

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD VIA TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 3 JULY 2024 AT 6.30PM**

Governors Present: Matthew Reah (Chair), Martyn Henson (Headteacher), Jamie Kellett, Jackie Mordaunt, Rose Odudu, Wendy Parsley, Shannon Parr, Claire Sutton.

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk), plus Nik Thomas (Business Manager), Naomi Rose (Deputy Head) and Steve Morley (staff) for parts of the meeting.

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

Action By:

1.	<p>To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to the same</p> <p>NOTED: the meeting was quorate.</p> <p>NOTED: apologies for absence were received from Chris Crawley, Bret Facey, Mark Laws and Rev. Kojo Wood.</p> <p>AGREED: to accept the above apologies for absence. Matt Reah would speak to one of the governors who had not been able to attend Governing Board meetings recently.</p> <p>NOTED: Rose Odudu apologised in advance for her late arrival.</p>	MR
2.	<p>AOB</p> <p>NOTED: no other business was identified.</p>	
3.	<p>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest re. items on the agenda</p> <p>NOTED: there were no declarations.</p>	
4.	<p>Safeguarding Report</p> <p>NOTED: the report uploaded with the agenda. Steve Morley provided an oral summary, including an update on pupil behaviour, which was largely the same as last time with a minority of pupils causing disruption. One third of all pupils had no behaviour points at all. Pupil exclusions, however, were at the highest level they had been at. The Headteacher was focused on the high level of suspensions. The school would not change its expectations of pupils, but would approach matters on a stepped basis next year. He hoped the creation of a unit for pupils unable to cope with classroom structure would make a significant difference. Governors looked forward to hearing about the impact of the new unit in the autumn term.</p> <p><i>Steve Morley left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
5.	<p>Governor Appointments</p> <p>NOTED: the appointment of Mrs Sophie Cowan as a Co-opted Governor was on the agenda, as was a progress update in relation to parent governor elections. Since the agenda had been published, elections had concluded and the school was in a position to bring forward the appointment of the two elected parent governors and also the appointment of a co-opted governor. The Clerk asked if the Governing Board was willing to consider all four appointments, although only one was formally listed on the agenda?</p> <p>AGREED: unanimously to consider the following appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Sophie Cowan – Co-opted Governor • Dr. Samuel Appiah – Co-opted Governor • Mr Samuel Dwamena – Parent Governor 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miss Helen Sparks – Parent Governor <p>NOTED: Samuel Dwamena and Helen Sparks had been elected as parent governors by a majority of the parent body entitled to vote. The Head had met both parents. Sophie Cowan and Samuel Appiah had been interviewed by the Chair (as well as the Head) as prospective Co-opted Governors and he was happy to recommend both appointments.</p> <p><i>Rose Odudu joined the meeting at this point</i></p> <p>AGREED: to make or ratify (as appropriate) the following governor appointments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs Sophie Cowan to be appointed as a Co-opted Governor for a period of four years from 4/7/24 to 3/7/28 subject to satisfactory clearance of DBS and Section 128 checks; Dr. Samuel Appiah to be appointed as a Co-opted Governor for a period of four years from 4/7/24 to 3/7/28 subject to satisfactory clearance of DBS and Section 128 checks; Mr. Samuel Dwamena’s election as a parent governor to be confirmed for a period of four years from 26/06/24 to 25/06/28 subject to satisfactory clearance of DBS and Section 128 checks; Miss Helen Sparks’ election as a parent governor to be confirmed for a period of four years from 26/06/24 to 25/06/28 subject to satisfactory clearance of DBS and Section 128 checks. <p>NOTED: the Chair hoped to meet the two parent governors over the summer holiday period.</p> <p>NOTED: the Clerk advised that one Co-opted Governor vacancy and one Co-opted (Staff) Governor vacancy remained unfilled. The meeting discussed how best to fill them.</p> <p>AGREED: further governor appointments should be paused pending an update on possible federation with Lodge Farm School.</p>	MR
6.	<p>School Plan</p> <p>NOTED: a written report had not been provided as the Headteacher’s Report video sent to all governors by email focused on an update of the 23/24 School Plan. The video had, however, omitted a section on Teaching and Learning by Charlotte Harnetty. It had been circulated to all governors that evening, but too late for governors to consider. Governors were invited to email Naomi Rose with questions related to the missing segment.</p> <p>Governors thanked the staff team for producing the video. They had found it targeted and useful.</p> <p>NOTED: Naomi Rose provided an oral update on the development of the 24/25 School Plan. Most plan headings remained unchanged, but the plan now included a significant Equality, Diversity and Inclusion thread. “Do We Do What We Say” was the plan’s strapline. Naomi Rose summarised the focus of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion thread, which included staff training, staff recruitment, developing a learning environment to be more reflective of the local community and the establishment of a pupil EDI group.</p> <p>Governors favoured the positive approach and liked the idea of developing performance metrics by which the plan could be evaluated. The Chair thanked staff for their work in developing the plan and highlighted the positive evolution of the plan over recent years, with it becoming more data driven, enabling governors to more easily monitor and assess success.</p> <p>NOTED: in collaboration with the Board and SLT the Chair was hoping to develop the school’s 3-5 year strategy over the summer to sit above the school plan. The</p>	

