MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD REMOTELY VIA TEAMS ON TUESDAY 30 JUNE 2026 AT 6.30PM

Governors Present: Matt Reah (Chair), Samuel Appiah, Chris Crawley, Samuel Dwamena, Callum Green, Jamie Kellett, Mark Laws, Jackie Mordaunt, Richa Nair, Shannon Parr, Rav Phagura (Headteacher), Helen Sparks.

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk), plus Naomi Rose (Deputy Head), Nik Thomas (Business Manager).

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

1.	**To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to the same** **NOTED:** the meeting was quorate. Apologies for absence were received from Sophie Cowan and Rose Odudu. **AGREED:** to accept apologies for absence as received.	
2.	**AOB** **NOTED:** no other business was identified at this stage.	
3.	**For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest re. items on the agenda** **NOTED:** there were no declarations.	
4.	**Action Tracker** **NOTED:** the current version of the Action Tracker as uploaded with the agenda. **The Chair invited everyone to review it and forward updates to the Clerk before 31/7/26. He highlighted that it would be good to have a clear tracker for the start of 26/27.**	**All**
5.	**Minutes of Previous Meetings - Foundation Committee and Governing Board.** **NOTED:** the Foundation Committee meeting scheduled for 22 June 2026 had been cancelled because of proximity to the two Board meetings of 1 June and 30 June, and to allow the school to focus on developing its Financial Recovery Plan and related financial matters. **NOTED:** the provisional minutes of the previous Governing Board meeting held on 1 June 2026 as uploaded with the agenda. **AGREED**: the minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on 1 June 2026 as a true and correct record. They would be signed by the Chair and passed to the school for safe keeping.	**Clerk**
6.	**Head's Termly Report** **NOTED:** the report uploaded with the agenda. The school's recent focus had been on pupil exams and the development of a school calendar, given its strategic and potential impact. Other issues considered by the meeting were: the recent event for new parents; fixed term exclusions; the use of AI written submissions by parents in the complaints process meaning that many wished to by-pass the informal in-person stages of the process; staffing; strategic priorities and the SIP. The tag-line of the latter would be "Stronger together in our pursuit of excellence". **A governor asked if any trends were discernible in complaints received during the year?** No trends were discernible,	

	given the source of the majority of complaints. Others were too few in number to form a trend. The situation was highly unusual and had impacted negatively on staff and governor time. **Governors asked if the current Complaints Policy required further review to prevent a repetition of events?** The policy would be considered further having regard to DfE guidelines. **Governors asked questions about processes followed, and whether there were procedural lessons to be learned. More frequent reviews of policies were suggested to ensure that updates were considered whenever HCC model policies were updated.** **NOTED: a governor commented favourably on the lack of permanent exclusions and asked what steps the school had taken to achieve this.** The Head was pleased that figures were low. She highlighted the school's behaviour management approach, the use of Reflection and the consistency of the school's follow-through in relation to behavioural issues. **NOTED: the Chair was pleased to see improvements being made by the school including those highlighted in the two SEA reports uploaded with the agenda.** The Head advised that, following her recent visit, the school's adviser felt that all areas of the school met the expected standard in keeping with OFSTED definitions. **The Chair felt this was encouraging, and looked forward to seeing the school's new SDP for 26/27 at the next meeting.**	
7.	**Safeguarding Report** **NOTED:** the report uploaded with the agenda. It had only been three working weeks since the last report and therefore the report was brief. Naomi Rose and the Safeguarding Link Governor had not had an opportunity to meet prior to the report being uploaded. The views of the Safeguarding Link were not therefore included in the report, but they had met during the term. **The Chair found Helen Taylor's report on CLA students, and the support the school provided, heartening.** Naomi Rose highlighted a well-received talk given to staff that morning on CLA students by Helen.	
8.	**Staff and Parent Surveys Feedback** **NOTED:** the report on the two surveys uploaded with the agenda. The focus had been on mobile phones. The parent response had been the largest received for a survey, with over 400 responses received. Parents and staff were in favour of preventing pupil use of mobile phones in school, though views on how this might be achieved differed. The school would be using phone pouches. Naomi Rose explained the system to be used. **In response to a question from governors, she confirmed that pouches would not prevent phones from being on and tracked to and from school. They only prevented use in school.** Diabetic pupils who used phones to monitor their blood sugar would still be allowed to use them. **NOTED: in response to further multiple questions from governors, the school advised that the company providing the pouches, and schools who had used them, had found pupils did not forget to unlock the pouches before going home, smart watches and other devices with an internet connection would also be placed in the pouches, the logistics of unlocking phones was discussed in detail, there would be 20-25 unlocking stations and more could be provided, Reception could unlock pouches during the day if necessary. The lease scheme cost approximately £6.5k per year. There was a break clause at the end of the first year should the scheme not be successful. After that, the contract would run for a further five years. The option of purchasing the equipment had been considered, but the cost was prohibitive in a single year and there were other advantages to the lease, such as repair of faulty equipment. Whilst noting this, governors**	

