

GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

Academy Trust

Company Number 769819.

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Committee members are invited to attend the

Full Governing Board Committee Meeting

Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 9.15am via Microsoft Teams

Attendees	Initials	Position	Comments
Newberry, Ian	IN	Member Appointed (Committee Chair and Chair of Governors)	Present
Smith, Doug	DS	Co-opted Governor	Present
Bloodworth, Andy	ABL	Headteacher	Present
Higgs, Rachel	RHI	Staff Governor	Present
Anstee, Sarah	SJA	Staff Governor	Present
Meardon, Lucy	LM	Parent Governor	Present
Meeson, Sam	SM	Member Appointed Governor (Joint Vice Chair of Governors)	Present
Hemsworth, Robert	RH	Parent Governor	Present
Wall, Lesley	LW	Co-opted Governor (Joint Vice Chair of Governors)	Present
Turnwell, Michael	MT	Parent Governor	Present
Major, David	DM	Parent Governor	Apologies
Stevens, Jo-Anne	JAS	Parent Governor	Present
Pateman, Jo	JMP	Clerk to the Governing body	Present

MINUTES

2020-21/ FGB/1	Apologies	Apologies were received and sanctioned from DM.	I, D
2020-21/ FGB/2	Conflicts of Interest	None.	I
2020-21/ FGB/3	Election	LW nominated IN, seconded by LM, all voted and agreed. IN elected as Chair of Governors for the academic year 2020-21.	I, D

2020-21/ FGB/4	Governor roles	<p>Committee chairs – LW and DS had been elected as committee chairs of T&L and Resources at the meetings last week. These decisions were ratified by all.</p> <p>Due to recent governor resignations and the removal of the faculty structure, there were various vacancies which were discussed at length. The following appointments were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LW – SEN, link governor for Geography and History, Pay Committee, HT Appraisal, Executive management committee. • SM – PP, CIC, link governor for English, Maths and Science. • JAS – link governor for PSHE and Music. • DS – Executive management committee, link governor for Drama and Art. • RH – link governor for MFL and ICT, HT appraisal, Executive Management Committee. • LM – link governor for PE and Outdoor. • MT – link governor for Design and Catering. <p>Action – clerk to contact relevant staff introducing their link governors and governors to make initial contact regarding a first meeting.</p> <p>Action – clerk to arrange HT appraisal training for RH and LW.</p> <p>Vice Chair – governors discussed and agreed that SM and LW would become joint vice chairs. IN requested both attend chair training, Clerk to action. A full list of the governing body and their roles are attached to these minutes.</p>	<p>I, D</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>D</p> <p>A, I</p>
2020-21/ FGB/5	Minutes and Matters Arising	<p>Budget – this has been reconciled again showing a surplus of £103k, followed by accounting adjustments changed to £154k. The toilets have now been paid from last year's budget and our surplus is therefore £80k lower.</p> <p>Q – are parent evenings still currently suspended? Yes, year 11 should have been yesterday but was stood down. Teaching staff have been asked to communicate with all year 11 parents by email by the end of the week. This is going well and feedback has been positive. Parent evening cannot go ahead until the guidance from government has changed.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed and accepted as a true reflection of the meeting.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I, D</p>
2020-21/ FGB/6	Committee Matters	<p>T&L – nothing specific although the committee wished to pass on their thanks to all staff for their hard work over recent months.</p> <p>Q – as discussed in T&L, have we changed exam board for English? Yes, just for one exam we have switched to Edexcel.</p> <p>Resources – again the committee wished to thank all staff for their work during this difficult time. The committee are very aware that we have been running at a deficit budget and that money needs to be spent on something positive within the school. ABL has requested the approval to purchase canopies i.e. covered areas outside which could be used during break times, but also as outside teaching areas. This has been needed for some time but even more so since Covid. The committee had agreed to recommend that ABL be given approval to spend £100k on canopies. FGB discussed and agreed to ratify this decision.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p>

