

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON 6th JULY 2016

Present: Martyn Henson (Head Teacher), Hilary Rodgers, Nick Hoffman, Graham Blackburn, Julia Marshall, Keith Hopkinson, Julia Brettell, Sue Padfield, Craig Temple, Richard Aggus (Chair of Governors), Kojo Wood, Amy Pearson, James Marshall, Emma Bull, Phil Cave

Apologies: Sheenagh Parsons, Kath Smith, Pippa Frost, Nick Collins

(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in italics)

1.	<p>To receive any apologies and decide whether to give consent for absence.</p> <p>Apologies from Nick Collins, Kath Smith, Sheenagh Parsons and Pippa Frost had been received and consent for absence was given.</p> <p>The Head Boy and Head Girl were welcomed to the meeting; they were joining as Associate Members. Introductions were made.</p>	
2.	<p>To receive notification of any other business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moodle 	
3.	<p>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest for items on the agenda</p> <p>None</p>	
4.	<p>Head's Report, RELIC</p> <p>The report had been circulated and questions were taken.</p> <p><i>Q What was the response rate from the teachers' consultation on the school calendar? There had been 74 responses from 90 teachers.</i> <i>Q Do we know why the 16 didn't respond? The Head did not think there was any particular reason; it was an anonymous questionnaire so he did not know who they were. 74 out of 90 was a good percentage. More staff had responded to the staff survey. One of the areas in the staff survey with a relatively less positive response, ie not so many strong agreements, was the level of consultation with staff. This had then been followed by the questionnaire regarding the school calendar, which had now been revamped for next year following the responses.</i></p> <p>The Head elaborated on the calendar: every single Wednesday would include some form of training, rather than having longer separate sessions. The feedback from staff was that a 2 hours training session was not productive, whereas shorter pit-stop sessions every Wednesday would be more effective.</p> <p>Staff had also been asked if they wanted an occasional day in the Autumn term – there had been a divided response on this.</p>	

<p><i>A governor thought that it was interesting that there was a strong preference for the status quo. Question phrasing could have had an impact, although there was the opportunity for staff to add comments on the form.</i></p> <p>The Head added that they were setting up an Advisory Group, where the agenda was set by the staff. It would give staff an opportunity to raise particular items and also get more involved. This meeting would run alongside a more traditional staff meeting each term.</p> <p>Q <i>A couple of Governors wondered if an early finish to Parents Evenings would make it difficult for some parents to attend. This would not help with their key development area of engaging parents. Parents evenings were scheduled for 3.30pm to 6.30pm. The Head would look at this. He added that the bulk of parents attended between 3.30 and 6.30pm. The problem with engagement was with the 10-15% who did not really engage with the school, perhaps through feeling insecure about coming into school due to their own experiences or because they thought there would be negative feedback about their children. There was a huge correlation between non-engagement of parents and non-achievement of children, so this was an area that had to be addressed. It was noted that there would be a targeted parents evening on a separate evening where parents would talk to one member of staff who would talk through all subjects. There would be a positive message with options for support. Parents would get phone calls and letters and the school would ensure it would be a convenient time for the parent. The extended SLT would run these sessions; it might be necessary to have these meetings off-site to make them less threatening. Asked, the Head said that parents would have prior knowledge that there were issues and problems and this might be a factor in them not attending. It was an issue affecting the children's progress so did need addressing. There was a definite improvement last year in targeted parents attending by adopting this approach; this had had a measurable impact on the children's progress.</i></p> <p><i>The Head added that staff were given guidance and CPD on conducting parent consultations. A governor thought that more personal contact would be welcome, such as phone calls celebrating achievement and giving positive feedback. Even the Well Done cards from the Head really made a difference.</i></p> <p>Q A Governor asked if it would be possible to use the Parents Forum. <i>However, a parent Governor noted that it was invariably the same group of people who attended the Forum. The agenda usually only went to parents who attended or regulars, so sometimes the wrong target audience were there in terms of the topic being discussed. It might be useful to try and expand membership. Q Do you canvas parents' views? They do try to, but could do better.</i></p> <p>(KW arrived at this point).</p> <p>The Head noted that, in RACE, there was a focus on further developing the role of the Parents Forum. The form tutor should be building relationships with parents on a positive note, before calling about something negative.</p>	<p>Action 16/34 Head to review timings of Parents Evenings</p>
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	<p><i>Q A Governor commented that more communication with parents by email was good, but there were issues with email and IT. She would like to be reassured that the IT infrastructure was solid and could cope with this. The Head said that they were moving over to another platform, which should address the IT problems. They were setting it all up over the summer and would have a new platform from September.</i></p> <p>Q A Governor queried low engagement by PP children in the enrichment activities. <i>The Head said that there were all sorts of gaps with PP children, which they were aware of and addressing. With respect to curriculum and enrichment, they would be targeting specific PP children with activities which would suit them.</i></p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Conversion to Foundation Status</p> <p>HfL could not enact the FGB's decision at the last meeting regarding the Instrument of Government as it was an either/or decision. The Chair had written to all parents regarding nominations for the Partnership posts and there were no responses. The FGB was now free to appoint people with appropriate skills. The FGB discussed the Instrument of Government and the following proposal was made:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">2 Parent Governors 1 LA Governor 1 Staff Governor 1 Headteacher 11 Co-Opted Governors 2 Partnership Governors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Total – 18</p> <p>The term of office would remain as 4 years for all categories. The Instrument was to be effective from 1st September 2016.</p> <p>It was also proposed that 2 current governors with specific skills and expertise required by the FGB, Sheenagh Parsons (Legal expertise) and Sue Padfield (Educational expertise) should be moved from Co-Opted Governors to Partnership Governors.</p> <p>The proposal was made by KH and seconded by JB. The proposal was passed unanimously by the Board of Governors.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Prevent Duty/ Safeguarding</p> <p><i>The Safeguarding Governor was due to come into school to finish off the safeguarding audit/checklist.</i></p> <p><i>The FGB had held cluster safeguarding training on Monday – there was a record of governors who attended. JM would check whether those who did not attend still had valid training.</i></p>	<p>Action 16/35 JM to check whether non-attendees still had valid safeguarding training</p>

