

**GREAT CHESTERFORD [CoE] PRIMARY ACADEMY  
 LOCAL GOVERNING BODY  
 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2024**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Term</b>
* Andrew Pickering	Foundation		01/09/2026
Vacancy	Foundation	Incumbent	Ex-Officio
John Burwood	General Member		10/09/2028
Wazz Mughal	General Member	Chair	01/09/2026
Nick Patterson	General Member		01/09/2026
* Rachel Thackray	General Member		18/09/2028
* Ros Woodcock	General Member		16/09/2028
Jonathan Macdonald	Parent		29/10/2027
Joe Edwards	Parent		14/05/2025
Sarah Mitchell	Executive Headteacher		Ex-Officio
Amy Sargeant	Headteacher		Ex-Officio
Natalie Starbuck	Staff		21/02/2025
* <i>Signifies absence</i>			
<b>Others in attendance</b>			
Tom Bennett	Clerk		

**39/24 Chair**

The meeting noted the Trust’s Board of Directors had agreed, at their meeting on 11th September 2024, to appoint Wazz Mughal as Chair of the GCPA LGB for the 2024-25.

**Action**

**40/24 Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed John Burwood to his first LGB meeting. The Chair advised the Directors has also appointed Rachel Thackray and Ros Woodcock to fill the vacancies on the LGB following the decision of three governors to stand down at the end of the last academic year.

Apologies were received and accepted from Andrew Pickering, and from Rachel Thackray and Ros Woodcock due to the short notice between the meeting date and the dates of their appointment.

**41/24 Vice-Chair**

The Clerk reported he had not received any notifications from governors that they would like to be considered for nominations as the Vice -Chair. It was **agreed** to defer the appointment of Vice-Chair until the next meeting when more governors would be present.

**Chair/  
Clerk**

**42/24 Notification of AoB**

- Breakfast Club
- Information Technology

**43/24 Notification of business interests**

- a) It was **agreed** all governors who had yet to complete and send the annual declaration of pecuniary and private interest forms to the clerk should do so within two weeks of the meeting.
- b) 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

**All**

dealing with matters for the Academy.

#### **44/24 Governance**

##### **a) LGB Membership**

The meeting noted the governors appointed by the Trust's Board of Directors at their meeting on 18th July 2024 and the subsequent appointments of John Burwood, Rachel Thackray, and Roz Woodcock. There remains one vacancy which would be filled when a new Incumbent is appointed.

##### **b) Scheme of delegation for the LGB**

The meeting received and noted the MAT's Scheme of Delegation setting out the roles and responsibilities of Board of Directors, the Executive Headteacher, the LGB and the Headteacher on the running of the school.

The meeting noted that the Trust's Articles of Association were currently being updated to bring them in line with the Academy Trust Handbook and the latest guidance on governance. It was planned to review and update the Scheme of Delegation to ensure it was aligned to the amended Articles of Association.

Nick Patterson asked whether all governors agreed with the Ethos and Mission Statement of the Trust and who had drawn up the statement.

Sarah Mitchell reported the Scheme of Delegation was based on a model drawn up by the Chelmsford Diocese Education Trust and used for all Church of England academies joining Multi Academy Trusts to ensure schools maintained their religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.

Nick Patterson asked how the delegated levels of responsibility and decision making set out in the Appendix to the Scheme of Delegation were derived from.

Sarah Mitchell reported the delegated levels of responsibility reflected the requirements set out in the Academy Trust Handbook and also the Board of Directors' decision that all individual academies and their LGBs should retain a level of autonomy and to be able to reflect their individual and community individualities.

The meeting noted the role of the Trust's Executive Headteacher was to work with and manage the Headteachers of each academy within the Trust.

##### **c) Code of Conduct for the Governing Body 2024**

The meeting received and noted the Trust's Code of Conduct for LGBs setting out the roles of the LGB and individual governors, the requirements of governors in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities and how the LGB should conduct itself in meetings and the importance of confidentiality on all the matters discussed.

The Code of Conduct was based on best practice as set out by the National Governance Association [NGA].

It was **agreed** to adopt the Code of Conduct

All

##### **d) Code of Conduct for Committees Members 2024**

The meeting received and noted the Trust's Code of Conduct for Academy Committee Members and **agreed** to adopt it.

All

##### **e) Annual Programme of Business**

The meeting received and noted the LGBs annual programme of business detailing the LGBs responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegations Appendix and the meetings when they would be dealt with.

##### **f) Membership of the Subcommittees and Governor Responsibilities 2024-25**

The meeting considered and **agreed** the proposed membership of each committee and governor responsibilities.

