

GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL
Academy Trust
 Company Number 769819.
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Full Governing Board Committee Meeting
Thursday 24th April 2025 at 3.30pm B6



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	Apologies
Couch, Lara	LJC	Staff Governor	Present
Cox, Lizzie	ELC	Staff Governor	Present
Machin, Michael	MM	Co-opted Governor	Present
Newberry, Ian	IN	Member Appointed	Present
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

Minute Reference	Minute Item		Action
2024/25/ FGB/ 55	Apologies	Apologies received from CC; these were sanctioned.	I, D
2024/25/ FGB/ 56	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts declared.	I
2024/25/ FGB/ 57	Minutes and Matters Arising	Minutes of the meeting held on 13 th February 2025 were considered and approved to be signed.	I, D

		<u>Matters arising and action points from the last meeting</u> Q – wellbeing survey feedback to the middle leader team, is it effective? Feedback has been done gradually, another piece this morning regarding parent evenings and we will do the final bit in the next staff meeting. Q – are staff aware this feedback relates to the survey? Yes. • Clerk to source/investigate terms of reference for a sustainability governor – currently nothing provided by Devon Education Services, will check NGA website and other schools. MM offered to action. <i>(NB – following the FGB meeting, Devon Education Services released a template terms of reference for a sustainability governor which the Clerk forwarded to MM).</i> • All governors reminded to complete the skills audit – results and further discussion at next FGB. • Equality objectives presented and approved at T&L 27.03.25. • Staff wellbeing survey – the recommendation is to undertake annually or bi-annually. Governors discussed, depends what we hope to gain from it, accurate comparison would be doing it annually, and at the same time of year. Annually less of a task than biannually. Staff governors suggested annually, advised some staff were hesitant to fill it out as unsure whether it was anonymous or not and that it wasn't clear where the survey was coming from. Needs to be more explicit i.e., where it has come from and why, could help to encourage staff to complete. • Decision – annually with greater information around anonymity and reason for generating a wellbeing survey. ABL suggests more quantity of data and less anecdotal data. • Q – how useful was it for ABL? Marginally, we have discussed previously, a lot of 'stuff' can't be quantified, were these singular incidents or multiple, single staff or multiple staff etc. Don't want to make radical substantial changes based on what could be a perception in a moment of time. • CW some of the comments made around behaviour were in the free format section and unless you are very careful with your question you could miss a whole range of answers because you didn't ask the right questions. • IN more pointed questions would result in more quantifiable data, with less free form questions. • ABL would rather staff just met and spoke with him rather than filling out surveys. • CW we need to understand the wellbeing of staff as governors have a duty of care to them too.	Q Q I, D I I I D Q I I I I
2024/25/ FGB/ 62	Policies	NMM joined for this agenda item. 2 - Attendance Policy presented by NMM, used DCC model this year, because of the amended framework DCC are adopting and wanting to ensure our policy in line with these changes. Attendance letters also updated. NMM ran through the attendance flowchart and explained the attendance process and supportive strategies to the board.	I I

	Q – is there a simpler guide for pupils starting here, a parent’s guide i.e., how you ring in? This is included in the parent handbook, it is on the website and is included as part of the induction. NMM discusses with mid-phase pupils too as attendance can often be a reason for moving schools.	Q
	Q – this is more or less the same policy as last time but made more ‘GTS’? Yes, it is the DCC model policy that they recommend but amended to GTS.	Q
	Q – if the policy is more or less the same, how effective was the last policy? We can only judge this by attendance and attendance is no great but we are working closely with parents and as much as we can within the DCC framework.	Q
	Q – if the previous policy was not as effective as it could have been had we put anything in this policy improve it? It is not that the last policy was not effective, attendance is an issue across the country and it will take time to resolve.	Q
	Governors agreed to adopt the policy.	D
	20 - uniform policy, presented by NMM. We did not previously have a uniform policy but always had clear guidance on our uniform expectations on the website and within the parent handbook. This policy includes that information and also legal expectations around uniform costs. In addition, we are expecting changes from government of what is expected of a school uniform but the white paper has not yet been released. The initial indication is that schools will only be permitted to have 3 branded items, at this time we have, possibly 5 if you include the PE hoodies, although this is optional.	I
	IN advised he had received numerous emails from parents regarding uniform and wanted to raise the hoodie. Is it truly optional as there is no option for pupils to wear a non-branded hoodie, they wear the school hoodie or they wear nothing. Also, it is the one item that is branded and not available from Price and Buckland. Having to order online or in town makes it distinctively different from the rest of the school uniform in terms of supply chain.	I
	Q – given we say it is optional but do not allow a non-branded hoodie, is that a reasonable policy and shouldn’t we consider replacing the branded hoodie with a dark grey completely unbranded hoodie? Lots of pupils buy the school hoodie but it is also the piece of uniform that is left/lost. Lots of peer pressure to have the hoodie, is it an obvious item to take out of the policy? Even if we allowed plain hoodies, some parents would not be able to afford it and colour hoodies would result in a huge variance in colours and some with branded hoodies.	Q

