



**ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH**

**THOMAS TALLIS SCHOOL**

**At a meeting of the Governing Board  
on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**MINUTES**

These are the values and virtues and governors at Thomas Tallis apply when making ethical governance decisions:

**Selflessness, Trust, Integrity, Wisdom, Objectivity, Kindness, Accountability,  
Justice, Openness, Service, Honesty, Courage, Leadership and Optimism.**

**GOVERNORS PARTICIPATING:**

Emma Warren (EW)	Chair of Governors
Carolyn Roberts (CR)	Headteacher
Catherine Farrant (CF)	Vice-Chair of Governors
Charles Duckworth (CD)	Vice-Chair of Governors
Richard Graham (RG)	
Yingzhen Chuang (YC)	
Esther Talabi (ET)	
Rhianne Muir (RM)	
Abbie Cooper (AC)	
Kirsty Kollgaard (KK)	
John Sabapathy (JS)	
Cheryl Campbell (CC)	Business Director – Associate Governor
Stephanie Shaldas (SS)	DHT Inclusion & Equality – Associate Governor
Katherine Walsh (KW)	DHT (Acting) Curriculum – Associate Governor
Joe Brown (JB)	Associate Governor

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Lucy Davies (LD), Royal Borough of Greenwich, Clerk to governors  
Diana Weber (DW) EA to the headteacher

The meeting started at 6pm.

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Newly elected parent governors John Sabapathy and Kirsty Kollgaard were welcomed to the meeting. Governors thanked them for putting themselves forward for the role.

Governors welcomed Joe Brown to the meeting, as a potential Associate Governor.

Apologies for absence had been received from Mark Turner, noted.

Introductions were made.

## **2. BRIEFING FROM THE CLERK**

The clerk reported that the local authority had set up a partnership working group “Educate Against Racism” to raise awareness of racial equality in schools. Stephanie Shaldas had participated in the recent event run by the local authority, and her presentation video had been circulated to governors. Governors were pleased to learn that she had been involved. The briefing note is appended to these minutes. Further information is available here: [Educate Against Racism RBG](#).

The Summer Term Information Paper for governors from the local authority had been circulated to governors. The clerk highlighted:

The DfE will update their guidance on RSHE which will require school policies to be updated.

The DfE are encouraging governing boards to publish information on their school websites about board diversity. It is not mandatory to do so, and the DfE has indicated that individual board members should not be able to be identified. The template Register of Business Interests form will be updated to capture the relevant information and the board will decide on a collective and individual basis whether to publish the information. **Action Point:** Whether to publish governor diversity information on the school website to be discussed at the autumn term full governing board meeting.

## **3. DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS & SECURITY CHECK**

Governors were reminded that they should declare any pecuniary or other interests in any agenda item and may need to withdraw from the meeting for that item. There were no such declarations.

## **4. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP & APPOINTMENTS**

The chair introduced Joe Brown and said some words about himself and why he is interested in governance at Thomas Tallis. He had been a Tallis student and served as a student governor. He left the meeting briefly while governors discussed his appointment and unanimously agreed to appoint him as an Associate Governor.

Governors were informed that Abbie Cooper was leaving the school and therefore no longer serving as the elected staff governor. A new staff governor would be sought through

the election process. Governors thanked Abbie for her contribution and support as the staff governor.

Governors noted that Joanne Townshend had resigned as a governor and thanked her for her dedication and work as a governor, and as chair of the Inclusion Committee.

It was unanimously agreed that Katherine Walsh be appointed as an Associate governor for the duration of her role as Acting Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum.)

## **5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

It was confirmed that actions from the last meeting had been completed.

**Action Point:** Governor monitoring visit to monitor the implementation of the policy for High Prior Attainers.

## **7. LEADERSHIP REPORT**

The leadership report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read. CR reminded governors that the School Plan Update report is formatted in alignment with the School Plan and gives a RAG rated snapshot update on the progress of the School Plan.

A governor commented that a Data Dashboard would be a useful supplementary report to the School Plan report. Governors and leaders are analysing available standardised data which is generated through the Brom Com system. Standardised data would mean that baselines would be set and triangulated with the strategic priorities in the School Plan.

Governors commented on the evidence shows a stronger emphasis on trauma-informed practice and behaviour.

The board discussed the areas which are Red rated:

Improve GCSE P8 Score to 0+ by increasing achievement: The headteacher reported that this aim has been impeded by the high number of SEND students. It is likely that the P8 (Progress 8 Score) will be between -0.5 and -0.1, similar to the 2022 level -0.14. Children in the local authority have excellent outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 4, outcomes are less strong because 60% of the top decile leave and join grammar schools outside the borough.

Maintain ALPS2 therefore opening all the doors of opportunity to students at 18+. During the two years of Covid, students achieved higher outcomes at Key Stage 4. The likely achievement will be ALPS5.

Improve Attendance to 96% and reduce lateness to below 2.5%. It was reported that attendance levels nationally have fallen post-Covid. Attendance at Thomas Tallis was 88.9% at the time of writing the report, which is 1% above the national average.

Improve behaviour further, reducing suspensions by 10% by building a happy and safe community. It is not likely that this level will be reached. Post-Covid has seen students struggling with behaviour. A core group of 21 students are engaged in behaviour which leads to higher rate of suspension.

Engage all parents and carers in children's learning with 90% parent's evening attendance. The attendance rate at parent's evening is around 79%. The school is in touch with every parent.

Work with the LA to maintain a fair SEND intake. The headteacher reported that Thomas Tallis is seen as a good choice for parents of children with SEND, and some other schools turn away students with SEND. There are 130 children at the school who have an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan). Funding is not sufficient to cover the cost of supporting young people with SEND. Governors acknowledge that the high level of SEND impacts all aspects of school life and much strategic thought and work goes into responding to the situation.