	suggested the school review the situation at the end of the first year. Governors asked questions about the time taken to evacuate the building whilst unlocking phones and asked if the delay had a Health and Safety implication? The school felt that after the first few weeks, any delay would be minimal and would not be detrimental to health and safety. The school planned to increase the number of random phone searches. **In response to a question from a governor, it was acknowledged that unlocking devices were sold online, but most of them did not work. The Behaviour Policy would make it clear that conscious attempts to get round the pouches would be dealt with more firmly than simply forgetting to follow rules.** The school was seeking to introduce a culture change with regard to mobile phones. **A governor, whose school already used the pouches, concurred with the comments of the school and pointed out that, in other schools, parents were expected to pay for intentional damage to pouches.**	
9.	**School Development Plan** **NOTED**: the School Development Plan had been included within the Head's Report.	
10.	**School Finances** **NOTED:** the multiple reports uploaded with the agenda. **NOTED:** the Term 3 Finance Report was provided in detail. The outcome for 25/26 had been a revenue surplus of £17,800. Key drivers were listed. There had been a significant overspend on energy costs because of the difficulty in producing realistic estimates as a result of historical misbilling. The overspend had been counter balanced by savings and increased income in other areas. **NOTED:** the school's agreed 2026/27 budget had been submitted to HCC on 10 June. The only response to date had been the initiation of an SFVS audit. The Chair and Finance Link Governor had met with auditors on 22 June and there would be a further query meeting with auditors the following day. The process would take longer than originally planned because of a shortage in allocated auditors. **The Chair pointed out that, as an SFVS audit, auditors would be focusing on policies, processes and governance oversight.** **NOTED: Governors queried the capital expenditure on the predicted budget outturn, how the money owed to HCC had been accounted for and the size of the predicted deficit in three years' time.** Nik Thomas advised these issues would be addressed in the later sections of the report and attached documents. £295K was shown for 26/27 Capital Works. The timing of works took into account that the school could not make retrospective capital claims to HCC, and the capital grant process ran from September to February. The following programmes totalling £125k were scheduled for the summer: • IT Servers (hardware plus ongoing support costs) • Heating Pumps • 228 Aircon • Classroom AV upgrades • also, minor works necessary for the introduction of phone pouches **NOTED:** assuming the full capital expenditure backlog was delivered, with no external grants, the school was forecast to experience a £270k deficit at March 2027. When including the £200k HCC cashflow support facility, this represented a cashflow shortfall of £470k. The school was, however, awaiting a clearer picture of outstanding staff pay awards. The school would speak to HCC about cashflow issues in September 2026	

	when the situation was clearer. It had sufficient cash reserves until then. Were HCC to fund requested capital works, the school would maintain a positive cashflow. **NOTED:** the updated Financial Recovery Plan provided by the school. There were three significant challenges: • Short-term capital, caused by emergent faults and the prioritisation of IT and campus development over ongoing maintenance in recent years. • Medium-term recurring costs, caused by wage growth significantly exceeding income growth. • Long-term capital requirements for future major refurbishment needs. **NOTED: the meeting discussed the impact of these issues on the budget over the next three years.** The Financial Recovery Plan included staffing forecasts. The implementation and monitoring of the recovery plan would need to be discussed in greater detail in the autumn. **In response to a question from governors, the school acknowledged that current scenarios were worrying, especially as both the recovery plan and assumptions had still to be tested. Governors asked if there were likely to be any future surprises?** Nik Thomas shared he had always been open about the school's position and was not anticipating further surprises, but there were always unknown unknowns. For example, a minibus would be expensive to replace were anything unexpected to happen. The Head felt there was scope for further tightening of expenditure, and some processes needed reviewing. **The Chair stressed that governors were not expecting any further financial surprises, as they had agreed the 26/27 budget on the understanding that all outstanding issues had been included within it. A governor commented favourably on the Recovery Plan and indicated they would raise minor issues outside of the meeting. The impact of outstanding staff pay awards was commented on. Governors asked if HCC could be encouraged to resolve the legalities surrounding the former caretaker's house in the near future, as it could assist in addressing issues? The length of time it had taken HCC to conclude the matter was commented on.** Nik Thomas advised that boundary plans had finally been agreed and he needed to verify the terms of the Music Centre lease, given the passage of time since it had been drafted. He would continue to chase HCC. **NOTED: the chair commented that the Recovery Plan had a good structure, but would need fleshing out more fully over the summer. He asked whether it would be worth proactively contacting HCC over the capital position and potential support? Jamie Kellet had emailed his thoughts on the plan to Nik Thomas. Other governors were invited to contribute further thoughts given the challenging funding situation for 27-28 and 28-29 where expected staff cost increases significantly exceeded expected funding increases.**	
11.	**Approval of Policies** **NOTED:** the Behaviour and Learning Policy uploaded for approval. It had been reduced to a parent-facing document, with an implementation strategy document available to staff. It included reference to mobile phone pouches and some minor adjustments. It was linked to the Uniform Policy as published on the school website. In approving the Behaviour Policy, the Board would also be approving the Uniform Policy. **AGREED:** the Behaviour and Learning Policy. **NOTED:** approval of the Communications Protocol (previously a Communications Policy) had been deferred to the Autumn Term. The Head felt a protocol allowed for greater flexibility of response to evolving situations.	

