



Notes of Meeting: London Advisory Board

24 November 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

- Claire Burton.

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Rama Venchard
- Emma Bradshaw
- Gill Ball
- Penny Barratt
- Cassie Buchanan
- Vanessa Ogden
- Lee Mason-Ellis

Guests

- None

Apologies

- Susan Douglas

DfE senior civil servants

- Anna Barker
- Alan Parnum

Representations received

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

General Discussion Points

RD update

- RD welcomed members.
- Conflicts of interest declared by Vanessa and Lee.

SEND Improvement and Intervention

- Outlined the remit of the SEND Improvement and Intervention Team, which is now part of the Vulnerable Children's Unit in the London Regions Group.
- Overview of the intervention process following a Local Area SEND inspection that has identified areas of significant weakness. 6 Local Areas in London with a live Written Statement of Action (WSOA), following their Local Area SEND inspection – Merton, Richmond upon Thames, Tower Hamlet, Haringey, Newham and Hounslow.
- Overview of the intervention process following the publication of the annual SEN2 data.
- Overview of the financial interventions that are managed within the National Directorate.

Pupil Place Planning (PPP) Overview for London

- DfE Regions Group is responsible for understanding how local authorities are meeting their statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient mainstream school places available for all children in their area.
- Primary data set used is Schools Capacity Survey (SCAP), statutory annual submission by all LAs, consisting of schools' capacity, pupil number forecasts, and known future capacity changes. DfE-modelled SCAP outputs determine the allocation of LA Basic Need Grant.
- Discussed factors currently affecting London place planning.

Schools Financial Support and Oversight Directorate (SFSO) – key functions and interactions with Regions Group and the Advisory Board

- Following an Arm's Length Body review, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has transformed the way it operates, ensuring that ESFA is structured to support the Department for Education, to best deliver on helping children and learners up and down the country to realise their potential.
- SFSO oversees the School Resource Management Portfolio on behalf of both the ESFA and the DfE.
- SFSO supports academies and their trusts to strengthen their financial capabilities

and make the most of their resources.

- SFSO supports Regional Directors to intervene with an academy trust, where financial concerns arise.
- SFSO works with local authorities in their efforts to strengthen the financial accountability and efficiency of the maintained school sector.

LA Overviews

- Haringey
- Kingston and Richmond
- Southwark
- Bexley

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Five schools in Kingston and Richmond LAs to convert to academy status and form a new MAT - Christ the Redeemer Catholic Education Trust (CtRCET). The schools are:

- Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, Kingston,
- St Osmund's Catholic Primary School, Richmond,
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Kingston,
- St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School, Richmond,
- Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Kingston.

AB discussion: The application is for five converting schools and two SATs within the Archdiocese of Southwark and the London boroughs of Richmond and Kingston to form Christ the Redeemer Catholic Education Trust (CtRCET) on 1 September 2023. Richard Challoner School, the only secondary school in the trust, will be the lead school.

Noted that St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School has withdrawn from the process.

The formation of the trust is supported by the Archdiocese of Southwark.

Discussed trust finance and noted schools are financially healthy.

Discussed recruitment plan: CEO vacancy, CFO vacancy, and Director of Education vacancy.

AB discussed trust governance. Noted plans to have trustees in place by September 2023.

Recommendation for trust-to-trust mentoring support

Recommendation to increase system leadership experience on the trust board.

RD decision: Approve with conditions

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: 1. The appointment of at least one additional trustee with experience of system leadership, ideally at primary phase. 2. Trust to work with an established Catholic MAT in a mentoring capacity. 3. Trust to review the CEO's part-time role in 12 months' time.

Project: River Hill Federation, Southwark, to join Nexus Education Schools Trust

AB discussion: Rotherhithe Primary School (RPS) and Dog Kennel Hill Primary School (DKH) form the River Hill Federation under one Executive Head. Both schools are rated 'Good' by Ofsted.

After considering several academy trusts, the governing body felt NEST would be an ideal partner for both DKH and RPS as their ethos aligns with those of the schools.

Discussed RSP and DKH pupil forecasts.

Discussed financial position of DKH and how this will impact the trust. Noted that ESFA do not have any major concerns.

AB discussed trust governance.

Noted that four schools joined from Communitas on 1 September.

Discussed the LA's strategy for managing surplus places and noted that the schools have been identified for PAN reductions.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No action required.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: St Mary's CofE Primary School, Haringey, to become an academy and join LDBS Academies Trust

AB discussion: St Mary's CofE Primary School is a voluntary aided school in Haringey.

In March 2022, following a section 5 inspection of the school, Ofsted judged its overall effectiveness as inadequate (serious weaknesses). Noted that there has been a section 8 monitoring inspection since then which converted to a full section 5 inspection. Awaiting inspection report.

Noted that LA and Diocese are working closely with the school to ensure safeguarding standards were raised in the interim prior to conversion.

Noted that diocese have requested academisation is paused at this point awaiting publication of the inspection report.

AB discussed the risks of pausing the application.

Discussed trust finances and noted forecast of over 900k deficit.

Discussed location of the school and overall Diocesan academisation strategy.

RD decision: Defer

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: To consider following publication of the inspection report.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: Woodside High School (SAT), Haringey, to join Mulberry Schools Trust

AB discussion: Woodside High School is currently a SAT and wishes to voluntarily merge with Mulberry Schools Trust (MST), a 5-school trust based in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) comprising 3 secondary schools, one 14-19 University Technical College (UTC) and one primary free school.

Trustees consider the academy would benefit from being part of a strong MAT and, following the appointment of the new headteacher, shortlisted two options. Mulberry Schools Trust was selected as the preferred option as their vision and values are well aligned.

Noted that CEO of MST is an NLE and that the trust is the lead school in East London Teaching Schools Hub.

Discussed trust finances and potential risk with in-year surplus decreasing (Woodside).

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: Vanessa Ogden did not receive the paper for this item.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Richard Challoner School (SAT), Kingston, and St Agatha's Catholic Primary School (SAT), Kingston, to transfer to new MAT - Christ the Redeemer Catholic Education Trust (CtRCET)

AB discussion: See discussion under 'Five schools in Kingston and Richmond LAs to convert to academy status and form a new MAT - Christ the Redeemer Catholic Education Trust (CtRCET)'.

RD decision:

Conflicts:

Further actions required:

Project: King Henry School (part of Odyssey Trust for Education), Bexley, to join Leigh Academies Trust.

AB discussion: King Henry School is a large mixed non-selective academy serving the north-east (Erith & Thamesmead) area of Bexley.

The school (previously RI) was judged inadequate (special measures) by Ofsted in May 2022. Noted safeguarding issues.

Noted that the substantive head teacher at King Henry resigned in early 2022 and the current trust does not have the capacity to improve King Henry.

LAT provided school improvement (SI) support once Ofsted's judgment was confirmed and was awarded emergency school improvement funding (ESIF).

AB discussed financial risks to the trust and recommended full-scope SRMA deployment. .

RD decision: Approve with condition

Conflicts: Lee Mason-Elis did not receive the paper for this item.

Further actions required: Trust to agree to an SRMA visit.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

**Project: Cudham CofE Primary (part of Aquinas CofE trust Ltd), Bromley
- to reduce the age range from 2-11years to 4-11 years**

Decision type: Significant Change

RD 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: St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

Type of decision: Converter Academy Orders

Reason for why it was taken off agenda: The school has withdrawn its application.

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