MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON 7th DECEMBER 2016

Present: Martyn Henson (Head Teacher),
Julia Marshall, Julia Brettell (Co-Chair) Sue Padfield, Richard Aggus (Co-Chair),
Amy Pearson, Emma Bull (AM), Phil Cave, Revd Wood, Craig Temple, Alison
Haggar (AM), Sheenagh Parsons,

Sarah Bennett (Clerk), Naomi Rose, David Martin, Rebecca Cox, Corrina Reader

Apologies: Kath Smith, Graham Blackburn, Keith Hopkinson

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

1.	**To receive any apologies and decide whether to give consent for absence.** Apologies from had been received from Kath Smith, Keith Hopkinson, Graham Blackburn, and consent for absence was given.	
2.	**To receive notification of any other business.** • Nil	
3.	**For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest for items on the agenda** None	
4.	**Curriculum Development Update** RCX gave a presentation on vocational and alternative provision aspects of the curriculum, including OCR Cambridge National and technical qualifications: • All level 1 and 2 technical/vocational courses were reformed in September 2014, becoming more rigorous in line with the reformed GCSEs. • An exam component was introduced for all courses and some courses/elements were removed eg Outdoor Education • For level 3 courses, similar changes were implemented from September 2016. • Problems with BTEC – the exam was difficult. It was an online, on-demand test, which seemed like a good model, but was difficult to administer. There were difficulties logging on students, running the software. There was no tiering and there were issues with different questions of different difficulty being given to students which made analysis difficult. • ***Q Was allocation of questions random?*** *Yes, it was done to stop any collusion. Some students might sit the exam several times and not pass, yet not know why they had not passed.* • There was a huge amount of paperwork associated with the	

- BTEC courses, and verification issues.
- The school had thus decided to stop doing BTECs; Year 11 were still doing them as a legacy year. For Year 10 students the school had moved to OCR CNats and CTechs. The OCR Technical certificates and diplomas were equivalent to one or two A levels respectively, or the BTEC National Sub-Diploma and Diploma.
- The range of courses offered included Business and Enterprise, Health and social care, ICT, Sports Studies, Applied Science and Outdoor education (Year 11 only). There was no level 3 qualification for Outdoor Education.
- ***Q Do employers recognise an OCR CNat/CTech?*** *Universities did, and they had the same UCAS points. All the new reformed level 3 qualifications had to have employer engagement. With OCR Nationals, the employers had written some of the specifications and the school was also working with Glaxo.*
- OCR CNat/CTechs differed from BTECs in the following ways:
  - The exam was a written paper, which could be taken in January and June of the 2-year course, as often as necessary.
  - Coursework assignments were much more like GCSEs and A levels in their approach and assessment, which suited the school. It was a familiar approach for the teaching staff.
  - Subjects could request pre-moderation visits before submission of assignments.
  - Assignments could be resubmitted as many times as necessary.
  - Support from OCR in terms of model assignments and briefs was very good. Training was very good.
  - The content of the course was much more engaging and interesting for students.
  - The way the CNat qualification was graded provided greater progression, as the level 1 element was divided into pass, merit and distinction.
  - A level 1 distinction was worth 3 points on the new tariff, making it a genuine level 1 course. It was a big difference to the school in terms of points.
  - The school had already had successes in Outdoor Education.
  - The feeling amongst staff was that they were very good so far and feedback from students was also very positive so far.
- ***Q Will they apply as much to students doing the A level route? Will they be prepared to do one of these qualifications?*** *Yes, as A levels got harder, they might need to steer some students towards these qualifications.*
- ***Q Does it make it harder for some students having to take exams? Will it affect their performance?*** *Last year's results*

for Outdoor education were good for the exam element; there were resources and support available and there was feedback that the students were not finding the exam element as detrimental as the BTEC exam.

(SP arrived at this point).

