

MINUTES OF A SCRUTINY MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 18th JANUARY 2017 at 6pm

Governors Present: Richard Aggus (Co-Chair) – Chair of the Meeting, Julia Brettell (Co-Chair), Graham Blackburn, Phil Cave, Martyn Henson (Headteacher), Nicholas Hoffman, Julia Marshall, Sue Padfield, Sheenagh Parsons, Amy Pearson, Hilary Rodgers, Craig Temple, Revd. K. Wood.

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk), Sarah Bennett (Outgoing Clerk), Barry Burningham (Deputy Head), Christine Crawley (Business Manager), Steve Morley (Assistant Head) and Naomi Rose (Deputy Head).

Apologies For Absence Received From: Emma Bull, Alison Haggar, James Marshall, Kath Smith, Keith Hopkinson

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

		Action By:
1.	<p>To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to same.</p> <p>NOTED: Apologies were received from Emma Bull, Alison Haggar, James Marshall, Kath Smith and Keith Hopkinson.</p> <p>AGREED: Consent for absence was given to all tendering apologies.</p>	
2.	<p>To receive notification of any other business.</p> <p>AGREED: to consider the following as AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering Update • Governors' Documents on Moodle • Farewell to the Outgoing Clerk to the Governors 	
3.	<p>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest for items on the agenda</p> <p>NOTED: No declarations of interest were received from those present.</p>	
3a.	<p>Special Item – Farewell To The Outgoing Clerk To The Governors</p> <p>AGREED: re. item 2 above, to insert a brief special item to allow the Chair, on behalf of the Board, to say thank you to Sarah Bennett, the outgoing Clerk, for her long and loyal service to the Board and to present her with a card and present. All governors wished her well.</p> <p>NOTED: Jacquie Watts had been appointed to the position of Clerk and would be taking over from Sarah as of this meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Foundation Status</p> <p>NOTED: The Chair confirmed that the school had achieved Foundation status as of 5th January 2017. The Headteacher confirmed that the school was now managing in-year admissions.</p> <p>In terms of Timebridge and the Music Centre, no documents had been provided for the school to sign. A formal written schedule was needed from Hertfordshire County Council.</p>	

	<p>The position regarding the caretaker's house was still disputed and Richard Aggus had asked the legal team to provide a process for arbitration and to confirm that the school was not required to complete any further paperwork on the matter.</p> <p>It was queried whether the Board required additional insurance to cover premises liability? Christine Crawley advised that the County Council had advised this was not necessary as the school remained under its auspices.</p> <p>AGREED: Christine Crawley to double check insurance liabilities with Hertfordshire County Council in light of the school's Foundation status.</p>	CCY
5.	<p>Fundamentals Data</p> <p>NOTED: the current information available to governors via Moodle and the questions and answers raised online. Steve Morley confirmed that year to date pupil attendance remained excellent at 95%.</p> <p>DISCUSSED: pupil behaviour and the use of the pupil rewards system, including recent exclusions. Steve Morley advised that the school was looking to ensure it recognised and rewarded outstanding work and behaviour consistently, but that cohort behaviour had become increasingly challenging over the last five to six years. Many of the negative behaviour points had been earned by a minority of pupils, but staff use of points was not consistent and the school was working with staff over this and the use of language and approach in managing pupil behaviour.</p> <p>NOTED: the Nobel Action Group was meeting the following day and would be discussing pupil behaviour and the school's Behaviour Policy, which the school was considering changing. To this end Steve Morley would shortly be visiting a school in Luton that had implemented the new scheme he was interested in. It was queried whether the policy was working and whether significant change to it was necessary if it was working for the vast majority of students and staff as suggested? Would such a change be cost effective and did it risk "throwing out the baby with the bath water"? following which a detailed discussion on the matter ensued.</p> <p>AGREED: to revisit pupil behaviour in the summer, once the school had had the opportunity to consider policy options.</p>	SMY
6.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>NOTED: there were no safeguarding issues to report at this stage. The first scheduled meeting of term would take place the following Friday. The report and checklist for 2015/16 had been completed and would be discussed on the Friday.</p> <p>AGREED: An update on safeguarding would be provided at the next Scrutiny meeting of The Board.</p> <p>NOTED: Three governors still needed to complete safeguarding training: Graham Blackburn, Keith Hopkinson and Kath Smith. They had been sent the necessary link by Julia Marshall.</p>	SMY