	NOTED: the Policy Tracker uploaded with the agenda. **The Chair commented that some policy approvals seemed to be falling behind. He asked the school to assess any risks inherent in not keeping polices up to date and whether any newer HCC models could be used to update them as a priority. A governor suggested that the frequency of policy reviews should also be re-assessed.** The Head noted that the school expected to review this before September. **AGREED:** governors with thoughts on the frequency of policy reviews should email them to Nik Thomas and Rav Phagura.	**All**
12.	**Health and Safety Update** **NOTED:** the report uploaded with the agenda. There had been three accidents since the previous report. One was still being investigated, but nothing of serious concern had so far been identified. **NOTED:** the fire duct survey was being arranged. A cheaper quotation had been obtained. The failing fire system had resulted in an increase in unplanned evacuations, but the risk to the school was one of disruption rather than safety. A periodic site inspection was planned at the end of term or over the summer holiday period. *Nik Thomas left the meeting at this point*	
13.	**Annual Careers Report** **NOTED:** the video report uploaded with the agenda. **Governors found it to be positive. A governor suggested it was worth the school reviewing the paid-for service to source work experience placements.** The Head commented that the school paid a lot for the service and was considering other options, including bringing it inhouse. **The Chair praised the excellence of the school's careers offer.**	
14.	**General Careers and PP Updates** **NOTED: Samuel Appiah, as PP Link Governor, would be visiting the school on 14 July.** **NOTED:** Careers had been covered in item 13 above.	
15.	**Governance Effectiveness** **15.1 Governor Monitoring and Visits 25/26** **NOTED:** the visit record had been uploaded but governor visit reports were not available. **AGREED:** the Head and Chair would discuss the collection of reports, including the use of the centralised spreadsheet to collect and publish reports at Board meetings. **NOTED: a governor felt the spreadsheet form worked well, but it would be useful if it were possible to add a document attachment. The Chair would consider the possibility and use of attachments.** The Head commented that, for the 2026 Autumn Term, the aim was to book governor visits a term in advance for ease of planning and clarity. **The Chair reminded the meeting of the purpose of monitoring visits. The process needed to be simple and streamlined as far as possible. The report backlog needed to be addressed to make it simpler for future terms.**	**RP/ MR** **MR**

	15.2 Link Governor Roles 2026/27 **NOTED:** approval of 26/27 link governor roles had been deferred until the Autumn Term to align roles with the school's new SDP and evolving strategy. **15.3 Governor Complaint Panel Feedback** **NOTED:** the former complaints Policy, which was still being used for complaints that had commenced before the new policy was approved at the end of April 2026, required panel findings to be reported to the Governing Board and the Board to confirm findings and any actions taken. A brief summary of a recent complaint in relation to implementation of a specific EHCP detail was provided. Guidance from HCC had, at times, been contradictory. Based on evidence supplied to the panel by HCC and others, the panel had upheld one element of the complaint, but not other elements. Governors had no comments to make. The Head was continuing to work with the family and HCC to clarify contradictory advice. **15.4 Governor Training Update and Annual Review** **NOTED:** the training record uploaded with the agenda. **Shannon Parr, as Training Link Governor, was pleased with progress made. She thanked governors for working their way through the training pathways and reminded them of the process for uploading completion certificates to the Certificates To Be Added folder.** **AGREED:** Shannon Parr would notify governors of old and expired training, along with recommended training for their link roles. **15.5 Annual Review of Governor Effectiveness** **NOTED:** the Governance Effectiveness Working Group would be meeting in July to consider the 25/26 annual review and, subsequently, the 26/27 Skills Audit. **15.6 Foundation Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 26/27** **NOTED:** proposed Terms of Reference for 26/27 and current committee membership as uploaded with the agenda. As the June Foundation Committee meeting had been cancelled, any agreed changes to the TOR would be reviewed by the Committee at their first meeting in 26/27 and the Committee would be able to suggest further changes to the subsequent Governor Board meeting. **AGREED:** the proposed Terms of Reference for 26/27. The Clerk would finalise the document and publish it on TEAMS/ SharePoint. **AGREED:** Foundation Committee membership for 26/27 as: • Chris Crawley • Helen Sparks • Jamie Kellett • Sophie Cowan • Samuel Appiah • Matt Reah • Rav Phagura **15.7 Annual Meeting and Agenda Schedule 2026/27** **NOTED:** the two versions of the schedule and the report from the Head requesting changes to the meeting day and time. The Clerk explained version 5 of the schedule was	**SP** **Clerk**

