



**ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH**

**THOMAS TALLIS SCHOOL**

**At a meeting of the Governing Board  
on 28<sup>th</sup> March 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
Tom Challen (TC)	
Richard Graham (RG)	
Mark Turner (MT)	
Joanne Townshend (JT)	
Gavin Williamson (GW)	
Yingzhen Chuang (YC)	
Esther Talabi (ET)	
Rhianne Muir (RM)	

Cheryl Campbell (CC) (Business Director) – Associate Governor  
Stephanie Shaldas (SS) DHT Inclusion & Equality – Associate Governor  
Katherine Rowley-Conwy (KRC) DHT Curriculum – 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. BRIEFING FROM THE CLERK**

The clerk delivered a short briefing, appended to these minutes.

## **2. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Governors welcomed Esther Talabi to the meeting, as a potential new governor. Introductions were made.

Apologies for absence had been received from Abbie Cooper and Camelia Muldermans. Apologies for lateness from Rhianne Muir.

## **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**

It was noted that Rosie Ross, Deveena Sahota and Sandrine Marionville-Jaines had resigned as governors. An election for a parent governor will need to be held. **Action Point.**

### Associate Governors

The board considered the appointment of Deputy Headteachers Stephanie Shaldas and Katherine Rowley-Conwy Associate Governors. After a brief discussion the board agreed to appoint both as Associate Governors. Katherine Rowley-Conwy will be on maternity leave after Easter and her role will be covered by Katherine Walsh. **Action Point:** Board to consider the appointment of Katherine Walsh as an Associate governor at the next meeting.

### Co-opted Governors

Esther Talabi introduced herself, she works in operational support at a large accounts organisation and has an interest in volunteer roles with social responsibility. She has an interest in schools and young people and lives locally. She left the meeting briefly and the board unanimously agreed to appoint her as a co-opted governor.

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

*Change to attendees: Rhianne Muir joined the meeting with apologies for lateness.*

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

It was confirmed that the PTFA Strategy had been circulated to governors. The chair of the PTFA joined for part of the last Resources Committee meeting to talk about the work of the PTFA and fundraising ideas.

It was confirmed that Daniel Talbot had joined the governor strategy day to talk about his work on Pupil Premium strategies.

## **7. STRATEGY DAY**

Governors had received the Strategy Day Actions document which tracks and monitors actions from the strategy day. No decisions needing ratification were taken at the last strategy day.

## **4. GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Rhianne Muir was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made. Rhianne introduced herself; she works in technology and has experience of marketing, technology and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. She lives locally has an interest in volunteering, likes working with people to empower problem solving and is enthusiastic about supporting Thomas Tallis. She left the meeting briefly and governors unanimously agreed to appoint her as a co-opted governor.

## **8. LEADERSHIP REPORT**

The leadership reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read.

### Staff Tallis Jury Service

Governors discussed the Staff Tallis Jury initiative. **Governors asked about outcomes, mindful that the staff Jury is a relatively new programme.** CR reported that staff feedback was positive. Groups had talked about workload and organisation. Discussions are reported to Leadership Group, who feed back to staff via the Staff Bulletin.

### Attendance

**A governor asked why pupil attendance levels are below the national average.** SS reported that Persistent Absence is a concern. Some students are school refusers and there are mental health and anxiety issues, as well as some students with medical issues. Underlying causes are identified, and key actions are in place. During the summer term a new approach to attendance management will be developed, and then implemented from autumn term onwards. The approach will incorporate early intervention.

**A governor asked why the levels of Persistent Absence are higher at Thomas Tallis.** There is a significant proportion of students who have SEND. Some students have adjusted timetables. Many schools are experiencing higher levels of Persistent Absence after the pandemic. Some students are enabled to miss school by their parents.

**A governor asked about punctuality.** SS reported that punctuality is improving. There is a core group of challenging students.

**A governor asked whether all possible is done to support an improvement in attendance.** CR reported that the Admin team working on Attendance had been strengthened and good processes are in place.

