

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD
HELD ON 23rd MARCH 2016

Present: Martyn Henson (Head Teacher),
 Graham Blackburn, Julia Marshall, Pippa Frost, Sheenagh Parsons, Jill
 Borchards, Hilary Rodgers, Nick Collins, Nick Hoffman,
 Keith Hopkinson, Julia Brettell, Sue Padfield, Craig Temple

Apologies: Kath Smith, Hilary Rodgers (late), Richard Aggus, Rebecca
 Hughes, Phil Cave

Absent: Martin Powell

(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 were received and accepted from Kath Smith, Richard Aggus, Rebecca Hughes and Phil Cave.</p> <p>Apologies had not been received from Martin Powell.</p> <p>Sue Padfield was welcomed to the Governing Board and introductions were made.</p>	
2.	<p>To receive notification of any other business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was Jill Borchard's last meeting – she would be much missed as a fantastic member of staff, excellent teacher and valued Governor. • Moodle – JB and JM gave a short presentation on Moodle and how it could be used more actively by Governors. A Governors' Action front page had been set up giving any current documents and documents for action. Once actioned, they would be moved into files in the relevant tabs. All governors had now been enrolled on the Governors course so should be able to access the documents. There was an area for pre-meeting discussion and for policies to approve. Governors were able to post comments on documents/policies which everyone could then read and there would be a tracked record of the discussion. To add proposed changes to a policy, the Governor could save the policy, highlight any changes and then upload as a different version. Governors could also upload their visit reports to the front page; there would be a blank template to use. A prompt question sheet could also be uploaded. The School Plan and Faculty plans could also be uploaded and kept updated so Governors could keep track and use prior to a visit. Governors agreed that they would use Moodle rather than emails to send and comment on documents. 	
3.	<p>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest</p> <p>None</p>	

4.	<p>Presentation on Safeguarding</p> <p>Deferred to next meeting</p>	Agenda
5.	<p>Vote on Conversion to Foundation Status</p> <p>Governors had been kept informed of progress and developments.</p> <p>It was clarified that the school was voting to convert to Foundation status and not Foundation Trust. An explanation with regard to Foundation rather than Foundation Trust had been given; it was much easier to set up, simpler, HCC would pay for Foundation but not Foundation Trust, and it would be easier to convert to Academy if required eventually.</p> <p>The Head referred to the new White Paper whereby schools will have to show they are considering Academisation by 2022. As a Foundation School, they would be in an easier position to convert to Academy and the cost would be paid in full by HCC.</p> <p>The Head recommended that they proceed with conversion to Foundation status. There had been a very constructive meeting with parents; there had been no challenge or opposition at all from parents. Comments and questions from parents had been circulated to governors. Staff had also been very supportive. The UNISON Rep had allayed the fears of the support staff, and teaching and support staff were onside with the proposal. A notice would need to put in the Comet next week to fulfil the time schedule. If all went to plan, the school should be Foundation status by September.</p> <p>KJ then proposed that Nobel converted to Foundation School status; this was seconded by KH. A vote was taken and the proposal was unanimously agreed. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>The Head added that the whole process had been managed in a very effective way; staff were onside, and governors had engaged with the stakeholders in a constructive and timely way.</p> <p>Governors also thanked the Chair for the huge amount of work he had done, and the constructive and collaborative way in which he had managed the process and consultations.</p>	
6.	<p>Head's Report</p> <p>The Head's Report, RELIC, had been circulated.</p> <p>The results from the staff questionnaire had been included. The only issues which had seen a decrease in approval were behaviour in class and behaviour being handled consistently, which was a concern. It was, however, still a high figure in terms of approval.</p> <p>The Head thought that the school increasingly had a small but challenging group of students who had coloured the view of staff. Behaviour by the vast majority of students was excellent. A lot of the behaviour points were being accrued by a small number of students.</p> <p>Q Are they Pupil Premium or SEND? There would not necessarily be</p>	

any correlation. **Q Any particular year group?** They were spread across the school. A couple of challenging students in Year 11 were late joiners to the school. Sometimes students at risk of permanent exclusion at one school were moved to another school at the instigation of the parents, when interventions would be better put in place to deal with the issue. Outside support from the Behaviour Team was no longer available and there were only 12 places at the ESC, who also admitted from North Herts as well as Stevenage.

(HR arrived at this point).

