



Notes of Meeting: South East and South London

10th September 2020

Attendance

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

HTB members who apologised have been consulted on all projects, where available, before the meeting. This excludes items where there were conflicts. Their views are reflected in the discussion at the meeting (where appropriate).

Regional school commissioner (RSC) chair

- Claire Burton

Headteacher board (HTB) members

- Alison Beane
- David Boyle
- Stephen Carey
- Andrew Carter
- Jon Chaloner
- Mark Ducker
- Paula Farrow

Guests

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Anna Barker

General discussion points

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

Verbal update provided on an Ofsted report for Oak Lodge School which is a school for pupils who are deaf or have hearing loss and related speech, language and communication difficulties. Ofsted judged the school as good. This was the only published inspection report over the previous three months.

RSC discussed:

- Covid response: 50% of RSC team's time being spent on Covid response. There has been a general positive response at the start of term. However, we are now seeing Covid cases in schools across the region. We are working with public health teams, trusts and LAs to ensure decisions are consistent. Trust and school risk assessments have held up well.
- Second half of autumn term we want renewed focus on our business-as-usual work and thinking about building capacity through the system, particularly cold spots. We will also look to re-start our trust reviews but with a view to holding these over a longer timespan and to avail of virtual tools.
- RSC to write out formerly to all HTB members to ask them to extend their tenure up to elections.

HTB discussed:

- ESFAs high pay letter and the timing/content of this during a covid crisis. For instance, the letters were received on A-level results day. There is concern that ESFA are acting independently from RSC offices and without understanding the context. There is also discontent that ESFA has done this without communication with RSCs. Further, ESFAs relationship management has been viewed as being unsatisfactory.
- Funding - unfunded salary increase is very difficult to manage alongside excess Covid costs.
- Covid guidance coming out on Friday evening is really unhelpful.
- Ofsted's role is not helpful when system is trying to re-build, particularly the lack of clarity around Covid recovery visits and formal inspections post January. Ofsted doing visits when there are spikes in schools is really difficult to manage for schools and trusts.
- Exams and assessments for 2021- still no clarity on this.

Discussion of projects, including decisions made by RSC with advice from HTB

All decisions are made in reference to relevant legislation and the published criteria.

Academy Orders and MAT Approvals

Project: Trinity Academy to join Future Academies Trust, Lambeth SAT to MAT

HTB discussion:

- Future of the leadership and governors at Trinity. Future Academies will review leadership/governance and it is not expected that the Trinity trustees will join the Future Academies trust board.
- Separation of powers on the Future Academies Trust board. Three of the four members are also directors and Lady Nash is CoG at two of the trust's school.
- Discomfort that CEO of Trinity is former DfE official that helped to set up the trust.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required:

- Trustees at Trinity will not be appointed to the trust board at Future Academies.

Significant Change

Project: Oasis Johanna, Lambeth - Capacity expansion

HTB discussion:

- Potentially interesting proposition but several reservations.
- No need for any additional forms of entry at primary level in Lambeth, particularly in the north of the borough.
- Most MLD pupils are in mainstream school so not clear why a separate centre would be needed for these children although noted that LA is supportive of the need for the SEND centre.

RSC decision: Reject

Conflicts: None

Further actions required:

- Trust to develop and provide plan for the SEND centre, which should be discussed with the RSC.

Academy Orders and MAT Approvals

Project: St Edmund's Catholic Primary School, Surrey to join Xavier Catholic Education Trust

HTB discussion:

- This is the only catholic MAT in the area so recognition that there aren't any other options. ESFA wanted a condition that the trust had an SRMA which was agreed. The condition was on the recommendation paper.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: None

Significant Changes

Project: Ashley CoE Primary School, Surrey – Change in school capacity

HTB discussion:

- The school had previously expanded it's provision and so the application for a significant change was retrospective.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: None

Sponsored routes

Project: Marnel Junior School, Hampshire -Sponsor Options

HTB discussion:

- Bourne has not visited the school yet, which is surprising. RSC team noted that Bourne are planning to visit. It has been difficult to do this during the Covid period.
- Potential future consolidation of Junior and Infants schools.

RSC decision: Approve Bourne as a sponsor with recommendation

Conflicts: None

Further actions required:

- RSC to write to infants school about future of the school in light of sponsor match for the Junior school.

Academy Order and MAT Approval

Project: Worth Primary School, Kent to join Deal Education Alliance for Learning Trust (DEALT)

HTB discussion:

- Important to ensure the new CEO is properly supported for expanding role. CEO should be engaged in RSC office support.
- Clarity needed on how leadership arrangements will change when Worth primary joins the trust.

RSC decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: None

Further actions required:

- Trust to provide assurance to the RSC about changes to leadership arrangements
- RSC office to encourage attendance at forthcoming RSC support events.

Decisions taken between HTB meetings

Project: Willow Dene, Greenwich -Temporary Age Range Change

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: None

Project: Sir Roger Manwood's: Significant Change Application

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: None

Project: Hamsey Green School, Surrey: Lowering age application

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: None