

# GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

Academy Trust

Company Number 769819.

A Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England

## **Full Governing Board Committee Meeting**

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 3.30pm in the Boardroom**



Attendees	Initials	Position	Comments
Beer, Emma	EB	Member Appointed	Present
Bloodworth, Andy	ABL	Headteacher	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	Present
Wynne, Colin	CW	Co-opted Governor	Present
Pateman, Jo	JMP	Clerk to the Governing body	Present

## MINUTES

Agenda Reference	Agenda Item	Information and Action Required	Action
2023/24/ FGB/37	<b>Apologies</b>	MAR and ASP had sent their apologies in advance of the meeting, these were sanctioned.	I, D
2023/24/ FGB/38	<b>Conflicts of Interest</b>	None	IN
2023/24/ FGB/39	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>	The minutes of the FGB meeting held on 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and approved to be signed.	D

	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>Behaviour – this is an item on the Headteacher report, which is presented each term and will therefore be discussed at every other FGB meeting. It is not necessarily helpful to continually question behaviour, unless there has been a specific incident or concern has been highlighted to a governor.</p> <p>Question raised prior to the meeting:</p> <p>Q – may we have an update on how the issues with behaviour are progressing i.e., is it worse, better, is the policy fit for purpose? ABL advised that the challenges continue, and the impact of mid-phase transfer (MPT) pupils is undeniable. Locking down of the PAN has been effective and means that we will not take any more. The interesting thing is we are actually making a little bit of headway with some of the MPT. It is a slow and gradual process. However, there has been a significant number of fixed term suspensions (FTS) for MPT, particularly those in year 8. We need to keep working with these pupils, but we also need to break their cycle of behaviours. We have reviewed individual pupil behaviour data this week and established another set of plans. We have escalated support, held parental meetings, put pupils on Behaviour Support Plans (BSP) and Pastoral Support Plans (PSP), and some pupils have gone onto off site provision. It is difficult for the pastoral staff to keep on top of everything.</p> <p>During the deep dive last week, behaviour in lessons was observed. Where staff are correctly following procedures, any pupil displaying unmanageable behaviour is quickly removed and the lesson continues. Four headteachers from Cornwall schools visited GTS yesterday, they commented that they were impressed by the focus and behaviour in lessons and how quickly the pupils transitioned between lessons. They were fairly impressed with the corridors at other times of the day. This is positive, however deliberate behaviour continues, as does the increasing number of parents who are not supportive of the school. There is lots of work to be done and staff are working hard but some of their relational practices do not help de-escalate behaviour and staff are tired. There is lots of absence again at the moment and pupils are regularly having supply staff, which does not help with behaviour. We have had to cancel training and meetings just to ensure we have staff in the classroom. Again, strategic leadership stops because we are struggling by being on call all of the time.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the Vice Chair are not quite ready and will be circulated at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>The Terms of Reference for the GDPR governor were formerly accepted by the board.</b></p> <p>The Clerk will circulate a Terms of Reference for a Pupil Premium Governor and the board will agree who will take on this responsibility at the next FGB meeting.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p>
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		Update from Finance Governor on checking the school website – postponed to next meeting.	I
		Assigning governors to monitoring areas of the SIP – on the agenda later.	I
2023/24/ FGB/40	<b>Committee Matters</b>	<p>Items brought to FGB from the T&amp;L and Resources committees:</p> <p><b><u>Teaching &amp; Learning</u></b></p> <p>IN reminded the board that more time should be spent looking through the committee minutes to ensure we capture everything in the FGB minutes. At the last T&amp;L meeting, NMM spent time presenting data on bullying, the school has a fairly low level of bullying, according to the data, however there was some discussion over the validity of the data, due to the low numbers. NMM will provide additional data on a regular basis so that the board can monitor bullying. The numbers were not really statistically relevant, and governors had been surprised by the results, which had not been as expected, i.e., the majority of instigators were pupil premium, rather than the majority of victims being pupil premium.</p> <p>The committee also reviewed attendance and discussed at length what the school are doing to try and address the attendance problem. The ongoing issue of internal school refusers was also discussed, as were strategies to address this.</p> <p>The committee reviewed current PFG data for this year and talked through the issues around that and where the school currently stands with CiC, SEN, PP and gender group results, and where the school stands with FFT data/ predicted results this year against last year's data.</p> <p>Finally, the SIP was reviewed, and this will be discussed later as an agenda item.</p> <p><b><u>Resources</u></b></p> <p>An updated Finance Policy had been submitted and approved to the Resources committee, this was recommended to the full board. <b>The full board ratified this decision and adopted the policy.</b></p> <p>The board discussed external and internal auditors, both of which will go out to tender this year and is in hand with the School Finance Manager.</p> <p>Premises update - there is a serious water leak in the school, which is currently being investigated, and the water invoice has increased significantly. The school are securing a company to find the water leak.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>

