

GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL
Academy Trust
 Company Number 769819.
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Full Governing Board Committee Meeting
Thursday 2nd October 2025 at 3.30pm in D1



Attendees	Initials	Position	Comments
Balman, Sharon	SB	Parent Governor	Present
Beer, Emma	EB	Member Appointed	Present
Bloodworth, Andy	ABL	Headteacher	Present
Chipperfield, Caroline	CC	Parent Governor	Present
Cox, Elizabeth	ELC	Staff Governor	Present
Machin, Michael	MM	Co-opted Governor	Present
Newberry, Ian	IN	Member Appointed	Present
Wall, Lesley	LW	Co-opted Governor	Apologies
Whewell, Barry	BW	Member Appointed	Apologies
Wynne, Colin	CW	Co-opted Governor	Present
Pateman, Jo	JMP	Clerk to the Governing body	Present

Minute Reference	Minute Item	Minute	Decision
2025/26/ FGB/1	Election	<p>The board elected the chair of governors for the academic year 2025/26. SB nominated IN, seconded by CC. IN left the room, a vote was held, unanimous decision to elect IN as chair of governors.</p> <p>IN returned, the board elected the vice chair of governors for the academic year 2025/26. IN nominated EB, seconded by SB. EB left the room, a vote was held, 5 voted in favour of EB, 1 abstained. EB returned.</p>	<p>I D</p> <p>I D</p>
2025/26/ FGB/ 2	Apologies	Apologies had been received from LW and BW, these were sanctioned.	I, D
2025/26/ FGB/ 3	Conflicts of Interest	2025/26/FGB/6 – conflict of interest for ELC as a staff member. The board agreed this agenda item would be addressed last so that ELC could leave the meeting.	I, D
2025/26/ FGB/ 4	Minutes and Matters Arising	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2025 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and approved to be signed.</p> <p>Matters arising and action points from the last meeting</p>	<p>I, D</p> <p>I</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills audit – the board to address training during FGB this year i.e., highlight training for individual governors to attend and hold short training sessions at the beginning of each FGB. <p>As a follow up to this matter arising, IN reminded the board that they had received training from the School Finance Manager during the planning meeting earlier today. KLR had provided information on understanding where the money comes from and how it spent. LW will provide a safer recruitment training session at FGB in December.</p>	I
2025/26/ FGB/ 5	Committee Matters	<p>Items brought to FGB from the T&L and Resources committees</p> <p>The board ratified the election of the committee chairs for 2025/26, LW as chair of T&L and EB as chair of Resources.</p> <p>The board ratified the adoption of the ToR for the T&L and Resources committees.</p> <p>T&L – in LW’s absence, IN advised that the meeting had focused on the results and an action plan for addressing attainment this year. This will be revisited later in the meeting 2025/26/FGB/6.</p> <p>Resources – the committee voted and agreed to appoint the internal auditors for an additional 3-year extension; this decision was ratified by the board. The committee had discussed whether to buy the existing minibus or lease a new bus and a final decision will be made in December. Governors considered whether a conditions survey was required on the building and had agreed this should be completed however there was a question around initial costs suggesting £10k whereas MM had found companies offering this service for £2k to £3k. The budget forecast return had been approved for 24/25 and is showing a small surplus.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I, D</p> <p>I, D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I D</p>
2025/26/ FGB/ 7	Policies	The Safeguarding policy was not ready and will be deferred to Resources in December.	I
2025/26/ FGB/ 9	Safeguarding	<p>Vaping is high profile again; the school met with the police last week and will schedule a police visit.</p> <p>Q – is there any evidence of counterfeit illegally obtained vapes, and/or are they containing other things? There is not much evidence of illegal vapes, some pupils are bringing in more than one, which could suggest they are selling vapes. There is no evidence of vapes containing drugs however the school are passing vapes on to Operation Vaper which suggests that many vapes found in schools contain illicit substances.</p> <p>Q – what sort of illicit substances? Spice and THC.</p> <p>Q – how much time does this take up in school? Hours and it is impactful. Staff work on intel, conduct bag searches, and regularly check CCTV.</p>	<p>I Q</p> <p>Q Q</p>