XFM (Expectation, Effort Engagement – In-school initiative to encourage Year 11 students to engage with homework.)

**A governor asked whether XFN was running.** Confirmed in place for Year 11. After mock exams are over, it will be launched for Year 10. There is a focus on supporting students who are eligible for Pupil Premium. The initiative may extend to lower year groups.

#### ALPS (A-Level Performance System) Data

**A governor asked about the School Plan aim to maintain ALPS 2; noting that the algorithm needs resetting. Would ALPS 2 be deserved?** KR-C reported that the ALPS data makes comparisons difficult, particularly as this year follows a period of Teacher Assessed and Centre Assessed Grades. The current Year 13 had Centre Assessed Grades at GCSE and had suffered from possible grade inflation and missed education. Students are well-supported at Tallis but some are struggling with completing all course content. Actions are in place to support students to achieve their best in exams, both in Years 13 and Year 11. Grade boundaries will revert to 2019 levels.

**A governor asked whether the long-term expectation is to reduce the number of U grades, once the impact of the pandemic is diminished.** K R-C reported that a reduction should be seen, as going forwards students will have sat GCSEs. Mock exams are taking place now and then targeted action plans will be put in place.

#### In-School Truancy

**A governor asked about levels of in-school truancy, particularly amongst students with SEND.** SS reported that there is not a requirement to track in-school truancy; there is an acknowledgement that some students are out of lessons. Identified students have a contract and receive support; their attendance is reviewed by the Head of Year. Heads of Year receive a truancy alert and then need to locate students. In-school truancy levels are similar at Thomas Tallis and other schools. Some have SEND needs and are supported to access the curriculum.

#### SEND

**A governor asked about levels of SEND intake; are numbers increasing?** CR reported that Thomas Tallis' proportion of students with SEND is much higher than other schools and a request to the local authority to balance this has been made. The school is seen as a supportive school for children with SEND.

#### Careers Education

**A governor asked about the School Plan aim to offer top quality careers education; what is needed for the RAG rating to move from Amber to Green?** It was reported that the Careers Plan is on track, and it is likely that this will move to Green.

#### Teacher Recruitment and Training

**Discussing the School Plan aim to recruit, train and retain the best quality teachers, a governor asked whether future teacher recruitment is likely to be**

**problematic.** CR reported that there had been some difficulty recruiting teaching staff, e.g. Geography and Maths.

**A governor asked whether all staff had undertaken Trauma Informed Training.**

Confirmed. All staff are trained, or in the process of training.

#### Improvement Partner Report

Governors received the Improvement Partner Report February 2023. The local authority Improvement Partner visit was focused on attendance and exclusions and progress in Y11 and Y13.

#### SEND Restructuring

Report received. **A governor asked whether the two SENDCos would have the SENDCo qualification.** Confirmed. CR reported that there is a national crisis with funding for SEND. **A governor asked whether EHCP funding covers funding needs.** No, the funding does not cover costs. Information across schools is being sought to support requesting funds. **A governor noted that there is an identified £485k shortfall in Key Stage 3; where is the funding coming from?** The shortfall must be found from the school budget and there are budget difficulties as a result of this.

Paper received for noting; CR reported that the work to develop plans to effectively structure the SEND provision is continuing.

#### Geography Award

Governors were pleased to learn that the Geography Department had been awarded the PTI Bernice McCabe Award for quality of curriculum and extra-curricular activities. **Action Point:** Chair to write to congratulate the Geography team.

#### High Attaining Children

**A governor challenged the Green status of the High Attaining Children aim to respond to the needs of this group of children. What is being done to ensure that the needs are being met, given that work on the Policy is in progress?**

**Action Point:** Governor visit to take place after the Policy has been developed and approved by governors and had a chance to embed.

#### Progress 8

**A governor commented that the P8 score School Plan aim is RAG rated Red.** But noted that P8 as a measure is difficult due to children's experiences during the pandemic, and changes in grade boundaries. **How are the young people coping with predictions?** KR-C reported that students are supported well and positively and are organised into intervention groups. Uptake and engagement with the interventions is positive.

