



Notes of Meeting: West Midlands Headteacher Board

22 October 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

- Andrew Warren (RSC)

Headteacher board (HTB) members

- Kate Brunt (HTB)
- Mike Donoghue (HTB)
- Dame Mo Brennan (HTB)
- Sir Mark Grundy (HTB)
- Sinead Smith (HTB)
- Sajid Gulzar (HTB)

Guests

- None

Apologies

- Margaret Yates (HTB)

DfE senior civil servants

- Dawn Dandy (Deputy Director)
- Bhupinder Bhoday (Deputy Director)

General discussion points

Points discussed in the meeting.

- Temperature check of the region including COVID impact and the engagement with CEOs around the region.
- Significant change applications considered and approved between HTB meetings
- Conflicts of Interest

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.

Converter academy orders

Project: Whether to issue an Academy Order to Turves Green Girls School, **Birmingham**, to convert and become an academy and join King Edward VI Academy Trust.

HTB discussion:

- Turves Green Girls School is a smaller than average secondary school based in Birmingham. At its last Ofsted inspection in April 2013 the school was rated 'Good' in all areas. The school's March 2017 Ofsted inspection states that the school 'continues to be good'.
- King Edward VI Multi Academy Trust (KEVI) is made up of 9 schools, including 3 Ofsted 'Outstanding' schools, all based within the Birmingham LA.
- The Girl's school believes that becoming part of the King Edward VI Academy Trust would enable the school to benefit from and support collaboration activity across the trust's schools.
- The school will work locally and city-wide with the trust's nine academies, to further improve teaching and learning, broadening curriculum offers, and enabling them to concentrate on realising their students' ambitions.
- The King Edward VI brand will facilitate wider pupil recruitment and strengthen parental support.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: Mo Brennan, Mike Donoghue, Sajid Gulzar

Further actions required: School and Trust to be informed.

Project: Whether to issue an Academy Order to The Rosary Catholic Primary School, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and St Chads Catholic Primary School, **Birmingham**, to convert and become an academy and join St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy Company.

HTB discussion:

- All three proposed converter schools are Birmingham based primaries with an Ofsted rating of 'Good'.
- The St Teresa of Calcutta MAC is looking to expand with the aim to improve standards in all the schools in the MAC and particularly the primary schools. After expansion, the St Teresa of Calcutta MAC will have 4 primary partners and two secondary partners; and will be able to educate pupils from 4-18.
- All schools will gain a large selection of benefits including additional capacity, additional school facilities and tailored transition programmes for year 6 pupils.
- The schools have worked with Holy Trinity, Archbishop IIsley's and Holy Souls over the last 2 years as part of the diocesan strategy and vision for all Catholic schools.
- St Chads has an existing working relationship with St Joseph's (joint training, moderation, collective worship) working collaboratively and sharing good practice, driving continued improvement in standards through MAC school improvement structures.
- A condition has been set in place on the approval of the project for the deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA).

RSC decision: Approved with a condition.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Schools and MAC to be informed and SRMA to be deployed

Project: Whether to issue an Academy Order to Trinity Catholic School, **Warwickshire**, to convert and become an academy and join Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi Academy Company.

HTB discussion:

- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic MAC formed in July 2014 in Warwickshire and is a mixed phase, five school trust within the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham. Only the latest joining school in Nov 2017, St Thomas More First is rated 'Require Improvement' and the remainder are Ofsted rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.
- Trinity Catholic School is an Ofsted rated 'Good' secondary located in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, following a number of financial issues and whistleblowing concerns, the school's Governing Body was replaced in September 2018 with an Interim Executive Board (IEB). There were also changes to the school's leadership team at this time. Despite best efforts from the IEB and the diocese the pupil numbers in the school have reduced and the school's deficit has continued to rise.
- Trinity Catholic School joining the MAC is aligned with the Archdiocese and MAC's vision for growth, which sees the long-term future of its local Catholic schools in the area forming and being part of a single Multi-Academy Company by summer 2022.
- The lead school, St Augustine's is a teaching school that has already been supporting the school for over a year.
- After discussions with the Department for Education, Warwickshire Local Authority and the Archdiocese of Birmingham, it has been agreed to resolve any deficit carried forward at the point of conversion.
- The board considered and discussed all options of the application, and approved with a number of conditions. Specifically, a request for records of the trust board meeting and the finance committee meeting from 1 January 2020 to 1 January 2022 (or 12 months from conversion), monthly management accounts from 1 January 2021 until 1 January 2022 and an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the SRMA report within 1 month of conversion.

RSC decision: Approved with conditions.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School and Trust to be informed.

Project: Whether to issue an Academy Order to Werrington Primary School and Moorside High School, **Staffordshire**, to convert and become an academy and join Potteries Educational Trust.

HTB discussion:

- Werrington Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school located in the Staffordshire Moorlands. At its last Ofsted inspection in 2012, the school was judged to be 'Good' in all areas.

