MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL – PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – SETTING AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF LORD GREY SCHOOL
HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2017 AT 4.30PM

PRESENT: Mrs A Tomey (in the Chair), Mr O Jaccard, Dr T Jones, Mrs K Lawrence, Ms K Opszala, and Mrs P Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs S Fahy – Clerk
Mr N Handyside – Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion)

1  APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Mrs J Austin, Ms N Baker, Ms B Reynolds, Miss J Holloway-Smith, Dr V Taylor and Mrs P Wright

Mr Clarke, CEO, Tove Learning Trust (TLT) had advised that he may not be able to attend the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest at this stage.

2  ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Ms Opzala was elected as Vice Chair until the second meeting of autumn 2018.

3  MINUTES – 11 SEPTEMBER 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2017 were agreed and would be signed as a correct record.

4  MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 School Website – Minute 3.1

Most Governors had now provided a photograph for the school website and it was hoped these could now be added.
4.2 Governing Board and Committee Membership – Minute 3.2

There were currently vacancies for three co-opted governors and one parent governor.

The Headteacher continued to advertise vacancies through the school's newsletter.

The school was on track to become an academy school in April and would reconstitute then. Any Governor that knew of any interested parties should direct them to the Chair in the first instance.

Any Governor that was interested in having an NGA login to use the membership purchased should contact Jane Kenyon at the school.

4.3 Safeguarding Training

As arranged Mr Handyside had shown up to provide Safeguarding Training, however the Governors present had already had that training so it was cancelled. The Chair asked that when Governors requested training that they attend it.

5 CHAIR’S REPORT

The following activities were noted:

Mrs Tomey had regular visits with the Headteacher and also attended Targeted Improvement Board (TIB) meetings.

There had been no suitable candidates for the Business and Estate Manager post. This had been advertised again and a better field of candidates had been attracted. Interviews would take place next week commencing 18 December.

The fire evacuation point had been moved from the NHS premises to the Astro-turf pitch as permission was never sought from the NHS to locate it there by Dean Johnson (though he had been directed to do so). The H&S Policy will be updated to reflect this change.

Mrs Tomey met with the Finance and Payroll Manager periodically and discussed campus matters including the catering provision, Astro-pitch and IT network.
The Chair continued to meet with Year 7 and Year 8 children for reading sessions which were most enjoyable.

Mrs Tomey had taken a Chair’s Action to appoint EPM to carry out TUPE arrangements.

Governors approved the Chair’s action and thanked her for the report.

6 REPORT OF THE HEADTEACHER

The Report of the Headteacher was presented in the format aligned to the operational SEF. This was normally updated every three to four weeks.

There had been a good start to the year and the school was full. Y7 had started with 269 pupils and this number now stood at 265.

Behaviour had started to slip from after the half term break and Mr Handyside had instigated a clampdown.

The appraisal process had been undertaken for all staff.

Governors noted the school events listed at page 42.

The school was tracking every year group and this data was scrutinised at TIB meetings. This data was provided at pages 20-21 and 49-59 of the pack. Governors noted that each year group was currently tracking at between 11-15% below the target pathway and the school would be working to close these percentages. Some subjects were tracking at ‘green’ however they tended to be minority subjects with small group sizes.

The school robustly challenged on reasons behind the data and areas identified as contributing factors were lack of concentration from pupils, low prior attainment and consistency of lesson cover.

Staff illness and mid-year resignations impacted on the consistency of the experience pupils received.

Governors asked why the differential appeared to be increasing.

Each cohort was different and currently the Year 10 group had the strongest profile with their target pathway tracking at 44.5% against 40.7% in Y9 and 38.8% in Y11.

Governors noted the curriculum changes planned for next year listed at page 22 of the pack; these were currently under discussion.
History and Geography were constrained subjects and could be moved from core curriculum into the free options columns along with Languages with a caveat that students must fill Basket 2.

Where students were not studying a language the school was planning on offering an extra vocational subject to the current array in Basket 3. The additional subjects were likely to be VCERT Craft and VCERT Sport. It was expected this would be a boost for lower attaining students. The school recognised that some learners were not strong on literacy and these vocational courses offered an opportunity for these students to get a qualification.

