learning Committees at their last meetings who had made the following changes:

Operational - Reading, writing and mathematics – The mitigating controls had been updated to record the implementation of new DfE validated phonics scheme.

Strategic - Parental / community engagement - Poor engagement with parents and community impacts upon Academy reputation – The additional mitigating controls had been updated to remove the need for additional communication during Headteacher recruitment.

Operational Risk - Staff morale - Failure to attract / retain high quality staff leading to diminished performance; change to working conditions. The risk had been updated to remove the mitigation action to provide additional support/ communication due to Headteacher recruitment provided by HT / DHT / Governors.

Action

The meeting discussed the Operational Risk – Security - and the risk to a child escaping the premises or an unauthorised person entering the premises leading to injury or reputational damage. The T&L Committee had discussed the issue of the height of the wall on the boundary of the playgrounds and School Street after comments from a parent who had asked whether it should be increased.

The meeting noted that lunchtime play in both playgrounds was supervised and monitored by school staff.

It was **agreed** to contact UDC Planning department to confirm whether there were any planning restrictions on installing a higher mesh fencing inside the wall.

AF

24/24 **The Headteacher's Report**

The meeting received and the Headteacher's Summer term report.

The following areas were discussed:

Identified Groups – Jonathan Macdonald asked why the identified groups included Year 7 children.

Amy Sargeant reported that the Pupil Premium Grant receivable was calculated in retrospect including former eligible Year 6 pupils.

The Headteacher explained that Reception 2024 was full and there was a waiting list. The meeting noted they had not as all the KS1 classes were currently at the statutory maximum of 30.

The meeting noted there were a number of families looking for mid-year school places.

The meeting noted the transition activities being undertaken to help the new children joining Reception in September to transition successfully from their pre-school settings to Reception.

Secondary Admissions – Laura Saunders questioned how families were dealing with the fact that not all children got their first choice secondary school, notably SWCHS.

Sarah Mitchell reported there was a high demand for places at SWCHS with the increasing number of new housing in Saffron Walden and a higher than normal birthrate for the year. After some initial disappointment, most families had now accepted the school places offered. Although there were additional houses in Saffron Walden, this may not have impacted the places offered in the short term.

Applications for SWCHS were based on where parents lived rather than children from "feeder" schools that happened in other counties.

Achievement and standards - Andrew Farrimond asked whether the difference in the KS1 Achievements and KS2 Achievements when compared to the previous years reflected a change in the ability profiles of each class.

Sarah Mitchell reported that the implementation of the new Phonics teaching resource had impacted positively on the current Year 1 outcomes.

Amy Sargeant reported the achievements for pupils at Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a Good Level of Development [GLD] would be lower for the current year's cohort when compared to 2022 and 2023 due to the higher number of pupils with SEND.

The results of the Year 4 Multiplication Check was higher this year but may not be so next year.

The meeting noted that being a small school, standards and achievements were measured on an individual child basis using their level of attainment and standards

when joining the school that created variations when comparing different year cohorts.

Leadership and Management - SMT Structure 2024-25 –

Jonathan Macdonald asked whether the reduction in the size of the SMT structure would have an adverse effect on the school.

Sarah Mitchell reported that the SMT was increased to support the formation of the Multi Academy Trust and an established designated Executive Headteacher Role. The SMT could now return to its former size.

Jonathan Macdonald asked who would take on the KS2 lead following the departure of the Year 5 teacher.

Sarah Mitchell reported that the SMT would take on the leadership role and it would be closely monitored.

25/24 Pupil Premium

Sarah Mitchell provided an overview of the three-year cycle of activities to children eligible for Free School Meals to meet the identified challenges in the following areas:

- To achieve and sustain improved attendance for all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils.
- To continue to meet the well-being needs of all pupils but especially disadvantaged pupils to reduce potential barriers to their learning.
- To meet Specific Educational Needs across the curriculum with a particular focus on reading, language acquisition and mathematical fluency.
- To provide opportunities to raise attainment and aspirations through greater exposure to rich life experiences.

26/24 Academy Development Plan/ Self Evaluation

a) Academy's Development Plan 2023-24

The meeting received and noted the Academy's Development Plan for 2023-24 that had been updated to reflect the activities carried out during the summer term to meet each of the five priorities in the plan.

b) Academy's Development Plan 2024-25

Amy Sargeant reported the draft principal areas for the Academy development plan for 2024-25 were as follows:

- 1) Quality of Education - Consistency and pedagogy in writing to ensure progress is at least expected for all pupils, including SEND.
- 2) Quality of Education - Consistency and pedagogy in foundation subjects (three subjects yet to be chosen - one will be MFL. Potentially DT, music or history)
- 3) Early Years - To ensure that all children are ready for the next stage of their education specifically in the personal, social and emotional development.
- 4) Behaviour and Attitudes - Ensure behaviour and attitudes are positive and contribute to long-term good academic and social success.

27/24 Management Accounts

Laura Saunders, the Chair of the F&P Committee provided an overview of the Management Accounts for the 9 months to 31 May 2024 and highlighted the following.

- The results for the 9 months to 31 May 2024 showed a deficit of £17k.
- Following a thorough review of each expenditure and income item for the remaining 3 months, the year-end outturn was now forecast to be in the region of a £4k surplus.
- The turnaround on the financial positions was due to additional unbudgeted grant income received and receivable and a reduction in budgeted expenditure.

28/24 Budget 2024-25

The meeting received and noted the draft Budget 2024-25 that showed a small £5k surplus for the year.

Laura Saunders reported this was the first year that the recently appointed MAT Finance Manager (CFO) had prepared the budget. She had reviewed each item of income and expenditure thoroughly including all contract for services the school received to ensure the school was receiving best value.