- ***Q How does this work for lower ability students?*** *It was better; the school could give more support for the coursework element than with BTECs. The students could receive more guidance, which assisted the students.*
- ***Q Are there plans to link with local industries in a practical way?*** *Yes, Health and Social care were very good at creating links and getting outside professionals in and there was more scope for this. They could also work on building up the work experience element. The link with Glaxo was very good.*
- ***Q Is there a higher cost involved in providing these courses?*** *RCX had not heard that there was a higher cost.*
- ***Q What is the next step? Q How far will they go in terms of range offered?*** *The school was looking to introduce the IMedia course for Year 12 at level 3 as a CTech to replace the current Media course. This would be a Post 16 option.*
- ***Q What about the other schools in the town?*** *Other schools had not at present gone with OCRs, but stayed with BTECs.*

Alternative provision at KS4
- The Blue pathway gave some students a modified mainstream curriculum:
  - Extra Maths and English lessons
  - The Humanities GCSE was not being offered in the future
  - Core RE and extra PSE (Year 10)
  - European Computer Driving Licence level 2 qualification (year 10) - this counted in Progress 8. It was all online and E-learning, and could be taken on demand. It was all timetabled.
  - ***Q What does it do for the students?*** *It was a confidence builder, gave the students useful skills and was a qualification which could be banked early.*
  - Prince's Trust as an option subject. One student had two option blocks worth of Prince's Trust and they were currently working out the logistics of getting the student on a long-term work placement.
  - 2 students had been identified from this year's Year 10 as needing 2 options blocks worth of Prince's Trust.
  - ***Q What is Prince's Trust?*** *A level 1&2 modular qualification in personal development and employability skills which attempted to engage students in their education through developing skills such as team building, leadership and personal development.*

(CT arrived at this point).

- o There were currently 12 students in Year 10, 14 in Year 11 taking the Prince's Trust option. It was timetabled as a double lesson on the same day each week so that students could go off site for work experience or other activities without impacting on their other subjects.
- o Activities for Prince's Trust included – Aspire Programme with Stevenage Football Club, College Taster Days, Work experience, first aid training, weekend residential, level 1 and 2 coaching courses in kayaking and sailing.
- o It had a lot of potential but required a lot of work from Mr Trotter to find the right things for the right student. It was also an expensive option.
- o ***Q How do employers see it from an employment perspective?*** *There were units on work experience and personal development; it helped the students put together a decent CV and gave them the confidence to show their skills in interviews etc. It built up their confidence.*
- o The students on the Prince's Trust would be the students really struggling in Maths and English.
- o ***Q Are other schools using the same route? Would it be possible to double up?*** *Most schools were doing some alternative provision, but RCX did not know if they were using Prince's Trust.*

Alternative provision at KS3

- o Year 7 Foundation groups to help students who had come not Secondary Ready to help them catch up as soon as possible. As soon as they had caught up, they returned to mainstream lessons. 2 out of 21 had already gone back to mainstream.
- o ***Q What was the expectation?*** *Ideally there would be no-one in a Foundation group by the end of the year as they would have all caught up. Some students were a long way off Secondary Ready. It was a really expensive model.*
- o ***Q Is pupil premium money being used for it?*** *Pupil Premium funding was being used to buy some resources which were more appropriate for these students.*

(PC arrived at this point).

- o ***Q When will you review it?*** *They will review at the end of Easter term to see what they needed to do in terms of provision for Year 7 students going up to Year 8.*
- o ***Q What about the students who would not be ready? How will you deal with them?*** *They would want to get them back into mainstream, even if it was with extensive TA support. If they stayed out too long, it was very difficult to get them back in.*

o **Q Do the students interact with the rest of the year?** *The Foundation Group was only for Maths, English and MFL and the students were with the rest of their cohort for the other lessons. It was very personalised.*

o **Q Is there any sense that this is a growing issue?** *Sue Padfield had talked through this at her meeting with Julia Marshall. As part of the transition programme, Primary schools could flag up the children who might need it. It would depend on the cohort as to how many there were coming through not Secondary Ready.*

Building Character Presentation

CRR gave a presentation on Character Education:

- The Jubilee Centre defined character as a set of personal traits that produced specific moral motivations, and guided contact.
- They defined 4 main characteristics – moral virtues, intellectual virtues, performance virtues and civic virtues. It tied in with Ofsted's focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Evidence suggested that academic achievement and character were interrelated. Teaching and learning was good and outstanding and if they could get students of excellent character they would make great progress.
- The school was looking at what they were doing to create Nobelians. CRR would be speaking to employers and Universities to see what characteristics they wanted. First step would be to decide on the desired characteristics and then assess how they could best embed and grow those characteristics.
- CRR was also speaking with staff and students and sending out Surveys to local employers.
- Next steps were to finish the consultation with stakeholders, decide on the most important characteristics of a Nobelian, use the framework of what we feel, what we think, how we act and what we do, and start to create the opportunities for the students.
- ***Q What is your timeframe?*** *To finish the consultation by the end of January, distil the characteristics and have something in place by the end of Spring term.*
- This was the next level of the Nobelian scheme.
- *The student representative gave her own interpretation of a Nobelian and thought it was something everyone could benefit from. A Governor added that it was giving experiences and linking it to the vocabulary, so the children knew what it meant. By making the vocabulary explicit, they could relate it to themselves and their own experiences. Students sometimes had to live and experience things in order to fully understand the*

concept. The school had to pick things which were achievable.

- *A Governor commented that he had seen from sixth form interviews what a small step it was sometimes from the transition of struggling to confidence.*
- *A Governor commented that it was important to get consistency across the board and for the scheme to be managed and monitored consistently. Feedback from stakeholders was important.*
- *Rev Wood had talked to BBM about the link between families, students and schools.*
- The Head said that they wanted to build on Nobelians and for it to be a developmental process which would stay with the students during their time at school. It would take the place of the 12 steps. Students would still get recognition for activities undertaken but it would be an ongoing process. They also wanted to increase buy-in.

(Sue Padfield left the meeting at this point).

- ***Q Do you want any input from Governors?*** *It was about making the characteristics real in terms of what they did at school. They wanted to tap into real world experiences that governors and parents could provide.*

Teaching and Learning Report

The Teaching and Learning Report had been circulated.

Q *Show My Homework (SMH) looks good and it is very clear what students have to do. However, the table you provided would seem to indicate that getting a B2 for not doing PLT is no deterrent and I am unclear how SMH will address this. NRE replied that there were a small number of students for whom the B2 No PLT detention was clearly not working and the next challenge was to find an alternative. As they started to look at the quality of what was being set next term this may give some indication of why some students chose not to do it and would inform future actions in this area.   For many other students, however, the challenge was to engage parents with Show My Homework and encourage parents to check that PLT had been done. The school was currently experimenting with the use of the Show My Homework Markbook to be able to indicate to parents whether PLT had been submitted on time.*

Q It seems that the students involved don't forget PLT; they actively choose not to do it. How are we to address this? *NRE replied that figures of non-completion of PLT had gone up. There were a couple of factors in play; SMH was not fully live all term. The daily reminders teachers received meant that they were chasing up more, which might be having an impact. They would be moderating PLT next term to see if completion rates improved. NRE would next look at the quality of work being set and getting Directors of Faculty to challenge*