Governors felt that Languages were important on the curriculum and asked for the rationale behind the decision. Of 86% of students entered for a language only 21% were getting a C grade or above. For students that had linguistic ability there would be an opportunity to study more than one language. The school wanted the pupils to have more choice that fitted to their interests and ability.

Governors asked what happened with students currently who did not take History, Geography or Languages. Such cases were rare. The school offered Maths Mastery, English Skills and Study Support lessons as an alternative and these would be continued. Offering vocational subjects not on the DfE Approved Qualifications list gave the pupils an opportunity to gain a qualification they could put on their CV, however it did come at a cost to the school and so was used judiciously.

Mr Smith had provided an update on 6th Form including progress data for Y13. (page 23-24). The Value Added score was lower this year than last year at -0.03 (+0.16), however Mr Smith felt this might improve to -0.01 once validated data was provided.

Numbers into Y12 and Y13 were lower than desired, 135 had joined Y12 against a hoped for number of 145 but only 60 had stayed into Y13 - but were tracking solidly. Trial exams would commence in January.

Staff were currently supporting students with the UCAS process.

Head Boy and Head Girl appointments were made in both Y12 and Y13.
Mr Handyside had provided an update on Pastoral Issues (page 24-25).

Although overall attendance was slightly over 95%, Mr Handyside was working with the Heads of Houses on targeting attendance and persistence absences particularly in Y9 and Y11. Some success was being noted in Y11 and the school hoped that by targeting Y9 early they would break any habits that were forming.

Governors asked why punctuality had regressed. This was mainly morning arrival time and lateness to lessons. Mr Handyside would increase the sanction to an hour after-school detention.

A report from Simon Killen and Jo Harris was provided (pages 27-28). Their work was focused on the quality of lessons, pedagogy and tracking data. Ms Harris was also doing a cross phase project with partner primary schools.

Governors noted the report from the SENCO (page 28) and an update on Teaching and Learning (T&L) and CPD (pages 28-30).

As part of CPD, teachers were tasked with undertaking Action Research Projects; currently there were 19 underway.

There was a rolling programme of faculty reviews in place, the first faculty reviewed this year was the Wellbeing Faculty and the Creative Technologies Faculty review was currently underway.

A Careers Update was provided (pages 31-33). A part time assistant had been hired to support Michelle White.

Following the librarian being made redundant there was now a teacher in charge of the LRC and a new Scholastic reading programme had been introduced.

Governors noted the data provided for Admissions and Numbers of Roll and queried why the numbers for Y7 were different than provided earlier in the meeting. The Report was compiled over a period of time and pupil numbers could change on a daily basis. The school typically received 10-15 admissions applications on a weekly basis which were vetted for suitability. The school tended to accept pupils who were new to area and in catchment where possible but would decline applications for pupils that had very poor behavioural records at their previous schools.
Mr Johnson had provided a written update on finance and premises matters (pages 39-41). Most of the matters listed were reviewed at Resources Committee. Mr Johnson was preparing handover notes for his successor.

Governors had been surprised to receive a correspondence from the Catering Manager regarding the future of the catering provision as no firm steps had yet been agreed. The school was looking at options, one of which was outsourcing, and at what could be provided by external caterers in order to do a comparison with the current in-house provision and see which option would be most cost effective. The school had previously opted to have in-house catering as external providers were not very good, however this now seemed to have changed in the region. Mr Johnson had requested quotes from three suppliers; Cucina, Aspen and Harrisons.

Whilst the in-house provision was quite good it was impacted by significant and regular absence by a key member of the team.

If an external provider was selected staff would be TUPEd across. There were no plans to implement a change prior to academisation.

Faculties had been asked to provide their views on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Governors observed that the main concern areas were around redundancies and the curriculum. The school had a lean staffing structure and as such no redundancies were planned for as part of academisation and there would be a consultation about TUPE arrangements. The school had had confirmation from the CEO of TLT that selecting appropriate curriculum and exam boards would remain a school based decision. The Headteacher would hold a staff meeting to allay these fears.

In addition, Governors noted the following:

- A new awards system had been introduced to replace Vivo.
- There were fewer trips and visits planned, the main reasons being the closure of Longrigg and potential for terrorism.
- Trial exams for Year 11 pupils were underway. The trials scheduled for today would be rearranged because of the school being closed due to severe weather conditions.
Staffing Update

Changes to contract were set out at pages 36-38.