	<p>school was well positioned to evolve with good exam results and a good OFSTED outcome.</p>	
7.	<p>Headteacher’s Termly Report (including Complaints)</p> <p>NOTED: the video report circulated by email in place of the written report listed on the agenda. The Head stressed that staff were working towards creating tangible targets to enable meaningful monitoring of the 24/25 School Plan. The school would be fully staffed for the 24/25 academic year. The Head highlighted aspects of staff recruitment and pupil enrolment. The number of pupils taking exams in 2024 was positive, but it was probably the last year for Progress 8 scores, as the next pupil cohorts had come through COVID lockdown and had not taken exams at the pertinent time. Recruitment to the Sixth Form was very positive with pupil numbers coming close to 300.</p> <p>NOTED: in response to a question from governors, the Head advised that no formal complaints had been received by the school since the last Governing Board meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: the Head praised the staff and their commitment in terms of school clubs, out of school activities and lunchtime cover. The SLT was a strong team. Governors applauded staff and the SLT and commented that the school would not be in its current good position without their hard work and commitment. Governors wished them a restful summer.</p> <p>AGREED: the Head would include Board comments in the next staff newsletter.</p>	MH
8.	<p>Parent Survey</p> <p>NOTED: the survey results uploaded to TEAMS. Naomi Rose explained the survey process, which had utilised Parent View. There had been a low response from parents, but it was felt that often only those with a specific comment to make completed the survey. Nevertheless, responses had been positive, with 84% of parents and carers stating their child felt happy at school and 90% feeling their child was safe. The majority of pupils did not experience bullying and 60% of those who had felt the matter had been dealt with quickly and effectively. This percentage was lower than the school liked, but “quickly” was open to interpretation and it sometimes took time to build up evidence of bullying. 75% of parents who had complained to the school felt the matter was dealt with properly, 96% stated their child was able to participate in clubs and out of school activities and 85% would recommend The Nobel School to others. Only 56% of parents of children with SEND needs felt they received the support they needed. The school felt this was a reflection of SEND services in Hertfordshire being over-stretched. Governors felt the results were primarily positive and questions had been covered by the talk. They asked if free text responses had been provided, as these might clarify responses regarding bullying and SEND support? Parent View did not provide a free text facility, but the school was willing to consider the approach for the following year. The school would also build the survey into the school timetable to highlight it and hopefully increase the number of respondents. Governors queried the proportion of SEND pupil parents to other parents both in the school and in the survey? The school confirmed proportions were representative. Assuming the school was right in stating that responders were mostly parents with issues to raise, the percentage of parents who would recommend the school to others was encouraging.</p> <p><i>Naomi Rose left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
9.	<p>Health and Safety Update</p> <p>NOTED: the report uploaded to TEAMS. The school accident rate was low. One recent accident was highlighted. Fire panel repairs had been completed. A Fire Safety check</p>	

