



## Notes of Meeting: East Midlands Advisory Board

21 September 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 Director (RD) chair

- Carol Gray

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Paul West
- Inderjit Sandhu
- Mark Thomas
- Sian Hampton
- Paul Heery
- Sarah Armitage
- Chris Wheatley
- Julian Scholefield

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- None

### DfE senior civil servants

- Kelly Hughes, Deputy Director – East Midlands Regions Group
- ESFA representative

## Representations received

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

## Converter academy orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** Whether to approve Scarcliffe Primary School, Derbyshire, to convert and join Redhill Academy Trust.

### **AB discussion:**

Scarcliffe Primary School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school located in Bolsover, Derbyshire. The school received a good Ofsted judgment in January 2019.

Scarcliffe Primary School wants to join a trust to obtain additional support and greater collaboration with other schools. Scarcliffe Primary School has already established a close-working relationship with Redhill Academy Trust and is geographically close to other schools able to offer support. The school's governing body has passed a resolution to join Redhill Academy Trust.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Redhill Academy Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** Chris Wheatley. Chris was not in receipt of project papers, nor was he in attendance for this part of the meeting.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision. The supportive deployment of a schools resource management adviser was recommended for Redhill Academy Trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve Kingsway Primary School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and join the Minster Trust for Education (MITRE).

### **AB discussion:**

Kingsway Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join MITRE. The school has had 3 successive Ofsted good judgements in full inspections since opening. The most recent monitoring visit in January 2017 found that the school continues to be good.

Kingsway Primary School's governors and staff have held discussions with MITRE representatives and agreed that joining MITRE would benefit the school and allow the school to retain its sense of identity. The school's governing body has passed a resolution to join MITRE.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at the Minster Trust for Education (MITRE) and the trust's future financial health were also considered. In addition, the trust's school improvement strategy was considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** Sian Hampton. Sian was not in receipt of project papers, nor was she in attendance for this part of the meeting.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision. A supportive deployment of schools resource management adviser was recommended.

## Free school presumption – sponsor approval

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

**Project:** To discuss the local authority's recommended sponsor for the Hinckley presumption primary school, Leicestershire.

### AB discussion:

Leicestershire County Council is seeking to establish a 1 form entry primary school (totalling 210 pupils), in the town of Hinckley. The school will serve a new 750 dwelling housing development within the locality. The school will open in August 2023 with 30 places in reception.

Four trusts submitted written proposals to sponsor the school by 11 April 2022. Cabinet approval for the preferred sponsor was given on 24 June 2022.

The local authority's preferred sponsor is Oadby, Wigston and Leicestershire Schools (OWLS) Academy Trust.

Whilst the board members acknowledged that all trusts that applied were suitable candidates, they agreed with the recommendation of the local authority. As well as having the capacity and expertise to successfully open a new school, OWLS Academy Trust is well-placed to develop a primary school in the Hinckley area. It has 2 schools within 20 minutes (10 miles) of the proposed school site, including the trust's registered office at New Lubbethorpe Primary School.

The strength of financial management and governance in place at OWLS Academy Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved OWLS Academy Trust as the sponsor.

**Conflicts:** Inderjit Sandhu. Inderjit was not in receipt of project papers, nor was she in attendance for this part of the meeting.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform Leicestershire County Council and trust of the decision. An external review of governance was recommended for OWLS Academy Trust.

**Project:** To discuss the local authority's preferred sponsor for the Snelsmor Grange primary presumption free school, Derby.

## **AB discussion:**

Derby County Council is seeking to establish a 1.5 form entry primary school (315 pupils), including provision for a 39-place nursery. The school will serve two new housing developments within the locality.

The school will open in September 2023 with 45 places in reception and 39 places at nursery. It will have a staggered intake to minimise any possible detrimental effects on neighbouring schools. The school would then increase in size gradually each academic year, until it reaches its capacity of 315 pupils in September 2029.

Six trusts submitted written proposals by 29 March 2022. Cabinet approval for the sponsor was given on 13 July 2022. The local authority's preferred sponsor is East Midlands Education Trust.

East Midlands Education Trust has 21 open academies: 11 primary, 9 secondary and 1 alternative provision school. The trust has schools in Derby, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The new primary presumption school would be supported in a local hub with existing East Midlands Education Trust schools.

The board was in agreement that East Midlands Education Trust is a logical sponsor choice, with a clear vision and a favourable history of Ofsted inspection outcomes.

The strength of financial management and governance in place at the East Midlands Education Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved, East Midlands Education Trust as the sponsor.

**Conflicts:** Sian Hampton. Sian was not in receipt of project papers, nor was she in attendance for this part of the meeting.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform Derby City Council and trust of the decision. A supportive deployment of schools resource management adviser was recommended.