		Q – which staff are undertaking this work? The pastoral staff.	Q
		Q – does that take staff away from their key duties? Absolutely yes.	Q
		The board confirmed that they had all received and read KCSiE.	D
2025/26/ FGB/8	Sustainability	JMB joined the meeting at 3.47pm and presented the Sustainability policy. A sub-committee has been formed, made up of a good mix of support staff and teaching staff. JMB will ask for parental representation too and would like to have a student committee who will become sustainability students.	I
		The Sustainability Policy and Terms of Reference for a Sustainability governor were approved and adopted.	D
		The board discussed which committee the sustainability sub-committee should report back to. There will be elements of sustainability in all governor meetings, and it was noted that MM attends all committees. It was agreed that the main reporting will be conducted at FGB and role specific duties reported on for info as required at the T&L and resources committees.	I
		Q – is there a climate action plan? This is not fully developed yet; we feel it is embedded into the curriculum quite widely but have not yet evidenced when and where it is taught. MM has already started work on monitoring water and energy usage and there are opportunities for grant funding e.g., chargers and solar panels.	Q
		Q – an initial action could be benchmarking, what we do when and how? Yes, we can benchmark against similar schools. JMB left at 4.06pm	Q
2025/26/ FGB/ 11	Staff Wellbeing	Governors had previously agreed to ask staff to complete a wellbeing survey annually in February. The survey questions had been circulated to the board to review. The deputy head suggested keeping the questions the same for February 2026 to allow a direct comparison to previous results. The board agreed. The clerk will ask the deputy head to conduct a wellbeing survey at the beginning of February and report back to FGB.	I D
2025/26/ FGB/ 10	Pupil numbers	The board reviewed forecasted pupil numbers and the implications these could hold for the school. It was noted that the figures for some of the smaller feeder schools were concerningly low and could have serious implications for these schools. However, despite a few ‘bulges’ in overall numbers, they do not appear to drop as badly as previously anticipated. Predictions over the past 10-12 years have been roughly accurate and we are confident in this pupil forecast which would suggest a difference of approximately 30 from now to 6 years’ time. The school should manage that dip financially, although we will need to plan and potentially look at classes.	I

		<p>The public buses remain a concern at the moment and the increased cost to some pupils of getting to school. We are subsidising pupils for the time being.</p> <p>Q – has the school finance manager reviewed the pupil forecast and the effect to the finances? Yes.</p> <p>Q – are those 30 pupils (less) the same age or spread across the school? Across the school so it would not be as easy as simply dropping one class in a year group.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>
2025/26/ FGB/ 13	ToR	The board approved the Terms of Reference for the Vice Chair and Safeguarding Governor	I, D
2025/26/ FGB/ 14	SoD	The board approved the Scheme of Delegation.	I, D
2025/26/ FGB/ 15	Training	This has been covered earlier today in the planning meeting, IN reiterated that there is a significant amount of training available from DES, often at low or no costs and mostly online. Please contact the clerk if you wish to undertake any training.	I
2025/26/ FGB/ 16	Governor Visits	None.	I
2025/26/ FGB/ 17	Items Through the Chair	<p>IN reported to the board that at the Members board meeting in July 2025, their focus had changed, in terms of their questioning to IN. The Members want to make sure that they are holding the governors board to account. Previously, the Members had asked about staffing, the curriculum, the wider community involvement, and finances. Recently the Members were beginning to question IN about the governor boards questioning of teaching and learning within the school and have raised a concern that as a board they are not sure the governors are drilling down enough in terms of what is going on with teaching. IN discussed this at length and the clerk has provided the T&L minutes from last year to evidence the questioning that takes place in this meeting. IN reminded the governors that they need to be mindful of questioning the school and the evidence they are presented with. IN and the clerk will work on managing action points and ensuring that items are revisited appropriately to ensure progress. The clerk will circulate the Q cards at each meeting.</p> <p>The Head informed the board of an incident the previous day which had resulted in him evoking the Managing Unreasonable Behaviour Policy and banning a parent from the school site. The board discussed the unfortunate increase in the number of unpleasant emails, letters and calls from parents and agreed that this would not be tolerated.</p> <p>ELC left at 4.39pm.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p>

