



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
HELD ON 4th FEBRUARY 2015

Present: Martyn Henson (Head Teacher), Richard Aggus (Chair)
 Jill Borchards, Hilary Rodgers, Keith Hopkinson, Kath Smith, Graham Blackburn, Julia Brettell, Revd Wood, Pippa Frost, Julia Marshall, Martin Powell, Sheenagh Parsons, Rebecca Hughes, Craig Temple

Apologies: Phil Davidson, Holly Ingram, Ross Thompson

In attendance: Sarah Bennett (Clerk)

(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 had been received from Holly Ingram and Ross Thompson. The governing board consented to extended absence from Phil Davidson due to medical reasons.</p> <p>The new parent governors were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.</p>	
2.	<p>To receive notification of any other business.</p> <p>Nil</p>	
3.	<p>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest</p> <p>No conflicts were declared.</p>	
4.	<p>Update on Safeguarding</p> <p>SP advised that she had undertaken 2 visits to school, meeting with Steve Morley, the DSP, the safeguarding team and the SEN team. They had had good preliminary discussions so she had a feel of what was happening in both departments.</p> <p>The safeguarding annual report had been sent back to SM to be signed off before being submitted to the governors. The safeguarding checklist was with SP to complete the governors' section. She would send it to RA and KH in the first instance before sending back to SM. She would hope to do this within the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>With regard to training, governors needed to ensure that their safeguarding training was up to date. New governors also needed to book onto safeguarding training.</p> <p>JM as the training governor would find out whether there were any local courses available. The school subscribed to the Herts training service and could hold cluster training. The in-house training course this year was on exclusions.</p>	<p>Action 14/77 SP to circulate Safeguarding annual report and checklist when available. To be signed off at next FGB meeting</p> <p>Action 15/5 Governors to book onto safeguarding training if necessary</p>

	<p>Governors wondered whether it would be worth holding a cluster as safeguarding training needed updating every 3 years and there would be quite a few governors needing refresher training. JBS commented that safeguarding training for governors had quite a different content to that undertaken by staff in school.</p> <p><i>Q Is safeguarding training from another establishment transferrable? Yes, it should show up on the training records. Governors should notify JM when they had been on training. JM had individual training records and would send these out for governors to update. This would give an up to date and accurate picture.</i></p> <p>JM and PF had attended governor induction training before Easter, which was very good.</p> <p>The Chair said that the important initial training for new governors was induction and safeguarding. Governors should also be doing training relevant to their committees, eg financial training or appraisal training.</p> <p>Governors thanked SP for taking on the safeguarding linked role, which was a time-consuming, but very important link.</p>	<p>Action 15/6 JM to find out if safeguarding training is being held locally</p> <p>Action 15/7 JM to send out training records for governors to update</p>
<p>5. Committee Meetings</p>	<p>Committee meetings had been circulated.</p> <p><u>Finance, Personnel and Premises Committee</u> – MH said that the invitation was still open to come to the school lunch; there was an action on governors to come and talk to caterers so this would be a good opportunity. RA reported that there was a new DfE requirement from January 2015 regarding school food. There was a checklist for governors to complete and they would need a discussion with the caterers to ensure they were compliant with the regulations. The guidance and checklist were available on www.schoolfoodplan.com. School governors were responsible for monitoring compliance. Governors were told at the pupil wellbeing and welfare training this week that this was an area that governors should be looking at. It was advice, but if not compliant, governors should be able to justify why they were not following the guidance.</p> <p>Governors noted that food was important for students. A few students had not been able to have school lunches since their FSM had stopped. <i>Q Had they stopped because they did not renew their application or because they no longer met the eligibility criteria? Both. The school had now ensured that any students affected were now having a school lunch.</i></p> <p><u>Learning and Development Committee</u> – there had been a presentation on Inclusion and alternative provision; the aim was to create a separate unit which would address issues with behaviour and attendance. The Head added that he thought this alternative provision would be a great boon for them; it was not just for behaviour issues, but would help students with other needs.. There were a small but significant number of children who had not benefited from their education and were not getting their due. They also significantly affected the school's Raise Online data. There were 8 students last year who had left without any qualifications: 6 in last year's Year 11 who had U grades or did not take qualifications for whatever reason, plus 2 from the year before. This was for a wide variety of reasons, including mental health reasons. It had affected their value</p>	