	the most up to date in terms of agenda content. The second version contained the date changes proposed by the school, but was an earlier and incomplete version in terms of agenda content. The Head explained her reasons for suggesting that meetings moved from Mondays to Thursdays, and that some Foundation Committee meetings were held early on Friday mornings. **Governors discussed the value of TEAMS versus in-person meetings. At least one governor favoured more in-person meetings. It was suggested that strategy meetings, when held, should take place in-person.** **NOTED:** the Head asked if governors would trial asking questions online in advance of meetings, thus enabling governor questions to be answered ahead of meetings. **AGREED:** trialling the online asking and answering of questions, provided the Clerk was still able to capture and record governor challenge within meetings. **AGREED:** version 5 of the schedule for agenda content, but agreed the Thursday dates contained in the second version. All Board meetings, except for the first and last of the year, would be held by TEAMS. The first and last of the year would take place in-person at the school. Further discussions would be held on whether additional meetings should be in-person. While Foundation Committee times and dates were also agreed as Thursdays at 6.30pm, the school would trial holding some of them at 8am on a Friday morning via TEAMS. The meetings to be hold on Friday mornings would be determined nearer the time. The Clerk would combine the two documents to create version 6 and publish it on TEAMS/ Share Point. She would also send it to HfL, as the clerking providers from 1/8/26 onwards. **15.8 Annual Election of Chair** **NOTED:** the Clerk reminded governors of the agreed process and called for nominations. Matt Reah was nominated and seconded. There were no other nominations. **AGREED:** unanimously to appoint Matt Reah as Chair of the Governing Board for 2026/27. **15.9 Annual Election of Vice Chair(s)** **NOTED:** the Clerk reminded governors of the agreed process and called for nominations. Shannon Parr and Jamie Kellett were nominated and seconded. There were no other nominations. **AGREED:** unanimously to appoint Jamie Kellett and Shannon Parr as Co- Vice Chairs of the Governing Board for 2026/27. **15.10 Death of Peter Heppelthwaite 1967- 2026** **NOTED:** with sadness, the recent death of Peter Heppelthwaite, former Chair of Governors from 2017-2023. His significant contribution to the school was noted, and those who knew him remembered him fondly. **AGREED:** the school would send a card to his family on behalf of the Governing Board. **15.11 Resignation of Rose Odudu** **NOTED:** Rose Odudu was sad not to be able to attend the meeting, as it would be her last one. She was standing down because of work and personal commitments. The Board thanked her for her service and wished her all the best.	**Clerk** **RP**

	15.12 Clerk's Final Meeting **NOTED:** Jacquie Watts had served as Clerk since January 2017 and would be standing down at the end of July 2026. The Board had sent a card and hamper to her address. Governors thanked her for her years of service, commenting on the positive structure she had introduced and the constructive advice she had provided over the years. They were very sorry to see her go. Jacquie thanked governors for their generous gift. She would miss the school, but it was time for her to focus on other things.	
16.	**AOB** **NOTED:** the Head referred back to the agreed Behaviour and Learning Policy and highlighted that acceptance of it also meant acceptance of the School Uniform Policy and the phasing out of school jumpers. She asked governors to confirm they were happy to agree the school uniform policy as published, the Head mentioned that staggered approach to the new logoed skirt and ties had previously brought to Governors. **Governors reiterated their agreement of the Behaviour and Learning Policy and the School Uniform Policy.** **NOTED:** the Head thanked the Board for its support during her first year at Nobel. **Governors thanked her for her many efforts during a positive if challenging year.**	
17.	**Date of Next Meeting** **NOTED:** the date of the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Governors was Thursday, 8 October 2026 at 6.30pm in person at the school, in keeping with the agreed Annual Meeting and Agenda Schedule for 2026/27 **NOTED: the Chair thanked everyone for their commitment and time during a very busy year.** *The meeting ended at approximately 21:05*	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk To The Governors
1-3 July 2026

Approved by The Board of Governors on:

Date: .....

Signature (Chair): ……..