	had been carried out by the fire brigade with minimal recommendations. The Health and Safety link governor had visited the science area in June.	
10.	<p>Finance</p> <p>NOTED: there had been no changes to the Financial Procedures Handbook.</p> <p>AGREED: continued use of the unchanged Financial Procedures Handbook in 24/25.</p> <p>NOTED: the 24/25 salary cost forecast. There had been minor adjustments since the budget was approved, but the impact on the budget was negligible. Information on 2024 staff pay awards was still awaited. The support staff pay award had been due on 1/4/24. Governors queried the impact on the school's cashflow when pay awards were retrospectively approved? Nik Thomas felt it would not be an issue as the government grant was normally received very soon after the award was confirmed. He had no concerns in relation to the future cashflow position.</p> <p>AGREED: Nik Thomas would propose a 24/25 meeting schedule for the Finance Working Group.</p>	NT
11.	<p>School Business Plan</p> <p>NOTED: the report uploaded to TEAMS as previously shared and discussed with the Foundation Committee. Plans now included the resource for pupils unable to access the mainstream curriculum. This involved approximately £12k of building works at Timebridge over the summer. Costs would be met from the capital budget and would be offset by delays to the Building Management system upgrade because of the need to identify an alternative provider.</p> <p><i>Nik Thomas left the meeting at this point</i></p>	
12.	<p>Approval of Policies</p> <p>NOTED: there were no policies to approve.</p>	
13.	<p>Governance Matters</p> <p>13.1 Governor Monitoring and Visits 23/24</p> <p>NOTED: the PP and additional Health and Safety monitoring reports uploaded with the agenda and recorded on the 23/24 Governor Visit Record. Chris Crawley had asked for her thanks to the Science Team in relation to the Health and Safety visit to be noted. The Clerk had received a curriculum report from Rose Odudu after reports for the meeting had been uploaded. It would be presented to the October 2024 Board meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: the 23/24 visit record listed 23/24 link governors and current vacancies. The Chair proposed reviewing link roles over the summer and, in the meantime, approving 24/25 link roles as per those for 23/24. Governors queried whether current vacancies could be prioritised. The link role for SEND was considered a priority.</p> <p>AGREED: Jamie Kellett would serve as SEND link governor until the 24/25 link governor review had been completed. The Head would ask the school's SENCO to contact him.</p> <p>13.2 Governor Training</p> <p>NOTED: an updated training record had not been provided as there had been few changes since the last report. A focus on completing key "emerging" training was</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>MH</p>

