

# GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

Academy Trust

Company Number 769819.

A Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England

## **Full Governing Board Committee Meeting**

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 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	Member Appointed	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

Agenda Reference	Agenda Item	Information and Action Required	Time
2023/24/ FGB/1	<b>Election of committee chair</b>	IN was proposed as Chair, <b>the board voted and elected IN as Chair for the academic year 2023-24.</b> LW was proposed as Vice Chair, <b>the board voted and elected LW as Vice Chair for the academic year 2023-24.</b>	D D
2023/24/ FGB/2	<b>Apologies</b>	Apologies had been received from MAR, ASP and BW. These were sanctioned. The board were informed that JAS had resigned on 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 and DM had resigned earlier today. The board agreed to send letters of thanks to both.	I, D I A
2023/24/ FGB/ 3	<b>Conflicts of Interest</b>	None declared.	I

2023/24/ FGB/ 17	<b>Policies</b>	JSR joined the meeting at 3.37pm. 43 – Curriculum Statement had been circulated to the board (this would normally be presented at T&L). JSR advised that there had been minimal changes made. LW raised that the document referred to 4 learning skills and then 3. Please could this be consistent. EB highlighted that Read Aloud needs to be separated from House time. <b>With these amendments made the board approved the Curriculum Statement.</b>	I  D
2023/24/ FGB/ 15	<b>Exam results</b>	The board reviewed the early analysis of data and the exam results. JSR advised we are still waiting on remarks and that having a positive progress 8 for pupil premium is a brilliant result and as a school, we should really be advertising this. The gap is closing at GTS!  The board reiterated that the results were excellent and that the progress made by all pupil groups this year was a credit to the hard work of everyone at the school. JSR left at 3.47pm	I  I
2023/24/ FGB 4	<b>Governor Roles</b>	The board reviewed current vacancies and <b>agreed responsibilities as follows:</b>  Safeguarding – vacancy due to DM resigning from the board. IN is also a named safeguarding governor. LW was appointed as the safeguarding governor, IN to assist where needed.  LW remains SEN governor and MM will shadow as succession planning.  Pay committee – EB replaces DS.  Headteacher appraisal panel – IN, LW and MM. IN will remain the ‘constant’, other governors will rotate annually.  Executive Management Committee – the board discussed and agreed that a school improvement partner was not required this year. ABL has support through his NPQEL. The board agreed to add this as an agenda item to FGB in the spring term to discuss and agree whether to engage a school improvement partner for the year 2024/25.  The board discussed the role of Pupil Premium and CiC governor but did not appoint anyone to these roles. <b>NOTE AFTER MEETING 29.09.23 – the Clerk has checked with Devon Education Services and the roles of Pupil Premium and CiC governor/s are not statutory, but a ‘good to have’. DES suggested combining the roles and having a governor for Disadvantaged Pupils i.e., SEN, PP and CiC. The Clerk will add to the next FGB agenda for further discussion.</b>	D
2023/24/ FGB/ 5	<b>Forms</b>	The board updated and signed business declaration forms and related parties’ forms for the academic year 2023/24.  The board signed the Code of Conduct for the year 2023/24.	I  I

