

GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

Academy Trust

Company Number 769819.

A Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England

Full Governing Board Committee Meeting

Thursday 18th July 2024 at 3.30pm in the Boardroom



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
Rhymer, Matt	MAR	Staff Governor	Apologies
Smith, Doug	DS	Co-opted Governor	Present
Sparrow, Annie	ASP	Staff Governor	Apologies
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

Minute Reference	Item	Information and Action Required	Action/ Decision
2023/24/ FGB/ 68	Training	CW provided a presentation and feedback on the recent SEND funding conference he had attended.	I
2023/24/ FGB/69	Apologies	Apologies had been received in advance of the meeting from MAR, ASP and BW. These were sanctioned.	I, D
2023/24/ FGB/70	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts of interest were declared.	I

		<p>Q – who would do that work? The school site staff to mitigate the risk and expand the life span on the roof.</p> <p>Q – would it help? It would not be a cure but could help. We have run out of time; we do not have quotes for roofs this year. If it doesn't impact something else critical, spending £1000 and a few days of the caretakers time could help.</p> <p>Q – how does it stand doing this work in house from a health and safety point of view? We would allocate a caretaker; the work has been risk assessed and he has received health and safety training and working at heights. He would be working on the large flat roof which is single story. The parapets on the dining hall would need a professional company.</p> <p>Q – any risk issues with mould in offices? Yes, historical issues of mould which is monitored. JMB and KLH left at 3.58pm</p> <p>Governors briefly discussed fundraising as a school community and engaging parents. It was agreed that parental engagement and fundraising would be added as an agenda item at the planning day in early September.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/ 72	Budget	<p>Q – what is the deficit next year? £39k. The reality is that it is already at £110k deficit, as we will need to put £80k in for the CIF bid.</p> <p>Governors discussed and agreed that at the first resources meeting next year, the committee should discuss in detail and agree how much to allocate for the CIF bid.</p> <p>Governors voted and agreed to adopt the budget.</p> <p>KLR left at 4.04pm.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>I, D</p> <p>D I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/73	Minutes and Matters Arising	The minutes of the meeting held on 24 th April 2024 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and approved to be signed.	I, D
2023/24/ FGB/74	Committee Matters	<p>T&L –the committee had received an excellent presentation on the work experience programme at GTS. The meeting had reviewed the quality assurance process and results for the year. The SIP had been discussed at length and is currently in the process of being updated by SLT. This will be presented at FGB in September and the full board will need to agree governor monitoring responsibilities.</p> <p>Resources – the committee had discussed the budget at length, the gym contract lease had also been discussed and renewed. The resources committee are recommending the capability policy for ratification by FGB. Governors discussed and agreed to adopt the policy.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/75	Positive Handling Training	This is an annual agenda item for discussion. ABL informed the board that there is PIP training available to school staff. Some secondary schools have a number of staff who are PIP trained to manage pupils physically if required. GTS has always	I

	<p>taken the view that we will review this decision each year based on our current challenges and decide as a board whether we feel it is appropriate and/or necessary.</p> <p>ABL is of the opinion not to train staff as he feels having staff trained in manual handling can actually double the number of incidents and the trained member of staff needs to be in the right place at right time, otherwise another member of staff, who may not be trained, would end up intervening.</p> <p>Q – have there been many incidents in the last year? Yes, four incidences. All staff are trained in the use of reasonable force and training was last held in May 2024, using the National College.</p> <p>ABL would advise not to train staff, he fears this could create more problems than it would solve.</p> <p>Q – would it be useful to review behaviour, the board are concerned that this is deteriorating, does that suggest PIP training is needed? The data is suggesting behaviour is getting worse and more pupils are getting physical but the majority of incidents can be dealt with without the need for physical intervention. When physical intervention has been required, the member of staff involved reports this to the Head immediately and the situation has been reviewed.</p> <p>Q – how do the staff feel about whether they have training or not? All staff have training on the use of reasonable force but training on self-defence is a completely separate issue.</p> <p>Q – do you train staff in the use of self-defence? No, only the principles of the use of reasonable force.</p> <p>Q – do you have situations where a child is being threatening in the class and therefore being threatening towards other pupils? No, I would advise staff to evacuate the classroom, I would rather everyone leaves that room than a member of staff physically grapple with a child to remove them. The moment a member of staff physically makes contact with a pupil, they are no longer in control of what is happening next, whereas if they were to move the class out of the room, that member of staff is still in control and has minimised risk.</p> <p>Q – if a child is attacking another child can a member of staff intervene? Yes, that is using reasonable force, that is what our staff are trained to do i.e., to prevent a child from hurting another child, from hurting a member of staff and/or from hurting themselves.</p> <p>Q – have there been any incidents involving weapons? Thankfully no, and that would be a whole different type of training.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>
--	---	---