	<p>suggested before the new academic year. The layout of the spreadsheet was discussed. The Chair and Shannon Parr would continue discussions beyond the meeting.</p> <p>13.3 Governor Effectiveness Survey 23-24: Part I feedback</p> <p>NOTED: a written report had not been provided and Mark Laws was unable to attend the meeting because of work commitments. The Clerk said her last discussions with him had indicated that not all governors had undertaken the survey and he was considering an apparent decrease in governor involvement. The Chair would discuss the survey with Mark Laws at their forthcoming meeting. The survey would be included on the October Board agenda.</p> <p>13.4 60 Second Round–Robin Update</p> <p>NOTED: governors provided the following updates on actions undertaken in relation to Nobel since the last meeting: (MR) – Foundation Committee Meeting, 1:1 meetings with governors, talks with Head; (WP) – teaching, curriculum planning, event activities; (JM) – moderation, DoE Bronze Award, yr 11 &12 induction, 6th form arrangements; (JK) – careers discussions; (SP) – planning meetings with staff and Chair, planning training; (RO) – Foundation Committee meeting, planning meeting with Chair; (CS) – Foundation Committee meeting and would be visiting school on the following Friday. The Chair thanked everyone for their efforts.</p> <p>13.5 Annual Meeting and Agenda Schedule 24/25</p> <p>NOTED: the proposed schedule uploaded to TEAMS with the agenda. The clerk explained the process of drawing up the schedule and highlighted that Wednesday meetings meant Rev. Kojo Wood would not be able to attend every meeting. The Chair acknowledged that, and confirmed he had discussed this with Rev. Kojo Wood. The Chair hoped Rev Kojo Woods’ apologies would be accepted by the Board given his generous attendance at committees, working groups and school events.</p> <p>AGREED: the annual meeting and agenda schedule for 24/25. The first Governing Board meeting of the academic year would be in-person at the school.</p> <p>13.6 Election of Vice Chairs(s) for 2024-25</p> <p>NOTED: the Clerk reminded the meeting that the annual election of the Chair had taken place early because of Kelly Hagland’s decision to step down. The election of Vice Chair(s) had still to take place. Previously there had been two Vice Chairs. The Chair commented that, ideally, he would like two co-Vice Chairs as the arrangement worked well. The role of the vice Chair was explained. The Clerk asked for nominations. Claire Sutton and Shannon Parr were nominated and seconded. They both agreed to take on the role on an interim basis until the October 2024 meeting, when link governor and other roles would be discussed further. There were no other nominations.</p> <p>AGREED: the appointment of Claire Sutton and Shannon Parr as co-Vice Chairs until the first Governing Board meeting of the Autumn Term. The position of Vice Chair(s) would be placed on the agenda for the first Governing Board meeting.</p>	<p>All MR/ SP</p> <p>MR/ ML Clerk/ ML</p> <p>Clerk</p>
14.	<p>Annual Careers Update plus General Careers and PP Updates (Standing Item)</p> <p>NOTED: PP matters had been discussed under items 4, 6 and 13.1.</p> <p>NOTED: the Annual Careers report had not been made available. Jamie Kellett explained he was still discussing possibilities with Nick Brown and the careers team. They were seeking to introduce ambition and interest into the offer to</p>	

	engage otherwise disengaged pupils. They were also considering placement data to see if careers/ work experience placements could be developed. He would produce a visit report in due course and the Careers Strategy Document would be updated and uploaded to TEAMS. A governor who was also a parent commented on the difficulty of finding placements for under 16s because of company insurance requirements.	JK
15.	<p>Minutes of previous Foundation Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2024</p> <p>NOTED: the provisional minutes of the Foundation Committee meeting held on 12 June 2024, the committee's proposed Terms of Reference for 24/25 and the accompanying summary of Committee decisions taken at the meeting as uploaded with the agenda.</p> <p>AGREED: the provisional minutes of the Foundation Committee meeting held on 12 February 2024 and its 24/25 Terms of Reference.</p>	Clerk
16.	<p>Minutes of Previous Governing Board Meeting held on 5 June 2024</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on 5 June 2024 and the accompanying Action Tracker document as uploaded to TEAMS with the agenda.</p> <p>AGREED: the minutes of the Governing Board meeting held 5 June 2024 as a true and correct record. They would be signed by the Chair and passed to the school for safe keeping.</p>	Clerk
17.	<p>AOB</p> <p>NOTED: there was no urgent business to be discussed.</p>	
18.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>AGREED: the date of the next meeting of the Board of Governors as <u>Wednesday 9 October at 6.30pm in-person at the school.</u></p> <p>NOTED: the Foundation Committee would meet before the Governing Board on Wednesday 18 September. The Chair reiterated the contents of his recent email, highlighting that over the summer period he would be focusing on 1:1 meetings with governors, developing the 3-5 year school strategy, undertaking training and reviewing possible Board efficiencies. He asked Governors to undertake at least the "emerging" training on Modern Governor. He thanked everyone for their time and commitment and wished them an excellent summer break. The Head thanked all governors for their support during 23/24.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>The meeting ended at approximately 20:09</i></p>	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk To The Governors
5 July 2024

Approved by The Board of Governors on:

Date:9 October 2024.....

Signature (Chair):.....