The draft budget had been reviewed in detail by the F&P Committee.

It was **agreed** to recommend the draft Budget 2024-25, to the Board of Directors for approval.

SM

29/24 Safeguarding children

The meeting received and noted the annual report from the Safeguarding governor, Andrew Pickering.

Andrew reported that having meetings each half term with the headteacher provided a planned and systematic overview of all safeguarding issues that had been invaluable.

The only current safeguarding issues currently being address were the KS1 playground and KS2 security. There were no other safeguarding issues to report.

Nick Patterson asked whether the four children listed as missing from education were from the same identified group. It was noted three children were and had moved out of the county and the other child had moved out of the country.

Amy Sargeant reported the DFE were increasing their focus on attendance and schools issuing the appropriate sanctions. The Trust would be updating its attendance policy including issuing penalties when necessary.

Andrew Farrimond noted the number of children with mental health issues seemed low when the prevalence of mental health in school was rising. He asked whether there were other measures that could be used to identify mental health issues and other ways schools could help those with them.

Amy Sargeant reported staff undertook Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) training to help identify children with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and were able to continue to fund a therapist to help individual children.

The meeting noted that the level of external support and responses received by schools in Essex was often at times inconsistent.

30/24 SEND

The meeting received and noted the annual report from the SEND governor, Jayne Greenwood.

The following points were highlighted.

- The school had a larger than normal level of children on the SEND register, some with SEMH issues.
- The school was unable to replace the private Education Psychologist (EP), that was previously employed. This has resulted on the school being dependant on support from the Essex CC Educational Psychology Service that already had a large workload.
- It had taken longer to receive approval and funding for Educational, Care and Health plans that has added pressure to the school's financial and support staff resources.
- The school often prioritised and supported children with complex needs before funding was secured.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

31/24 Chairman's action

No urgent action had been taken by the Chair or Vice-Chair on behalf of the Board since the last meeting.

32/24 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 March were approved as an accurate and true record of the meeting subject to the following amendment:

"Minute 5/24 Headteacher's Report - Performance management of staff – ~~Jonathan~~ ~~Macedonald~~ Nick Patterson asked what the general outcome had been following the staff performance management reviews."

33/24 Matters arising

Minute 15/24 – Parental Engagement

The meeting noted the working party of governors to consider the format of future governor and parent events and to devise a parent questionnaire was in the process of being set up.

No other matters arising from the previous minutes not otherwise covered on the agenda were reported.

34/24 Correspondence

The Chair reported that she had received letters from two parents who had questioned why the After School Club could not be carried out within the main school buildings.

It was noted that the After School Club was a separately operated business and moving it into the school would have an impact on the running of the clubs. The school had not be contacted directly from Kidzactive.

35/24 Minutes/reports of committees

a) Finance and Premises Committee

Laura Saunders, the F&P Committee Chair highlighted the business discussed at the last meeting including:

- Management accounts
- 2024-25 budget
- The review of all contracts and leases
- Building conditions
- Capital Expenditure including repairs to the roof
- Security
- A SAR request.

The meeting noted the windows in the listed part of the school had been replaced and had been part funded by a grant.

Andrew Farrimond provided an update on the repairs to the KS1 playground and that Eddisons had worked through the specifications prior to tender and had agreed that all the groundworks, drainage and the resurfacing of the playground should be completed as one project by the end of the year.

Tenders to implement the works had been sent out to a number of contractors.

The estimate for the works was in the region of £90K ex VAT.

AF agreed to:

- a) Confirm that availability of any S106 funding from a local residential home developer;
- b) To recommend the proposal to the Board and that it be funded from any grants S106 funding and from reserves.

Andrew Farrimond reported that the decision to separate the premises and facilities management from the financial management roles had resulted in improved knowledge, expertise and management of those areas.

b) Teaching and Learning Committee

The meeting received and noted the minutes of the last Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on the 12 June 2024.

Jayne Greenwood, the Chair of the T&L Committee, reported the committee had discussed governors' responsibilities and subject monitoring that could be improved going forward.

Governors were not always filling the Activity Log on Teams. It was proposed to set up a separate signing in book for governors when visiting to record the date of the monitoring visit and the subject or area monitored.

It was noted some governors had limited time to carry out visits, but it was generally felt that carrying out visits to monitor a subject helped governors gain an understanding in the subject there were responsible for as well as help forge strong links with teaching staff.

36/24 Governor visits

The following governor visits had been carried out since the last meeting.

- Nick Patterson – Reception/ EYFS
- Jayen Greenwood – SEND/ DT
- Andrew Pickering – World of Work/ RE
- Wazz Mughal – Maths/ Computing

- Laura Saunders – Finance/ 2024-25 Budget
- Joe Edwards –supported with Sports Day

Wazz Mughal reported he had highlighted a couple of issues when monitoring Maths that were being addressed and a proposal to set up a Parents Maths workshops to help support children not working at the expected levels

Wazz Mughal also reported he had contacted the company providing ICT support to the school that had resulted in an improvement in the level of service provided but this was still being closely monitored.

37/24 Any other business

The Chair thanked Andrew Farrimond and Laura Saunders who were standing down at the end of the academic year for their considerable time, support and expertise that had contributed to the continued success of the school.

Sarah Mitchell thanked Jayne Greenwood for both her time as a governor, taking on the Chair, supporting both her and Amy and carrying out a host of activities benefitting the school.

38/24 Date/time of future meetings

It was **agreed** to meet on the **Tuesday 24thSeptember 2024** and agree the dates for the remainder of the LGB meetings for the new Academic Year at that meeting.

All

Approved by the LGB on 24 September 2024