		Resources – although there is an agenda item for ‘budget’ on FGB today, this is no longer needed. KR had originally advised that a new budget would need to be agreed, whereas in fact she only needed to advise governors that the budget has changed following the cost of the toilets being paid from last year’s budget, as previously mentioned under ‘minutes and matters arising’.	I
2020-21/ FGB/8	COVID-19 update	<p>ABL has provided updates to both the T&L and Resources committees, details of which are contained in the relevant minutes. The school are currently creating roadmaps back to some form of normality. Some areas will be able to move quicker than others. KS3 have been kept in teaching bubbles and this has affected other aspects of school life. Speaking with other schools, PHE appear to be sending whole year groups home when positive cases are identified. GTS are therefore questioning whether we need to keep KS3 in class bubbles, as being able to keep KS3 in year group bubbles, would allow greater flexibility with other areas e.g. reinstating tutor period. ABL has tried to contact both the DfE and PHE for advice but has been unable to get anywhere, other than having the current guidance read back to him.</p> <p>The weather is having a negative impact on all measures currently in place and this has highlighted how essential covered outside areas are if we are to continue with Covid measures throughout the winter.</p> <p>GTS still has no positive cases, we do have a member of test currently awaiting test results but all pupils and staff tested since our return in September, have been negative.</p> <p>Q – where is the school with the potential for online learning if whole year groups, or even the school is sent home? We have contacted all parents with an IT survey so that we have a detailed access plan of which children will require equipment in the event of year groups being sent home. We are currently looking at changing platforms to Office 365. We have asked teaching staff to prepare for a 2 week transition period i.e. if year groups were asked to work from home, they could continue to learn in the same way. Staff due to teach a particular year group, would be asked to be available to them via email, at the usual time they should have taught them. We have also added 2 weeks’ worth of work and guidance to the school website which children and parents can access without having to contact staff direct. We were expected to set work for pupils off with Covid, however if pupils were asked to stay home by ABL e.g. with a cough, there is not expectation for work to be set. We realise this will cause pupils to fall further behind and it has therefore been addressed.</p> <p>Q – in the event of a full lockdown, what would be expected of staff i.e. what about those staff who may have young children at home too? There are so many different possible scenarios, it is difficult to prepare for all. ABL does not believe there will be a country wide lockdown again. If our school were on lockdown, it may be that a teacher with young children is still able to send their children to school. Worse case, they would be asked to be available perhaps at the beginning and end of their usual lesson time, or even at an allocated time later in the day.</p> <p>Q – the new heating system has been installed, is it now working? This will be commissioned tomorrow, however we are slightly concerned as only 1 boiler appears to be working at the moment. This may be a simple fix but we won’t know until the heating engineers are back in. We have asked staff to use their common sense with regards to ventilation, doors and windows being open and allowing children to wear jumpers/coats if necessary. We will shortly be heating the world with the heating on but windows open due to Covid. Our heating bills could be expensive!</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>

2020-21/ FGB/9	Housekeeping	The Governor Code of Conduct, Declaration of Business Interests and AUPs have been circulated to all, please complete, sign and return to the clerk ASAP.	I, A
		Terms of Reference – these were discussed. SM is member appointed, this should be amended on T&L ToR, all others were agreed. Clerk to send to relevant governors/ committee chairs to sign.	I, D A
		IN reminded the governing body that when presenting information and reports to committees, school staff are requested to submit all supporting documents 2 weeks prior any meeting to allow governors time to read everything. Please would all governors ensure that they have read all documents provided and forward any questions to the clerk 1 week prior to the relevant meeting. The governing body is not trying to catch staff out, we are simply asking questions to clarify points and ensure we gain the correct information.	I
		Visits to school – although not relevant at this time, please could all governors record any visits they make to the school and/or individual departments. These should be forwarded to the clerk and feedback provided to governors at the next FGB.	I
		Contact with staff – when contacting school staff, please be mindful of working hours and ensure contact is reasonable i.e. not a long string of ‘back and forth’ emails.	I
		Q – should link governors arrange virtual meetings with staff or can these meetings be face to face? DfE guidance is to avoid any unnecessary contact with people coming into school. However if governors feel that they want to arrange a meeting with a member of staff in school and that member of staff is happy to meet face to face that is fine. This needs to be on an individual basis and please be aware of staff to as there are different levels of anxieties etc.	Q
		Returning to normal meetings – IN suggested remaining with virtual meetings until at least Christmas, after which time this can be discussed again. Q – are governors able to have more access to school information e.g. schemes of work? Governors already have access to the T drive, although some do experience difficulties in using this. Once we move to Office 365, it should be easier to access information. Please contact the clerk if there is anything in particular you need to access. Action – the clerk to arrange IT training for governors on how to use Teams whilst viewing files etc. HVW joined at 10.30am.	I Q A, I
2020-21/ FGB/10	Policies	HVW presented the SEN Policy which had been circulated to all governors prior to the meeting. There are no major changes, other than one statement which states that ‘no child will be refused....’ Which has been amended to ‘no child will be refused if reasonable adjustment can be made...’ Q – the policy mention differentiation several times. During T&L last week, JS advised that as a school, we are moving away from the word ‘differentiation’ and using ‘scaffolding’ instead. Is it possible to ensure this policy aligns with the T&L policy? HVW agreed to work with JS and ensure that the SEN policy is consistent with the T&L policy. The governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy on the understanding that HVW would make the amendments as listed above.	I Q D

