



Notes of Meeting: London Advisory Board

23 February 2023

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

- Cassie Buchanan
- Rama Venchard
- Lee Mason-Ellis
- Gill Ball
- Susan Douglas
- Emma Bradshaw

Guests

- Angela Cox
- Peter Sweeney

Apologies

- Vanessa Ogden
- Penny Barratt

DfE senior civil servants

- Anna Barker

Representations received

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

General Discussion Points

RD update

- Minutes of last meeting agreed.

AB member reflections

- AB members discussed SEND funding.

Presentation by the Catholic Archdioceses of Southwark and Westminster

- Angela Cox, interim Director of Education at the Archdiocese of Southwark, and Peter Sweeney, Director of Education at the Diocese of Westminster Education Trust, gave a strategic overview of their plans for developing Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts in London.

Significant Change

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

Project: Wood End Park School, Hillingdon – significant change to add a SEN Unit

AB discussion: Wood End Park Primary converted and joined The Park Federation Academy Trust (TPF) in September 2012. The school has 942 pupils on roll, with a total capacity of 1050 and was judged Good by Ofsted following a short inspection in November 2017, consolidating its Good judgement from May 2013.

In collaboration with Hillingdon Local Authority, TPF is proposing to establish a SEND unit for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder with 24 places by adapting an existing building on site at Wood End Park Academy (WEPA) by September 2023.

Hillingdon LA is part of DfE's SEN Safety Valve programme to help reduce its high needs budget deficit. Opening this provision means the LA will be able to place more students locally and reduce spend on high cost out of borough placements.

AB noted the timeline of this change was tight and that this could present a risk.

AB discussed pressures around LA high needs funding and noted that, whilst the school and trust reserves could support the SEN unit in the short term, the department should recommend SRMA support to look at longer term financial security.

AB discussed areas for prioritisation recommended by Ofsted and whether these have been addressed.

AB discussed staffing costs at TPF.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Recommendation for an SRMA visit.

Project: De-amalgamation of Harris Academy South Norwood into two schools.

AB discussion: Harris Academy South Norwood is a large school split across two different sites, 1.5 miles apart.

The trust is proposing to de-amalgamate the school to create two schools which will allow the schools to respond more efficiently and flexibly to their specific local context.

Both sites currently operate as separate schools in many aspects, including having a separate leadership team.

No educational concerns identified.

No financial concerns raised.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: No further action required.

© Crown copyright 2023