	regarding level of work. Once it was embedded, they would start looking at quality, and this would be reported in the next Teaching and Learning report. NRE added that informal feedback had been sought at Parents Forum on Show My Homework – feedback so far was very positive. Not all parents were logged on, which was part of the challenge. They would be able to get feedback from parents on extension and challenge. *Q Asked, the student representative said she liked SMH and it was very useful in sixth form. They could see all the homework in one place and were able to print off anything they were missing.* ***Q Can you monitor who is logging on?*** *Yes.* ***Q How do we give access to students who don't have access to a computer?*** *The homework was still set in the lesson. NRE had contacted teachers to ensure that there were print outs available in class. Students could make use of computers in school or after school in the case of tests. She confirmed that teachers were telling students that there was homework on Show My Homework. NRE would check the students who did not have an email address. Governors noted that it might be possible to access email via a phone but not the SMH website.* ***Q What about parents' ability to access?*** *They now had email addresses for virtually every parent so most should be able to access. The school would ask the question again, but it was not a huge issue. They would be surveying the parents again.* ***Q Do parents get a summary email each week?*** *One Governor received a summary email as a parent of child at another school and found this very useful. NRE would check if they were able to do this as it would be very useful for parents.* **Q** *Governors expressed an interest in attending a relevant CPD Pit Stop and asked about the schedule. NRE said that the Pit Stop calendar would be added to Moodle. A draft layout for the CPD day was circulated and CRR talked through. Governors were invited to attend for as much of the session as they wanted. Information on Pit Stops was distributed, showing the range and content being provided. The Pit Stop model was enabling staff to choose and tailor for their own CPD needs. There were 4 Parent Pit Stops scheduled for the new year - Making the most of Show My Homework, Keeping your child safe, Sex and Relationships Education and Mental Health in Teenagers. Governors were also welcome to attend. Parents had indicated that these topics would be useful. Governors thought this showed excellent engagement with parents.* *It was agreed that Governors should look at the Pit Stop calendar and links to RACE to try and attend a Pit Stop pertinent to their own monitoring area of RACE. Governors should email Chantal that they were attending so that the member of staff was aware. Updated Pit Stop calendars would be uploaded onto Moodle. CRR could also ask that any resources for a Pit Stop a Governor was interested in could be made available.*	**Action 16/58 NRE to check if there were students without an email address** **Action 16/59 NRE to check possibility of parents receiving summary email from SMH** **Action 16/60 Governors to look at Pit Stop Calendar for any Pit Stops relevant to their RACE monitoring area. To let Chantal know if wish to attend.**

	Q A Governor asked if it would be possible to review the impact of PiXL in the summer. NRE agreed to make sure that an evaluation of PiXL was on the agenda for the summer term meeting. *A Governor was very pleased to see that only a small number of teachers needed bespoke support to improve their teaching, and that they were getting the support they needed.* *Q Does the school work together with other local Secondary Schools to moderate?* the school was part of the North Herts Teaching Alliance and clusters were used to moderate. The Maths Faculty was a lead faculty for the Maths hub in the local area. The school was moderating across schools. *Q The use of the DATA software systems to support pastoral and academic systems seems a great idea. Will the reports, that Governors have access to, highlight the impact of the pastoral and academic systems that have been introduced or should we look at this as part of our link governor role?* NRE suggested that Governors might like to sit in on meetings to hear first-hand how data reports were being used to challenge and question robustness of data. The best way of measuring impact was to see it in use. *Q How many students in years 9,10 and 11 have been 'flagged up' as the main stream curriculum is not appropriate for them?* This was dealt with in the presentation by RCX. *Governors agreed that NRE's suggestions for Governor monitoring in the RACE areas was an excellent starting point.*	**Action 16/61 NRE to ensure evaluation of PiXL on agenda for summer term meeting**
5.	**Governor Monitoring Reports on RACE** *BBM, RA, MHN and JB had discussed taking the questions suggested by NRE to create a set of questions for each RACE sub-section as an aide-memoire for governors. This should assist in asking questions on a visit and filling in the report. Starter questions would be helpful in starting off the process. Everything now linked back to RACE so Governors needed to fit in with this.* *Under the RACE file, there was a monitoring section for each area, so there was one Word document for each subsection. Sue Padfield had done the first visit using this system as a starting point.* *Governors agreed that it would be useful to have a list of questions as a base, but with some flexibility allowed. It would also allow staff to prepare in advance and collect some evidence to show the Governor. It would give a useful framework.* *The Head added that the staff really wanted Governors to come in and provide challenge. Governors should feel that they could ask any question they wanted. It was a collaborative process. Staff wanted to improve and this could be helped through critique. It was a worthwhile activity, and a different perspective from a different context was always valuable. Questions asked in a supportive way of students would also*	**Action 16/62**