		Q – is this a sensible time to have a rethink? ABL suggest adopting the policy but also start having discussions around uniform in general with a view to making changes in September. This could be the time to explore uniform again, not just in terms of uniform but in terms of jewellery too. Q – do we provide second hand or preloved uniform? Yes we do. Q – has this policy been discussed with pupils and do we track pupil engagement in policy development, review, and implementation? Pupil voice has been conducted informally, we need to do further pupil voices, especially if we are revisiting the uniform policy in September and making further changes. Q – if we remove the initials from the hoodie it could be passed down/ used again. Pupil voice needed, views on costs, jewellery, makeup etc. then review this. In the meantime, the current policy was adopted. NMM left at 4.22pm	Q Q Q Q I, D I
2024/25/ FGB/58	Governors	The board discussed governors approaching the end of their service term, no action, just for info. Meet the tutor evening – CW and SB offered to attend, clerk to email dates and invitation to both.	I I, D
2024/25/ FGB/ 59	Committee Matters	Items brought to FGB from the T&L and Resources committees T&L – excellent results from the deep dive, detailed and impressive, extended to a discussion around stretching the bright, and appropriate structures for other pupils in the school. Discussed homework, we need to return to homework soon. A review of the deep dive, very thorough process and less stressful for staff this year. Resources – the committee approved spending £20,000.00 from reserves on the J block cladding to make the building safe. FGB to ratify this decision (please see update provided by KLB) – we could not provide mitigation and agreed to replace. Additional money found I the budget from the delegated capital fund £18,000.00 so no withdrawal from reserves required to pay for the cladding. Governors ratified the decision. IN asked all to ensure they had read the resources minutes and are aware of the legionella issue within the H&S report. IN has spoken at length with KLB, this was extremely low risk. The school understand how it occurred and have taken steps to significantly reduce the risk of it happening again but IN is raising as a strategic risk to FGB.	I I D I

		Q – is this included on the risk register? We will need to raise when we next review the risk register, we need to understand how much risk we are carrying.	Q
		The catering tender is now open and a small working party has been formed. The board will receive updates.	I
		PTFA – renewing PTFA to access grants and fundraising discussed.	I
2024/25/ FGB/60	Uniform	Discussed earlier under 2024/25/FGB/61	I
2024/25/ FGB/61	Skills Audit	Moved to next meeting.	I, D
2024/25/ FGB/ 63	Safeguarding	The safeguarding audit report had been circulated to the board prior to the meeting. Following the audit, there has been some definition around strategic and operational management and the safeguarding meetings have been realigned accordingly. The majority of these meetings will now be operational, with one per term being strategic and which the safeguarding governor will attend. The easter period saw the highest number of PPN relating to our pupils. Mostly unlinked but the sheer amount was quite stark over the Easter period and raises concerns for Mayfair this year. Q – safeguarding audit, please remind me, page 2 the difference between CP plan, CIN plan and Early help? Child protection – highest level, ICN next level and early help level below those. Guidelines CP and CIN are statutory run by local authority; early help can be led by anyone. Q – page 8 confidence levels in the following safeguarding themes ACES, INCEL etc?. ACES = adverse childhood experiences e.g., parents split up, domestic violence, disguised compliance. INCEL – involuntary celibate (the tv show Adolescence), a concept where their physical presentation prevents them from finding a mate or a partner, very toxic, toxic masculinity, Andrew Tate. We also raised with staff professional curiosity i.e., the presentation of a child has suddenly changed i.e., becoming glamorous or presenting as dirty, staff should be asking why. Q – confidence levels appear low, hasn't that been addressed? Yes we addressed this with training around neglect and some of those matters recently.	I I I Q Q Q