## **9. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Draft minutes from the Spring term committee meetings had been circulated.

It was reported that the **Deficit Recovery Group** continues to meet and will meet on 29<sup>th</sup> March. The aim is to produce a balanced budget.

### Resources Committee

7<sup>th</sup> March meeting. Draft minutes had been circulated. Committee Chair GW reported that the PTFA chair (Debbie Joyce) had met the committee and is generating ideas for fundraising. Ideas had been discussed at the governors Strategy Day, and thanks were extended to Debbie for her enthusiastic work.

The 2023.24 budget and 3-year forecast will be considered for approval at the June Resources Committee meeting.

### Learning & Achievement Committee

Draft minutes from the 24<sup>th</sup> January and 14<sup>th</sup> March meetings had been circulated. Noted.

### Inclusion Committee

Draft minutes from the 17<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> February meetings had been circulated. Noted.

## **10. GOVERNOR TRAINING**

Governors were encouraged to enrol for the governor training courses through the local authority Governor Services. **Action Point:** Clerk to circulate the link to governors, including new governors.

Governors were reminded that they can access training through the NGA, including training in School Finances.

It was acknowledged that the governing board has a broad range of skills, and there is not an expectation for all governors to be experts in school finance, although they should all have a broad understanding to allow for effective decision making.

## **11. GOVERNOR VISITS**

Visit Reports had been circulated:

- SEND Visit
- TOFFS and Basecamp. **A governor asked how the questions raised at the visit will be answered.** It was reported that the TOFFS lead had attended the Inclusion committee to present. EW will undertake a follow-up visit and the report and question answers will be reported to the Inclusion Committee.
- Data Collection and Presentation
- Careers – it was noted that regular reports take place to Inclusion Committee.
- Single Central Register – it was confirmed that a governor had visited to monitor the Single Central Register, including a check on Temporary Staff. CC reported that G4s now give fuller information. **Action Point:** MT to write a visit report for the Single Central Register check.

## **12. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

Approved 11.7.23

None, policies had been approved by the committees.

### **13. SCHOOL FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD**

Copy received for information. Noted. The SFVS had been discussed and approved by the Resources Committee and will be signed by the chair of the Resources Committee.

### **14. CHAIR'S ACTION**

None.

### **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Governors wished Katherine Rowley-Conwy well for her maternity leave. Her post will be covered by Katherine Walsh.

New governors will be appointed a buddy to support them.

### **16. INFORMATION PAPER FOR GOVERNORS**

The spring term paper had been circulated by the local authority governor services.

### **17. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

None.

The meeting ended at 7:30pm.

### **Actions Log**

1.	An election for a parent governor will need to be held.	DW
2.	Board to consider the appointment of Katherine Walsh as an Associate governor at the next meeting.	Govs/ Clerk
3.	Chair to write to congratulate the Geography team.	EW
4.	Governor visit to take place after the High Prior Attainers Policy has been developed and approved by governors and had a chance to embed.	RG
5.	Clerk to circulate the link for governor training to governors, including new governors	Clerk
6.	MT to write a visit report for the Single Central Register check.	MT

## **CLERKS BRIEFING**

### **Finance / News:**

- PP funding will increase – Primary + £70, secondary +£50 and LAC children + £120.
- Energy support will be shared across school – on average primary + £16K and secondary £42K.
- The schools Bill will not progress as previously reported – but certain elements would be prioritised.
- Mental Health Training funding still available – DFE is offering £1,200 to train senior mental health lead to develop whole school approach.

### **Procedures / Reminders:**

- Governors are asked to ensure that the procedure in school is secure for providing a new school with a student's file as soon as possible – a number of schools have reported real issues around this. This is a particular issue if the students have SEND or CP concerns.
- SFVS needs completing and returning by March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Financial skills audit should be completed.