



Department  
for Education

## Notes of Meeting: West Midlands Headteacher Board

Date of meeting – 22 April 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 Schools Commissioner (RSC) chair

- Andrew Warren

### Headteacher Board (HTB) members

- Kate Brunt.
- Mike Donoghue.
- Dame Mo Brennan.
- Sir Mark Grundy.
- Sinead Smith.
- Sajid Gulzar.
- Margaret Yates.

### Guests

- None.

### Apologies

- Claire Trewartha (Deputy Director).

### DfE senior civil servants

- Dawn Dandy (Deputy Director)

## **Representations received**

- 1; Bentley Heath C of E Primary School to be transferred to Birmingham Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust, Trust Change.

These representations were shared in advance of the meeting with all attendees and considered alongside their corresponding item.

## **General Discussion Points**

### **Local Update**

- The RSC and HTB members discussed the current climate in schools across the West Midlands Region.

### **HTB member reflections**

- HTB members reflected on their experiences of schools reopening after the pandemic including Ofsted Inspections and Teaching School Hubs.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** Holden Lane Primary School, Stoke, to convert and become an academy and join St Chad's Trust.

### HTB discussion:

- Holden Lane Primary School is a primary school located in Stoke-on-Trent; at the latest Ofsted inspection the school was rated 'Good'.
- The school and trust have a pre-existing relationship, this conversion will formalise the relationship between the school and trust.
- St Chad's school improvement was noted as being provided through school to school support, Diocesan improvement advisors and at a trust level from the CEO. The board discussed how the strategy seemed limited and may require further work.
- The governance structure was reviewed during the meeting, with the board suggesting a refresh and a review of governance compliance.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

**Project:** Highfields Primary School, Staffordshire, to convert and become an academy and join Inspire Excellence Learning Partnership.

### HTB discussion:

- Highfields Primary School is a small primary school situated in Burntwood, Staffordshire. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2016 and was rated 'Good'.
- The primary has applied to convert and establish a new Multi Academy Trust with Erasmus Darwin Academy called Inspire Excellence Learning Partnership.
- Highfields have had a positive, informal working relationship with Erasmus for many years.
- The board discussed financial status, school improvement strategy and educational performances at both Highfields and Erasmus, noting they were above national averages.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

**Project:** Brailes Church of England Primary School, Herefordshire, to convert and become an academy and join The Stour Federation Multi Academy Trust.

**HTB discussion:**

- Brailes CofE School is a rural school in south Warwickshire, close to the Oxfordshire border.
- The school has been in a formalised partnership with The Stour Federation Partnership since September 2015.
- The Stour Federation trustee board has agreed to move to church majority at Member level if the conversion of Brailes CofE Primary School to join the MAT is approved.
- The board members supported the recommendation, with the RSC recommending a School Management Resource Advisor (SMRA).

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

## Significant Change

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

**Project:** Tarpoley High School and Sixth Form, Cheshire and Chester to increase their physical capacity.

### HTB discussion:

- Tarpoley High School and Sixth Form is a 3 school MAT situated within Cheshire and was last rated 'Outstanding' in their latest Ofsted Inspection in 2014.
- The school would like to expand its physical capacity due to a current temporary permission to flex their published admission numbers (PAN) from the local authority.
- A consultation letter was issued to parents, staff, governors, Cheshire primary schools and Cheshire secondary schools in 2019.
- The board discussed the school's capacity and planning permission of the expansion.
- The board members supported the recommendation, with the RSC recommending an SMRA.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Mark Grundy.

**Further actions required:** To inform the school.

**Project:** Coleshill Church of England Primary School, Warwickshire, to change their age range.

### HTB discussion:

- Coleshill CofE primary school is a small primary located within Warwickshire local authority, their current Ofsted rating from their last inspection in 2015 is 'Good'.
- The primary wish to submit a retrospective application to increase their age range to accommodate a nursery provision.
- This submission from the school requires no material changes, no associated project funding, or other alterations as the nursery provision is already in place.
- The local authority has stated clearly in the consultation and in a pre-consultation that the age range change is the right step moving forward. They had no concerns and raised no issues in regard to the significant change.
- The consultation which took place on 17 September 2018 had no objections from the wider community, employees, governors and the local authority.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** To inform the school.

