

**MINUTES OF A STRATEGY MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 20 September 2017 at 7.00pm**

**Governors Present:** Peter Heppelthwaite – Chair, Graham Blackburn, Phil Cave, Steven Chown, Martyn Henson (Headteacher), Nick Hoffman, Helen Jewitt, Sue Padfield, Amy Pearson, Hilary Rodgers, Robin Spicer, Craig Temple.

**Also in Attendance:** Jacquie Watts (Clerk), Barry Burningham and Christine Crawley. Matt Macguire, Steve Morley and Stuart Trotter were present for part of the meeting.

**Apologies For Absence Received From:** Richard Aggus and Rev. K. Wood.

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

Action By:

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to the same.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> apologies for absence were received from Richard Aggus and Rev. K. Wood.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> consent for absence was given to those who had tendered apologies.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest re. items on the agenda</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> no declarations of interest were received from those present.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Investors in Careers Award</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the talk given by Stuart Trotter in relation to the Investors in Careers Award.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the stages of the award process, including the fact that the next stage was due to be completed by January 2018, with the full award achieved by September 2018. <b>In response to a request from the Chair, a full copy of the annual plan was tabled.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> The careers work being undertaken by the school. <b>Governors questioned how the school provided contact for students with current practitioners, i.e. how a student interested in nursing could get to meet a working nurse. Stuart Trotter advised that such contact was available, but it took place via the auspices of the faculties. A number of governors pointed out that they had professional skills and experiences that could be utilised by the school.</b> Stuart Trotter agreed to consider this.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the board thanked Stuart Trotter for an interesting presentation.</p> <p><i>Stuart Trotter left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Whole School Literacy Presentation</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the presentation provided by Matt Maguire, who was responsible for developing whole school literacy. The presentation</p>	

	<p>emphasised that all teachers have a role in developing literacy, regardless of subject specialism and that the development of literacy required a consistent routine across the school. Examples were provided of some of the activities undertaken, including Word of the Week. The aim was to embed literacy in everything the school does. Governors were highly supportive of the consistency of approach and the improvements being made and applauded Matt Maguire's enthusiasm and passion for his subject and his forward thinking approach. They looked forward to seeing future literacy developments.</p> <p><b>NOTED: governors queried whether the promotion of specific reading texts might put some children off reading. The school recognised this as a potential concern, but felt that there was sufficient variety in the texts to entertain and engage most students. In response to a question regarding choice of texts, it was confirmed that students were not currently involved in choosing texts, but could be in the future. Students were allowed to read their own books in addition to the stipulated texts.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED: the governor suggestion that peer to peer recommendations might be promoted.</b> Matt Maguire agreed to consider this.</p> <p><i>Matt Maguire left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
5.	<p><b>Approval of Policies</b></p> <p><b>5.1 Behaviour for Learning Policy</b> <b>5.2 Child Protection Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the presentation provided by Steve Morley on both policies.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Child Protection Policy required annual review and was based on the County approved policy. There had been no significant changes from the previous year. <b>In response to a question from the Board it was confirmed that specific staff would shortly be trained in the Family First approach.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Child Protection policy as presented to governors.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Behaviour for Learning Policy was a statutory policy. Steve Morley provided a detailed explanation of behaviour points, changes in the last two years and the introduction of the Pivotal scheme, including the five behaviour "pillars". The school was looking to change classroom practice. There had been positive feedback to the steps taken so far, including the shaking of hand at the start of each lesson. <b>Governors queried whether repeated physical contact via handshaking might increase sickness rates in staff and students. In response to questions from the Board, the school's future plans to embed the process were discussed, including practical applications of the theory, the challenge presented by supply teachers not versed in the system and steps that might be taken by the school if staff did not adhere to the new practice. Barry Burningham added that policy issues were built in to the learning walk procedure.</b></p>	SM

