

GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL
Academy Trust
 Company Number 769819.
 A Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England
Full Governing Board Committee Meeting
Thursday 3rd October 2024 at 3.30pm in E5



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
Machin, Michael	MM	Co-opted Governor	Present
Newberry, Ian	IN	Member Appointed	Present
Smith, Doug	DS	Co-opted Governor	Present
Wall, Lesley	LW	Co-opted Governor	Present
Whewell, Barry	BW	Member Appointed	Apologies
Wynne, Colin	CW	Co-opted Governor	Present
Pateman, Jo	JMP	Clerk to the Governing body	Present

MINUTES

Agenda Reference	Item	Minutes	Decision/ Action
2024/25/ FGB/ 1	Forms	Governors signed the Governor Code of Conduct 2024/25 Governors signed AUP's for the academic year 2024/25 Outstanding declaration of business interests were signed for the year.	I I I
2024/25/ FGB/ 2	Apologies	Apologies had been received prior to the meeting from BW, these were sanctioned.	I, D
2024/25/ FGB/ 3	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts of interest were declared.	I
2024/25/ FGB/ 4	Elections	The clerk conducted the election of the Chair of Governors. Prior to the meeting DS had proposed IN, this was seconded by LW. IN reminded the board that it is recommended for a Chair to serve no longer than 6 years, and that he had	I

		<p>exceeded this time, but he was happy to stand again. IN left whilst the board discussed. The board took a vote, 6 were in favour and 1 abstained. IN returned to the meeting.</p> <p>IN conducted the election of the Vice Chair of Governors. DS had proposed LW but LW had withdrawn, as she felt the Vice Chair should ideally be someone aspiring to become Chair. LW proposed EB, this was seconded by IN. EB left the room. The governors discussed and took a vote. 6 were in favour and 1 abstained. EB returned to the meeting.</p> <p>IN formally elected as Chair of Governors for the academic year 2024/25. EB formally elected as Vice Chair of Governors for the academic year 2024/25.</p>	<p>D</p> <p>D</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 5	Committee Elections	<p>Governors voted and elected chairs of the committees for the academic year 2024/25.</p> <p>LW elected as chair of T&L EB elected as chair of Resources</p>	<p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 6	Governor Roles	<p>Governors reviewed the current list of governor responsibilities. With exception of the changes to vice chair and chair of resources, all other responsibilities were agreed to remain the same for the year 2024/25.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>D</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 7	Governor Board	<p>The board reviewed the makeup of the board and current vacancies as follows: Vacancies = 6 (1 member appointed, 3 parent and 2 staff). The clerk had emailed all staff in July to advertise the staff governor vacancies, with no response. It was agreed to send another email to all staff along with an invitation to attend an open meeting. The clerk will contact all parents via parent mail, to advise of current parent governor vacancies and confirm with EB once this has been actioned.</p> <p>Governors reviewed those nearing the end of their term of office, DS May 2025, CW Jan 2026 and EB Sept 2026.</p> <p>The board discussed gaps in skills, EB was tasked as Vice Chair with conducting a skills audit, the clerk will liaise with EB.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I, D</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 8	ToR	<p>Governors considered terms of reference for the academic year 2024/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L Committee – add complaints policy, also ratified at FGB. Add ECT policy and remove covid related funding. • Resources Committee – check policies on the ToR – send to EB to check again – managing unreasonable behaviour policy to go to FGB as should be discussed by full board • Safeguarding Governor – approved. • Finance Governor – approved. • Vice Chair – approved. 	
2024/25/ FGB/ 9	SoD	<p>Governors reviewed the Scheme of Delegation for the academic year 2024/25.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p>