	<p>added data, but it was also important for the students themselves to leave with some kind of qualifications. They needed to forge a future for these students after Nobel, eg at college or an apprenticeship. They would not necessarily follow the same curriculum as the other students, but would do subjects or activities that would keep them involved and engaged, as well as studying the core subjects. The Chair said that it was a school core concept that all students should be leaving with value added. It would become a much more tailored programme for the individual.</p> <p><i>Q Were there more in Stevenage than elsewhere? Not necessarily. It was difficult to compare LA with LA as they had different systems, for instance elsewhere students might have been moved before the census date to an Education Support centre so their results came off the school's books. This did not happen in Herts.</i></p> <p><u>Pay and Performance Appraisal Committee</u> – KH reported that they had not met since the end of last term when they had approved the pay and performance appraisal policies. There was now more onus on governors to come up with their own policy rather than using the County model. KH had attended training on pay and setting increments – the issue with bonuses had arisen. County usually inferred that bonuses were frowned upon, but the training had inferred that on the new pay range, staff could jump by 2 or 3 points, but it was more important to consider a bonus. KH thought that other schools were implementing in different ways, and would continue to chase this up with County.</p> <p>The Chair noted that governors had a key duty to look at pay progression in line with performance.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>The following polices had been circulated and were approved by the governing board. Any comments had been incorporated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment and Bullying • Probationary Policy for Support Staff • Nobel Grievance Procedure • Code of conduct for staff <p>With regard to the whistleblowing Policy, SP said that there was a section on safeguarding in this policy which stated that all issues should be reported to Steve Morley as the DSP but there was no provision for if the safeguarding issue concerned the DSP. There needed to be somewhere for this to go, whether it should be the Head or a governor. Governors thought that this might be covered in the safeguarding policy but should also be explicit in the whistle blowing policy. MH would check. The whistleblowing policy was approved subject to this being inserted into the policy.</p> <p><i>Q A governor noted that the Harassment and bullying policy talked about staff to staff policy – was there another policy that dealt with staff to pupil, or pupil to pupil bullying? Pupil to pupil bullying would be in the behaviour policy and staff vs pupil bullying would be covered by the Code of conduct for staff.</i></p>	<p>Action 15/8 MH to check whether safeguarding policy contained provision for any issues on DSP to be reported; whistle blowing policy to be amended</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Governor Visits</p>	

	<p>The Chair, the Head and some SLT members had visited Microsoft to look at potential opportunities for IT for the school. They needed to reflect back on the educational values of what they had seen. Microsoft were putting themselves forward as the cutting edge of IT in school. There was a cost to it and there were positives and negatives. Governors had discussed VLEs before and there were still question marks about consistent use by staff. The IT strategy plan had been discussed at the Finance meeting.</p> <p>SP had reported on her visits to school.</p> <p>KH would write up his visit to school.</p> <p>The Chair reminded governors that they had all signed up in the Governors code of conduct to coming into school, visiting and reporting back. The faculty meetings were on the calendar and governors had access to the calendar. They were well worth attending and were a good opportunity for governors. It was something they needed to take seriously; governors had a duty to visit the school, and it was often a valid criticism made by Ofsted that governors should be more proactively involved. If governors could not visit during the day, there may be opportunities in the evening with scrutiny of work books etc. The governing board might have to take a view of what to do if practice did not improve, as this was included in their code of conduct.</p> <p>JM said that when she set up the Faculty review meeting she advised the link governor. Governors would be very welcome to come and talk to the Head for an hour or so and have a walk round the school if they could not come for a longer visit.</p> <p>SP asked that if governors talked to students on a visit, they should ask questions around about e-safety and any issues, as this was valuable evidence that students were feeling safe in the environment or if there were any problems. JM noted that this was a question on the school panel at a Faculty meeting.</p> <p>ADT review was the next Faculty review meeting.</p> <p>Governor links would be reviewed in the summer term.</p> <p><i>Q With regard to the visit reports, how are these logged? They go to the clerk so they are logged. The clerk reminded all governors to copy her into circulation of a report.</i></p> <p>HR had visited on 27th November and had sent round a visit report.</p> <p>RA would put a scanned copy of the pupil welfare training on the shared webspace. There had to be a report on the website on food standards, and one on British Values. The Head confirmed that the British values statement was on the website.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Organisation of the Governing Board</p> <p>The Chair had advised County of the governing board reconstitution; the LA were behind with producing new instruments of government.</p> <p>RA had met with the third parent who had put themselves up for election. He had skills that would be relevant and useful to the governing board. RA suggested that they bring him on as an Associate Member until there</p>	<p>Action 15/9 RA to contact parent re</p>