		<p>The board confirmed that they had all received and read the Academy Trust Handbook emailed by the clerk on 11.07.23.</p> <p>The board confirmed that they had all received and read KCSiE emailed by the clerk on 08.09.23.</p>	<p>D</p> <p>D</p>
2023/24/ FGB/ 6	<b>Scheme of Delegation</b>	The board reviewed and approved the Scheme of Delegation.	D
2023/24/ FGB/ 7	<b>Meetings</b>	<p>The board agreed that FGB meetings will be open.</p> <p>IN reminded the board that all confidential business would be conducted under Part 2.</p> <p>The board agreed that virtual attendance at meetings was permissible when required. The board decided not to impose a limit on the number and would approve on a case-by-case basis. The board agreed to provide at least 24 hours' notice of their wish to attend virtually. However, the board agreed that it did not approve attending meetings virtually on a routine basis.</p> <p>The board reviewed the procedure for dealing with apologies and sanctioning absence. Apologies should be sent via the Clerk. Governors were reminded that a register of governor attendance appears on the school website. <b>The board agreed that any governor missing 4 meetings in a row (any meetings, not just FGB), would trigger a conversation with the Chair.</b></p> <p>The board discussed the individual committee meetings and how information is divided. <b>It was agreed that the Resources agenda would remain as it is for the time being.</b> It was felt that now that the new build had been finished, and that the sport facility takeover was complete, that the Resources meeting should be of more of a manageable length. This will be reviewed again if it is felt that the meetings continue to be too long.</p> <p>The board discussed and agreed the importance of keeping all meetings to the agenda, and that any staff attending meetings were not to read through information/ reports provided again, but to answer questions/ points raised. The clerk to remind staff of this. Governors also agreed, wherever possible, to provide any questions they may have relating to reports etc., prior to meetings. However, questions are always welcome in meetings too, not just in advance.</p>	<p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p>

		After much discussion it was agreed that the Chairs of T&L and Resources would provide more detail to the final agenda item of <i>What has been the impact of this meeting</i> , and that this would be carried over and presented under Committee Matters at FGB meetings. This would ensure that key points from both committees were captured in the minutes of FGB.	D
2023/24/ FGB/ 8	<b>Makeup of the Board</b>	<p>It was noted that with the resignation of JAS and DM, the board currently have no parent governors. The clerk will contact all parents ASAP and begin the process of an election.</p> <p><b>The board discussed and agreed that whilst they acknowledge the guidance from the DfE not to have staff governors, the board felt that the benefit from having staff governors outweighed any risks.</b> Therefore, the board will continue to have staff governors for the academic year 2023/24.</p> <p><b>The board discussed and agreed to continue holding meetings on Thursday afternoons.</b></p> <p>Succession planning - with the addition of committee vice chairs, governors shadowing roles with existing governors, the board agreed that succession planning had been addressed. IN raised that the board needed to consider succession planning for a Chair. LW would be happy to take on this role in the short term, but the board need to consider long term options.</p>	<p>I, A</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p>
2023/24/ FGB/ 9	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and approved to be signed.</b></p> <p>Matters arising – the board were reminded that progress against the SIP should be reviewed at every FGB. The clerk will add this as a standing agenda item.</p>	<p>I, D</p> <p>I, A</p>
2023/24/ FGB/ 10	<b>Committee Matters</b>	<p><b>Teaching &amp; Learning</b> – analysis of the exam results has already been covered in FGB today. The T&amp;L committee had congratulated all staff for fantastic GCSE results. JS and ABL had presented ‘Reconnect the GTS way’ to the committee. This focuses on strategies to deal with the increase in behaviour outside of the classroom and during unstructured times. These strategies should help to re-establish values, define behaviour, and encourage good relationships. The strategies are from the book ‘Reconnect’ by Doug Lemov, who is addressing the impact of mobile phones, the decrease in trust across all institutions and the negative impact that the growth of individuality has had on the sense of community and belonging. Reconnect the GTS way will address these issues and wider behaviour concerns.</p> <p><b>Resources</b> – the safeguarding policy was adopted by the committee; <b>this was ratified by FGB.</b> The new build has been completed on time and under budget. The school have conducted checks and are of the opinion that there is no RAAC within the school buildings. ABL added that since the Resources meeting, he had been contacted by the DfE to clarify several points and that the DfE were sending an inspector to conduct survey of the school.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p>