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Membership	Finance & Premises	Teaching & Learning	Areas of responsibility
Andrew Pickering		X	Safeguarding/ Child Protection/ Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE)/ Religious Education and Worship/ Attendance
Vacancy [Incumbent]	TBC	TBC	TBC
John Burwood	X		Financial Monitoring/ Art/ DT
Wazz Mughal	X		IT/Computing/ Maths
Nick Patterson		X	Early Years Foundation subjects/ English
Rachel Thackray	X		H&S/Building Maintenance/ Science
Ros Woodcock		X	SEND/ Pupil Premium
Joe Edwards		X	Sports Premium/ History/ Geography/ PE
Jonathan Macdonald	Chair		Contracts/MFL/Music
Sarah Mitchell			Governor visits and training
Amy Sargeant	X	X	Website
Natalie Starbuck		X	Equal Opportunities & Equality/ Governor Visits

It was **agreed** to circulate a list of subject leaders, and their school contact details to allow governors to arrange subject monitoring visits.

HT

**g) Committee Terms of Reference**

It was **agreed** to ask each committee to review its terms of reference and make any recommendations to amend them at the next meeting of the LGB.

Committee Chairs

**45/24 Policies**

**a) Trust policies for review in 2024-25**

The meeting received and noted the polies reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors and the policies delegated to the LGBs to review and approve, as necessary.

**b) Trust Polices**

The meeting received and noted the following policies that were approved by the Board of Directors at their July and September 2024 meetings.

- Admissions Policy July 2024
- Attendance Policy July 2024
- Charges and Remissions, September 2024
- Reserves Policy, September 2024
- Investment Policy, September 2024
- Whistleblowing Policy, September 2024
- Procedures for Dealing with Safeguarding Allegations Against Adults in Schools, September 2024

Johnathan Macdonald asked whether there had been any parent feedback to the changes to the Attendance Policy July 2024 and the imposition of more stringent sanctions for un-authorised absences.

Amy Sargeant felt the Academy could receive feedback from parents when letters are sent advising them of the new attendance policy and the sanction provisions. She was concerned the new policy would increase the current workload of the administration

team. She had had a virtual meeting with the Essex CC Attendance Officer to discuss attendance concerns.

Johnathan Macdonald noted that within the Trust's Charges and Remissions Policy September 2024, the price charged for school lunch had increased for the second time within a short period and asked whether there had been any feedback from parent to increase prices and were the increases due to higher food and other catering costs.

Sarah Mitchell confirmed the increase in price was due to higher food and other catering costs and the need to balance the catering budget.

**c) LGB Policies**

The meeting received and considered and the following policies:

- **Child Protection**

It was **agreed** to approve the Child Protection Policy, September 2024.

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- **Online Safety**

It was **agreed** to approve the Online Safety Policy subject to checking the new IT providers recognised their responsibilities.

HT

- **Equality Objectives**

Johnathon Macdonald asked whether governors and the leadership team were comfortable that the stated equality objectives were all encompassing.

Sarah Mitchell reported the objectives were the current ones that the school were focusing on, which may change when the policy is reviewed in four years' time.

Johnathan Macdonald asked whether the objectives covered "inclusion."

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It was **agreed** to review and report back on whether inclusion was included within the Trust's Equal Opportunities and Accessibility Policy reviewed in September 2023.

- **Fire Evacuation Procedure**

John Burwood asked whether the school was subject to "Martin's Law" whereby additional fire and lockdown regulations for hiring premises for events of 100 people and more were required.

Sarah Mitchell reported nothing had been received by schools yet.

It was **agreed** to approve the Fire Evacuation Procedure.

HT

- **Lockdown Procedure**

It was **agreed** to approve the Lockdown Procedure.

HT

- **First Aid Policy**

It was **agreed** to approve the First Aid Policy, September 2024

HT

- **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions**

It was **agreed** to approve the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, September 2024.

HT

- **Staff Code of Conduct**

Nick Patterson asked what the purpose of the Staff WhatsApp group was for.

The Headteacher reported it was set up primarily for social purposes but was also used sometimes to share important and immediate information in addition to the school's email, for example informing staff of school closures due to bad weather.

It was **agreed** to adopt the Staff Code of Conduct

HT

## **46/24 Headteacher's Report**

Amy Sargeant, the Headteacher, provided a verbal update on the start of term and highlighted the following:

### **Staff**

During the summer holiday, a one-to-one Learning Support Assistant had resigned. Recruitment had proved tricky, but someone had been appointed to fill the vacancy until the end of the autumn term 2024.

An agency teacher had been appointed to cover a member of staff leaving on maternity leave as in the summer the teacher who had been covering this role last term had informed the school, they were no longer able to continue covering the role this term.

The number of hours the Early Career Teacher required out of class had reduced as part of their structured training induction programme for their second year.

### **Admissions**

The number of pupils on roll [NOR] stood at 188 that included 30 pupils in Reception.

Home visits and parent meetings had been held as part of the transition activities to help new children joining Reception to transition successfully from their pre-school settings.

Nine children had left the school since the start of term, which included five children moving to private schools.

### **Attendance**

The attendance target for the year had been set at 97%.

### **Identified Groups**

It was noted that three children with Education and Health Care Plans [EHCPs] in Year 6 last year had left the school to move to secondary school. The school was still experiencing long delays when applying for EHCP funding that impacted on the school's finances.

### **Safeguarding and Behaviour**

All staff had received training to update them on Safeguarding. Amy had completed level 3 Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL] training, and some staff had undertaken First Aid training.

