



## Notes of Meeting: South-East England and South London Advisory Board

28 April 2022

### 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

- Claire Burton

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Paula Farrow
- Andrew Carter
- Mark Ducker
- Stephen Carey
- David Boyle

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Alison Beane
- Jon Chaloner

### DfE senior civil servants

- Anna Barker

## **Representations received**

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

## **General Discussion Points**

### **RSC Update**

- RSC gave an update on Schools White Paper briefings and webinars.
- AB members discussed what makes a strong trust.

### **Ofsted**

- A positive picture for SESL Academies overall.
- Noted inadequate academies and maintained schools and judgements relating to safeguarding.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Kent, to join Kent Catholic Schools Partnership

**AB discussion:** St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is proposing to join Kent Catholic School Partnership (KSCP), which was founded in 2012.

Benefits of joining KSCP include robust school improvement strategy, and operational and financial benefits.

The school's headteacher has worked closely with KCSP and the school is in close proximity to the trust.

Latest Ofsted inspection judged the school to be 'Good'. The report also noted the school's support for disadvantaged and SEN pupils meant these pupils were able to make good progress.

Discussion on SI strategy and the make-up of the school improvement team.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project: St Peter's Catholic Primary School, St Wilfrids Catholic Primary School and Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School, to join Bosco MAT**

**AB discussion:** St Peter's has high pupil outcomes in West Sussex and caters well for children with special educational needs. Our Lady Queen of Heaven also has a strong track record of pupil achievement with strong leadership in place. St Wilfrid's is a popular and successful one form entry primary school which is financially secure. All three schools will add capacity for the trust.

St Paul's Catholic College, Bognor Regis, joined BOSCO CET on 1st September 2021 as an academy converter and also provides capacity to the trust.

All three schools want to join BOSCO due to shared ethos and values as expressed in the BOSCO Catholic Education Trust's Mission and Aims statement. Other benefits include accelerated delivery of the school improvement plan, sharing expertise, and benefitting from strategic and operational support.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project: Chyngton Primary School, East Sussex, to join Seaford Head Academy Trust**

**AB discussion:** Chyngton Primary a two-form entry Primary school for pupils aged 4-11 in Seaford, East Sussex. The school was rated as Ofsted Good in all areas in October 2015.

Chyngton Primary has worked with Seaford Head Academy Trust for several years and is now seeking to formalise the partnership to secure further progress. The Primary is also a feeder for the trust's secondary and both are in close proximity to each other.

Discussed the trust's governance structure.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:**

- 1.NLG to input on new MAT governance structure.
- 2.New MAT governance to be approved by RSC prior to school joining the trust.
3. Deployment of a SRMA

## Sponsored Route:

Points discussed in relation to a school's sponsor status.

### **Project: Homewood College, Brighton and Hove - sponsor options**

**AB discussion:** Following an Ofsted inspection in December 2021, Homewood College was judged as Inadequate in all areas and put into special measures.

Looked at eight potential sponsors.

Recommendation for Sabden MAT as the sponsor for Homewood College, due to the trust's existing expertise and capacity in SEN, and specifically SEMH. The trust is an existing special school MAT with three specialist SEMH academies within a one hour drive of Homewood. All Sabden academies have been judged as Ofsted Outstanding or Good. Although this would be the trust's first sponsor project the trust previously held teaching school status and has previous experience of helping other special schools to improve.

Noted that trust currently has four members.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Sabden MAT to increase number of members to five, and only one employee to act as trustee, in line with departmental preferences.

### **Project: Ashford Hill Primary - sponsor options**

**AB discussion:** Ashford Hill is a mixed 4 to 11 primary school with 138 pupils on roll against a capacity of 140 (99%).

The school was judged inadequate in their most recent Ofsted inspection which took place in November 2021.

Looked at 15 trusts as sponsors which was shortlisted to four trusts based on factors including capacity and location.

Recommendation for Thames Learning Trust (TLT), based in Reading, as the sponsor for Ashford Hill Primary School due to its track record of driving improvement in underperforming schools, the fact that it is closer to the school geographically than the other shortlisted trusts, and because TLT has the capacity to work with the school currently.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

## Significant Change

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

**Project:** Grove Park Academies Trust, Kent, to merge with TIMU Academies Trust, Kent

**AB discussion:** Grove Park Academies Trust and TIMU Academy Trust wish to merge to create a new MAT. This is a voluntary merger.

Discussed financial planning and noted that ESFA had no concerns on finance.

Noted that Aspire hasn't had an Ofsted inspection.

Noted that TIMU has been a sponsor since 2016.

Discussed education experience on the board, particularly special and AP.

Discussed support for CEO. Noted that there is support from Kent MAT Alliance.

Question on future growth.

**RSC decision:** Approve with condition

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** To undertake an SRMA deployment in the first year of operating. Recommendation for governance to be brought in line with department's preferences.