**Project:** Rokeby Primary School, Coventry to add a specialist provision to their mainstream setting.

**HTB discussion:**

- Rokeby Primary School located in Warwickshire, is one of nine schools in Stowe Valley MAT, with an Ofsted rating of 'Requires Improvement' at their last inspection in 2017.
- The primary has applied to establish a resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The proposed resourced provision will meet the needs of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan, who are cognitively able to access the curriculum and will benefit from being located alongside a mainstream school environment.
- The consultation took place from 14 September 2020 for a four week period in order to ensure there was full engagement from stakeholders.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** To inform the school.

## Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to a new trust.

**Project:** Bentley Heath Church of England Primary School Trust to join Birmingham Diocesan Multi Academy Trust.

### **HTB discussion:**

- Bentley Heath C of E Primary is an academy located within Dorridge and Hockley Heath ward of Solihull. The academy is currently rated 'Requires Improvement' by Ofsted.
- The Trustee Board had decided that it would be suitable for Bentley Heath to join a large MAT.
- The board discussed the trust's school improvement offer as BDMAT have appointed staff with a track record of school improvement as school leaders, this was considered whilst reviewing the RI schools within BDMAT and led to the requested recommendation.
- The board supported this recommendation whilst ensuring consideration of the representations we had received; the RSC recommended a period of consolidation for the trust working with the RI schools.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Kate Brunt.

**Further actions required:** To inform the trusts.

**Project:** Real Life Learning Academy Trust to change to North West Academies Trust, Cheshire and Chester.

### **HTB discussion:**

- Real Life Learning Academy Trust is a 2 school trust formed in 2016, located in Cheshire East. One school holds a current Ofsted rating of 'Good' with the other rated as 'Outstanding'.
- The proposal is for both academies to change to North West Academies Trust. RLLAT would close on transfer.
- The board discussed the viability of the transfer of both schools, ensuring the future of the two rural primaries would remain secure.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** To inform the trusts.

**Project:** Health Futures UTC to Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust, Sandwell.

**HTB discussion:**

- Health Futures UTC is an undersubscribed university technical college located within Sandwell. The UTC has a current Ofsted rating of 'Requires Improvement'.
- Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust (Shireland CAT) consists of seven academies and currently has five pipeline projects, ranging from free schools to underperforming schools.
- The board discussed the UTC's finances, in particular financial planning of budgets and deficits. Conversations were held based on educational performance and governance.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Mark Grundy.

**Further actions required:** To inform both the Trust and UTC.

**Project:** Erasmus Darwin Academy's proposal to convert from a Single Academy Trust to a Multi Academy Trust.

**HTB discussion:**

- Erasmus Darwin Academy is located within the community of Burntwood, Staffordshire. On their last Ofsted inspection, the academy was rated 'Good'.
- Erasmus has applied to convert and establish a new Multi Academy Trust with Highfields primary School called Inspire Excellence Learning Partnership.
- Both of the schools moving to the new trust have had a positive, informal working relationship for many years.
- The board discussed financial status, school improvement strategy and educational performances at both Highfields and Erasmus, noting they were above national averages.
- The board members supported the recommendation.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** To inform the academy and the trusts.

## Decisions taken between HTB meetings

List of decisions taken by the RSC outside of HTB meetings.



**Project:** St Augustine's Catholic Academy, Stoke on Trent.

**Decision type:** Significant Change – expansion of nursery provision.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Inform the school.

**Project:** Park Lane Primary School, Warwickshire.

**Decision type:** Significant Change – reduction of age of entry.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Inform the school.

**Project:** Auckland Education Centre, Solihull.

**Decision type:** Significant Change – retrospective closure.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Inform the school.

**Project:** Honeybourne First School, Solihull.

**Decision type:** Significant Change – physical expansion.

**RSC decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Inform the school.

**List of projects listed on the published draft agenda, but were removed before the meeting**

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

**Project:** The Priors School Trust to Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust, Warwickshire.

**Type of decision:** Trust Change.

**Reason for why it was taken off agenda:** communications were received on the day of the meeting that changed the status of the project.