		Governors voted and agreed not to train staff in PIP training for the academic year 2024/25. ABL recommends adding a caveat that if the LA continue to put children into mainstream school, who are wholly unsuitable for mainstream school, the governing board may wish to object and refuse.	D I
2023/24/ FGB/ 76	Policies	<p>JSR joined at 4.23pm</p> <p>7 – Equality Information Policy – no changes to the policy.</p> <p>Q – is pupil premium a protected characteristic under the equality act? No, the equality act is based on global things, disadvantaged is one, as often linked to other areas. PP is a DfE terminology and not a national terminology. Children are vulnerable due to disabilities or a disability of parent, that is the protected characteristic, not PP itself.</p> <p>7A – Accessibility Action Plan 2021 – 2024 – no changes other than adding neutral gender toilets to fit with the current school building.</p> <p>Governors voted and agreed to adopt policies 7 and 7A.</p> <p>29 - Careers Guidance – the actual policy has not changed; the policy statement and provider has changed and access is updated annually. Worth noting, Next Step SW have had their funding evoked and Careers SW have removed funding. This will be an issue with regards to work experience checks. We can buy into software as a school, LL is currently researching this further. Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy.</p> <p>49 – Staff wellbeing – LW noted that the policy mentions an annual survey. JSR advised that she is trying to find a suitable survey as many are so onerous they can affect the wellbeing of staff completing the survey! It was agreed that JSR would put a survey together and ask governors check for any bias. Governors requested that this is actioned in time for the December FGB. HVW arrived at 4.40pm.</p> <p>Q – it does state that early recognition of common mental and physical health is useful, staff may need training? Within school training, MAMSA meetings and first aid, if we identify there is a possible problem staff are referred to OH as our school staff are not medically qualified.</p> <p>Q – do MLT have training in recognising work related stress? No. Some staff are better at recognising this than others.</p> <p>Q – could you identify training for middle leaders? Yes, we can begin by checking the National College.</p> <p>Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy with the caveat that training will be identified for MLT and SLT on stress awareness and mental health. JSR left at 4.49pm</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>D</p>

		<p>CW questioned whether governors would be reviewing exit interview feedback from the staff who have left this term. The clerk advised that this would be shared with the board in September.</p> <p>14 – SEN Policy – no major changes, checked against the Devon policy, still the 2020 version, a few minor amendments, added developmental language delay (DLD) as this is becoming more recognised and we have increasing numbers in school. Also, an update to page 6, graduated response and our ‘assess, plan, do, review’ process. This is being re-launched with an online inclusive provision.</p> <p>Q – two recent IRPs laboured heavily on SEN; do you believe there is anything different in the policy that needs changing specifically? Not in the policy, but in our practices, yes. As an example, the mapping out of a 6-week plan.</p> <p>Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy. HVW left at 4.57pm</p> <p>31 – Grievance Policy no changes, remains the most recent version. Governors voted and agreed to adopt the policy.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>D</p> <p>I, D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/77	Safeguarding	<p>It is becoming more evident that we are dealing with increasing incidents of self-harm and mental health related issues. Parents are also attending doctor surgeries with their children and GPs are telling parents to refer children to their school counsellor, however our school counsellor is only employed two days per week and already has a large list of pupils to see.</p> <p>Early Help – an action for next year is that we need to identify who the lead personnel are for key pupils, as agencies come and go and we often are not aware of strategies put in place for these key pupils. Communication can become fractured with things going on outside of school.</p> <p>Governors discussed and agreed that the DSL’s should present safeguarding reports i.e., figures, and present at every other FGB. The Clerk to add to the annual cycle.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/78	1265	<p>ABL presented the 1265 for the academic year 2024/25</p> <p>Q – does the union have a view on this? Yes, the union consulted on 8th July 2024.</p> <p>Staff who are part time will receive a pro rata 1265 unique to them.</p> <p>Q – expectation to stay if not involved in evening meetings? Most involved however if not teaching all year groups would not be at that parent evening.</p> <p>The governors voted and agreed to adopt the 1265.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/79	SIP	<p>The new SIP is currently being updated by SLT. This will be presented at FGB in the autumn term for approval and to assign governors.</p>	<p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/80	Training	<p>Send training notes to JMP to add into training folder.</p> <p>Training opportunities – add to planning day training/mentoring</p>	<p>LW</p>

