



Notes of Meeting: East Midlands Advisory Board.

12 October 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

- Kate Copley.

Advisory Board (AB) members

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

Guests

- None.

Apologies

- Chris Wheatley.

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 Linby-cum-Papplewick CofE (VA) Primary School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and join Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

Linby-cum-Papplewick CofE (VA) Primary School applied to convert to academy status and join Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust.

Linby-cum-Papplewick CofE (VA) Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school, situated 8 miles north of Nottingham. The school received a requires improvement Ofsted judgement in February 2020.

The school has agreed a partnership with Hucknall National Church of England Primary School, another CofE school within one mile of Linby-cum-Papplewick. The two schools will share an Executive Head and collaborate, as a long-term partnership.

Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust is a Church of England trust and, as such, is a good match with the school's voluntary aided status, vision, and ethos. Hucknall National Church of England Primary School is also part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust.

Linby-Cum Papplewick CofE Primary School wants to join Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust to sustainably improve performance. The school values the strong process of annual educational review undertaken by Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust with all their schools. Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust demonstrates both strong performance and leadership.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

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

RD 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, diocese, and trust of the decision. Academy Order to be issued.

Project: To discuss progressing Gamston CofE (Aided) Primary school, Nottinghamshire, to join Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust, for which an Academy Order was issued on 7 June 2018.

AB discussion:

The Regional Director (then Regional Schools Commissioner) issued Gamston CofE (Aided) Primary school with an Academy Order on 7 June 2018.

The conversion to academy status was delayed due to land issues which are now in the process of being resolved.

Gamston CofE (Aided) Primary School is a small primary school in Retford, Nottinghamshire. In March 2016, Gamston CofE (Aided) Primary School was judged to be good by Ofsted. An inspection in January 2020 found the school continues to be good but the inspectors had some concerns that the standards may be declining.

During the delayed period of conversion, Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust has continued to provide support to the school. Following due diligence, all the parties involved - the diocese, trust, and the school are now content to continue with the conversion to academy status and work towards a 1 February 2023 opening date.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

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

RD 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, diocese, and trust of the decision.

Project: Whether to approve St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and join St Francis Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

The Diocese of Hallam has 50 schools (including 3 independent schools) across 6 local authorities (Barnsley, Derbyshire, Doncaster, Nottinghamshire, Rotherham, and Sheffield). This is a mix of single academy trusts, maintained schools and 3 multi-academy trusts (The Hallam Schools' Partnership Academy Trust, St Clare Catholic Multi Academy Trust and St Francis Catholic Multi-Academy Trust).

In 2019, the Diocese of Hallam expressed a desire to convert and transfer all of their schools into 2 new multi-academy trusts. The proposal for St Francis Catholic Multi-Academy Trust was presented at Advisory Board on 15 June 2022 and approved to open in September 2022 with an initial 7 schools across Doncaster, Rotherham, and Nottinghamshire. It was indicated at the June Advisory Board that a further 4 schools would consult and vote on joining the trust (St Patrick's Catholic Primary School being one).

St Patrick's is a smaller-than-average sized primary school based in Nottinghamshire. The school was judged to be good by Ofsted in 2018 and has no financial concerns.

The school Governing Body has passed a resolution to join the St Francis Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

The board was in agreement with this proposal. The board was keen that the development of St Francis Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and its leadership are monitored as it moves forward as a new, growing trust.

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

RD decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision made.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Ravenhurst Primary School.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2022.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: The Old Leake Primary and Nursery School.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2022.

Further actions required: No action required.

Significant Change

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

Project: Whether to approve a retrospective significant change made by Glossopdale School and Sixth Form (The True Learning Partnership), Derbyshire.

AB discussion:

This significant change application is retrospective as the school has already completed an expansion of its premises. The significant change was an increase in capacity from 1200 to 1440 (200 11-16 places and 40 6th form places).

In September 2018, the new Glossopdale School building was opened on a single site. The previous school was split across 3 sites in Glossop and Hadfield. The core facilities had been built to accommodate 1440 pupils however in the initial phase, the teaching accommodation was limited to supporting 1200 pupils.

Due to the need for places across the planning area and increased popularity of the school, the second phase was brought forward and the extension to the teaching accommodation progressed.

A non-statutory consultation took place between 14 October 2019 and 15 November 2019 to seek the views of interested parties. All the responses supported the proposal.

The board was in agreement with this proposal. The board did recommend that a letter was sent to the school to remind them of the importance of adhering to the significant change processes going forward.

RD decision: Approved the pre-16 capacity increase. The Post-16 capacity increase to be escalated to the Minister.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision and write to the trust reminding them of the importance of adhering to the significant change process.

Project: Whether to approve an increase in capacity at Babington Academy (Learning Without Limits Academy Trust), Leicester, from 1050 to 1350.