		Q – has lockdown affected the mental health and wellbeing of our vulnerable pupils? We were anticipating far more children needing a phased re-entry to school, whereas in fact we had 4, which isn't uncommon in a normal year. Measures in place due to Covid, do mean that we don't have the footfall in the Hardy Centre we would usually have, so perhaps some pupils are dealing with things on their own.	Q
		Q – do you have any idea when pupils will be able to access the Hardy Centre as they usually would? Yes, this would be phase 4. We do have other measures in place, year groups have specific drop ins and the pupil coaches are running a drop in session too. If we move away from class bubbles in KS3, this would again aid with opening up access to the Hardy Centre. Ironically, this may help our children to be more resilient! We are so ready to respond to issues, are we in fact providing too much of a crutch for some people? However, as discussed in Resources with DA, there are definitely more safeguarding issues at home and there will 'come out of the woodwork' and present in school as we move forward. HVW left at 10.41am.	Q
		Safeguarding Policy – this has been approved by Resources and was presented for ratification by FGB. Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy.	I, D
		Finance Policy – this has been approved by Resources and was presented for ratification by FGB. Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy.	I, D
		Complaints Policy – ABL has completely re-written this policy bringing together the guidance for parents and guidance for schools into one document. Governors noted that the policy was clear and well written. Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy.	I, D
2020-21/ FGB/9	Housekeeping	Governors discussed the vacancies currently on the board and highlighted the need for finance experience, as LM's term of office will shortly come to an end. Governors discussed various ideas to contact potential governors and agreed the following, to action within 2 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DS to write an article for the Crier on behalf of the governing board. • DS to investigate whether we could place an advert on the town council website. • SM to write a letter to target council employees, other schools, banks and government agencies. • LM to investigate accountancy/finance training firms and contacts. • IN to write/email to all parents of Year 7 pupil. 	I A A A A A
2020-21/ FGB/12	Items Through the Chair	Ofsted – schools were informed that during Covid, Ofsted would only be conducting visits, not inspections. Unions have challenged exactly what this means and Ofsted have advised that the visits are 'light touch inspections'. As a school, we need to ensure we are in the right frame of mind as we are due an inspection and it is likely that Ofsted inspectors will focus on schools in areas of low infection, which north Devon is! Ofsted won't make judgements, however we need to ensure we are all working towards positive outcomes. ABL reminded governors that they will be spoken to by Ofsted and should be able to explain the impact of Covid to GTS and the intent, implementation and impact of our curriculum.	I I

		<p>Q – is it possible to have a sample timetable for year groups? Years 7 – 9 should be fairly straightforward, however the option blocks in KS4, could make this quite complicated. The allocation of our curriculum has not changed or been impacted by Covid and the timetables look just as they would in any other year. The main differences are the lack of practical's and the impact to our pastoral system.</p> <p>The clerk was asked to investigate virtual exclusion training for governors and IN reminded governors that the expectation is for all to attend.</p> <p>Following an exclusion appeal earlier in the year, the debrief session had not happened due to Covid. The clerk was asked to arrange a meeting ASAP.</p> <p>Child protection training – this has been recorded from the INSET day in September, however ABL would like a member of staff to talk governors through this. Clerk to action.</p> <p>DS informed the board that GTS are winners of the Eco-Schools Microplastic Challenge.</p> <p>IN asked ABL to relay the thanks of the governing board to all staff. It was noted that staff had responded incredibly well to a difficult situation continue to do so.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>A</p> <p>I</p> <p>A</p>
2020-21/ FGB/13	Dates of next Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19th November 2020 – Teaching & Learning – PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE • 24th November 2020 – Resources • 1st December 2020 – FGB • All meetings to start at 9.15am on Teams. 	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>

The meeting closed at 11.24am.

Action Log

WHO	WHAT	BY WHEN	Reference
Clerk	Update list of governors, roles and responsibilities	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/4
Clerk	Contact relevant staff introducing their link governors	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/4
Clerk	Investigate dates and book RH and LW onto Headteacher appraisal training	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/4
Clerk	Investigate dates and book SM and LW onto Chair training	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/4

All Governors	Complete, sign and return Declaration of Business Interests, AUPs and sign to confirm you have read the Governors Code of Conduct	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/9
Clerk	Send Terms of Reference to relevant governors and committee chairs to be signed	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/9
Clerk	Arrange and invite governors to IT training on Teams	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/4
Clerk	Add the SEN, Safeguarding, Finance and Complaints policies to the T drive and if necessary, the website.	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/10
Doug Smith	Write an article for the next edition of the Crier to attract potential governors and investigate an advert on the town council website	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/9
Sam Meeson	Write a letter to target council employees, other schools, banks and government agencies	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/9
Lucy Meardon	Investigate potential accountancy firms and training providers to target finance professionals	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/9
Ian Newberry	Write to all Year 7 parents to attract potential governors	Half term 26.10.20	2020-21/FGB/9
Andy Bloodworth	Investigate the potential to make year group timetables available to governors	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/12
Clerk	Contact Babcock to provide virtual exclusion training for all governors	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/12
Clerk	Schedule a debrief meeting regarding a permanent exclusion.	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/12
Clerk	Arrange for a member of staff to talk governors through the recent CP2 training	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/12
All governors	Watch the CP2 training	Christmas	2020-21/FGB/12
Andy Bloodworth	Thank all staff on behalf of the governors for their hard work during Covid	ASAP	2020-21/FGB/12

Signed as a true record Committee Chair