	<p>AGREED: Graham Blackburn, Keith Hopkinson and Kath Smith to book and undertake Safeguarding training asap (though it was recognised that the current personal circumstances of KH would mean that this, together with attendance at Board meetings, might not be possible for some time).</p> <p>NOTED: a number of governors still needed to complete Prevent Duty training, which could be undertaken online in twenty minutes.</p> <p>AGREED: all governors who had not yet undertaken Prevent Duty Training to do so asap. The position would be monitored by Julia Marshall.</p> <p><i>Steve Morley left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	<p>GB, KH, KS</p> <p>Govs, JM</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Budget 2016/17</p> <p>NOTED: the budget report that had been uploaded onto Moodle. Christine Crawley apologised for the delay in uploading it. To date she had received no online comments.</p> <p>The budget document had been amended as requested by governors to make it easier to follow. An in-year deficit of £320k was forecast, which was larger than originally envisaged. Contributory factors were: the phasing of planned staffing changes in order to avoid redundancies, staff reduction less than planned, unplanned maternity and sickness cover, Lifecycle costs, lower income. It was felt that the planned increase in the school's sixth form would lead to increased income in the next financial year.</p> <p>DISCUSSED: in response to governors questions, the potential impact on quality if the school lost experienced staff and replaced them with cheaper, less experienced people; the benefit, or not, of taking out insurance for maternity cover; the financial implications of the Lifestyle contract and costs; ways in which the school was managing and attempting to address the increased deficit.</p> <p>NOTED: the school was reviewing staff departure and replacement, faculty by faculty, in order to avoid a negative impact on teaching and learning. Beck Cox would be considering the curriculum in the light of staff changes. Christine Crawley had previously considered insurance to cover maternity and long-term sickness absence, but had felt it was not cost effective. She was prepared to reconsider it.</p> <p>AGREED: Christine Crawley to re-visit the possibility of insurance for maternity and long-term sickness cover.</p> <p>NOTED: the financial implications of paying into the Lifecycle fund and what happens to any money left in the pot at the end of the contract. The school confirmed it would revert to the school. There would be no further obligations to pay into the pot once the contract had ended, though it might be prudent for the school to continue to set-aside contingency funding. It was not clear, however, whether the current Lifecycle contingency fund was appropriately funded at the moment. Christine Crawley confirmed she had received a report on the subject that morning.</p>	<p>CCY</p>

9.	<p>Governor Monitoring of RACE</p> <p>NOTED: a number of governors had been into school to review aspects of RACE and had been asking questions about it, including evidence, impact and the need for accurate data.</p> <p>DISCUSSED: feedback from governors who had been into the school recently, during which the need for governors to be able to share findings was highlighted. The intention was for reports and notes to be shared and evidenced on Moodle, but documents did not seem to be gathered in one place on Moodle.</p> <p>AGREED: Barry Burningham to consider the location of governor RACE feedback on Moodle, whilst listing link governors and lead staff for each area.</p> <p>AGREED: governors who had not yet visited the school to review their areas of RACE, to arrange a visit asap. Julia Brettell and Richard Aggus would arrange to cover the areas that Keith Hopkinson would normally have visited.</p>	<p>BB</p> <p>Govs JB, RA</p>
10.	<p>Approval of Policies</p> <p>NOTED: there were no policies requiring approval at this meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: the changes to the Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Policy had been made.</p> <p>AGREED: Richard Aggus and the Clerk (Jacquie Watts) would discuss the process for agreeing policies.</p>	<p>RA, Clerk</p>
11.	<p>To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting of The Board held on 7th December 2016</p> <p>AGREED: the minutes of the Board meeting held on 7th December 2016.</p> <p>NOTED: the following matters arising from the minutes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christine Crawley had resent the email regarding Governor data; • Richard Aggus had checked with the legal team re. FOI request re. leases and was awaiting a response; • David Martin had uploaded the 3-year trend analysis and presentation onto Moodle; • The reference to pupils without email addresses should read “parents” and Naomi Rose was pursuing these. 	
12. 12a.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Scheme For Financing Schools Handbook – this large document was tabled by Christine Crawley for approval by The Board. She advised that it contained no changes from the previous year’s version.</p> <p>AGREED: the Scheme for Financing Schools Handbook on the understanding that Christine Crawley would upload it to Moodle for governors’ consideration.</p> <p>Governors’ Documents on Moodle – governors were finding the</p>	<p>CCY</p>

<p>12b.</p>	<p>posting of documents to Moodle confusing and unstructured. It was wondered whether Office 365 would be a better platform to set up a structured folder system of documents. Christine Crawley would consider possibilities, but needed governor feedback as to what was required</p> <p>AGREED: Julia Marshall would produce a draft plan for storing governor documents for initial discussion with Christine Crawley and The Clerk.</p>	<p>JM</p>
<p>12c.</p>	<p>Catering Update – Christine Crawley had today received a detailed report on the tendering process. She had uploaded a summary analysis on Moodle along with the planned timetable of events and was putting together a working party of governors, staff and students to consider submissions. The analysis of bids was likely to take place on 27/3/17, with the contract presentations scheduled for 24/4/17.</p> <p>AGREED: governors interested in participating in the contract review process should email Christine Crawley.</p>	<p>Govs</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>AGREED: The date of the next strategic meeting of the Board of Governors as Wednesday 1st February at 7pm.</p>	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk To The Governors
21st January 2017

Approved by The Board of Governors on:

Date: 1st February 2017.....

Signature (Chair):.....