



**GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL
Academy Trust**

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<u>GOVERNORS' BOARD MEETING</u>				
Date	Monday, 24 th March 2014		Time / Location	* 4.30 for Presentation *5:00 pm L5
Potential Attendees	Initials	Position	Comments	
Michael Bamborough	MB	Member Appointed Governor (Chairman)	Present	
Sarah Almey	SA	Member Appointed Governor (Vice Chair)	Apologies	
Tracey Amos	TA	Head Teacher	Present	
Sue Bates	SB	Parent Governor	Present	
Laraine Bridger	LB	Parent Governor	Present	
David Cobbledick	DC	Member Appointed Governor	Present	
Marten Gallagher	MG	Parent Governor	Absent	
Pat Grimwood-Taylor	PGT	Member Appointed Governor	Present	
Amanda Hornsby	AH	Staff Governor (Non Teaching)	Present	
Lorraine Kenneally	LK	Parent Governor	Apologies	
Hannah Pettifer	HP	Staff Governor (Non Teaching)	Present	
Jo Simpson	JSi	Co-Opted Governor	Present	
Peter Villiers	PV	Co-Opted Governor	Present	
Vacancy		Member Appointed Governor		
Jacqui Whiteman	JSW	Non Governor - Visitor (Deputy Headteacher)	Apologies	
Vacancy		Parent Governor		
Rose Elliott	RE	Clerk to Governing Board	Present	

MINUTES

D marks a Decision, C a Challenge, I Information shared, R denotes a Recommendation T is for Thanks

2013-14/ GOV/39	Presentation *4.30pm – 5.30pm	<p>Pupil Premium led by Polly Matthews, PM, [copy of PowerPoint slides on file]. PM gave information on our allocation, how we currently spend it, and how this might change.</p> <p>The children supported all have different needs and circumstances. From September we will have a computer based tracking programme which will help us to work more “SMARTly” and will also be used for SEN tracking. PM also talked about narrowing the gap and what that means at GTS. Our gap is small but we can show how we add value to each pupil in their progression. We will have plenty of data to show how our spending benefits our pupils; the required information appears on our website.</p> <p>PV challenged PM to explain how we can be sure this is applied fairly? How we managed to spend more than was allocated in the P. Premium? Also do we spend in advance of receiving the funds? - TRA explained that at GTS interventions are made whether a pupil is in receipt of Pupil Premium funding or not according to their needs, as assessed by us and other agencies as appropriate. We have an obligation to educate all pupils from our basic GAG [General Annual Grant]; P. Premium and SEN additional funding, which we will apply for once the new code becomes clear, are necessary to provide extra support. When talking about our income PGT asks why we receive less per pupil than other areas? This is a very good question, F40 have been petitioning central government on this topic and recently we have been advised that we will get an additional £189</p>	<p>I</p> <p>C</p> <p>I</p> <p>C</p>
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		<p>per pupil next year to go some way to evening this out although each pupil in Devon gets £500 - £600 less than the average.</p> <p>DC asks how we are effectively supported our gifted and talented pupils? We seek to add value to all pupils but historically we do well for this group. One reason we have moved away from X & Y bands is to ensure all feel equal and this helps them to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>SB reinforces that this approach can benefit each child and in her experience turning some around who, for whatever reason, have become disadvantaged not only has a positive effect on them but also on those around them.</p> <p>At 5.25 pm thanks were given to PM for the information shared in her presentation, which was most interesting.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>C</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>T</p>
2013-14/ GOV/40	Apologies	Apologies had been received from SA and LK [working]. JSW was not required to present any items at this meeting.	I
2013-14/ GOV/41	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts of interests were declared regarding this agenda.	I
2013-14/ GOV/42	Governor Matters - Staff Governor	<p>We have received only one name and so there will not be a requirement for a ballot. Hannah Pettifer (Exams Officer) put her name forward and it is proposed that she be accepted for a four year term as the second staff governor. As she is not a teacher it is further proposed that if, at a later date, a member of the teaching staff volunteers to become a governor then that person would be accepted and we continue with three staff governors in addition to the Headteacher, who is automatically a Board member of an Academy. This will require an amendment to our Articles of Association. Governors agreed to follow this path if it becomes necessary.</p> <p>Hannah was welcomed to the meeting and the Governing Body.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p>
2013-14/ GOV/43	Minutes of the Last Meeting	Minutes of the meetings held on 24 th March 2014 were reviewed, agreed and signed as a true record.	D
2013-14/ GOV/44	Matters Arising not on the Agenda	<p>It transpires the two prospective business governors MB has been in contact with do not have the time available to join our governing body. We will continue to search.</p> <p>MB gave information from the SOCA panel he attended recently that it was the decision of the County Council not to change the catchment area boundary that had recently been questioned.</p> <p>The Handbook for Governors is overdue.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
2013-14/ GOV/45	Minutes of Committee Meetings	<p>T & L no questions.</p> <p>Personnel. PV challenged the HT to state if the change to longer teaching periods were a minor administrative change or planned to have a major effect on the school? TRA advised that considerable research had been done following the success of the Yr.7 curriculum change where staff felt they were able to get deeper learning with longer sessions and pupils showed greater understanding. There will be six 50 minute sessions but most subjects will be taught in 100 minute sessions. PE, Food and all practical subjects especially benefit from the longer lesson times. One staff member expressed concerns about the change but accepts that it will</p>	<p>C</p> <p>I</p>