	was a vacant slot for a co-opted governor. This was agreed by the governing board. RA would write formally to the parent to move this forward.	becoming Associate Member
9.	<p>To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 10th December 2014 and discuss any matters arising</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters arising –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SEND policy – ongoing. Head to chase • Business Centre, - RA, KH and JB had visited. The Centre could not handle companies requesting PC type training, so there was potentially an opportunity for Nobel to offer this type of training. The next step was for the Business Centre to visit and see if they could put any business our way. • RA would write something in the parents newsletter to the effect that governors were looking for someone with marketing experience and expertise. 	<p>Action 14/76 MH to request SEND policy to be updated</p> <p>Action 14/110 RA to put something in newsletter re parental expertise in marketing</p>
10	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	
11	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <p>L&D/FPP Wed 18th March at 6pm/7.30pm (Change of date)</p> <p>FGB Wed 25th March at 7pm</p> <p>L&D/FPP Wed 6th May at 6pm/7.30pm</p> <p>FGB Wed 20th May at 7pm</p> <p>H&S inspection on 25th June at 6pm - ALL governors required</p> <p>L&D/FPP Thurs 9th July at 6pm/7.30pm</p> <p>FGB Wed 15th July at 7pm</p>	
12	<p>Workshop on SEF & Road to Outstanding</p> <p>The Road to Outstanding document had been circulated. The governing board split into 5 groups to go through the action plans in detail. Each group started with one of the sections and worked through, so all sections would be covered.</p> <p>Leadership and strategy was the responsibility of the governing body overall. The plan contained the key actions which would enable them to get to outstanding. For each of the key actions, there was a set of actions, with definition of success, RAG rating, milestones, monitoring, resources required, and evaluation. Governors needed to show how they were adding value; the groups went through each action and considered whether it was moving the school forward to outstanding and would make a difference, and to evaluate the success criteria. The success criteria should show an appropriate outcome for the action. Governors also</p>	

considered how they should evaluate, what they should be looking for, and what would tell them that they were on track.

The document would be revisited every six months or so to ensure the school was progressing. Governance also had to be outstanding and the school could not gain an outstanding if governance held them back.

MH reported on the process of creating the document – they had done an evaluation of where they were since Ofsted. Various documents fed into it, including the SEF, the school vision, and pupil data analysis. It gave the key actions to take them from Good to Outstanding. It was a work in progress; for example students were working on the pupil voice section. They were convinced that if the plan was right, it would take them to outstanding. The Head was presenting the core ideas to the staff next week; on 4th March there was a mini conference with Heads of Faculty and Heads of year. The next step would be to have a vision for each Faculty, with actions to achieve this vision.

On their visits to school, governors should refer to the plan and try to see evidence of actions taking place etc.

Feedback by groups - overview and main findings:

- *Section 2 - comments had been added to assist with evaluation and suggestions for success criteria had been made, eg staff visiting Outstanding schools should bring back at least one example of outstanding practice that could be adapted for their Faculty.*
- *Section 2.2 – there were sometimes extra responsibilities that staff could take on – there should be a way staff could offer to take up these responsibilities, such as with Young Enterprise.*
- *Section 3 – some success criteria needed to be reworded. The group had talked about ways of engaging the parents; parent governors could have input into this. Developing alternative provision – do they need to raise awareness of the current intervention menu in the school and use of panel? Why are they not getting enough referrals to the hub? They needed to look at what they needed to do to make the hub more successful. What were the barriers preventing staff making referrals? A governor asked about the hub and the Head gave an overview of the function and purpose of the hub – sometimes it was more for nurturing and social needs. Students went in for all sorts of reasons – sometimes they were not doing a GCSE option so had extra support to help with another subject for that time; also if a student was not able to take part in PE lessons for medical reasons, they might go to the hub.*
- *Section 4 – similar comments about success criteria; they had wondered about regular work group scrutinies, how often was regular? The Head said that this meant it was part of the annual process – each term there were key points and milestones, alongside the yearly reviews. These were done once a year for each year, but there might be additional work scrutinies on top of this.*
- *Section 5 – actions needed to be prioritised, so that the actions that affected all the students were top of the list. They should be getting it right first time, so interventions would not be necessary in a few years' time. Again,*

	<p><i>comments had been made with regard to actions and success criteria and level of detail in the plan.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Section 6 – generally, the question “how” should be used for success criteria. There should be something on level 2 courses in sixth form, as this was specifically mentioned by Ofsted.</i>	
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