

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**HELD VIA TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 12 January 2022 AT 6.30PM**

**Governors Present:** Peter Heppelthwaite (Chair), Kelly Hagland, Mark Laws, Martyn Henson (Headteacher), Rose Odudu, Matthew Reah, Rev. Kojo Wood.

**Also in Attendance:** Jacquie Watts (Clerk), Nik Thomas (Business Manager), plus Naomi Rose (Deputy Headteacher), Nick Brown, Peter Dean and Steve Morley (members of staff) for parts of the meeting.

*(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 Glenn Atkins (work), Manesh Chudasama (work), Nick Hoffman (work), James Kay (new baby), Robin Spicer. The meeting was inquorate until Kelly Hagland joined the meeting (see minute 4 below).</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> a number of governors and attendees were likely to join the meeting late because of a clash with a parents' evening. Of these, only Wendy Parsley (governor) did not attend the meeting.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> (once Kelly Hagland joined the meeting and it became quorate) to accept all apologies submitted.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> there were no items of urgent business to discuss.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest re. items on the agenda</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> there were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding Report</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report uploaded to Teams along with the agenda and the references to safeguarding within the Head's video report. Steve Morley also provided a brief oral report. Reporting of safeguarding incidents had increased, but Steve Morley preferred colleagues to be over-vigilant than risk overlooking something important. He summarised recent activities and updates at the school and commented that pupil behaviour at the end of the previous term had been challenging, but the school was introducing additional support and interventions by way of response. Now the school was obliged to record COVID as an absence, the school attendance figures were lower than historically, but the new term had seen a positive start to attendance.</p> <p><i>Kelly Hagland joined the meeting at this point</i></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> A governor queried how detailed and sensitive safeguarding reporting was? Would it be possible to detect signs of escalation where appropriate? The Chair commented he had seen many examples of detailed and precise reporting. Steve Morley explained the processes used by the school. The Headteacher, whilst commenting that nothing was perfect, felt that the systems in place were rigorous and, subject to pupil confidentiality, was</p>	

	<p>happy to share details with the governor asking the question.</p> <p><b>AGREED: Mark Laws would arrange to visit the school at an appropriate time via the Headteacher to consider and discuss safeguarding records.</b></p> <p><i>Sam Morley left the meeting at this point</i></p>	<b>ML</b>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Student Voice</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the student voice elements of the Head's video report.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> Mathew Reah would contact the school to arrange a talk with the Head Boy and Girl to ascertain their views in person.</p>	<b>MR</b>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Curriculum Presentation – Most Able Children</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the oral and on-screen presentation by Peter Dean regarding high attaining pupils (HAT students). He explained the processes and opportunities for HAT pupils, including the Scholars Programme and the Inspire Curriculum. Academy Conferences had been put on hold because of the COVID situation. The school was trialling a Stretch and Challenge Booklet in the classroom and beyond.</p> <p><b>NOTED: a governor commented that he had listened to an online Inspire discussion during lockdown and had been very impressed. Governors queried whether interview training was available for all pupils at a certain point or just HATS?</b> Interview practice was available for HAT pupils as funded by the Baliol scheme and in-school practice with staff was available for all pupils in appropriate year groups. The school would consider whether practice using external mentors could be facilitated for everyone. <b>In response to a question from a governor, further information about the Stretch and Challenge booklet was provided. Its focus was RE/ History and English.</b></p> <p><i>Naomi Rose joined the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> The Baliol College funding was highlighted. It would run out in January 2023.</p> <p><i>Peter Dean left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Curriculum Presentation - MCR Pathways</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the MCR Pathways presentation had been deferred by the school to the next Board meeting. The Head provided a brief summary of the project, but said he would leave it to the team itself to describe the approach in detail.</p>	<b>MH/ Clerk</b>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Feedback from Parent, Student and Staff Surveys</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> this item has been deferred at the request of the school until the end of the academic year because COVID has prevented the surveys from taking place. They were in hand and there would be data by the end of the year. The Head further advised that the pupil well-being survey had taken place and he would bring the results to a future meeting. The staff questionnaire was planned for after February half-term and the parent survey would be conducted in the Summer Term.</p>	