There were two staff due to go on maternity leave and there had been a number of resignations.

A Teacher of English was leaving at the end of term and a temporary appointment had been made to cover this post.

A resignation had been received from a Teacher of Maths for the end of term, this post had been advertised and an appointment was made.

Filling the Head of Music vacancy was proving very difficult.

A replacement for the Heal of EAL had been appointed.

A Cover Supervisor had been appointed and a further position would be recruited to.

A Student Services Administrator had been appointed.

Dr Jones was thanked for her report.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Governors had received the minutes from the following meetings:
T&L – 11 September and 13 November
Resources – 17 July and 30 October
Community – 3 July and 2 October
Policies – 18 September

It was noted that Salaries Committee had met twice and would meet again immediately after this meeting.

A decision had been referred from Resources Committee on 13 November set out at Minute 9 – Revised Budget for November. Governors were provided with the school pay-scales for 2016 and the proposed increases for 2017 document along with a comparison document from NASUWT and noted the three options in the minutes for addressing pay increases for teachers and support staff. The recommended scales were not identical in every step but were largely the same. The Headteacher cautioned that whilst the NASUWT document sounded very official it was advisory only.
Governors asked if Option 3 was affordable. The school was already finding recruitment difficult so having pay scales that were lower than the Union recommendations would make it even more difficult. Option 3 would have the least amount of carry forward but it was still a healthy balance of c.£50K.

After discussion Governors approved the recommendation from Resources Committee to adopt Option 3 which was to bring all teachers, with the exception of Leadership and Lead Practitioners, in line with Union recommendations and national pay increments for Main Scale, Unqualified Teacher Status, Upper Pay Scale and TLRs. Incremental payments for Support Staff based on appraisal would proceed. However, it was also agreed that an email dialogue for governors would be useful regarding start date for the teachers’ change and in case moving to TOVE brought up any other factors.

8 REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNOR

The Chair was not aware if Dr Taylor had managed to attend the Development Governor training session.

9 GOVERNOR VISITS

Mrs Rodriguez had carried out a Safeguarding visit and the report for this was in the pack at pages 60-61.

Mrs Tomey had provided notes from the Tove Consultation Evening with stakeholders (page 62).

10 SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION FORM AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Governors had been provided with the SIP and SEF.

Some work was still required to finish the SEF as some judgments were not filled in. Many of the judgement areas were listed as a 3 and this was largely based on the results and taking a cautious stance.

Under Effectiveness of Leadership and Management, Governors discussed the judgment for ‘Do Lord Grey leaders check the rigour and accuracy on self-evaluation and how well it leads to planning that secures continual improvement’. The Headteacher felt that whilst there was rigour and accuracy that had not yet translated into higher exam results so the judgment was in the balance
between 2 and 3 but closer to a 3.

On ‘How well do leaders and Governors engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders and agencies to support all pupils’ Governors identified that they could do more to raise their profile and suggested having a regular slot in the newsletter. Mrs Tomey was being interviewed by Y8 pupils and that would feature in the newsletter. Other Governors were encouraged to write a piece for subsequent editions.

Mrs Wright had done a piece of work elsewhere and would provide an example of this to the Chair.

Governors noted that succession planning was required for the Chair and also for the Safeguarding Governor roles.

The Headteacher invited Governors to provide input, edits or other suggestions on both the SIP and the SEF – by email.

11 ACADEMISATION UPDATE

Mr Clarke had visited the school on a couple of occasions.

The DfE’s Academy Order and supporting documentation was included in the meeting pack at pages 130-137.

The school was proceeding in expectation of converting on 1 April 2018.

The school would receive a grant of £25K to put towards legal costs and Howes Percival had been instructed to carry out this process. TLT would get a grant of £85K to assist with the support and improvement required.

TUPE arrangements would be managed by EPM.

Discussions were on-going on land transfer, due diligence, governance structure, funding and other ‘next steps’ set out at Annex A to the Order on page 132.