<p>7.</p>	<p>RACE</p> <p>The latest version had been uploaded onto Moodle in the Pre-Meeting discussion section. The Head said that he was very pleased with the document. There was a list of objectives and action points, and the success criteria was more measurable than previously.</p> <p>Governors were asked to view the latest version (10.1) and give feedback via email.</p> <p><i>The Board of Governors went on to discuss how RACE could be used effectively as a tool for governor monitoring and visits, particularly involving more pupil voice. There were other documents which could also assist monitoring, eg monitoring work of Groups panels by viewing the minutes of meetings. KS4 and KS3 progress linked governors could work with the lead staff member. It would be useful for governors to acquire expertise and skill in a particular Key Stage, since it was a rapidly changing area. The governor would have a key role in monitoring that actions were being completed. Governors also thought it might be advisable to have 2 governors linked to an area so they could exchange ideas. It was anticipated that the link governor would feed back information to the FGB in an accessible way.</i></p> <p><i>It was noted that Ofsted wanted to see that all Governors were aware of what was going on, and sharing information was vital. They would be discussing FGB structure and roles/links later in the meeting, possibly moving away from Faculty links.</i></p> <p>The Head mentioned that he was involved in a Good to Outstanding project where Nobel was twinned with another school. The Head had presented RACE and they were impressed with the concept as everything was linked in a cohesive way, including self-evaluation and performance appraisal. The new PAR system was directly linked to achieving the success criteria.</p> <p>The next part of the process would be that each Faculty would write their own plan, linking to each objective and giving their own targets and success criteria. It would give a consistent set of documents which all governors could use strategically.</p> <p><i>KW had visited the Head to talk about the local community and had offered to provide a pit-stop training session about a parent's view of what a form tutor should be like. Any parent governors would be welcome to join in.</i></p> <p><i>Governors commented that they really liked the format and concept of the RACE document. The Head added that it enabled the school to give evidence to show where their data was outstanding.</i></p> <p>Q Shouldn't there be some evidence of governor involvement in the success criteria so it was evident everyone was working together in leadership and management and the governors' role was clear? As part of the process to get to Outstanding, the Governing Board needed to be part of this and raising their own game. It was noted that there was a section in the SEF on Governance which</p>	<p>Action 16/36 Governors to give feedback on RACE via email</p>
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	<p><i>needed to be revisited. Evidence needed to be clear and obvious.</i></p> <p>Section 8 Inspection – there would be 2 Inspectors coming into the school and the Head would need to convince them they needed to come back in for another day as the school was Outstanding. They would need solid evidence to support this.</p>	
8.	<p>To discuss urgent matters arising from Committee Meetings</p> <p><u>Finance, Personnel and Premises</u> Minutes of the committee meeting had been circulated.</p> <p><u>L&D Committee</u> Minutes of the committee meeting had been circulated.</p> <p><u>Pay Committee</u> Nothing to report.</p>	
9.	<p>Policies</p> <p>Nil</p> <p>The Safeguarding Policy was being reviewed by HfL.</p>	
10.	<p>Community Use Agreement</p> <p>A confidential item was discussed.</p>	
11.	<p>Governor Visits and Links</p> <p><i>Safeguarding training had taken place.</i></p> <p><i>A governor commented that getting hold of Faculty staff to make visits could sometimes be difficult.</i></p>	
12.	<p>To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 11th May 2016</p> <p>The minutes were approved.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 16/24 - SP to check on requirements for governors on SCR/Log – Ongoing • Action 16/20 - KW to talk to SM/safeguarding team regarding engaging with hard to reach families - ongoing • Action 16/18 - SM to share Safeguarding Action Plan with SP - ongoing • Action 16/21 - SM to make agreed changes to E-Safety policy and upload revised policy to website - ongoing • All other actions were complete 	<p>Action 16/24 SP to check on requirements for governors on SCR/Log</p> <p>Action 16/20 KW to talk to SM/safeguarding team regarding engaging with hard to reach families</p> <p>Action 16/18</p>