- Moorside High School is an Ofsted “Good” (Jan 2017) secondary school also located in the Staffordshire Moorlands. The school is smaller than average and consistently oversubscribed.
- Both Werrington and Moorside have been associate members of the Potteries Educational Trust for the last 18 months and are now seeking to convert and become full members of the trust.
- Through their associate membership, the schools have built a good working relationship with PET, and have worked closely together on a number of occasions, including joint staff inset days and school improvement. The trust has also supported both schools through the response to Covid-19.
- Werrington Primary is the main feeder school for Moorside High and in 2020 Moorside was the biggest feeder to the City of Stoke-on-Trent sixth form college.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Schools and Trust to be informed.

Trust Transfer

Project: Whether to approve the transfer of St Mary’s Church of England Primary and Nursery Academy, **Birmingham**, to Fioretti Multi Academy Trust.

HTB discussion:

- St Mary’s C of E Primary is a large primary in Handsworth, Birmingham and opened as a SAT in 2013. Upon conversion, the academy was graded ‘Outstanding’ on the then Ofsted framework; the academy was also a National Support School.
- The Fioretti Trust is a two school MAT in Birmingham with Primary schools in Bourneville and Erdington; it has 664 pupils currently and with the intake of St Mary’s this would become 1083 pupils across the Trust.
- The Governing Body were exploring options for joining a MAT and the Birmingham Diocese signposted them to the Fioretti Trust. The relationship with Fioretti has evolved which has included visits between all three schools (St Mary’s + Fioretti Trust schools) involving governors, trustees and senior leaders.
- They have also worked together during the pandemic utilising risk assessment resources. The academy wishes to take advantage of MAT resources and economies of scale going forwards and having researched various MAT options decided to apply to join the Fioretti Trust.
- The Birmingham Diocesan Board of Education has agreed to the application for St Mary’s C of E Primary academy to join the Fioretti trust subject to agreement by the Regional Schools Commissioner.
- A condition has been set in place on the approval of the project for the deployment of a SRMA .

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School and Trust to be informed and SRMA to be deployed.

Project: Whether to approve the transfer of Severndale Specialist Academy, **Shropshire**, from Severndale Special Academy to Learning Community Trust..

HTB discussion:

- Severndale Specialist Academy is a single academy Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) trust providing education to 407 pupils, aged 2 to 19, with a broad range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include speech, language and communication needs, physical disabilities, social and emotional difficulties and autistic spectrum conditions.
- The academy was visited by Ofsted on 10 July and the academy's safeguarding was found to be ineffective. Following a Termination Warning Notice (TWN) being issued by the Regional Schools Commissioner on 17 July, the academy has agreed to transfer to a MAT by 1 December 2020.
- Learning Community Trust is a Multi Academy Trust formed in March 2018 and comprises of 6 academies all based in Telford. Since formation, the Trust has achieved sponsor status and added a sponsored school, Charlton School.
- Throughout the Covid-19 period, from March 2019, Shropshire Local Authority voiced concerns regarding the provision for pupils at the academy, with the school taking a cautious approach to re-opening.
- The transfer to LCT will ensure Severndale are fully supported in making the aforementioned improvements, with LCT having a proven track record of effective safeguarding at a specialist provision and as well as making effective use of data.
- A condition has been set in place on the approval of the project for the deployment of a SRMA.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: School to be informed and SRMA to be deployed.

Sponsored

Project: Whether to approve an appropriate sponsor for Turves Green Boys School, Birmingham.

HTB discussion:

- Turves Green Boys School is a smaller than average secondary school with an Ofsted rating of 'Inadequate' following an inspection on the 4 June 2019. Attainment outcomes and progress scores have been below the Local Authority and national averages for the past three years.
- One of the sponsors, Matrix Academy Trust, is comprised of 4 schools based in Walsall, Birmingham and Warwickshire, 2 schools are Ofsted 'Good' with 1 'Outstanding' and 1 'Requires improvement'. The Trust attributes its 2019 improvement to moving towards greater collaboration and the sharing and standardisation of its curriculum.
- Another sponsor considered for the boys' school was King Edward VI Multi Academy Trust (KEVI), made up of 9 schools, including 3 Ofsted 'Outstanding' schools, all based within the Birmingham LA.

- As the project was previously deferred, the board discussed further varying factors of the two sponsors presented including school improvement strategies, the separation of the girls and boys schools and managing the local community. The outcome from these conversations affirmed that Matrix Academy Trust will be the new sponsor for Turves Green Boys School.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: Mo Brennan, Mike Donoghue, Sajid Gulzar.

Further actions required: Sponsors and School to be informed.

Project: Whether to approve an appropriate sponsor for Woodfield School, **Coventry**.