Governors discussed whether the school name should change once it became an academy. There was strong brand recognition for Lord Grey. The proposals were to stay as it is, change to Lord Grey Academy or simply Lord Grey. The Clerk advised that this was not a decision that could be taken at this meeting as it was required to be an agenda item for FGB. This would be added to
the next agenda. The Clerk would provide the regulations relating to a name change.

12 DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Committee structure and membership, specialist governor roles and other delegations were agreed as provided on Governorhub.

Governors agreed not to adopt standing orders as it duplicated other documents.

Those present completed the pecuniary interests update. Absent Governors were asked to ensure that they completed their pecuniary interests form without delay and return it to Jane Kenyon so that this information could be included on the school’s website.

Governors agreed to continue with the collaboration arrangement with Knowles Primary School until 1 April 2018 for the purpose of hearing and appeal committees.

Terms of reference for all committees were also reviewed and agreed as provided on Governorhub.

The financial delegation was agreed.

Governors reviewed and adopted the current NGA code of practice.

13 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN – ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNING BOARD

The Annual Report on Safeguarding had been returned to the LA.

Governors were also encouraged to attend relevant safeguarding training.

14 PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELFARE IN SCHOOLS

Following the successful conference on promoting positive mental health in schools, governing boards were encouraged to appoint a Mental Health and Wellbeing Governor and support the appointment of a designated mental health and wellbeing lead within the school’s leadership team.
It was agreed that these roles would both be filled by Becky Reynolds.

15 THE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE (CONSTITUTION AND FEDERATIONS) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2017

Governors noted the amendment to the regulations in that elected parent and staff governors could now be removed from governing boards in the same way as they could remove co-opted governors.

16 EXCLUSIONS GUIDANCE 2017

Governors noted that the revised exclusion guidance now included two annexes as a guide for headteachers and parents.

17 MODEL TEACHERS’ PAY POLICY

The annual revisions to the Schools Pay Policy for Teaching Staff reflecting changes within the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document 2017 were brought to governors’ attention and the policy was referred to the Policies Committee for consideration, personalisation and adoption.

For reference, governors also noted the current pay ranges for headteachers and that the school’s group size was Group 7.

Any queries on the Pay Policy for Teaching Staff should be directed to Declan Leith, HR Consultant on (01908) 253851.

18 REDEPLOYMENT AND REDUNDANCY POLICY

It was agreed that the amendments to the Redeployment and Redundancy Policy were referred to the Policies Committee for implementation.

19 SCHOOL TRIPS AND EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Governors noted that the guidance for off-site visits had been revised and any necessary changes to the school’s educational visits policy were referred to the Policies Committee.
SCHOOL UNIFORM

The school wanted to introduce a new school skirt once the academy conversion took place.

The main issue with uniform centred on girls wearing unsuitable variations of what was supposed to be a black knee length skirt.

Going forward the school wished to change to having a skirt that was purchased through a provider identified by the school so the myriad of style variations and quality was brought under control.

Governors were shown three potential styles, an A-line skirt, a plain black pleated skirt and a tartan pleated skirt.

The sample prices were from c.£17 for the black pleated skirt to c.£21 for the tartan skirt, however the quality was far superior to supermarket versions.

The school had identified a supplier, Maisie’s, who would be the sole stockist. Maisie’s could hold stock year round and could supply in the full range of sizes to account for physical differences.

Governors raised their concern about transparency and ensuring best value for money. In the past the school had used John Lewis’ as a supplier however their costs had been too high. The Headteacher said that lots of other schools had a sole supplier. Governors felt it would be better to have more than one supplier if possible. Post meeting note - the skirt can be ordered from Trutex as Jubilee Senior Tartan Kilt online, though parents have to register an account. The skirt is available on Amazon too.

The school would have a hardship fund to help families that either couldn’t afford the new skirt or would help with paying the differential with a supermarket bought version.

The alternative option was that girls could wear plain black trousers.

Governors opted for the tartan skirt.

TRAINING

Mrs Tomey had attended training on Governing Board Effectiveness Self Review and the slides from this were included in the pack along with the 20 Key Questions document (pages 150-
Governors were asked to read through the 20 Questions as preparation for the whole governing board reviewing them at some stage in the future.

22 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next FGB meeting would be on:

19 February 2018 at 4.30pm.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.