	<b>AGREED:</b> the results of the pupil well-being survey should be presented to the next Board meeting.	<b>MH/ Clerk</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Fundamentals Data</b>  <b>NOTED:</b> although the item had been deferred until the next meeting, Steve Morley had included fundamentals data, such as school attendance, in his report and presentation on Safeguarding.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Annual Equal Opportunities Report</b>  <b>NOTED:</b> the school's Annual Equal Opportunities Report for 2020-21 as uploaded with the agenda. Nik Thomas reported that no major issues or negative narratives had been identified. The staff profile was representative of the surrounding region, rather than just Stevenage. <b>Governors queried the gender balance of the SLT.</b> Currently there were more men than women, following the retirement of Chris Crawley and her replacement by Nik Thomas, but historically SLT had demonstrated greater gender balance. Low numbers of SLT meant that a change in just one post could impact the figures significantly. Nevertheless, the school would keep an eye on the situation.  <b>AGREED:</b> the school's Annual Equal Opportunities Report for 2020-21.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>School Finances</b>  <b>NOTED:</b> the documents uploaded to Teams with the agenda covered:  <b>11.1 Four Year Financial Forecast</b> <b>11.2 Financial Benchmarking</b> <b>11.3 Revised Budget</b> <b>11.4 Approval of Financial Procedures Handbook</b> <b>11.5 Fund Raising Initiatives (oral report)</b>  <b>NOTED:</b> Nik Thomas advised that the in-year financial position had currently worsened by £30k, but this was a relatively small percentage of the school budget. <b>Governors asked if the current Omicron situation had impacted negatively on Fund Raising and lettings in particular?</b> The school had detected no negative impact. Most lettings were long term. <b>A governor asked for an update on the electric and gas situation.</b> As previously advised and discussed by the Foundation Committee, the school had accepted a 33% increase for a period of 2 years. The benefit or otherwise of this approach would only become clear at the end of the two year period depending on the national gas and electric prices. The school was calculating whether the re-activated use of the school bio-boilers would be a cheaper option in the current climate.  <b>AGREED:</b> the Financial Procedures Handbook.	<b>NT</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Business Continuity Plan</b>  <b>NOTED:</b> the school's Business Continuity Plan as uploaded with the agenda. The only changes had been in relation to named individuals.  <b>AGREED:</b> the school's Business Continuity Plan.	<b>NT</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Approval of Policies</b>	

<p><b>NOTED:</b> the policies for approval as listed on the agenda:</p> <p><b>13.1 E-Safety Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as approved online by governors and orally by the Chair.</p> <p><b>13.2 Health and Well-Being Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as approved online by governors and orally by the Chair.</p> <p><b>13.3 Restraint Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the school had chosen not to write one. <b>A governor questioned this decision as the Board had specifically agreed that a policy be written?</b> The Head explained that the school had taken advice on the matter and had been advised that a stand alone policy was not required as the matter was dealt with within the school's Behaviour Policy.</p> <p><b>13.4. Alcohol Drugs and Gambling</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy was not due to be reviewed until later in 2022.</p> <p><b>13.5 Collective Worship</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy was not due to be reviewed until later in 2022.</p> <p><b>13.6 Disciplinary Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> an insufficient number of governors had agreed the policy online. The document was discussed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Disciplinary policy.</p> <p><b>13.7 Disposals Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> an insufficient number of governors had agreed the policy online. The document was discussed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Disposals policy.</p> <p><b>13.8 Freedom of Information</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> an insufficient number of governors had agreed the policy online. The document was discussed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Freedom of Information policy.</p> <p><b>13.9 Most Able</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as approved online by governors.</p> <p><b>13.10 PLT (Homework) Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as approved online by governors and orally by the Chair</p> <p><b>13.11 Code of Conduct</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as approved online by governors.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>
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	<p><b>13.12: Accessibility Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy was not due to be revised until 2024</p> <p><b>13.13 Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statements</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> an insufficient number of governors had agreed the policy online and <b>one governor had stated online that he was a unable to approve it without further changes</b>. The document was discussed, including the requested changes.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Data Protection policy and privacy statements, subject to the requested changes being made.</p> <p><b>13.14 Data Security</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> an insufficient number of governors had agreed the policy online. The document was discussed.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Data Security policy</p> <p><b>13.15 Feedback and Marking Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy had been approved ahead of schedule in October 2021.</p> <p><b>13.16 Relationships and Sex Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy would be available for Board approval in March 2022. The school had commenced the required consultation process and a finalised draft policy should be available for the March Board meeting</p> <p><b>13.17 Careers Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy provided to the Clerk had been uploaded with the agenda and approved online by a number of governors. Further revisions to the policy had been made the day before the meeting and a revised document uploaded to TEAMS for governors' information. Nick Brown explained the changes and the reason for them. Changes included minor amendments to the names of organisations, also the inclusion of a section on regular feedback from stakeholders, employer talks for year 7 and the inclusion of careers information as part of lessons, though the implementation of the latter was still under discussion and would not be incorporated into the curriculum until September 2022.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the revised version of the Careers Policy as uploaded to TEAMS the day before the meeting.</p> <p><i>Nick Brown left the meeting at this point</i></p>	<p><b>NT</b></p> <p><b>NR/ Clerk</b></p>
14.	<p><b>School Admission Arrangements</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the admission documents uploaded with the agenda. Nik Thomas explained the only change from previous years was the revised definition of home address, as requested by HCC following a legal challenge.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the school's Admissions Statements for 2023 as uploaded with the</p>	<p><b>NT</b></p>

