



Notes of Meeting: North

Thursday 11 March 2021

Attendance

Attendance data is published annually on the GOV.UK website.

HTB members who sent their apologies for the meeting have, where possible, been consulted on all projects before the meeting. Their views are reflected in the discussion at the meeting (where appropriate). This excludes items where that member declared a conflict of interest.

Regional school commissioner (RSC) chair

- Katherine Cowell (RSC)

Headteacher board (HTB) members

- Zoe Carr (HTB)
- George Beveridge (HTB)
- Lesley Powell (HTB)
- Nick Hurn (HTB)
- Elizabeth Horne (HTB)
- Andy Bayston (HTB)
- Chris Clarke (HTB)
- Sir Michael Wilkins (HTB)

Guests

- none

Apologies

- none

DfE senior civil servants

- none

Representations received

- No representations were made for any items discussed at this meeting.

General discussion points

Points discussed in the meeting.

RSC Update

RSC welcomed board members to the meeting. RSC carried out a Covid 19 temperature check, inviting members to share their views.

Significant Change

Points discussed in relation to significant changes application(s).

Project: This is a proposal to increase SEN places at Hopewood Academy, Durham

HTB discussion:

- Hopewood Academy caters for young people with a diverse range of special educational needs.
- Hopewood was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in September 2018.
- The board was advised that due to a shortage of high needs places within the region Durham County Council has requested additional places from the academy. Hopewood Academy has therefore submitted a formal request to increase their pupil numbers.
- The academy is projected to be full by April 2021, they are unable to admit any more pupils unless they increase the agreed pupil numbers.
- The board was informed that the academy has the physical capacity to meet the increase in numbers, there will be no capital costs incurred to facilitate this request.
- Formal consultation has been carried out; a small number of responses was received which the trust has addressed.
- The board supported this proposal.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: Nick Hurn was not present and did not receive papers for this item

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal to increase SEN places at Portland Academy, Sunderland.

HTB discussion:

- Portland Academy is a special school that caters for students between the ages of 11 and 19 who experience severe learning difficulties and profound, multiple, and complex medical needs.
- Portland was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in November 2019.
- The board was advised that there is a shortage of high needs places within the local area and local authorities require further places for the 21/22 academic year.
- The academy has the physical capacity to accommodate the increase in numbers, there will be no capital costs incurred to facilitate this request.
- The board was advised that Portland currently has a waiting list, they are unable to admit any additional pupils until RSC approval is granted.
- Formal consultation has been carried out; a small number of responses was received which the trust has addressed.
- The board supported this proposal.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: Nick Hurn was not present and did not receive papers for this item

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal to increase SEN places and increase age range at Ash Trees Academy, Stockton on Tees

HTB discussion:

- Ash Trees is a primary aged (4-11) special academy, which caters for pupils with severe learning difficulties, including profound and complex medical needs and young people with autism.
- Ash Trees was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in September 2017.
- The board was advised that there is a shortage of high needs places within the local area and the local authority are requesting further places from the academy.
- In addition, the academy would also like to expand their age range to include a nursery intake in September 2021 from 4-11 years to 3-11.
- Ash Trees Academy has the physical capacity to accommodate the additional places. The academy is split over 2 sites which provides further capacity and flexibility.
- The board was informed that the increase in pupils will have transport implications because all pupils are transported to this academy. The board accepted that the increase in numbers would prevent pupils potentially being transported to long distance locations within another local authority/county.
- The board was advised that formal consultation has been carried out; the responses received was positive and supported the increase in place numbers and the change of age range.
- The board supported this proposal.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: Nick Hurn was not present and did not receive papers for this item

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal to increase the age range at Pentland Primary School, Stockton on Tees

HTB discussion:

- Pentland Primary currently has nursery provision for 3 and 4 year old children, the board was advised that they wish to extend the provision to accommodate 2 year olds and also extend the provision to a 52 week service. This proposal will include the school expanding to an adjacent building.
- Formal consultation has been carried out; the responses received have been positive. The local authority has also shown its support.
- Pentland Primary was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in September 2013.
- The board supported this proposal, pending some further assurances from the trust regarding funding costs and staffing structures.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal to increase SEN places at Outwood Academy Acklam, Middlesbrough.

HTB discussion:

- Outwood Academy Acklam is an 11-16 mainstream secondary school, the academy would like to change the existing provision at the Higher Needs Base (HNB) to meet the increasing need for ASD places.
- The board was informed that Outwood Academy Acklam has successfully provided for pupils at the HNB with Moderate Learning Difficulties, if approved, this configuration of provision will allow pupils with ASD access to mainstream education with the support of the HNB.
- Outwood will work with the local authority to provide these additional ASD places.
- Outwood was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in April 2015, a further short inspection was carried out in October 2019 and the academy retained its 'Good' judgement.
- Formal consultation has been carried out; the responses received have been positive.
- The board supported this proposal.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: Andy Bayston and Sir Michael Wilkins were not present and did not receive papers for this item

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal to support the closure of the sixth form provision and in year admission change at North Durham Academy, Durham.

HTB discussion:

- The board was advised that North Durham Academy proposes to permanently close the existing sixth form provision from 31 August 2021, this will result in a change of age range from 11-19 to 11-16 which will need to be reflected in the funding agreement.
- North Durham Academy was judged by Ofsted 'Requires Improvement' in October 2018.
- The board was advised that closure of the sixth form will allow the academy to focus on 11-16 provision.
- Sixth form numbers have been historically low, increasing numbers of students are choosing to travel outside of the area.
- The last available KS4 data from 2019 shows the academy was performing below national average.
- The academy suspended recruitment to year 12 in September 2020, whilst they carried out a formal consultation. The academy received a limited number of responses. The local authority has also shown their support.
- The board was advised that there will be no change to the leadership and governance if this proposal is approved, however, the trust do intend to advertise for a permanent CEO.
- The board discussed the current post 16 provision within County Durham and was advised that there is an extensive range of provision within the area.
- The board supported this proposal, however, they suggested further discussions with the trust are necessary to establish more clarity regarding their long-term vision.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: This is a proposal for St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, New Seaham, Durham to convert and join Bishop Chadwick Catholic Academy Trust

HTB discussion:

- The board was advised that this proposal is in line with the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese's vision on Catholic education.