	be very helpful. The more often Governors could visit the better. They were always welcome to come in for a learning walk. *It was agreed that Governors should email RA and JB with any questions for their areas. These would then be collated and discussed with DMT, BBM and NRE and then posted onto Moodle. Governors should have made one visit by half-term next term. NH said that he had already arranged a visit.*	**Governors to email RA/JB with any questions for their RACE monitoring area; questions to be collated and posted onto Moodle. Governors to have made one visit by next half-term.**
6.	**Update on In-Year data, including RAISE** DMN gave a presentation on KS4 Measures and Refreshing Understanding of Progress 8. • A comparison of 2015 and 2016 GCSE measures was given. It was recognised that the 2015 measures were flawed and the Government wanted to move away towards a system of measuring progress. • Measures for 2016 – Attainment 8 and Progress 8 models, % of students achieving threshold in English and Maths, % entered for EBacc and gaining EBacc, Destinations (there was a 2 year lag with this information from the DfE), Performance gaps for disadvantaged students vs other students nationally (this was a big shift in RAISE). • Attainment 8 will measure achievement of a student across 8 qualifications – English, Maths, 3 other EBacc subjects and 3 further approved subjects. English and Maths were double-weighted (higher score of English Language or English Literature is double weighted if a student takes both). • DMN went through an example of how Attainment 8 was calculated. • It was an attainment model, linked to a number of other factors. It did not indicate how much value the school had added and how well the student had progressed. • 2017 results saw the introduction of the new 9-1 grading system in English and Maths, which affected how grades equated to scores. More subjects would follow in 2018. The system was flawed in that it impacted on the lower ability students. It was weighted more towards the higher achievers and would have a big impact on Progress 8. Until they moved to a model where all grades were equal, it would not be a totally fair system. • Progress 8 score was defined as a student's Attainment 8 score, minus their estimated Attainment 8 score. • Governors should be looking for positive scores. Anything above 0 indicated that value was being added. • In school, there were systems to enable them to track progress	

- 8 scores.
- School Outcomes judgement criteria – judgements were given according to how their P8 was graded. Well above average was P8 greater than 0.5 and Confidence Interval above 0. Above average was between 0 and 0.5 with Confidence Interval above 0.
- The Government had now defined floor and coasting thresholds. The floor standard was now minus 0.5, which would trigger an Inspection. Coasting schools would have a score of -0.25.
- ***Q How do you determine the confidence interval?*** *It was provided through RAISE online.*
- Nobel had a score of 0.05 and was considered close to national average. They were well away from floor standard and coasting threshold.
- There had been a shift in how curriculums were being devised by other schools, such as changes to grading systems. The Nobel School did not play any games to try and boost their score but wanted to ensure that the students had an education fit for them and it was the right model for them. This did however impact on the progress 8 score.
- The score was based on students' KS2 score and the reliability and validity of this score should be taken into account. The school had other evidence to show the value they were adding.
- DMN went through the timeline of curriculum accountability and assessment changes. There was a huge amount of change and turbulence at the moment, both with curriculum changes and with assessment systems.

Raise Online Report
- This had been circulated to Governors.
- Attainment was a useful figure, but Governors should focus on the Progress scores which was the real evidence as to whether the school was adding value.
- The Inspection Dashboard gave information on what the school was doing well and areas to look at.
- The main summary report gave S shaped curve graphs to enable the school to focus on the particular groups needing attention.
- It had validated their own analysis as a school. RACE targeted all the areas; they had identified the areas they needed to put more work into and were putting in strategies.

Sue Padfield had visited school to discuss the issue of attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. The school had already flagged this as a concern and had implemented strategies to address it.

Q With regards to a Governor's questions on attainment, particularly of boys and the disadvantaged pupils, DMN said that RAISE was a snapshot, a 1 year piece of information. It did not take into account

Action 16/63
DMN to upload 3-

		fluctuations within a year or a blip year. DMN had done a 3-year trend analysis to show trends over the years. There was a clear shift in reduction of reds. There was more red this year than last because of the increased analysis at the disadvantaged level; this was a known area they needed to work on. It was one group, although a key group. The school was closing gaps, reducing gaps or there may be fluctuations. Strategies were being put in place, but the trend over 3 years was important. DMN would upload the 3 year trend table so Governors could see the picture over time. It told the story behind the figures. Governors thought this would be very useful.	**year trend analysis and presentation onto Moodle**

