

**MINUTES OF A SCRUTINY MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 6pm**

**Governors Present:** Richard Aggus (Co-Chair) – Chair of the Meeting, Graham Blackburn, Martyn Henson (Headteacher), Nicholas Hoffman, George O'Neill, Sue Padfield, Amy Pearson, Hilary Rodgers, Revd. K. Wood.

**Also in Attendance:** Jacquie Watts (Clerk) and Christine Crawley (Business Manager). Caroline Phillips (Head of English) was present for item 4.

**Apologies For Absence Received From:** Julia Brettell, Phil Cave, Alison Haggar, Sheenagh Parsons and Craig Temple.

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

Action By:

1.	<p><b>To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to same.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Apologies were received from Julia Brettell, Phil Cave, Alison Haggar, Sheenagh Parsons and Craig Temple.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Consent for absence was given to those who had tendered apologies.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> The Chair would speak to Keith Hopkinson to find out if he was now able to attend future meetings.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> The Headteacher would speak to Alison Haggar regarding her future intentions regarding Associate Governor status and advise the Clerk accordingly.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> That Katherine Smith had recently resigned as a Co-opted Governor.</p>	<p><b>RA</b></p> <p><b>MH</b></p>
2.	<p><b>To receive notification of any other business.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to consider the following as AOB –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral Report on the outcomes of a recent partial audit.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest for items on the agenda</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> No declarations of interest were received from those present.</p>	
4.	<p><b>English Department</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the presentation by Caroline Phillips (The Head of English) and the one page summary document tabled by Caroline. In particular, her presentation highlighted her desire to create a shared vision for the future with regard to the teaching of English in the school and to introduce consistency into the working of the Department. She was hoping to engender a love of both language and literature in equal measure and to increase parental involvement in the subject. Amongst other targets, she was developing a shared workspace for English teachers and would be overhauling the teaching of Key Stage 3.</p> <p><b>DISCUSSED:</b> the scheduling of the library and computer suite as it</p>	

	<p><b>had been highlighted as a limitation at a recent Pit Stop Literacy meeting attended by the Chair.</b> Caroline Phillips was not aware of any issues.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> The Headteacher would look into the matter and report back to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>NOTED: that, in response to a question from the Board, there was no written development plan for the English Department, other than the summary sheet presented to governors.</b> Caroline Phillips believed that the staff knew the aims of the department and were committed to achieving them. Consistency in all aspects of teaching, especially grading, was essential if the department was to become outstanding.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Caroline Phillips will attend the first Governing Body Scrutiny meeting of 2017/18 to report on progress within the English Department.</p>	<p><b>MH</b></p> <p><b>CP</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Governing Board Membership – Partnership Governor and Staff Governor</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that this was technically item 9 on the agenda, but it made sense to discuss matters at this point in the meeting.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the recent resignations as governors of Julia Marshall and Katherine Smith. The school was proposing that George O’Neill replace Julia Marshall as staff governor.</p> <p><i>George O’Neill left the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p><b>NOTED: that, in response to a question from the Board, following the resignation of Julia Marshall, the Headteacher had asked for nominations for a replacement staff governor from the staff.</b> Only one nomination had been put forward, namely George O’Neill. George had therefore been chosen as the new staff governor.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to formally welcome George O’Neill as the new staff governor.</p> <p><i>George O’Neill returned to the meeting at this point</i></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Board still had a number of outstanding vacancies it needed to fill, including a vacancy for a Co-opted Governor following Katherine Smith’s resignation. It was proposed that Helen Jewitt be invited to become a Co-opted Governor.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to invite Helen Jewitt to become a Co-opted Governor and to agree her appointment subject to her acceptance and the necessary checks being successfully carried out.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> previous discussions at Board meetings regarding the appointment of two Partnership Governors following the school’s achievement of Foundation Status. Sheenagh Parsons and Sue Padfield had been proposed as Partnership Governors, but it was subsequently discovered that Sue Padfield was not eligible to stand as</p>	<p><b>MH</b></p>