- St Cuthbert's Primary School was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' in May 2016, a short inspection was carried out in January 2020 and a 'Good' judgement was retained.
- Educational performance at the school is strong.
- The board was advised that St Cuthbert's secondary feeder is already part of the trust supporting transition.
- The board was informed that as a result of a previous RSC decision a formal condition was approved to deploy a SRMA into the trust. DfE will continue to monitor trust progress to anticipate any possible risks as more schools join Bishop Chadwick CET.
- Trust governance structure is in line with DfE guidelines, and includes a good mix of skills.
- The board supported this proposal.

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: This is a proposal for Dean Gibson Catholic Primary School, St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, St Bernard's Catholic High School, St Joseph's Catholic High School, St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School & St Cuthbert's Catholic Community School, Cumbria to form Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust

HTB discussion:

- The board was advised that this proposal is in line with the Bishop of Lancaster's Diocese's vision on Catholic education.
- The diocese is supportive of the proposal to set up the Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust. The trust will initially open with seven schools in Cumbria, the trust plans to sponsor a further school based in Lancaster, which has been receiving ongoing support since September 2020 from Dean Gibson Catholic Primary School.
- The seven schools within this proposal were judged by Ofsted to be 'Good'.
- The board was advised that currently there is an interim CEO in post, however, if the application is approved the permanent CEO post will be advertised.
- The governance structure is in line with DfE guidelines.
- The scheme of delegation is comprehensive and outlines the parameters of delegation.
- The board was advised that the diocese has provided a 3-year consolidated financial plan, which sets out how the trust proposes to address the current deficits. The proposed trust CFO will use ICFP to identify further efficiencies.
- The board was advised that if this proposal was approved, there would be a number of conditions that would have to be applied to help prevent long-term financial concerns.
- The board discussed the proposal and raised a number of concerns with the strategic vision of this proposal.

- The board suggested that further discussions with the diocese are necessary to establish further clarity regarding the wider catholic strategy and long-term plan of this trust.

RSC decision: defer

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Sponsor Application

Points discussed in relation to applications for sponsor approval.

Project: This is a proposal for Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust, Cumbria to apply for sponsor status.

- The board was advised that this proposal is in line with the Bishop of Lancaster's Diocese's vision on Catholic education.
- The diocese is supportive of the proposal to set up the Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust. The trust will initially open with seven schools in Cumbria, the trust plans to sponsor a further school based in Lancaster, which has been receiving ongoing support since September 2020 from Dean Gibson Catholic Primary School.
- The seven schools within this proposal were judged by Ofsted to be 'Good'.
- The board was advised that currently there is an interim CEO in post, however, if the application is approved the permanent CEO post will be advertised.
- The governance structure is in line with DfE guidelines.
- The scheme of delegation is comprehensive and outlines the parameters of delegation.
- The board was advised that the diocese has provided a 3-year consolidated financial plan, which sets out how the trust proposes to address the current deficits. The proposed trust CFO will use ICFP to identify further efficiencies.
- The board was advised that if this proposal was approved, there would be a number of conditions that would have to be applied to help prevent long-term financial concerns.
- The board discussed the proposal and raised a number of concerns with the strategic vision of this proposal.
- The board suggested that further discussions with the diocese are necessary to establish further clarity regarding the wider catholic strategy and long-term plan of this trust.

RSC decision: defer

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Academy opening approved in principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Alne Primary School, North Yorkshire

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: Annfield Plain Infant School, Durham

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: Annfield Plain Junior School, Durham

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: Bishopton Centre, Stockton on Tees

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: East Stanely School, Durham

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: English Martyrs' RC Primary School, Newcastle

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: Lady Lumley's School, North Yorkshire

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: Preston Primary School, Stockton on Tees

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: Skipton Parish Church of England VC Primary School, North Yorkshire

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Aidan's Roman Catholic VA Primary School, Northumberland

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Alban's RC Primary School, Newcastle

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Bede's RC Primary School, Newcastle

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Bede's RC VA Primary School, South Shields, South Tyneside

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Charles RC Primary School, Newcastle

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Cuthbert's RC VA Primary School, Stockton on Tees

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St George's RC Primary School, Newcastle

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Hild's Church of England VA School, Hartlepool

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Mark's RC Primary School, Newcastle

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Patrick's Roman Catholic VA Primary School, Stockton on Tees

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Patrick's RC VA Primary School, Sunderland

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Project: St Paul's RC VA Primary School, Northumberland

HTB discussion: Proposed opening date 01/04/2021

RSC decision: approve

Further actions required: No further action required

Decisions taken between HTB meetings

List of decisions taken by the RSC between HTB meetings.

Significant Change

Project: Sinnington Primary School, North Yorkshire – lower the age range to 2-11

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Project: Helmsley Community Primary School, North Yorkshire - lower the age range to 3-11

RSC decision: approve

Conflicts: none

Further actions required: Project Lead to inform school/trust of decision

Projects listed on the published draft agenda but were removed before the meeting

List of projects that were on the published agenda but not discussed at the meeting.

St Mary Magdalen's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Seaham, Durham to join Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust

This case was removed from the agenda pending further information.