		<p>Q – what does ‘A’ stand for? A is where work needs to be done by that committee, but they are not necessarily making the decisions and the arrows shows the direction of advice and support. As an example, the Governance Professional is responsible for the election process of parent governors but the FGB decide when to hold an election process and ultimately vote new parent governors onto the board.</p> <p>The Scheme of Delegation 2024/25 was approved by the board.</p>	D
2024/25/ FGB/ 10	Budget	<p>Governors to ratify approval of the budget from the Resources Committee, noting pupil numbers, inflation rates and pay rise assumptions. This agenda item had been correctly covered in the FGB summer meetings but had not been removed from the agenda.</p>	I
2024/25/ FGB/ 11	Minutes and Matters Arising	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2024 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and approved to be signed.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>Roof – the board are still unable to make a decision on the roofing as no quotes have been provided. There will be an extraordinary meeting on 21st November to discuss the roof quotes and make a decision on the CIF contribution.</p> <p>Staff wellbeing – deputy head tasked to create a survey by Christmas, EB and CC to check for bias.</p>	<p>I, D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 12	Committee Matters	<p>Items brought to FGB from the T&L and Resources committees</p> <p>T&L – ECT policy had been approved by the committee, this was ratified by the full board.</p> <p>IN noted that the exam results were discussed at length during T&L, unfortunately only 3 governors were present.</p> <p>Q – it did not appear that there was much digging into the data and why the subjects had fallen, should the board be concerned for this year and what plans are in place? Exam review meetings are happening at department level now. In summary, where children sat all of their exams they performed in line with their targets, overall KPIs are low but this was a low cohort. What has hit P8 are those pupils not doing a full suite of GCSE exams. This is work for the school i.e., how to keep pupils and parents from opting out. The current year 11 already have a number who are not likely to sit all 8 GCSEs. The school have gone back through last year and reasons given for year 11s dropping subjects, there were potentially 1 or 2 cases where the outcome was weak, in most cases there was genuinely nothing the school could have done, and/or it was the right decision. P 8 is now -0.08, it is creeping up as remarks come back. Updated figures will be presented at the next T&L along with feedback from the exam reviews and action points for the coming year. However, the school and board recognise that the results were disappointing.</p> <p>Q – there is a legal requirement to send a child to school, is there a legal requirement to pick and choose which subjects that child sits? No, the only subjects which pupils can opt out of are RE and Sex and Relationships. However, we are</p>	<p>I, D</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>

		<p>experiencing pupils demanding that their child does attend a certain subject, they inform us that they will collect their child from reception and that we cannot stop them. We cannot allow pupils and parent to pick and choose, this is affecting our figures however the LA agreed recently to one child reducing their timetable. There is little we can do, parents will contact GPs stating mental health and anxiety, GPs will agree and contact the school advising that children should be withdrawn.</p> <p>The board discussed, there was also an argument that a pupil obtaining 6 strong GCSEs is better than 8 poor marks, as over stretched. There is also an issue with where pupils go if they are opting out, the school does not have the room or resources and must provide an alternative option.</p> <p>Q – is there a particular age this tends to start? It can start in year 7 and continue through the school, some parents do not have the frameworks to work with their children. This can lead to a snowball effect, if 1 child withdraws from a subject others want to follow.</p> <p>The board continued to discuss parental contact and in particular, staff beginning to feel vulnerable. The board agreed that ABL would identify parents to contact via letter and that the letter would also be signed by the board. This was agreed as a better course of action than sending a letter to all. It was acknowledged that this could result in an increase in complaints but the board agreed that action needed to be taken to safeguard the wellbeing of staff.</p> <p>The board agreed that at no level are abusive emails, phone calls or meetings appropriate and that the school must be consistent.</p> <p>Q – how do other schools manage these type of parents? Everyone is recognising the same pattern of problems across schools in Devon, potentially nationally too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour policy will be presented at T&L 28.11.24 • MM, CC and SB who were not present, or do not attend the Resources committee confirmed that they had received and read the Academies Financial Handbook emailed by the clerk to all on 30.08.24. • There had been a lengthy discussion about the roofs and CIF bids at resources, the school are still trying to obtain quotes and an extraordinary meeting has been called on 21.11.24 to review quotes and agree the percentage the school will allocate towards the CIF bid. • Agreed internal audit schedule for next 12 months and discussed at length the audit. Talked through issues identified and agreed way forward. • Sustainability – agreed MM to speak with JMB in the first instance although he will require a whole school response, important as a school we take action to put together a climate action plan. CC advised that Martin Slocombe of 	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I I, D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
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		361 energy works with students on sustainability and MM advised that there could be funding available. Agreed MM to speak with JMB first to understand the scope of what is going to happen can then identify staffing and the impact on workforce. JSR advised that sustainability is included in the curriculum and that MLT can be approached for feedback on how, when and where this is covered in the curriculum. It was agreed that the board will require subcommittee for sustainability.	D
2024// FGB/ 13	Policies	8 – Complaints Policy – no amendments, still the most recent version – adopted. 35 – Redundancy – <i>HR1 model policy, amendment B9 and V.1 added to ensure compliance with Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Act 2023. Extending rights to priority status for suitable alternative employment for employees on maternity, adoption or shared parental leave - adopted.</i>	I, D I, D
2024/25/ FGB/ 14	Safeguarding	The board confirmed receipt of the DfE KCSIE 2024 document (emailed by the Clerk 23.09.24) and that this had been read. Level 2 CP training was held on the INSET day with staff, governors, coaches, invigilators and peri teachers attending. The delivery of the training was felt to be excellent. Other than that, staff are still picking up issues from the summer holidays. ABL advised that he had been away from emails for several days over the holiday and when catching up with CPOMS he had recognised how large the body of work across the school that goes into this is now. There are numerous staff working with a large number of pupils, agencies and parents. This made ABL reflect on other people’s workload and how everything has scaled up. The committee discussed what safeguarding data they required from the DSLs. As agreed at the last FGB meeting, the DSLs will be asked to compile a report and NMM will present this to FGB each term. A safeguarding report exemplar was located on the Devon Education Services website, which the clerk will share with the DSLs.	I, D I I
2024/25/ FGB/ 18	Governor visits	No recent visits to report.	I
2024/25/ FGB/19	Items through the chair	Governance review – the previous review was in May 2023, governors discussed and noted that recommendation from the Governance Handbook is to hold a review every 3 years. It was agreed to schedule a review in 2025/26. The clerk will add to the final FGB agenda next year as a reminder to agree which term and book.	I D
2024/25/ FGB/ 15	SIP	ABL presented the SIP, governors discussed and agreed monitoring responsibilities. ABL advised that the outcomes were as they stood at the time of printing, they are still moving but provide a good idea of the results.	I I