Nobel was also a bigger school now, and crowded corridors made it more challenging at cross-over times; there were specific pinch points. The Head also thought that they had to spend more time training the teachers to deal with challenging behaviour. The new Progress 8 measures meant that schools had to make sure these challenging students were attending and progressing. Staff had higher expectations for everything, including behaviour, which was reflected in staff comments. The training on managing behaviour available was very good. Staff supported each other very well with behaviour.

Q How is the training being rolled out? Via the pit stop on Super Wednesday; the behaviour pit stop was compulsory. The school was very strict in terms of its expectations. The Stevenage schools were working together with regards to managing moves and giving a student experience of another school.

The questionnaire would be redone next year, and governors would be interested to see if the response had improved. There appeared to be strategies in place. Students needed to have a consistent message from all staff. A governor commented that the other area of note was consistent application of policies.

The other findings of the questionnaire were very positive. Over 90% of the respondents would send their own child to Nobel; staff felt that it was a good place to work. On the whole the Head was very pleased with the responses.

Q A governor queried the reports from Head Boy and Head Girl; there did not appear to be such a positive message. The Head said that they were brilliant Ambassadors for the school. However, the whole Student Senior Leadership team had perhaps not functioned as effectively as it could and could have been facilitated and supported better by himself and the staff. The Head felt that more could be done on pupil voice. A governor suggested that more could also be done using social media, to promote the school newsletter and the school's diary etc. This was a work in progress and the school could use Facebook more for recruitment and promotion.

A governor noted that a lot of charitable events were taking place. **Q Are the Pupil Premium students still able to join in with paid events such as non-uniform days?** Form teachers were aware who the PP students were and would keep an eye on this. Steve Howells was taking registers so they could see who was attending extracurricular activities. They would be able to see whether attendance was disproportionate and whether the PP students were attending

	<p><i>sports clubs and extracurricular events.</i></p> <p>(SP then left the meeting at this point).</p>	
7.	<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. The SFVS had been ratified and submitted to County.</p> <p><u>L&D Committee</u> Minutes of the committee meeting had been circulated.</p> <p><u>Pay and Personnel Committee</u> Nothing to report. KH said that they wanted to look at the possibility of changing the format and membership and perhaps have Committee Vice-Chairs instead of Chairs.</p> <p>The Head said that the school was undertaking a full review of the performance appraisal process and hoped to have recommendations for the next school year. Currently, staff had a data target around pupil achievement, a form tutor target and a training target. In consultation with staff, there were discussions around whether it was fair to have targets for one class, which could be divisive. The Head did not want to lose the rigour of the process but work with staff to find a fairer way. The targets needed to be more cohesive and focused on whole school development and improvements for the benefit of all pupils. The training target could also be changed to a learning target, so staff were more proactive in learning more about an area in their professional life.</p>	
8.	<p>Policies</p> <p>The L&D committee had reviewed and approved a revised Staff Code of Conduct.</p>	
9.	<p>Governor Visits and Links</p> <p><i>Governor visit reports would be uploaded onto Moodle.</i></p> <p><i>KJ had visited the sixth form – it was an extensive visit; he had conducted pupil interviews and seen independent work and students taking ownership of their learning. Students were very calm and focused. The interviews with the students gave a good insight into the students’ activities and opportunities. They were very complimentary of the leadership. He had also spent some time looking at data. He was pleased to see a holistic approach by the school to their education and learning.</i></p> <p><i>HR had tried to arrange a visit to the English Faculty but had not received a response yet.</i></p> <p><i>GB attended the Art and DT work scrutiny.</i></p> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <p><i>Steve Morley had drafted some questions for governors to ask around</i></p>	

	<p><i>safeguarding which would be added to the pupil voice questions.</i></p> <p><i>Monday 4th July was the most convenient date for governor safeguarding training; 75% of governors needed to be present.</i></p> <p><i>The link to online Prevent training had been circulated to governors and governors should let JM know when they had completed the training.</i></p>	
10.	<p>To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 10th February 2016</p> <p>The minutes were approved.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	
11.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	
12.	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <p>L&D (Progress) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 27th April 2016</p> <p>FGB – Wednesday 11th May 2016 (Governor Workshop on School Plan)</p> <p>L&D (Teaching and Learning) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 15th June 2016</p> <p>FGB – Wednesday 6th July 2016</p> <p>(FGB meetings at 7pm; L&D to start at 6pm; FPP to start at 7.30pm)</p>	