### **Project: Teddington School (BET) - Expansion to include Specialist Resource Provision**

**AB discussion:** Teddington School is a mixed 8FE secondary school in the London borough of Richmond upon Thames, which currently has 1211 pupils on roll. Since December 2019, it has been part of BET, which has 8 secondary schools and 11 primary schools.

The proposed change was for a Specialist Resource Provision unit (SRP) for 10 pupils with SEMH needs based at Teddington School.

Local Authority fully support the proposal and will also be funding it as there is a need for this provision in this area, particularly due to the recent closure of a similar provision at Richmond Park Academy.

Noted that current headteacher will be moving on. Assurance provided from trust that mitigations are in place and recruitment has started.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project: Meadow Primary school (BET) - Expansion to include Nursery Provision**

**AB discussion:** Meadow Primary school is proposing a change of lower age limit by two years to incorporate nursery provision, extending the age range from 4 -11 years to 2 – 11 years.

A private nursery, on the same site as the school, is due to close displacing 32 children currently attending. Meadow Primary is proposing to incorporate the nursery children as part of the main school therefore, providing a smooth transition into the Early Years Group and the school.

Surrey County Council supports the proposal.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project: Tomlinscote School (The Prospect Trust) - Closure of sixth form**

**AB discussion:** Tomlinscote School is seeking retrospective approval to formally remove its sixth-form.

The school ceased taking sixth-form students from September 2020. ESFA has confirmed that the school last received funding for sixth-form places in 2019-20

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Discussion regarding sixth form building use.

**Project: Bandon Hill Primary School, Sutton, (part of Greenshaw Learning Trust) – deamalgamation**

**AB discussion:** The existing 6FE primary school, including a 42 place resource base, operates across split sites, one in Wallington and the other in Carshalton. The proposal is to create a separate school on each site.

The de-amalgamation option was referenced in the 24/06/21 AB conversion paper.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project: Carshalton High School for Girls (Girls Learning Trust) - Increase to Capacity**

**AB discussion:** Proposal to increase the capacity to address the demand for year 7 places. This has been requested by LA.

Noted that the trust has a healthy budget. Forecasts for 2021/22 have been shared with ESFA.

Discussion on members and trustees.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Recommendation that there is maximum separation between layers of governance in line with the department's preferences.

### **Project: Glenthorne High School (The Willow Learning Trust - Increase to Capacity)**

**AB discussion:** Proposal to increasing its capacity to address a temporary shortage of places and accommodate 43 extra pupils. This comes from the request of LA.

The trust has a healthy budget and has provided their budget forecasts to the ESFA, showing that the trust will remain in a cumulative surplus.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

### **Project: The Link (Orchard Hill Academy Trust) - Merge and Satellite provision**

**AB discussion:** The Link Primary and Link Secondary Schools are proposing an amalgamation to become one entity under the Link Primary School DfE registration number as a 4-19 establishment and The Link Secondary DfE number will 'close'. The merged School will meet the needs of up to 126 pupils and students across the two existing sites.

In addition to amalgamation the Link schools have identified a satellite site to accommodate the increasing demand for additional SEND places within the surplus accommodation of Wallington Primary Academy (WPA), managed by Cirrus Trust.

The two existing sites and the proposed satellite site will come under the new name for the merged school, 'The Link School'.

LA supports this proposal and will fund the cost of the of the capital requirements of the satellite provision.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required



**Project: The Portsmouth Academy (TSAT) expansion 32 AP places**

**AB discussion:** Physical expansion / re-purpose of the school site with the addition of four SEN classrooms, therapy room, sensory room, social space, two group workrooms and a staff workroom for 32 pupils with learning and cognition needs.

Portsmouth City Council's strategic review of SEND provision identified a rapidly increasing demand for SEND places which existing provision was unable to meet. Therefore, the LA supports this proposal and will be funding the project.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

## Trust Change

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

**Project: Seaford Head Academy Trust, East Sussex, transfer from SAT - MAT**

**AB discussion:** Please see discussion under Chyngton Primary School above.

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** As mentioned under Chyngton Primary School.

## Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

**Project:** St Joseph's Infant School - age range change (addition of nursery)

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project:** The Michael Tippett School, Lambeth - sponsor match

**Decision type:** Sponsored Route

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

**Project:** St Nicholas CoE Primary Academy - application to add an SRP for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Discussion with trust regarding School Improvement plan

**Project:** Unity Academy Trust (Bexley) to merge with Cygnus Academies Trust (Kent)

**Decision type:** Trust Change

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Discussion with trust regarding School Improvement plan

**Project:** Orchard Park High School, Croydon (part of Greenshaw Learning Trust) - closure of 6th form

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RSC decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** No action required

## 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 AB meeting.

**Project:** Oaks Park High School, Sutton, (part of Cheam Academies Network) - capacity increase

**Type of decision:** Significant change

**Reason for why it was taken off agenda:** Waiting for response from policy team

**Project:** St Joseph's Infant School age range change (addition of nursery)

**Type of decision:** Significant change

**Reason for why it was taken off agenda:** Decision taken between meetings

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