		LW advised that the audit had raised governors making checks on pupils whenever they visit, take the opportunity to ask pupils if they know who the DSL is, do they feel safe etc., Clerk to update the governor visit form and check with ABL what to include for pupil questions. Pupils views from the audit, there are some worrying comments, when boys are sexually harassing girls SEND are excused whereas non-SEND are dealt with. ABL raised that we need to know who and what they are referring to, cannot address or respond without this information. Five pupils were questioned; it is concerning but is a small percentage of pupils.	I D I
2024/25/ FGB/ 64	SIP	Key actions are ticking along, gaps already identified i.e., work around homework and feedback has not progressed as we would want. Most areas are in progress and we have a strategy day coming up soon, where SLT will RAG and highlight any concerns. Behaviour is ongoing and will be all year, we have revisited this again with some very positive outcomes, parental engagement most of you will have seen the video I sent asking for parents to support the school and the new rules around lateness, DDI is really focused, and TLAC is more consistent again. The late room is working well, it is labour intensive and energy intensive but if we can keep it going the hard to reach pupils are already onboarding with this system and pupils seem positive about it. Q – what do you feel are the top two or three things for this key improvement? The cut off time and sustaining this. We want to be inclusive but the message of pupils is that inclusivity means you need to be in class and on time. We are allowing 5 minutes however an employer would not put up with people consistently being 5 minutes late. Before we had the good pupils on time, others drifted in over a few minutes and the more challenging pupils were 10 or even more minutes late. Now most pupils are there on or before the bell, the majority of the rest turn up within 5 minutes and those who are late, go to the late room. There has been kick back from some pupils going to the late room claiming that we are wasting their education but we are in fact protecting the education of the majority of pupils who are in class on time. Q – what happens if pupils are in a private music lesson and therefore late? They will be given a pink slip by their music teacher. Q – are all staff behind this initiative> Most of them, yes. This is not a SLT solution, it is a whole school solution.	I I Q Q Q
2024/25/ FGB/ 65	Training	LW has recently completed safer recruitment training with the National College. Will provide a training session for the board at the next FGB.	I
2024/25/ FGB/ 66	Governor Visits	LW visited the school to review CPD and coaching, this will be reported to T&L.	I

2024/25/ FGB/ 67	Items Through the Chair	Nothing raised.	I
2024/25/ FGB/ 68	Final Point	What is the impact of this meeting on outcomes for pupils in the school? Discussed health and safety from resources, keeping the building safe and bacterial issue, deep dives, QA, and the effect it has, reviewing uniform policy and where can make changes to help pupils attend lessons. Discussed effect of new five-minute attendance rule which is beginning to be seen. Indirectly the impact of staff talking about wellbeing, as we have a duty of care to staff as well as the pupils.	D D
2024/25/ FGB/69	Dates	Resources – Finance only – 22nd May 2025 (<i>NB after meeting, moved to 5th June 2025</i>) T&L 3rd July 2025 Resources 10th July 2025 FGB 17th July 2025	I

Meeting finished at 4.59pm

Agenda Reference	Agenda Item	Action Required	By Whom/ When
2024/25/FGB/57	Matters arising	Clerk to add staff wellbeing survey to Autumn agenda for governors to review questions before being circulated to staff in February 2026	Clerk Sept 25
2024/25/FGB/58	Governors	Clerk to invite SB and CW to the Year 6 parent evening	Clerk 23/05/25
2024/25/FGB/61	Skills Audit	Add to next FGB agenda	Clerk 17/07/25
2024/25/FGB/63	Safeguarding	Clerk to update the governor visit form to include questions to ask pupils	Clerk ASAP
2024/25/FGB/65	Training	LW to provide a training session on Safer Recruitment at next FGB	LW 17/07/25