		<p>happen. JSW is working on a plan to bring to the next Teaching and Learning meeting.</p> <p>Interviews are being held for PE, Maths and English posts.</p> <p>Governors mentioned they were picking up concerns from parents about the number of staff members who have left recently, particularly when it involves leaving during exam preparation. TRA responded saying that no letter of resignation had been received therefore the earliest a teacher can leave, without breaking their contract, will be the end of the Summer Term. One person is leaving on 30th April (this is the normal resignation date for a teacher). The replacement for that post will join GTS on 2nd June. The HT was then challenged as to why some staff are leaving. TRA explained that staff do. It was normal for any school to experience movement in and out, of staff. TRA could only respond in general terms, due to the need to keep circumstances relating to individuals confidential. As Headteacher TRA is tasked by Governors to raise standards across all areas of the school. As part of achieving this staff are encouraged to develop themselves, which inevitably means that some will move on other schools in order to further their careers. MB read from a paper [copy attached] he had put together relating to how staff morale is currently being affected by many external pressures. He found, when this was raised at a regional NGA meeting, that we are not alone in this which, although somewhat reassuring, does not offer a solution.</p> <p>It was stated that if a parent has a concern Governors encourage them to make an appointment to meet with the Headteacher. Although there had to be an understanding that the HT would not discuss individual members of staff with them unless it was directly associated with their child's progress or welfare.</p> <p>Premises. MB briefed the Governors that four years ago we were provided with a pottery kiln; at the time it was well received as it appeared to meet a requirement. Unfortunately that requirement has not materialised and the kiln has never been used; indeed, had it been, our electricity bill would be considerably higher than it is today. As the kiln is not needed to meet any requirements and it takes up valuable space, is owned by the school and, as there are no outstanding factors affecting its disposal, it is proposed that it be disposed of as being surplus to requirement. This topic has been brought before the full Governing Body for a decision because the Premises committee was unable to do so as it was not quorate when it met. It was voted that the kiln be sold and the money raised should not just be added to the school accounts but be targeted at purchasing something of value that would benefit the curriculum. In view of the size and weight of the kiln DC made a suggestion concerning moving it to whoever makes the purchase.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to DC for his time and experience in securing the on-going income from the recently installed Solar PV panels.</p> <p>Finance. SB sought clarification of her understanding on the budget sheets. DC confirmed that we will be facing a considerable deficit in the coming year however in this first year at least we have reserves to enable the curriculum needs to be well met. Our current upper school numbers are high and so we need our teaching staff to meet requirements. However, as each large year group graduates from the top and the number of Year 7 pupils joining at the bottom remains low, each successive year will place a greater strain on our finances. This is why we are seeking to make cuts wherever possible [e.g. the mutual fund], reviewing every vacancy as it occurs and realigning staff where appropriate rather than considering like for like replacements.</p> <p>DC proposed, PGT seconded and governors agreed to confirm the proposals of the Finance committee in items 35, 37 and 39, there being only two Governors present at the last Committee meeting.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>C</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>T</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p>
2013-14/	Legal	It is proposed that we give consideration to changing our legal advisor for	I

GOV/46	Services	educational matters from Foot Anstey to Browne Jacobson. TRA has met with their representative and a visit to discuss our requirements with SLT has been arranged. This would entail putting all our legal advice [including HR] and work together with one firm. No decision has been made as yet.	
2013-14/ GOV/47	Improvement Plan Review	In view of the time and MB's health situation this evening TRA will forward, via the Clerk, the latest RAGd version and will take questions at the next meeting or earlier if required.	TRA RE All
2013-14/ GOV/48	Governor Training	DC can take passengers when he attends the publicised RAISEonline session; LB is interested in taking this up. Safeguarding Level 2 is scheduled for 2 nd April. PV wishes to attend a Performance Related Pay session.	I I I
2013-14/ GOV/49	Items Brought Forward Through the Chairman	PV wishes to put Drama on the agenda for 19 th May. MB and PV mentioned that they would each intend to submit an objection to the Route 39 planning application. If Governors wish to do likewise, as individuals, now is the time. TRA reported the school is hosting the first TEACH MEET day to be held in N Devon, it is sponsored by iRIS and its Learning. Several GTS staff are contributing items, which is good practice for them and our new Head of Science will be present. The NUT have called a strike for 26 th March, the school will remain open.	I I I I
2013-14/ GOV/50	Dates & Times of Meetings	2014 Teaching & Learning , Meeting Room 1, Tuesday 6 th May at 5.00 pm Personnel , HT's Office, Wednesday 7 th May at 5.00 pm Premises/Finance , HT's Office, Monday 12 th May at 5.00pm Full Governors' Meeting , L5, Monday 19 th May at 5.00pm, preceded by a presentation at 4.30pm.	I