		<p>FFT is starting to show progress as 0.08, last year FFT was released very early and was wildly inaccurate. FFT have delayed their release this year and it will cover all schools, therefore being more accurate.</p> <p>Q – rank, is this against all schools or a selection? All schools.</p> <p>The board discussed remarks, currently 40 to 45% success rate.</p> <p>SIP discussed in further detail – Teaching, inclusion through high quality teaching – if teaching is inclusive hopefully less children in corridors. Teach like a champion will continue, coaching will continue. Will now also work with MLT to drive the SIP, started training, more meetings, more briefings, higher expectations of MLT.</p> <p>Targets in academic sport – around access to learning, looking at alternative provision. Ensure pathways are correct within the curriculum. Ensuring curriculum offer is wide and developed and our children have meaningful qualifications that they want to do.</p> <p>Behaviour and attendance – GTS have started a 2-year journey with Paul Dix <i>When adults change everybody changes</i> adopting his mantra within the GTS way of <i>Ready, Respectful, Safe</i>. The behaviour policy will not change but will be focus on Ready, Respectful, Safe.</p> <p>Engaging pupils and parents around behaviour and attendance – we need to get parents on board.</p> <p>Facilities agenda will remain, some work around building resilience through challenge. We are very good at supporting but are we providing pupils with the correct tools to become independent?</p> <p>Q – DDI? Data driven instruction, we are developing is an assessment protocol, staff are assessing at key times of the year, will spend time as a department analysing assessments, identify which topics have been taught poorly, develop practice and then reteach collaboratively.</p> <p>MLT and QA need more accountability and more challenge.</p> <p>We will look at lesson length.</p> <p>Q – people taking the strategic lead on SLT, is there a fair split of labour? Fair spread, some are easier topics to deal with than others. Some areas are also linked with other staff.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p>
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2024/25/ FGB/ 16	Parents	Discussed under agenda number 2024/25/FGB/12 Committee Matters.	I
2024/25/ FGB/ 17	Training	<p>Training opportunities are regularly circulated by the Clerk, the board were reminded that many of these are free and to contact the Clerk to book. The board noted that all governors should have a basic knowledge of finance and encouraged to attend finance training. IN also encouraged as many governors as possible to attend discipline committee training due to the increase in permanent exclusions. In addition, Ofsted will question governors on Prevent and the board were encouraged to attend Prevent training, dates to be circulated by the Clerk.</p> <p>It was agreed that training attended should be shared with the board via a brief training feedback agenda item at the start of meetings.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 19	Items Through the Chair	ABL requested approval to advertise an internal post for a Transition Lead to lead and manage the transition process. This is currently undertaken by two of the Assistant Heads. The proposal is to pay as a TLR3 at £1800. Governors agreed.	<p>I</p> <p>D</p>