	<p>a Partnership Governor because she was employed by Hertfordshire County Council. Sheenagh Parsons had transferred to Partnership Governor status, but there was still a vacancy for the other Partnership Governor.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that Sheenagh Parsons be confirmed as a Partnership Governor and that all governors would endeavour to identify suitable people to fill outstanding Board vacancies, which might increase depending on the decision of Alison Haggart, and identify any possible candidates to the Co-Chairs.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
6.	<p><b>Schedule of Financial Delegation</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report previously uploaded and discussed on Moodle. Following further discussions, changes were made regarding which documents should be submitted to the Foundation Committee and which ones should be considered by the Scrutiny Meetings of the Board.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Operational financial policies and the Charging Policy should be referred to Scrutiny Meeting, whilst staffing matters should be referred to the Foundation Committee.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Christine Crawley would amend the Schedule as discussed and upload the final version of the document onto Moodle.</p>	<b>CC</b>
7.	<p><b>Schools Financial Value Standards</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report previously uploaded and discussed on Moodle. Christine Crawley highlighted the <b>changes made to date following Governor comments. The Chair expressed his concerns regarding the current operational deficit and his reluctance for the Governing Board to agree to an operational deficit without a plan to return to at least a break-even position. He highlighted the Board's responsibilities under section B.12, but expressed concern that the document did not contain a more positive statement regarding the planned reduction of the deficit by the school.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Christine Crawley would amend the wording of B.12 to indicate that the school would eliminate the in-year operational deficit in 2017/18 with a view to re-building reserves in future years and would upload the amended document onto Moodle.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that an item be placed on the agenda for the next Strategy Meeting of the Board to allow the Board and the school to discuss how this deficit reduction might happen</p>	<b>CC</b>  <b>Clerk/ CC</b>
8.	<p><b>Additional Spend Request</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the school's request for additional expenditure to be approved for a new digital projector and screen for the school hall. A report on the matter had previously been uploaded on to Moodle and commented on by Governors.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that a cheaper projector was available, and the <b>Board felt that the educational value for buying the more expensive version</b></p>	

	<p><b>had not been made.</b></p> <p><b>DISCUSSED:</b> the technical merits of the proposal and the perceived benefits for the visually impaired of having the highest Lumen rating. Also, the possibility that the previous quotation had already lapsed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Christine Crawley to seek a re-quotation for the two possible projectors and to arrange a demonstration of the same so that the school could reach a view on the educational value of the two products and determine whether the higher light output is required. A brighter image might be easier for students with visual impairment to read. Equally the brighter image might mean that the hall lights can be left on making it easier to do presentations. Governors to be advised of the date of the demonstration so that anyone who was interested could attend.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> in principle, to the school spending up to £13k on the projector that provided the best educational value, subject to the demonstration and re-quotation. The Headteacher and Christine Crawley to make the final decision regarding the purchase within these parameters.</p>	<p><b>CC</b></p> <p><b>MH/CC</b></p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that Steve Morley and Sheenagh Parsons had been scheduled to provide a verbal update on safeguarding matters at the school. Sheenagh Parsons had had to tender her apologies because of work commitments and Steve Morley was not present at the meeting. Sheenagh Parsons had forwarded two reports to the Clerk for circulation to governors in advance of the meeting, but the Clerk had only been able to circulate them electronically a couple of hours before the meeting and it was likely that few governors had seen them. She therefore invited the board to consider whether or not it wished to defer this item until a subsequent meeting.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that one of the reports circulated was the annual Safeguarding Report for 2015/16 that had been outstanding for some time.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to consider both reports provided by Sheenagh Parsons as screen presentations with the Headteacher providing any necessary oral commentary.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the <b>School's Annual Safeguarding Report for 2015/2016</b> and discussed the same. Arising from discussions the following was noted or agreed:</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> All governors must undertake Prevent Training on line, including new Governors once they are appointed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Graham Blackburn to undertake Prevent Training online asap.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> The Headteacher was scheduled to undertake his safeguarding refresher course in April 2017.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Volunteers and Invigilators were scheduled to undertake</p>	<p><b>GB</b></p>