		Q – who is paying for the survey? The DfE.	Q
2023/24/ FGB/ 11	<b>Safeguarding</b>	DM has resigned, LW has been appointed as the safeguarding governor. No further updates at this time, other than what has been covered in the committee meetings.	I
2023/24/ FGB/ 12	<b>Objectives</b>	<p><b>The board discussed and agreed the objectives for the academic year 2023-24, which are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing parental engagement – recruit parent governors and improve engagement with all parents</li> <li>Succession planning</li> </ul>	I, D
2023/24/ FGB/ 13	<b>Members</b>	<p>From the Members Meeting in July 2023, IN had been asked to pose the following question to the board:</p> <p><b>What is the strategic response to the current challenges faced by GTS i.e., increased numbers of pupils with SEN, higher levels of behaviour, and reduced parental engagement?</b></p> <p>Governors discussed and agreed: Higher levels of behaviour – is being addressed via the Reconnect agenda.</p> <p>Parental engagement – also part of the Reconnect agenda. Staff are experiencing higher levels of inappropriate behaviour from parents, as well as a lack of engagement. ABL will be contacting a target group of parents to address this over the next few weeks. There will be ‘kick back’ but ultimately he will be passing on the message that if they feel unable to support the school and follow the behaviour policy, they need to start thinking of alternative schools.</p> <p>Q – we have discussed previously how to encourage parents into the school, has a decision been reached regarding parent evenings? Yes, these will be blended i.e., some face to face and some online. Again, we will be identifying key parents to encourage them to attend in person and appointments will be opened to them first. We need to be challenging parent accountability.</p> <p>Increased numbers of pupils with SEN – the board requested a report from the INCo at the next T&amp;L.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Q</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>I, A</p>
2023/24/ FGB/ 14	<b>SIP</b>	<p><b>The board agreed that the SIP priorities remain broadly the same for this academic year as the SIP is a three-year plan, with a slight change of emphasis to incorporate Reconnect.</b> SLT will work on the SIP within the next few weeks and ABL will present an updated SIP at the next FGB.</p> <p>The main priorities for this year therefore are Reconnect, maintaining consistency in the classrooms (TLAC), and the implementation of a facility plan to address fixing the leaking roofs.</p>	<p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>

		<p>LW raised the monitoring of the SIP. It was agreed that as visits had been held with SLT, these visits should now filter down to classroom teachers and pupil voice, to evidence the impact of the SIP priorities. Whilst ABL tweaks the SIP, governors were encouraged to conduct pupil voice and meet with staff to gauge the success levels of Reconnect so far, and whether it is making a difference. LW will contact the Deputy Head for a list of pupils who are receiving intervention and arrange pupil voice.</p> <p>It was agreed that IN will continue to oversee the facility plan, working with the Head of Operations and Site Manager. CW, as finance governor, will continue to work with the finance manager. The board agreed that CW would put together a scheme of work to focus on in finance.</p>	D
2023/24/ FGB/ 16	<b>Pupil Numbers</b>	<p>The board reviewed the pupil numbers and the implications for the school. 2023 intake was 198 (ABL had predicted around 200), there are still a lot of 'comings and goings' with additional tours etc., we may yet have additional pupils joining.</p> <p>The current whole school total is 861, which is the largest it has been for some time. Next year our intake is currently 164, but we predict this will increase to around 185, That said, the anecdotal feedback from the open days and open evening is that there a lot more discussion about future choice of schools for children outside our catchment area. We would not be surprised if the figure went up again to nearer the 200 mark. That would mean an additional 40 pupils in the school next year to what we currently have, and that would take us close to our contractor PAN funding agreement number of 900.</p> <p>The following three years see intakes of around 175-185, so no significant drop. By 2027/28 we need to be aware of not having excess staff as the intake drops down to 160 again.</p> <p>For the next 2 to 3 years, we will struggle again with space and staff may have to move around classrooms as we will have more staff than classrooms.</p> <p>The implication of the increase in pupil numbers is that our GAG funding will increase over the next few years. It will then decrease slightly but remain stable. However, 2031-32 (current year 3s) we are looking at an intake of 150. Obviously this could change, and nationally a lot of pupils are moving, but we do need to be aware of this and ensure we are staffed accordingly.</p> <p>To summarise, we are currently resourced in terms of buildings and teachers. Our staffing model is pretty tight at the moment, other than the flex that coaching allows.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>