	<p><b>NOTED:</b> governor comments that references to parent and parent/guardian were not consistent throughout the policy. The section on sanctions was not clear. Steve Morley advised that some sections of the policy were still being discussed with the SLT and sections of the document might yet be amended.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that Steve Morley should make any corrections and changes to the document and post the final version of the policy on Moodle (in the discussion section) by the end of the week for governors to comment on and agree on line.</p> <p><i>Steve Morley left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	<p><b>SM/ ALL</b></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Future School Developments (and RACE Link Governors)</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Chair's comments that, as a new Chair and relatively new governor, he was hoping for increased engagement and discussion amongst governors at meetings and increased governor input and support overall. He was hoping more governors would visit the school and engage with RACE monitoring.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that item 14 on the agenda, RACE Link Governors, should be absorbed within this item.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the paper tabled by Barry Burningham highlighting the elements of RACE and where governor input was being sought. Governors were invited to participate in learning walks with SLT and a walk during the school day involving many governors was enthusiastically supported by those present.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> RACE Link Governors for 2017/18 as follows:</p> <p>R1 – Helen Jewitt and Sue Padfield  R2+R3 – Hilary Rodgers and Nick Hoffman  R4 – Helen Jewitt, Sue Padfield and Robin Spicer</p> <p>A1+A2 - Amy Pearson  A3+A4+A5 - Steven Chown  A6 – Hilary Rodgers and Nick Hoffman  A7 – Philip Cave and George O'Neill</p> <p>C1+C2+C3+C4 - Rev. Kojo Wood</p> <p>E1+E2+E3 – Craig Temple</p> <p><b><i>N.B. After the meeting, and with the agreement of all parties directly concerned, the RACE Link Governors for 2017/18 were amended as follows:</i></b></p> <p><b><i>R1 – Helen Jewitt  R2+R3 – Hilary Rodgers and Nick Hoffman  R4 – Robin Spicer</i></b></p> <p><b><i>A1+A2 – Sue Padfield  A3+A4+A5 - Steven Chown</i></b></p>	

	<p><i>A6 – Hilary Rodgers and Nick Hoffman</i> <i>A7 – Philip Cave and George O’Neill</i></p> <p><i>C1+C2+C3+C4 - Rev. Kojo Wood</i></p> <p><i>E1+E2+E3 – Craig Temple</i></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that governors were asked to identify perceived strengths and weaknesses of the school. These included –</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> local reputation of school; good Headteacher and SLT; new, purpose-built building. <b>Weaknesses:</b> finances; the increasing number of challenging pupils (which some governors saw as a weakness, though the school’s ability to engage effectively with pupils was a counter-balancing strength); school taking on role of Social Services; school can be reactive rather than considered, pro-active and strategic; governors’ profile within school.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Chair would circulate copies of the White Paper on improving governance.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that ,when visiting the school, governors should observe and highlight good practice, rather than emphasising negatives.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that governors should email any further thoughts about school strengths and weaknesses and the governors’ role to the Clerk.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that governors wishing to visit the school during the day should email the Headteacher’s PA.</p>	<p>PH</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
7.	<p><b>Annual Equal Opportunities Report</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report that had been posted on Moodle. It was an interim report on progress to date and data so far collected. The Equal Opportunities Policy was scheduled to be reviewed in 2018. Christine Crawley highlighted key aspects of the report including the age and ethnic profile of staff. Comparisons with the national average were difficult as national averages had yet to be updated.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Christine Crawley would submit a further Equal Opportunities report to the next meeting of the Board once national averages were available.</p>	CC
8.	<p><b>Four Year Financial Forecast</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report that had been posted on Moodle. Since previous discussions the government had backtracked on planned financial cuts and there was the potential of growth. This, however, had not been included in the forecast as it was not yet clear the position that Hertfordshire County Council would take. The forecast in-year deficit was high despite staff reductions, but the financial benefits of these would trickle into the following financial year and produce a small surplus. 6<sup>th</sup> Form numbers were higher than anticipated (320 as opposed to the 300 factored into the budget) but still well below the notional capacity of 400.</p>	

	<p><b>NOTED:</b> in response to a question from governors, that the large projected drop in income between this year and the next year was because the 2017/18 income included possible amounts for funding which were either not expected or were not guaranteed in future years.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> in response to a question from governors, the inherent risks and lack of flexibility in reduced staff numbers, but the school considered it had been a necessary evil.</p> <p><i>Philip Cave left the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that the school had warned the County Council that it may need to borrow money in-year to offset the deficit as the date of the novation of the Life Cycle fund was unclear and at risk of being pushed back. <b>The Chair highlighted the need for the school to develop a strategy to raise income levels.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the four year financial forecast as presented to the Board.</p>	CC
9.	<p><b>Scheme of Financial Delegation</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report that had been posted on Moodle. There had been no significant changes from March 2017 when the document had last been reviewed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the scheme as presented to the Board.</p>	CC
10.	<p><b>Business Continuity Plan</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report as posted on Moodle and which was based on the Hertfordshire County Council policy. There had been little change since the last version, other than the addition of an evacuation section.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> in response to a question from governors, that copies of the plan were stored offsite at the homes of the Headteacher and Christine Crawley. A copy was also stored on Moodle, the back up of which was held offsite.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the document as presented to governors.</p>	CC
11.	<p><b>Approval of Policies</b></p> <p><b>11.1 Debt Recovery Policy</b>  <b>11.2 Admissions Policy</b>  <b>11.3 Most Able Students Policy</b>  <b>11.4 Complaints Procedure Statement</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policies as previously uploaded onto Moodle.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> there were no significant changes to the Debt Recovery Policy, although communication by letter had been amended to “by email”. <b>The Chair asked if there should be further changes?</b> Christine Crawley responded by saying that the system seemed to be working well. There was no worsening of the debtor position and there</p>	