		<p>The cleaning contract is coming to the end of its 3-year term, the board discussed the potential of bringing this service 'in house' and the committee agreed that was not a good idea due to costs etc. Governors instructed the Head of Operations to negotiate a 2-year extension with KGB.</p> <p>The committee had a lengthy conversation around the budget, which has been set as a deficit budget. SLT have investigated several changes, including a slight increase to class sizes, which has reduced the deficit from approximately £250k to £145k. There are other potential funding streams which we will continue to monitor. If the school is unsuccessful with the CIF bid, this will release £80k, however a proportion of this will be needed to dedicate to the roofs.</p> <p>Q – were there any issues highlighted for staff dealing with larger classes? Classes will only increase by 2 or 3 pupils, and classes have been this size historically. GTS class sizes will still be significantly lower than other schools. However, the school has needed to work to reduce the deficit budget to a more controllable figure.</p> <p>Q – I read that there had been damage to the sports hall floor, has this been rectified? Yes, the company hiring the facility were extremely apologetic and have funded the repair, which will be completed over the half term break.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>
2023/24/ FGB/41	<b>Committee Members</b>	<p>Three parents had applied to join as parent governors and are currently in the process of obtaining DBS checks etc. <b>The board formerly accepted Amber Heywood, Sharon Balman, and Caroline Chipperfield to the governing board.</b> It was agreed that Amber and Sharon will join the T&amp;L committee. Caroline has not yet expressed a preference, the clerk will contact her again. The clerk will now add the new governors to Companies House and update the website and handbooks.</p> <p>The board reviewed the committee members.</p> <p>The board discussed the meeting lengths and agreed that Resources had improved now that the new build is complete.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/42	<b>Safeguarding</b>	<p>As raised in T&amp;L and Resources - the regularity of safeguarding meetings is improving although they are sometimes cancelled at short notice due to safeguarding demands within school. As the meetings are now more regular they are becoming increasingly more effective.</p> <p>The current patterns of safeguarding are continuing to be around online incidents and a large number of pupils sharing images. The school has work going on around that now and will need to revisit again soon.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>



		<p>are not focusing enough on governance. It was noted that SEND is broken, but offered no solutions. Mainstream schools cannot cope and are not the place for all pupils. Another point from other school, mainly primary schools, is having direct contact with the pupils re: teaching and learning, and their experiences in the school. LW would like to revisit. The briefing also raised the necessity of all governors attending permanent exclusion training if they are being asked to sit on GDC panels.</p> <p>IN advised that he had recently asked Devon Education Services whether they could provide a bespoke training session to our board on permanent exclusions and appeals. The Clerk to chase this as no further contact to date. IN had also asked the LA officer to provide a training session on what his actual role is.</p> <p>The board discussed staff wellbeing, monitoring absence, turnover and workload. It was suggested that a staff wellbeing survey should be completed. The clerk to organise with the deputy head.</p> <p>CW advised that the board that he had attended a governor finance training session, the second part of which had been budget setting and monitoring for MATS, however the principles were the same for SATS.</p> <p>EB has recently attended a short webinar on securing good outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, to an extent, every child in Devon is disadvantaged as we live in such a rural area.</p> <p>The clerk will share all training slides with the board and these are also saved to the training file on SharePoint.</p> <p>LW asked all governors to provide a brief synopsis of any training they attend with key learning points to share with the board.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/	<b>Policies</b>	<p>KLH joined at 4.37pm.</p> <p><b>Business continuity plan</b> – no substantive changes, all relevant policies have been updated within the document, as has action in the event of severe weather, invacuation, and fire evacuation. Key contact numbers were checked and updated.</p> <p>Q – local authority support, were numbers checked? Yes.</p> <p>Q bomb hoaxes, can we make sure key staff are aware of this? Our receptionist is aware and has information in reception in the event of a call. KLH has the same information, finance could potentially benefit from having a copy too. KLH to action providing this information to key staff who cover reception.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>Q</p>



		<p>ABL raised contact with parents and asked the board to consider and potentially review how we deal with parents. There are a number of parents whose tone and types of contact are inappropriate. Just this week there have been 4 parents contacting the school by various means who have been aggressive, rude, and putting undue stress and workload onto staff.</p> <p>Q – what could work, how can the governors help? The Governors have a duty of care to pupils, but to our staff too. Q – could you start with a notice that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated? We already have on email footers.</p> <p>The board discussed at length and agreed they were in full support of the school and that parents must contact and behave appropriately to all staff. The board are fully supportive of the school taking a more robust response in the future.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q Q</p> <p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/50	<b>Personnel</b>	The board were asked to discuss a vacancy, which had not gone to Resources. The meeting moved to Part 2.	I
2023/24/ FGB/49	<b>Final Point</b>	There had been a significant amount of work ensuring governance is focusing on reviewing the SIP, and allocating governors. The board have focused on training and ensuring governors are better prepared for strategic planning in the future. The board have discussed the need for continued support from the board for staff wellbeing in these challenging times.	D
2023/24/ FGB/51	<b>Date of next meetings</b>	<p>T&amp;L Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024</p> <p>Resources Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</p> <p>FGB Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024</p> <p>All starting at 3.30pm in the Boardroom</p>	I

Meeting ended at 5.35pm

Minute Reference	Minute Item	Action	By whom/when
2023/24/ FGB/39	Matters Arising	Clerk to provide an example Terms of Reference for a PP Governor, circulate to all and add to the next FGB agenda.	Clerk 18.04.24
2023/24/ FGB/39	Matters Arising	Finance Governor to check the school website.	CW 18.04.24