

## Notes of Meeting: East Midlands and Humber Advisory Board

10<sup>th</sup> November 2021

### Attendance

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

AB 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

- Carol Gray

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Paul West
- Anne Martin
- Paul Stone
- Peter Bell
- Andy Child
- Inderjit Sandhu

### Guests

- Jane Moore, Leicestershire's Director of Children's Services

### Apologies

- none

### DfE senior civil servants

- none

### Representations received

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

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** Orchard Community Primary School, Leicestershire, to join Symphony Learning Trust, Leicestershire

### **AB discussion:**

Orchard Community Primary School received an Ofsted requires improvement judgement on 26 October 2017.

Symphony Learning Trust is a trust based in Leicestershire and currently has 8 academies, 6 of which are rated Ofsted good and 1 rated as outstanding.

Throughout the pandemic, Symphony Learning Trust provided assistance and support to Orchard Community Primary School, which now wants to formalise the working relationship and join the trust. .

The school improvement case put forward by Symphony Learning Trust to support Orchard Community Primary School was heard by Advisory Board members. The board were supportive of the proposal.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance at the Symphony Learning Trust and the impact on the trust's future financial health if this school joins were also considered.

**RSC decision:** Approved

**Conflicts:** Inderjit Sandhu did not receive the papers and was not present for the discussion

**Further actions required:** Converter Academy Order to be sent to the school's Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

## Significant Change

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

**Project:** Significant change to increase the capacity at Dorothy Goodman School from 290 to 345

### **AB discussion:**

Dorothy Goodman School (DGS) is a specialist school for cognition and learning in Leicestershire and is part of the Open Thinking Partnership trust. The local authority expects the demand for SEND places to continue to increase and has been seeking to develop additional local capacity for children and young people.

DGS received an Ofsted outstanding judgement in June 2016.

It has a capacity of 290 and currently has 338 pupils on roll. 48 places are being requested to take into account the existing numbers on roll and a further 7 places to change the overall capacity of the school to 345.

There would not be any need for major building modifications and only minor capital works are required to refurbish the buildings and adapt existing space. DGS operates across 7 sites, all of which are within a reasonable proximity.

A full consultation has been undertaken with stakeholders and no objections were received to the proposal. The local authority is also supportive of the proposal.

The strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact on the school's future financial health if the proposal goes ahead were considered.

**RSC decision:** Approved

**Conflicts:** none

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school of the decision. ESFA to make contact regarding retrospective significant change processes and supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) was recommended.

## Trust Change

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

**Project:** SAT to MAT transfer of Little Gonerby (SAT), Lincolnshire into Infinity Academies Trust

**AB discussion:**

Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School is an Ofsted rated good school (short inspection in June 2018).

The school has experienced a decrease in pupil numbers and project further reductions in the future. The trust views that the best option for the school is to join a multi-academy trust which has expertise in small schools.

The trust identified Infinity Academies Trust (Infinity) as their preferred multi-academy trust to join due to the strong alignment between their visions, values and culture. Little Gonerby would become part of an Infinity hub in the Grantham area and add additional capacity and EYFS and KS1 expertise to Infinity. The board were supportive of the proposal.

The strength of financial management and governance at the trusts and the impact on the future financial health were considered, should the proposal go ahead.

**RSC decision:** Approved

**Conflicts:** none

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the trusts of the decision. Supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) was recommended.