Andrew Pickering, the governor responsible for Safeguarding had visited the school for a Safeguarding meeting with the Headteacher, Amy.

### **Building and Premises**

The KS1 playground project including resurfacing had been carried out during the summer holidays. An old water pipe had broken during the works and had been temporarily fixed. The old pipe would be replaced during the Autumn Term half term holidays.

### **Events and Visits**

Pupils and parents had attended the Harvest Festival held in the Church.

The Chair thanked the Headteacher for her report and a successful start to the new academic year.

#### 47/24 Assessment

The meeting received the final assessment data for 2023-24 and noted that the outcomes for Early Year Foundation Subjects [EYFS] and pupils achieving a Good Level of Development [GLD] were lower than expected due to a number of reasons, the main one being the low levels of the children's social, emotional and listening skills when joining the school.

Extra support and monitoring were being provided to the pupils who were now in Year 1.

The meeting noted the results for Phonics Screening Checks was 90% of pupils achieving the standard compared to the National Average of 79%.

Joe Edwards asked why some children had resat the Phonics Screening Check. It was noted that pupils who did not achieve the standard in Year 1 were required to resit in the following year.

It was noted that Key Stage 1 exams were no longer statutory but were still held to allow teachers to assess the progress made by pupils since joining the school and in providing a baseline to help set individual KS2 targets and identify where extra support would be needed.

Nick Patterson asked what assessment information was provided to parents for the year groups.

The Headteacher reported parents received teachers' assessment together with how well their children did against their "effort grades."

It was noted the school was still carrying out the statutory baseline for each pupil currently in Reception.

#### 48/24 Risk Register

The meeting received the latest risk register and noted they would be reviewed and updated at the forthcoming committee meetings

The following risks on the risk register, highlighted in red, had already been updated:

- Strategic Risk – MAT Development
- Strategic Risk – Governor inspections / self-assessment
- Operational Risk - Transmissible infections
- Operational Risk – Remote Learning, the likelihood score had been reduced.

It was **agreed** to record the date when a risk was updated in the final column, rather than the review date to help users identify changes made to the risks listed.

HT

#### 49/24 School Development Plan

The meeting received and noted the detailed 2024-25 School Development Plan.

Johnathan Macdonald asked what the Senior Leadership Team were expecting to measure on the first two priorities on developing the quality of education and know when they had been successful in achieving those priorities.

The Headteacher reported success would be measured by improved and more consistent assessment outcomes across the school.

#### 50/24 School Term Dates

It was **agreed** to approve the school term dates for 2025-26 that were based on the school holidays set by Essex CC for LA maintained schools. The meeting noted the additional non-pupil days set.

HT

#### 51/24 Finance and Premises

The meeting noted the 2024-25 Budget had been approved by the Directors at their July meeting.

Johnathan Macdonald asked whether there was a budget for the Playground Project.

Sarah Mitchell reported the Directors had agreed to fund the project from the school's previous year's financial out-turn and reserves.

#### 52/24 Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024 were approved as an accurate and true record of the meeting subject to amending minute 35(a) should read "***The estimate for the works was in the region of £90K ex VAT***".

#### 53/24 Matters arising

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

#### 54/24 Safeguarding

The meeting noted no safeguarding issues had arisen since the last meeting

The meeting noted the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 and required annual training.

It was **agreed** all governors who had not already done so should complete the form confirming they had read and understood the KCSIE 2024 document and completed the Safeguarding Training, and to email it either to Sharon Dyster at the school or the Clerk.

All

#### 55/24 Governor visits

The meeting noted the following governor monitoring visits:

- Johnathan Macdonald – Modern Foreign Languages [MFL]
- Andrew Pickering –Safeguarding
- Wazz Mughal – Governance and Senior Leadership Team Support [weekly]

#### 56/24 Governor training

It was **agreed** to re-circulate details of the NGA training courses for governors.

It was **noted** that all governors needed to have completed the Safeguarding Training within three weeks of the meeting date

The Chair reported a new signing-in procedure and log had been implemented for governors attending the school.

Governors were still required to complete a visit report when carrying out a curriculum monitoring visit.

SM

#### 57/24 Any other business

- **Breakfast Club**

The meeting discussed the government's recent announcement on an initiative to offer a free breakfast club in every primary school in England and to trial it starting in the summer term 2024-25.

No information had been received from the Department for Education on how the initiative would be run and funded.

It was noted that there had been difficulties staffing a Breakfast Club in the past.

- **Information Technology**

The Chair reported HFL Education now provided support to the school for all its IT equipment and infrastructure needs. They were very proactive in resolving IT issues and visited the school fortnightly.

**58/24 Date/time of future meetings**

- Tuesday 12/11/2024
- Tuesday 18/03/2025
- Tuesday 24/06/2025

***LGB meetings to start at 18:30 hrs***

*Committees to arrange dates for meetings allowing sufficient time for the minutes to be prepared and circulated to the following LGB meetings*

**Approved by the LGB on 12 November 2024**