	<p>was no long-term debt. Rather, it was a case of late payment of invoices. Aged-debtors and creditors were to be considered at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Debt Recovery Policy as presented to governors.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Admissions Policy had previously been agreed during the last academic year, but Hertfordshire County Council has subsequently made changes. The document submitted to governors had already been posted to the school's website for 2018 admissions, but Hertfordshire County Council had requested a further change this week. This had been incorporated in the document presented to governors. The Sixth Form Statement was a separate document that was being written in accordance with County Council guidance.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Admissions Policy as presented to governors.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> in the absence of Naomi Rose, Barry Burningham advised that the Most Able Students policy document uploaded to Moodle was intended as an interim document as the new Most Able co-ordinator would be producing a new policy at Christmas. <b>Governors pointed out that there was an error in relation to the reference to SATs tests.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the policy as presented to governors subject to the removal of "a" in "5a" re. SATs tests.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Complaints procedure as uploaded to Moodle. The document had been updated for this academic year, but there had been no major changes.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that governors queried the 28 days recorded as the response time for complaints. This seemed inordinately long. The school confirmed that it was the Hertfordshire County Council standard for complaints to the Board of Governors. The school itself aimed to respond within 24 hours.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Complaints Procedure as presented to governors.</p>	<p><b>CC</b></p> <p><b>CC</b></p> <p><b>NR</b></p> <p><b>NR</b></p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><b>Governor Visit 7 June KS4</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report as uploaded onto Moodle. It had been written following a June governor's visit by Hilary Rodgers, but the September meeting was the first available date for submission to the Board. Since then exam results had been published and a further visit and report would be necessary.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the school's policy on submitting exam papers for re-marking, following a question from governors. Some Hertfordshire schools chose not to publish their initial exam results because of changes following re-marking, the non-availability of national averages at the time of results being announced and the confusion over this year's new exams.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report submitted to the Governing Board.</p>	

<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <p><b>13.1 Register of Business Interest</b>  <b>13.2 Self Declaration Form</b>  <b>13.3 Code of Conduct</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the three forms previously uploaded onto Moodle and the blue data forms tabled by the school.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> governors should complete and sign all forms and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Submit them to the clerk at the end of the meeting OR</li> <li>2. Submit them by email to the Clerk by the end of the week.</li> </ol> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that undertaking of Prevent Training and confirmation of the same to Hilary Rodgers had been a regular uncompleted item on the 2016/17 Action Tracker. ALL governors were reminded that they needed to undertake Prevent Training ASAP and forward the date of the training and the resultant certificate to Hilary Rodgers.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting of The Board held on 21 June 2017 and discuss any matters arising, including actions from the tracking sheet</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the minutes of the strategic Board meeting held on 21 June 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>• As per the previous minute, all governors should send copies of their Prevent Training Certificates to Hilary Rodgers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>All</b></p>
<p><b>15.</b></p> <p><b>15.1</b></p> <p><b>15.2</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><b>Admissions Consultation</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Barry Burningham’s oral request that the governors approve the school going out to consultation on admission arrangements for 2019.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that the school go out to consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2019.</p> <p><b>Foundation Committee</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Governing Board needed to increase the membership of the Foundation Committee following a turnover in governors. Staff and student governors were ineligible to stand. Volunteers were sought.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to confirm Peter Heppelthwaite, Martyn Henson, Rev. Kojo Woods, Hilary Rodgers and Robin Spicer as members. At least another two volunteers were sought from eligible governors.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> volunteers (or governors with suggested nominations) should email the Clerk ASAP.</p>	<p><b>BB</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>

16.	<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, 18<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> apologies for absence were received in advance from Nick Hoffman and Hilary Rodgers.</p>	Clerk
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Drafted by: Jacquie Watts  
**Clerk To The Governors**  
**22nd September 2017**

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

**Date: .....18 October 2107.....**

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