#### Report into Trauma Informed Practice at Tallis

Governors discussed the report and appreciated hearing the comments from students about how their teachers had been able to identify when students were needing support and stepped in to help them.

#### Improvement Partner Report

Report from the School Improvement Partner from June 2023. The Improvement Partner had visited TOFFs and discussed behaviour and exclusions for a core group of students who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Exam preparation and Curriculum and Assessment were also discussed.

#### Anti-Racist Action Plan

Governors were pleased to see the updated Anti-Racist Action Plan. The Equality Audit had been reported at a recent Resources Committee meeting. CF reported that she had recently attended Anti-Racist training and will share the training materials. **Action Point.**

Governors discussed the anti-racist work, which had also featured during discussions at committee meetings. They had seen evidence of the curriculum leads working on decolonisation of the curriculum. **They asked whether there is a whole-school narrative on curriculum decolonisation.** The headteacher reported that each department would publish their curriculum in the autumn term and the curriculum plans would clearly show decolonisation of the curriculum.

Governors are aware from discussions with students at the school that the young people felt that they had an opportunity to speak out on anti-racist matters and that they feel that their voice is heard.

#### Plans for 2023.24

Discussing strategic school planning, governors talked about key focus areas for the new academic year. Reading will continue to be a focus area, as well as the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Attendance – particularly Persistent Absence – and Behaviour will continue to feature. English, Maths and Science will continue as part of the plan. Governor visits will

be strategically aligned to areas of the School Plan. **Action Point:** CF volunteered to help plan governor visits.

Governors thanked leaders and staff for their hard work over the last academic year.

## **8. GOVERNANCE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The chair reminded governors that the governance framework had been discussed at one of the governor strategy days. The board had talked about governor retention, time commitment expectations and governor workload.

A small task group had looked at the governance framework and generated a suggested plan for streamlining governance processes whilst maintaining a high level of strategic focus, support and challenge as well as covering statutory governance areas.

The proposal put forward was for governance meetings to take place during the school day and be followed by strategically focussed governor visits. This would facilitate governors to spend time in school. The number of meetings that governors needed to attend would be reduced.

Governance meetings would take place once each half term – six meetings per academic year – and would include items that committees cover now. The meetings would last for two hours and would be attended by all governors.

The board spent some time discussing the proposal, weighing up the benefits and possible challenges and recognising that it represents a fundamental and courageous change. They recognised the role that governors play in holding the school to account.

Governors voted on the proposed change, and it was **AGREED** to move to the new model for the academic year 2023.24. Termly reviews would assess the effectiveness in practice of the new model of working and make adjustments if needed. It was agreed that the Deficit Recovery Group and Pay Committee would continue to meet.

## **9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The headteacher's performance management group was agreed: Catherine Farrant, Richard Graham and Kirsty Kollgaard.

Pay Committee: Mark Turner, Rhianne Muir, Ying Chuan.

Pay Appeals: Emma Warren + two other non-staff governors, who could be from other Greenwich schools.

## **10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Action Point:** Draft minutes from the Summer 1 committee meetings will be uploaded to Teams.

### Resources Committee

CD reported that the budget had been approved by the committee. The 2023.24 financial year will see a £600k in-year deficit and a predicted carry-forward of £300k. Future years see significant cumulative deficits and the Resources Committee recommended that the

Deficit Recovery Group continue to meet; agreed. There are many variables in the budget and the PFI costs and invoicing are unpredictable. Teacher's pay awards are not confirmed.

## **11. SCHOOL PLAN**

Governors discussed the current School Plan, which runs from 2020-2024. There are five headings for the plan:

SP1 A Powerful Curriculum – work will continue on the curriculum, looking in depth at what is taught when and why.

SP2 The Best Teaching & Learning – including teacher recruitment. **A governor asked about turnover rates.** The turnover rate is 11.5%. The school is fully staffed, and it is recognised that there is a recruitment crisis in teaching. Salary increases are unfunded.

SP3 Great Achievement & Progress – all students to achieve to their full potential. **Governors asked about Exceptional Learners and how they will be supported.** KW reported that principles of adaptive learning are being worked on, with plans in place to support all students to achieve to their full potential. Where the plan discusses underachievement, this refers to children of all abilities and not just the lower achievers.

SP4 Excellent Personal Development - focussing on character traits, community-building behaviour and positive behaviour traits. Trauma informed practice is threaded through these practices.

SP5 A Model for a Better World – a governor asked whether this area is linked to the curriculum. There are links to the curriculum; it is a broad area and includes work with the PFI provider.

## **12. CHAIR'S REPORT**

None to report.

## **13. GOVERNOR TRAINING**

CF reported that she had undertaken teacher anti-racist training. It was confirmed that some governors are trained in Safer Recruitment.

## **14. GOVERNOR VISITS**

Visit reports were received and noted: Careers, and Single Central Record.

CF will co-ordinate visits, which will be linked to strategic areas in the School Plan.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The chair reported that a parental complaint had been investigated, a panel hearing took place, and the matter is now closed as far as the complaints process is concerned.

## **16. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

None.

The meeting ended at 7:40pm.

## Actions Log

1.	Decision on whether to publish governor diversity information on the school website to be discussed at the autumn term full governing board meeting.	
2.	Governor monitoring visit to monitor the implementation of the policy for High Prior Attainers.	
3.	CF reported that she had recently attended Anti-Racist training and will share the training materials.	
4.	CF volunteered to help plan governor visits.	
5.	Summer Term I Committee minutes to be uploaded to Teams.	