		We did have plans for this year regarding staffing and behaviour, that we could not implement due to financial constraints. We hope to revisit this if the financial situation changes.	I
2023/24/ FGB/ 17	<b>Policies</b>	67 – Business Continuity Plan to FGB 07.12.23 <b>13 – Teaching &amp; Learning Policy (usually presented at T&amp;L) was approved and adopted by the board.</b>	I D
2023/24/ FGB/ 18	<b>Governor Visits</b>	The board were reminded that a governor visit form must be completed each time a governor visits the school. These should be returned to the clerk, who will circulate to the board and add to the next relevant committee agenda.  CW and EB had recently attended the year 5 and 6 open evening and reported that this had been a very positive event.  IN reported that he had visited the school in August, during the summer holidays, and had walked around the site with the Site Manager. They have discussed classrooms, work carried out and the need for a roofing plan. IN will provide a visit report ASAP.	I  I  I
2023/24/ FGB/ 19	<b>Items Through the Chair</b>	The governors discussed the current position of the school, covering the following 3 points.  1. Ofsted rating – the school was rated ‘good’ by Ofsted in July 2022, the third time in a row that the school had been judged as good. GTS is unlikely to be visited again for some time, and there are no concerns with regards to Ofsted.  2. Exam results – GTS has achieved the best results in 2023 and has bucked national and local trends. The school is in a strong position, there are no concerns with exam results.  3. Finance – the financial position of the school is stable, GTS ended last year with a surplus, and the school has invested in a new build. We are looking at a deficit budget next year, but the board will work to minimise that deficit and it will be addressed to a certain extent by the carry forward. In addition, we still do not know how much of the teacher pay awards will be funded, but we have budgeted for the worst case scenario. The board agreed that they were confident of balancing the budget next year.  Due to these 3 areas, and the strong position of the school, there is currently no pressure being applied externally for the school to MAT. <b>The board agreed that they had confidence in GTS as a school, teaching 11-16 year old pupils, and that it continues to be a going concern without any risk to its liability.</b>  MATs – the board need to discuss MATs and whether they wish to pursue joining a MAT. This will be added to the next FGB agenda, as it was agreed there was not sufficient time to discuss this today.	I  I  I   I D  I

		DS informed the board that he had again raised with TDC the enforcement issue relating to a property behind the school. TDC have confirmed they are actively pursuing this.	I
2023/24/ FGB/ 20	<b>Final Point</b>	What is the impact of this meeting on outcomes for pupils in the school? The school has a strategic plan to deal with the current issues facing the school, and we are planning to 'Reconnect'. The board have structured themselves as a body to better support the school.	Q D
2023/24/ FGB/ 21	<b>Date of next meetings</b>	ABL is unable to attend Resources on 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023. It was agreed that T&L and Resources meeting dates would swap. Therefore, the next round of governor meetings are as follows: Resources – 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2023 Teaching & Learning – 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 FGB – 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	I, D

The meeting ended at 5.56pm

<b>Agenda Reference</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>By Whom/ When</b>
2023/24/ FGB/2	<b>Apologies</b>	IN to write letters of thanks to DM and JAS, who have resigned from the board.	23.11.23
2023/24/ FGB/4	<b>Governor Roles</b>	Clerk to investigate governor training for those new to roles i.e., safeguarding governor, headteacher appraisal training, SEN governor	23.11.23
2023/24/ FGB/ 4	<b>Governor Roles</b>	Clerk to provide Terms of Reference for all individual governor roles and circulate at next round of meetings for approval	23.11.23
2023/24/ FGB/ 8	<b>Makeup of the Board</b>	The Clerk to contact all parents with details of parent governor vacancies. ABL to speak to staff re: suggesting individual parents to contact and encourage to apply.	31.10.23
2023/24/ FGB/ 9	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>	The Clerk to add review of progress against the SIP to be added as a standing agenda item at every FGB.	07.12.23
2023/24/ FGB/ 13	<b>Members</b>	Clerk to add to the next T&L agenda <i>What is the strategic response to dealing with increased numbers of pupils with SEN?</i> HVW to provide a report and present to the committee.	30.11.23
2023/24/ FGB/ 17	<b>Policies</b>	Business Continuity Plan to be presented at the next FGB by the Site Manager Clerk to add the T&L Policy and Curriculum Statement to the policy folder and (if necessary) the school website	07.12.23 06.10.23