## **Academy opening approved in principle**

List of academies approved to open.

**Project:** Aldercar High School.

**AB discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 01 October 2022.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project:** Brierley Forest Primary and Nursery School.

**AB discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 01 October 2022.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

**Project:** Cotgrave Church of England Primary School.

**AB discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 01 October 2022.

**Further actions required:** No action required.

## Significant change

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

**Project:** Whether to approve Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School (Infinity Academies Trust), Lincolnshire, to change from being an infant academy to an all-through primary academy, accompanied by an in-year admissions variation request.

**AB discussion:**

This significant change and accompanying admissions variation was submitted in conjunction with the significant change and admissions variation applications from Harrowby Church of England Infant School (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust) and The National Church of England Junior School (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust), which were also discussed at this Advisory Board meeting for decision.

The 3 Church of England schools are in close proximity in the Grantham area and the 2 infant schools feed the junior school. The proposed changes are in response to a surplus of primary school places in the Grantham area and the future basic need forecast.

Infinity Academies Trust and Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust agree that creating 3 all through primary schools, with reduced PANs will enable the trusts to make the best use of their resources. If approved, the total number of places across the 3 schools from September 2023 would be 735, a reduction of 105 places.

A consultation regarding the age range changes was undertaken from 16 May – 17 June 2022. A further consultation regarding the variation to the published admission number was undertaken from 1-30 July 2022. Both were conducted jointly between Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust and Infinity Academies Trust.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Infinity Academies Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and Lincolnshire County Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of schools resource management adviser was recommended.

**Project:** Whether to approve Harrowby Church of England Infant School (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust), Lincolnshire, to change from being an infant academy to an all-through primary academy, accompanied by an in-year admissions variation request.

## **AB discussion:**

This significant change and accompanying admissions variation was submitted in conjunction with the significant change and admissions variation applications from Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School (Infinity Academies Trust) and The National Church of England Junior School (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust), which were also discussed at this Advisory Board meeting for decision.

The 3 Church of England schools are in close proximity in the Grantham area and the 2 infant schools feed the junior school. The proposed changes are in response to a surplus of primary school places in the Grantham area and the future basic need forecast.

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A consultation regarding the age range changes was undertaken from 16 May – 17 June 2022. A further consultation regarding the variation to the published admission number was undertaken from 1-30 July 2022. Both were conducted jointly between Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust and Infinity Academies Trust.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and Lincolnshire County Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended.

**Project:** Whether to approve The National Church of England Junior School (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust), Lincolnshire, to change from being a junior academy to an all-through primary academy, accompanied by an in-year admissions variation request.

## **AB discussion:**

This significant change and accompanying admissions variation was submitted in conjunction with the significant change and admissions variation applications from Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School (Infinity Academies Trust) and Harrowby Church of England Infant School (Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust), which were also discussed at this Advisory Board meeting for decision.

The 3 Church of England schools are in close proximity in the Grantham area and the 2 infant schools feed the junior school. The proposed changes are in response to a surplus of primary school places in the Grantham area and the future basic need forecast.

Infinity Academies Trust and Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust agree that creating 3 all through primary schools, with reduced PANs will enable the trusts to make the best use of

their resources. If approved, the total number of places across the 3 schools from September 2023 would be 735, a reduction of 105 places.

A consultation regarding the age range changes was undertaken from 16 May – 17 June 2022. A further consultation regarding the variation to the published admission number was undertaken from 1-30 July 2022. Both were conducted jointly between Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust and Infinity Academies Trust.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and Lincolnshire County Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended.

**Project:** Whether to approve Headlands Primary School (Northampton Primary Academy Trust), West Northamptonshire, to add an additional 10 places to the SEN unit.

**AB discussion:**

This proposal is to extend Headlands Primary School's unit that caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder /speech language communication needs from 40 to 50 places.

The local authority has requested that Headlands Primary School increase the capacity in their unit to assist in the fulfilment of its statutory obligations to provide SEND places and meet the need in this area of the county.

The Academy undertook a full consultation and agreed to offer an additional 10 places on the basis that the LA would fund and deliver capital works at the Academy. There were no objections that arose following the consultation.

The board was in agreement with this proposal. The board also recommend that Headlands Primary School's SEND strategy should be discussed with the local authority to consider how the school's pupils can be integrated in mainstream education where possible.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Northampton Primary Academy Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and West Northamptonshire Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended.

## Decisions taken between AB meetings

List of decisions taken by the Regional Director outside of AB meetings.

**Project:** Whether to approve the increase in capacity at Pennine Way Junior Academy (single-academy trust), Derbyshire, from 324 to 360.

**Decision type:** Significant change.

**Regional Director decision:** Approved.

**Conflicts:** N/A.

**Further actions required:** Delivery Officer to inform the single-academy trust of the decision.

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