HTB discussion:

- Woodfield is an all-through special school (5-16) based in Coventry, for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. The school is split across two sites for primary and secondary provision. Woodfield was judged 'Inadequate' by Ofsted in March 2020.
- Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trust formed in 2014 with three academies (a primary and two secondary schools). The trust has since grown into a five school MAT, three are Ofsted 'Outstanding' (including the special school, Riverbank) one is Ofsted 'Good' and one (Radford Primary) is double 'RI'.
- The secondary school, Sidney Stringer Academy is a Teaching School that leads the Swan Alliance and the Coventry School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT).
- The trust has expressed an interest in sponsoring Woodfield and already has the necessary capacity (i.e. expertise and skill set within the trust) to support this school.
- Coventry LA strongly support Sidney Stringer MAT as the sponsor for Woodfield.
- The trust has already had several meetings with the LA, including a site visit to the Woodlands site over the summer holidays. The trust would seek to continue to work closely with the LA during the school's conversion to help with any amendments to the building plans. The Trust Board are fully supportive and hope to have the school join the Trust by Sept 2021.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Sponsor and School to be informed.

Project: Whether to approve an appropriate sponsor for Woodlands School, **Shropshire**.

HTB discussion:

- Woodlands School is a Community Special School in Shrewsbury situated in Wem. A directive academy order (dAO) was issued in January 2020 and the school was rated 'Inadequate' in November 2019 (from 'Good'), the school provides provision for pupils (aged 9-16) with social, emotional, and mental health needs who often have additional complex learning needs.
- Marches Academy Trust formed when The Marches School, judged 'Good' by Ofsted in Jan 2014 (previously Outstanding), converted in August 2011. The Trust is led by Sarah Finch (CEO and NLE) who has a track record of working to support schools to secure improvement, both within and outside of the MAT.

- Marches Academy Trust will conduct a thorough skills audit on the Local Governing Board (LGB) of Woodlands School, ensuring that Woodlands will continue with an integrated LGB that is fully aligned to Marches' vision.
- The Local Authority have drawn on specialists from within the Marches Trust to support SEND school improvement. The Trust's reputation for excellent SEND provision has also led to an autism hub being based at Sir John Talbots school by the local authority. The lead on SEND, Julie Johnson, has contributed hugely to the improvement of SEND.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Sponsor and School to be informed.

Decisions taken between HTB meetings

Project: Whether to approve an increase in capacity at Shipston High School, **Warwickshire**.

Background:

- Shipston High School is an 11-16 secondary school. Converted to academy status and has operated as a single academy trust since 2012
- Retrospective application to change the school's capacity from 450 to 600 pupils.
- The expansion in capacity took place in 2014, at the request of Warwickshire County Council due to increased need for places created by local housing development. The Council funded the building work necessary to accommodate the additional pupils.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School to be informed.

Project: Whether to approve an increase in SEN Provision for Kingfisher school, **Worcestershire**.

Background:

- Capacity increase from 80 to 91 in SEN provision.
- Fully supported by the Local Authority
 - LA proposed the change as it needed to meet the demand for SEN places
 - LA have agreed to arrange for the transportation of these pupils
 - Pupils have already been identified
- There will be little impact on the school other than a slight increase in class sizes, no extra space is needed as unutilised learning spaces identified, no extra staffing to meet the additional need, therefore it would be of no material change to staffing levels or risk assessment.
- If the proposed change is not approved, there will be a number of pupils without provision in the County.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School to be informed.

Project: Whether to approve a physical expansion and increase in capacity at Coton Green, **Staffordshire**.

Background:

- There has been an increase in demand due to a new housing development in the catchment area.
- Without the expansion of the school, there would be a shortfall in the supply of places.
- Staffordshire LA has approved the expansion design and funding.
- the Trust is in a strong financial position and no financial risks have been identified.
- The physical expansion will allow the students to be taught in single age groups.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School to be informed.

Project: Whether to approve the request for the provision of a nursery for two and three year old children at The Meadows Primary School, **Staffordshire**.

Background:

- The Meadows Primary school are requesting approval for a Nursery and wrap-around care provision operating 50 weeks per year with effect from 1st April 2021, which will be off-site at the Trusts Secondary School, Madeley.
- There is currently no existing provision for two year olds in the area.
- Provision for three year olds is limited to term time only. Over 70% of parents are having to drive at least 5 miles plus for childrens childcare.
- The school building at the Meadows does not have the capacity to accommodate a nursery and a sufficient wrap-around provision. A Satellite expansion is proposed, a modular building is to be erected on the playing fields at the Madeley School (Secondary) which is 0.7 miles away, also within the Shaw Education Trust.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School to be informed.

Project: Whether to approve an age range from 3-11 to 2-11 at Chandos Primary School , **Birmingham**.

Background:

- Chandos Primary School and Birmingham LA identified an under supply of 2 year old provision in the local community.
- Chandos Primary School currently has a nursery provision on site with sufficient capacity to accommodate 2 year olds, so no capital building costs will be incurred.
- Chandos Primary School has adequate staffing for the legally required ratios, so the change in provision would not bring about a need for additional staff.
- Anticipating this potential age range change would allow children with additional needs to be identified and assessed at an earlier age, meaning their needs can be met more efficiently at the school in the longer term.

RSC decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: School to be informed.

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.

Proposal for a new University Technical College Multi Academy Trust consisting of 4 UTCs, Coventry – additional time required to consider further information provided.