		<p>SM to share Safeguarding Action Plan with SP</p> <p>Action 16/21 – SM to make agreed changes to E-Safety Policy and upload revised policy to website</p>
13.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moodle – Governors discussed use of Moodle. Some Governors commented that the yellow font was difficult to read and the Chair would ask School IT to change. He added that they were looking at creating a better structure and filing and archiving system. It needed to be used more smartly. It would also be useful for governors to have alerts to home email addresses notifying of changes made. The Head said that the school was moving to Office 365 in the summer and would use 365 for this purpose. The Chair would continue to email governors to inform that documents had been posted as input would be required. 	<p>Action 16/37 RA to ask School IT to change colour of font on Moodle</p>
14.	<p>Workshop on structure of FGB</p> <p>The Chair advised that Martin Powell had submitted his resignation as a governor. Nick Collins had advised that he would not be able to make evening meetings due to work pressures and the FGB agreed that he should be asked to step down as a governor. He would be welcome to rejoin at a later date once he had availability.</p> <p>The FGB unanimously approved the appointment of Sue Padfield and Phil Cave as Full Governors.</p> <p>The FGB then approved the appointment of Sue Padfield and Sheenagh Parsons as Partnership Governors, as they had particular skills and experience required by the Governing Board.</p> <p><i>The Chair had circulated a document on options concerning future structure of the FGB and its meetings to try and maximise effectiveness and sharing of knowledge across the Board. Both options reflected that there would be increased responsibilities of the FGB concerning employment, premises, personnel etc, and proposed establishment of a Foundation committee to cover this wider range of responsibilities. This committee would replace the Pay Committee and cover pay/performance appraisal responsibilities. Both options also proposed that 2 Co-Chairs be appointed to aid with succession planning, handover and sharing of duties. Option 2 proposed removal of the L&D and FP&P committees and replacing with a FGB (detail) meeting, where all governors would be party to discussions on the budget, curriculum, attainment, finance, H&S etc. This option was, in the</i></p>	

	<p><i>Chair's opinion, a more efficient way of doing business. Decisions could be ratified at the meeting instead of having to be referred back to the FGB. It allowed more involvement by all governors, and governors would be more knowledgeable about all issues relating to the school.</i></p> <p><i>Panels for complaints/exclusions etc would be set up on an ad-hoc basis.</i></p> <p><i>Governors then discussed whether to have 2 Co-Chairs and 1 Vice Chair or 1 Chair and 1 or 2 Vice Chairs. A Governor commented that it would be preferable to have one person leading the organisation so they knew who had ultimate decision making authority. It was noted that the Chair would only have Chair's authority to make decisions on behalf of the FGB if something urgent occurred at very short notice. They were a corporate body with corporate responsibility; the Chair's responsibility was to ensure process was followed. The 2 Co-Chairs and Vice Chair could agree on how to share responsibilities and roles. Specific TOR could be agreed for each post. The Chair said that he would like the FGB to address succession planning in a more direct way; by having a designate Chair, there would be an onus on that person to take the Chair's training courses, read up on the role and gradually take over some of the workload. That person was doing the job knowing that they would take over the role of Chair in the future. It was about creating a structure whereby the person would genuinely take on responsibility and step up to become Chair at some point. Governors agreed that the current Chair took on a huge workload and it was time for another Governor to take on some of the role. If it was agreed which of the Co-Chairs had the responsibility for taking Chair's action, this would resolve the issue of ultimate authority.</i></p> <p><i>The FGB then approved Option 2, with the proviso that there would be 3 FGB meetings per term, possibly 2 Detail and 1 Strategic. There would be also be a Foundation Committee meeting per term.</i></p> <p><i><u>Governor links</u>- a system whereby governors linked to aspects in RACE was proposed. These were: leadership and SLT; Groups; Curriculum; Community and Engagement; T&L; Students; KS3; KS4; KS5; SEND, PP, CP, Prevent; Governor Training; Music; Sport and Healthy Eating/H&S.</i></p> <p><i>The Chair would email out suggestions for governor links in accordance with governors' skills and expertise.</i></p>	<p>Action 16/38 RA to email out suggestions for governor links</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>Election of Chairs/Vice Chairs</p> <p>Richard Aggus and Julia Brettell were elected unanimously as Co-Chairs for 1 year.</p> <p>Hilary Rodgers was elected unanimously as Vice Chair for 1 year.</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <p>Weds 21st September at 6pm (Apologies from KW)</p>	

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