2023/24/ FGB/81	Governor Visits	<p>The following visit reports had been shared with the board prior to the meeting: SEN visit report April 2024 – LW and MM Infrastructure visit report April 2024 – BW and MM</p> <p>SEN report – LW and MM spoke with the INCo and Hardy Centre Manager, it feels obvious that a is coming with the lack of funding and the increase in SEN pupils attending the school.</p> <p>Q - what can be done to ease the burden on the INCo? The school is aware of this challenge. The re-shift to the pastoral structure would allow for a head of year 7, who would take on responsibility for transition. This is still being considered, as is an assistant SENCP. We are also considering extending the hours of the INCO's admin assistant to work during the summer holidays. Some work will be filtered down to the HOLs rather than going straight to the INCO. We hope to spend time over the holidays provision mapping and making admin side much smoother.</p> <p>Q – we have spoken previously about money coming into the school if we were to have a hub? When first looking at the hub, we were under the impression money would come in as an additional pot of money. This was remodelled and resold, now it appears there is a small pot of money on top of what we would already receive. The money is essentially already in the budget and already accounted for.</p> <p>The piece of work for the holiday is to identify where that money is actually going, which could potentially identify money we could use to support the INCo. The new auditors are being rigorous, they are really looking at details of things we have wanted to be able to answer for a long time but haven't been able to and the audit is allowing us to do that.</p> <p>Q – is the hub now a less attractive option? Yes. The hub is now a non-starter. It would only bring in an additional £20k and the staffing model was changed to state that a teacher much be employed to man the hub. That would cost us as a school more than £20k.</p> <p>IN reminded the board that as Chair of Governors he meets with ABL regularly and they always discuss staffing and the workload of SLT.</p> <p>Infrastructure report – we have already discussed roofing earlier in this meeting however MM would like to stress that a lot of the leaks are on the wooden roofs, which is damaging the infrastructure and could lead to permanent damage and a bigger financial headache. The cladding on the J block is not good either, the batons are rotting which is a potential health and safety issue and is also not a cheap repair.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
--------------------	----------------------------	---	---

		<p>Q – how big an area? Basically, the whole J block. We could use our own site staff to take this off and replace but it would take an inordinate amount of time and pull them away from other jobs.</p> <p>Governors discussed the possibility of contacting parents who were builders, and/or going to the community for assistance or fundraising. It was suggested to contact other schools for advice. Action – to discuss further at Resources in December.</p> <p>It was agreed that IN and MM would meet with the site manager during the August summer holiday to walk around the school site, reviewing the premises and discussing any issues.</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/ 82	Dates	<p>The governor meeting dates for 2024/25 were approved.</p> <p>A governor planning day was agreed for the afternoon of 12th September. MM passed on his apologies for this meeting.</p>	<p>I, D</p> <p>I, D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/83	Items Through the Chair	<p>IN on behalf of the board, formerly thanked ASP and MAR for their contribution to the board as staff governors.</p> <p>IN thanked everyone for their efforts and support over the past 12 months, the board have made a positive contribution to the school. IN also thanked the head, the SLT and the wider staff for their hard working during what has been a difficult year. DS left at 5.41pm</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/84	Final Point	Clear vision of the budget moving forward, discussed staff wellbeing and the board are aware of the roofing situation.	I

The meeting finished at 5.42pm