	<p>training in 2017. <b>It was believed that some training had already taken place in 2016, but this was not reflected in the report.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Headteacher to ask Steve Morley to clarify the situation regarding Invigilator training in 2016 and to report back to the Board on the matter.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Rev. Kojo Wood would check to see if the training he had undertaken on safer recruitment at another institution was valid in relation to the Nobel School and if it could therefore be listed in the Annual Report.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> a number of gaps in the policy list, because issues such as the use of force and restraint were covered in the school's Behaviour Policy and other documents rather than in separate policies.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Steve Morley to amend the Annual Report to show clearly which school documents dealt with: drugs, extended schools, restraint, work placement.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Safeguarding was a standing item at all scrutiny meetings of the Board.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the number of safeguarding issues within the academic year. <b>The board wished to know how many were referrals under Section 8 of the Common Assessment Framework.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Steve Morley to confirm the number of referrals made in 2015/2106 that related to section 8 of the Common Assessment Framework and advise governors.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the increase in the number of children "looked after".</p> <p><b>NOTED: The Child Protection and Monitoring Report for the 2016/2017 year to date.</b> Arising from discussions the following was noted or agreed:</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> it would have been helpful to have received the corresponding 2015/2016 report for context, although this would have been seen by the Safeguarding Governor.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> issues of image sharing by mobile phone, though use of these was banned in the school. Following a full discussion, the Headteacher indicated he would consider whether there was a role for the Student Council in getting a "safe usage of phone" message across to younger pupils.</p>	<p><b>MH/SM</b></p> <p><b>KW</b></p> <p><b>SM</b></p> <p><b>SM</b></p>
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Responsibility For Governor Training</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> following the resignation of Julia Marshall, there was no longer a lead governor for governor training.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Hilary Rodgers would become lead governor for Governor training and would maintain training records and flag up suitable training courses in good time for governors to attend. The Clerk would obtain the current training record spreadsheet from Julia Marshall and forward it on to Hilary Rodgers.</p>	<p><b>HR</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

11.	<p><b>Governor Visits</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> recent and planned visits to the school by governors, including a recent visit by Rev. Kojo Wood to consider CARE and Nobellian standards, a visit by Richard Aggus to attend a Pit Stop meeting on literacy and planned visits by Nick Hoffman and Hilary Rodgers. Also, ongoing visits by Richard Aggus to consider Health and Safety. He would be reporting further on Health and Safety to the forthcoming Foundation Committee meeting.</p>	
12.	<p><b>In-Year Data</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the detailed In-Year data posted on Moodle by Dave Martin. <b>The meeting queried the apparently large number of students below track in certain subjects and the small number above track.</b> The report provided no explanation of the data or these variances and Dave Martin was not in attendance to answer governor questions.</p> <p><b>DISCUSSED:</b> the limited value of providing detailed data to the Board without a commentary or a covering report or the author in attendance at the meeting to talk to the data. Whilst lead governors might use aspects of the data to initiate discussions for their respective curriculum areas, <b>it was felt that a strategic or management overview should be provided to the Governing Body as a whole alongside the data. Strengths and weaknesses should be identified and the report should explain what the school was doing to address the weaknesses.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Headteacher would discuss the provision of In-Year Data with Dave Martin to determine a way forward, taking into account Governors' comments.</p>	MH/DM
13.	<p><b>Approval of Any Polices</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> The Charges and Remissions Policy uploaded and discussed on Moodle.</p>	
14.	<p><b>To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting of The Board held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 and discuss any matters arising, including actions from tracking sheet</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the minutes of the Board meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017, which were duly signed by The Chair.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the following matters arising from the minutes and action tracking sheet-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AGREED:</b> Chris Crawley to check on the PAN position.</li> <li>• <b>AGREED:</b> an item on The Student Voice would be placed on the next Scrutiny Governing body meeting Agenda, as it had had to be removed from this one for reasons of time.</li> <li>• The school lottery-funding bid had not been successful.</li> <li>• The Clerk and Christine Crawley and subsequently the Clerk and The Chair had met to discuss changes to Moodle in relation to the Governor pages. The school would be looking to implement changes by the end of March, including a clear yes or no response/audit trail from governors to documents uploaded for agreement.</li> </ul>	CC Clerk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Clerk had canvassed members of The Foundation Committee and meetings would commence at 6pm.</li> </ul>	
<b>15.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
<b>15a.</b>	<b>Verbal Report on the outcomes of a recent audit of the Fund Account</b> – Christine Crawley advised that the recent audit had identified no significant concerns. One cheque had not yet been presented by the payee and the school was looking into this.	
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> The date of the next scrutiny meeting of the Board of Governors as Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 6pm.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Agenda items for the 3<sup>rd</sup> May meeting would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Student Voice</li> <li>Budget Preparations (a meeting of the Board to focus on the draft Budget was scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> May)</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTED:</b> A meeting of the Foundation Committee was scheduled to take place on 22nd March. The agenda for the meeting would be made available to Foundation Committee Members via Moodle on 15<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts  
**Clerk To The Governors**  
**10<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Approved by The Board of Governors on:**

**Date:.....3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017.....**

**Signature (Chair):.....**