	<p>ABL discussed plans to advertise for an on-call/ behaviour room staff member to support behaviour challenges, term time only potentially D or E grade. The school need to respond to ongoing behaviour concerns and are currently investigating various processes and different behaviour support plans. The money is not in the budget but the finance manager has acknowledged the need for this type of post.</p> <p>Q – can you afford not to? Probably not.</p> <p>Q – what would this position do on a day-to-day basis? This is still to be determined, potentially to man the isolation room.</p> <p>Q – what type of staff? Support staff. Will need significant skills. A similar model in a lot of schools is a ‘reflection room.’ We need to unpick this further i.e., will pupils sit in silence or will this be more of a restorative type of room.</p> <p>Q – you are asking for authority to potentially recruit someone up to £32k? Yes.</p> <p>Q – what about pupils roaming the corridors? SLT and pupil coaches currently deal with this.</p> <p>Q – but they are still roaming the corridors? We cannot physically drag them into a classroom.</p> <p>Q – what would this role actually do? This is still to be finalised, the school is requesting permission to do a piece of work to figure out what to do, but there is no point doing the work if the board are going to refuse the expenditure.</p> <p>IN – do we allow that increase in an already over stretched budget to allow that strategic operational thought process to go ahead or should the board decide that the budget cannot afford it? The board keep asking questions around behaviour, perhaps we now need to take action to allow the school to tackle behaviour.</p> <p>Q – have other schools done similar things and has it had an impact? Yes, however impact varies.</p> <p>Q – why would it have an impact here? Because we want to do it properly.</p> <p>Q – you are confident you can do that? I am confident we will do that.</p> <p>Q – what is isolation? This is used for internal exclusions, internal isolating rather than sending a pupil home. This is another layer in a tiered process. We know that many pupils like being sent home. We would need this new role to be</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>
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		<p>carefully structured and planned and help us deal with behaviour. As an example, internal truanting, if a pupil is over 5 minutes late to a lesson they are sent to isolation. If they refused to go they are excluded.</p> <p>Q – SLT would presumable gain back time from such an innovative? Yes, they would gain back time to spend on strategic work.</p> <p>The board agreed that SLT should investigate further and were in agreement to financing an additional role.</p> <p>The meeting moved to Part 2 to discuss a request from a member of staff.</p> <p>ABL left at 6pm.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 20	Parental Engagement and fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental engagement • Fundraising for roof repairs <p>Unfortunately, the board had run out of time to discuss these items. All governors were asked to submit ideas and suggestions prior to the next FGB, when this will be discussed again. CC agreed to create a shared idea/brain storm file/document and circulate to the board.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>D</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 21	Final Point	<p>What is the impact of this meeting on outcomes for pupils in the school?</p> <p>A clear strategic direction for the school supported by the governors and monitored via the SIP. The board have addressed key challenges surrounding behaviour.</p>	<p>D</p>
2024/25/ FGB/ 22	Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L 28th November 2024 • Resources 5th December 2024 • FGB 12th December 2024 	<p>I</p>

The meeting finished at 6pm

Agenda Reference	Agenda Item	Action Required	By Whom/ When
2024/25/FGB/4	Election	Clerk to identify training for the Vice Chair e.g., NGA aspiring Chair training.	Clerk 24.10.24

2024/25/FGB/6	Roles	Clerk to update Governor responsibilities on the website due to the change in Vice Chair and Chair of Resources.	Clerk 24.10.24
2024/25/FGB/7	Makeup of the Board	Clerk to email staff re: staff governor vacancies Clerk to email parents via parent mail inviting nominations for parent governors	Clerk 24.10.24
2024/25/FGB/7	Makeup of the Board	Clerk to provide EB with a skills audit, with a view to circulating to the board and collating responses to identify skill gaps	Clerk 24.10.24
2024/25/FGB/11	Matters Arising	Clerk to remind JSR that a wellbeing survey should be forwarded to EB and CC for checking before circulating to staff.	Clerk 24.10.24
2024/25/FGB/20	Parental Engagement and Fundraising	CC to create a shared idea/brainstorm file/document and share with the board. All governors to add ideas and suggestions regarding parental engagement and potential fundraising for roofs (or other areas of the school) ready to discuss in detail at FGB on December.	All 12.12.24