2025/26/ FGB/6 and 12	Results and SIP	<p>ABL shared the outcomes and aspirations strategy 2025 with the board.</p> <p>A key aspect will be parental engagement; some parents do not understand the importance of parental engagement and are actively pushing back against the school.</p> <p>Q – how are you assessing the impact of the action points within the strategy? It is hard to measure the impact of some of these items e.g., parental engagement. The school could do a parental survey afterwards, perhaps towards the end of year 11, it could be a challenging questionnaire, but it will only be the parental voice that will inform us if this has improved. Results could go up but we simply will not know if this is due to improved parental engagement, other areas, or a combination of things.</p> <p>Reports – we will return to sending paper reports home by post, this will have a cost implication, but we need to address the issue of pupils and parents simply not knowing their targets, which has become evident during parent evenings. We know a lot of pupils put their reports in their bags and that is where they stay.</p> <p>We will hold an additional year 11 parents evening and will target those hard-to-reach parents first.</p> <p>Whilst too late for this year, we may need to use the disaggregated time from the 1265 for teachers to have time to contact parents.</p> <p>Positive praise strategy – this has been lost a little in recent years; we will return to year group reward assemblies so that all pupils are invited and can witness other pupils receiving award and aspire to achieve.</p> <p>E&I and intervention – currently 22% are not accessing intervention, we will work to reduce this as much as we can before Christmas with an aim that after Christmas, all will be in intervention.</p> <p>Mark schemes – SLT will work with MLT and introduce a plan for the expectations of middle leaders moving forward. Part of that is understanding what they need to be focusing on.</p> <p>We will hold academic health check weeks i.e., attendance, attendance at revision and contacting parents etc.</p> <p>Q – how often will that be? Once a month.</p> <p>Q – how much extra work will this mean for the staff? I would suggest there will be more work, it may be different work, things will be different for staff.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>
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	<p>Q – are you passing things onto staff? There will be higher expectations on staff, yes. This is a three-way strand, we need the engagement of staff, pupils, and parents.</p> <p>Exam reviews - we can identify where progress is not being made, or the data is inaccurate. As a staff body we have not responded to pupils not making the progress they need to. Assessment for learning, teachers should be able to teach and identify children not meeting their targets. We may return to having grades back on books and packets.</p> <p>Revision uptake was very low this year, equally we feel our revision offer was poor. Revision needs to be more structured so that pupils can attend all their subject areas. We hope to offer regular revision sessions over a week A and a week B. As an example, week A Monday to Wednesday will be English, Maths and Science and Week B will be option subjects so that pupils are not sacrificing one subject to attend another.</p> <p>We will introduce lunchtime revision, not to replace after school revision but to supplement it. We want to support and celebrate pupils attending revision and will work to offer discounts from the prom ticket based on attendance at revision i.e., the higher the attendance, the bigger the discount.</p> <p>FFT needs fine tuning.</p> <p>Accountability of evidence in PDPM, staff know we will request evidence. We may not see exactly what we want this year and may give warnings but by next year staff need to improve and governors must be prepared from some capability proceedings.</p> <p>PDPM targets and numerical targets are quite frowned upon however we need performance related pay in some guise. Do we have a numerical target? We previously stopped these as we were reaching a point where it was difficult for staff to improve however given the recent results this may need to be revisited.</p> <p>Homework – we need to ensure this is not arbitrary, that it is set, monitored and relevant.</p> <p>We will have a countdown clock i.e., days left to GCSEs, data on office walls so that all staff know pupil targets and progress.</p> <p>Leaving arrangements - we had planned a date but have cancelled this. We need a better structured close to the year, with pupils following an exam programme but that will come with a cost.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
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2025/26/ FGB/ 18	Final Point	<p>What is the impact of this meeting on outcomes for pupils in the school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board had reviewed the immediate actions identified by the school to address attainment in Year 11 and the long-term plan for year 10s and KS3. • The board have approved a sustainability policy and the appointment of a sustainability sub-committee who will now work on the action plan for the school. • The board have discussed staff wellbeing and approved a survey to be shared with staff early in the New Year. • The board have reviewed forecasted pupil numbers and financial planning. 	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2025/26/ FGB/19	Dates	<p>T&L 27th November 2025</p> <p>Resources 4th December 2025</p> <p>FGB 11th December 2025</p>	<p>I</p>

The meeting finished at 5.55pm