	agenda.	
15.	<p><b>Health and Safety Update</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report uploaded to TEAMS with the agenda and the oral update provided by Nik Thomas. HCC had no concerns. There had been no significant incidents recently and the school had made minor adjustments to working practices following accidents where necessary. <b>Governors queried the nature of the adjustments made</b> and were advised they included a suggestion to hold a specific tool, (such as a wrench) differently.</p>	
16.	<p><b>School Business Plan</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the written report uploaded to TEAMS with the agenda. The school was reaching the end of the 10 year building warranty and was therefore making sure that all outstanding issues were being recorded before the end of the warranty.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Chair would discuss warranty issues with Nik Thomas</p>	PH/ NT
17.	<p><b>Governance Matters</b></p> <p><b>17.1 Governor Visits: Safeguarding Report</b>  <b>Business and Finance</b>  <b>SEND</b>  <b>School Development Plan</b>  <b>Careers and Character</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Clerk highlighted the positive number of visit and link reports. <b>Mark Laws was planning further discussions with Naomi Rose regarding the School Development Plan and a further review of SEND issues.</b> Naomi Rose advised that she would shortly be sending an updated copy of the School Development Plan to all governors so that future link visits and discussions could be conducted in accordance with the plan.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Nick Hoffman was not present to talk to his report on careers and character, but he had recommended that an item on Careers be included on all future Board agendas.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that Nick Hoffman's recommendation regarding the inclusion of Careers on all future Board agendas be discussed at a future meeting when Nick Hoffman could be present</p> <p><b>17.2 Governor Training</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Kelly Hagland reported there had been little change to the training register as uploaded with the agenda and little training taking place and/or being reported. The need for more governors to undertake exclusion training and for those who had previously undertaken the training to undertake a refresher session was discussed in detail. The negative impact on the school if governors did not undertake such training was noted. Whilst training was mostly available online via video, customised in-person sessions could now be booked for live video-link delivery.</p> <p><b>17.3 Governor Skills and Effectiveness Working Group</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the minutes of the last meeting as uploaded to TEAMS with the</p>	<p>NR/ All</p> <p>NH/ Clerk</p>

	<p>agenda. The Clerk had received some responses in relation to questions for the annual effectiveness review, but not all governors had submitted them. She encouraged all to do so as soon as possible as she would shortly be convening a further meeting of the group to consider the questions to be asked.</p> <p><b>17.4 KCSiE Update</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Clerk advised the Board that all governors had now read part I the KCSiE and had indicated this on the specific TEAMS thread or by email or other communication with her. <b>Governors stressed the importance of being familiar with part I of the KCSiE and the changes introduced this year.</b></p> <p><b>17.5 Round-The-Table 30 second summary of individual governor activity since last Board meeting</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> in keeping with the decision taken at the last meeting, Round-the-table governor feedback was provided as follows:</p> <p><b>(PH) read documents, talks with Headteacher, attended exclusion hearing and staff interviews; (MR) link visit and report on Business and Finance, planning and arranging future link meetings, Chair training last term; (ML) attended Governor Skills and Effectiveness Working Group, visits, conversations and reports regarding SEND and the School Development Plan and general admin; (RO) nothing to report; (KH) Chair training, attended school's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary Celebrations, Exclusion Training, Head's Appraisal, attended and chaired Governor Skills and Effectiveness Working Group; (KW) Head's Appraisal, attended Governor Skills and Effectiveness Working Group, attended 6<sup>th</sup> Form debate, safeguarding training, discussions with Chair; (MH) Headteacher.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the Chair congratulated the meeting on the range of positive activities.</p>	<b>All</b>
<b>18.</b>	<p><b>Head's Termly Report</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the video report circulated to governors prior to the postponed December Board meeting. The Head added that the school would be due an OFSTED inspection in the next year or two and the school was aiming to hone its processes and achievements to gain the best possible result and wished to work with governors to see if it could improve upon its current Good status.</p>	
<b>19.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Foundation Committee Meeting held on 10 November 2021</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the provisional minutes of the Foundation Committee meeting held on 10 November 2021 and the accompanying Decisions Summary document as uploaded to Teams with the agenda.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to ratify the provisional minutes of the Foundation Committee meeting held on 10 November 2021.</p>	
<b>20.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Governing Board held on 6 October 2021</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on 6 October 2021 and the accompanying Action Tracker 21/22 document as uploaded to Teams with the agenda. The scheduled December Board meeting had been postponed</p>	

	because of sickness levels.  <b>AGREED:</b> the minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on 6 October 2021 as a true and correct record, to be electronically signed by the Chair.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>21.</b>	<b>AOB</b>  <b>NOTED:</b> there was no AOB.	
<b>18.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  <b>AGREED:</b> the date of the next meeting of the Board of Governors as Wednesday, 16 March 2022 at 6.30pm, probably via TEAMS link unless COVID infection levels declined.	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts  
**Clerk To The Governors**  
**13 January 2022**

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

**Date:** .....

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