AB discussion:

Babington Academy is a large 11-16 secondary academy in the Beaumont Leys area of North-West Leicester.

Babington Academy has not yet been inspected by Ofsted but its predecessor, Babington Community College, received an outstanding Ofsted judgement from its last inspection in March 2013. There are currently 1,344 pupils on roll.

There are two elements relating to the capacity of Babington Academy which were considered by Advisory Board:

The first element was a retrospective change - a temporary increase in capacity of 300 places from 1050 to 1350 (increase in PAN from 210 to 270). This temporary increase occurred in 2017/18 and is due to remain in place until 2024/25.

The second element was a permanent increase in capacity of 150 places from 1050 to 1200 (increase in PAN from 210 to 240) from 2029/30. This will be achieved by a phased removal of the temporary mobile buildings, a reconfiguration of the school building, and a permanent expansion (build completion expected in winter of 2024).

The trust's view is that the existing accommodation is overcrowded and not conducive to effective learning.

The board supported this proposal in principle, but felt further reassurances were needed around the financing of the project, how the trust was responding to the School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) report and sighting a local stakeholder on the proposals.

RD decision: Deferred.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision.

Project: To discuss increasing the number of places at Foxfields Academy (Community Inclusive Trust) from 50 to 80 with effect from 31 August 2022 (deferred at July's Advisory Board).

AB discussion:

Foxfields Academy is a special school located in the Leicestershire district of Blaby. It was opened as a free school by Community Inclusive Trust on 1 September 2020.

The proposal is to increase the number of places at Foxfields Academy (a special free school) from 50 to 80 with effect from 31 August 2022. This will be achieved by building a new 5-classroom block on the existing site.

This proposal is part of Leicestershire County Council's SEND Strategy. The strategy referred to the planned expansions of all Leicestershire special schools as it seeks to ensure a sufficient supply of specialist school places to meet the needs of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) within the local community.

Leicestershire County Council has confirmed the need for these additional places in Blaby due to regional demographic pressures as a result of birth rates and housing developments, site limitations elsewhere, the distance that pupils would have to travel, and parental preference.

The board was in agreement with this decision. The board stipulated that approval was subject to planning permission being granted.

RD decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision. The supportive deployment of a schools resource management advisor was recommended.

Trust Change

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

Project: Whether to approve the transfer of Derby Pride Academy (single-academy trust), Derby, to join Esteem Multi-Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

Derby Pride Academy is a single-academy trust that was created as a free school alternative provision for 11–16 year-olds in 2012.

Derby Pride Academy had a short Ofsted inspection on 20 March 2019 which confirmed that the school continued to be outstanding.

After a period of financial uncertainty during COVID-19 and a drop in pupil numbers, the board of trustees recognised their vulnerability as a single-academy trust and started to consider the future viability of the trust. The trust began looking at multi-academy trusts in Autumn 2021 to explore possible mergers.

Derby Pride Academy decided that they wished to join Esteem Multi-Academy Trust. Esteem Multi-Academy Trust are a Nottingham-based trust with schools in Derby, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. It is a mixed multi-academy trust with special, alternative provision and mainstream primary. The trust has a favourable Ofsted portfolio and all 3 of their alternative provision schools are rated good by Ofsted.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

RD decision: Approved.

Conflicts: Julian Scholefield. Julian 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 single-academy trust and the multi-academy trust of the decision made.

Project: Whether to approve the transfer of Rawlins Academy (single-academy trust), Leicestershire, to join Embrace Multi Academy Trust.

AB discussion:

Rawlins Academy is a former grammar school which converted to become a single-academy trust on 01 November 2011 and underwent an age-range-change in 2013 to become an 11-18 school. In 2019 Rawlins Academy was identified as having a declining financial position. The academy also has a challenging estate, which includes buildings dating back to the 19th century.

Rawlins Academy's board concluded that joining a majority-faith multi-academy trust with a strong central team and secondary expertise is the best way of improving its finances, education, and estate.

Embrace Multi-Academy Trust is a church-majority trust of 8 academies, 7 of which are Church of England schools. There are currently approximately 2,747 pupils across the trust's schools. Brockington College is an Ofsted rated good (November 2017) secondary school and is currently the only secondary school in the trust.

The proposal for Rawlins Academy to join Embrace will provide opportunities for collaboration, resource sharing and financial and operational efficiencies. As a majority-faith multi-academy trust, Embrace also offers similar ethos and values. The Diocese of Leicester has given its consent to the transfer.

The board was in agreement with this proposal.

RD decision: Approved.

Conflicts: Paul West. Paul 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 single-academy trust and the multi-academy trust of the decision. The deployment of a schools resource management advisor once Rawlins has joined Embrace was recommended.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Whether to approve an increase in capacity at Castle Donington College, Leicestershire, by 105 places from 645 to 750.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approved.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school and trust of the decision.

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