In-Year tracking reports
- DMN proposed sending the reports via Moodle and the Governor linked to the relevant Key Stage could collate the questions and meet with DMN to discuss the whole KS data.
- Examples of tracking reports were shown, including tracking of groups.
- *Reports would be posted onto Moodle; Governors should ask questions/ask for more information and the Governor linked to the KS would collate and come in and talk to DMN and MGR. Governors thought this would be a useful process.*
- *Q Governors asked questions with regards to reading the data on graphs and DMN gave an explanation. All the groups were tracked so Governors could see where the students were compared to their targets. The issue was that the school had not been given information regarding the desired end target.*
- Disadvantaged students were measured against all other students nationally.
- *Q What is High overall/low overall? High/low related to their prior attainment band. Other is based on a different criterion – the student might not have any prior attainment, such as a student coming in from abroad.*

DMN was thanked for his presentation. He would upload it onto Moodle.

Action 16/64 DMN to post In-Year tracking reports; Governor linked to Key Stage to collate questions and meet with DMN to discuss data

7.	**Report on Meeting of Foundation Committee**	
	The Committee had met the previous week. They had discussed and approved the pay awards for staff. There was an update on Foundation status, which would occur in January. Not all property issues would be resolved, but with the exception of the caretaker's house, there was a willingness on the part of HCC to discuss the issues and there were proposals which could work. There was no proposal regarding the caretaker's house which would meet what Governors wanted so they were preparing the way for arbitration. The school had asked the legal team to confirm that all was in place, including the staff contracts.

The committee had discussed the ventilation issue, which now appeared to be better after a lot of work had been done.

The committee had discussed the ISR range for the school and | |

	implications. It was currently set correctly unless the school grew significantly in size.	
8.	**Policies** **Dealing with Allegations of Abuse** *Q Would the Chair of Governors only be involved in the process if the allegation was against the Headteacher?* NRE replied that the LADO was normally responsible for deciding who needed to know that an allegation had been made and would advise the Head if the Chair of Governors should be informed. *Q What would happen if the person who made the allegation or their family wished to appeal against the school's decision?* NRE had made enquiries but still had no answer. She had put in a request through HR. It did not have to go into the Policy but they still needed to know the answer. *Q A Governor asked if it should be made more explicit in the Policy that any referrals to the LADO would require "the LADO referral form" to be completed and that any allegations were required to be made to the LADO within 24 hours of the allegation being made. NRE agreed that a LADO referral form would be made, specific for this policy and that these amendments would be made.* The Policy was then approved subject to these amendments. Safer Recruitment Policy – approved via Moodle. Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy – approved via Moodle. Governors discussed the procedure for review and approval of policies by Governors via Moodle. It was suggested that, from the New Year, the new clerk would be responsible for the administration of this procedure, including chasing Governors for approval and letting NRE know once the policy was approved. RA/JB would discuss this with the new clerk to ensure an effective process was in place, which would help reduce workload for NRE and ensure that all Governors had a voice, where relevant, in policy review and approval. All Governors confirmed that they could access Moodle.	**Action 16/65 NRE to make changes to Policy on Dealing with Allegations of Abuse** **Action 16/66 RA/JB to discuss policy review and approval procedures with new clerk**
9.	**To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 19th October 2016** The minutes were approved. <u>Matters Arising:</u> • Lifetime plan for refurbishment – PC had come in to have a look at OEMs and had asked for these to be made available in digital format. It was a work in progress.	

10.	**AOB** • JB and RA had met with Peter Heppelthwaite, who ran the Limitless Academy. He would bring a wealth of experience with regards to managing large contracts, which would be particularly useful with respect to the catering contract. RA proposed appointing Mr Heppelthwaite as an Associate Member for 6 months, with a view to becoming Co-Opted Governor thereafter. He was a client of the school so there was a slight conflict of interest which would need to be managed, but he would come with a lot of key skillsets. The FGB agreed to appoint as an Associate Member for 6 months.	
11.	**Dates of next meeting** **Wednesday 18ᵗʰ January at 6pm**	