



## Notes of Meeting: South West

20 March 2023

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

- Hannah Woodhouse

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Mark Ducker
- Jennifer Blunden
- Margaret Simmons-Bird
- Adele Haysom
- Steve Savory
- Jackie Smith
- Ben Antell
- Rachel Howie

### Guests

- Frances Pugh – Representative for the No10 Lead on Education
- Amy Finch - Head of Delivery (Schools and Families)

### Apologies

- None

### DfE senior civil servants

- Lucy Livings
- Matthew Stevenson

### Representations received

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

# General Discussion Points

## Regional Director Update

- AB members shared local intelligence and provided insight on the current challenges with recruitment and retention.
- Ofsted inspection outcomes from the start of this academic year were shared after the meeting.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

**Project:** Whether to approve the conversion of the following schools to form a new sponsor trust, The Leaf Trust:

- Blackhorse Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Bowsland Green Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Cadbury Heath Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Emersons Green Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Hanham Abbots Junior School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Kings' Forest Primary School and Nursery, **South Gloucestershire**
- Mangotsfield Church Of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Samuel White's Infant School, **South Gloucestershire**
- St Barnabas CofE Primary School and Nursery, **South Gloucestershire**
- Stanbridge Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Staple Hill Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- The Tynings Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Wheatfield Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**

**Points raised in discussion:**

**Strategy:**

- The Leaf MAT will formalise the collaboration and build on the successful networks already established by the schools ensuring those involved are part of a robust and agile organisation. It was acknowledged that further due diligence is needed, and the Regions Group will work closely with the senior leadership of the Trust as it develops its vision, values, and central capacity.

**Governance and leadership:**

- The experience of the senior leadership team was discussed, and it was acknowledged that leading a large trust from the point of establishment will be a challenge. Trustees will work with senior leaders to ensure they address areas for development in their new roles.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Margaret Simmons-Bird was not present and did not receive the papers for this

project.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

## Sponsored Route:

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

**Project:** Whether to approve Callowell Primary School, **Gloucestershire** joining Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust.

**Points raised in Discussion:** AB members were in agreement.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

## Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve Honiton Community College (SAT), **Devon** transferring to The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust (TWMAT).

**Points raised in discussion:**

**Strategy:**

- The capacity of the trust to take on further schools was discussed. It was confirmed that future growth would be subject to regular updates with the trust and the Regions Group team.

**Other:**

- The headteacher of Honiton has an established working partnership with TWMAT with significant collaboration in place supporting HR services and assisting with curriculum planning and timetabling.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve Winchcombe School (SAT), **Gloucestershire** transferring to The Balcarras Trust.

**Points raised in discussion:** AB members were in agreement.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve the following four academies from The Castle Partnership Trust (TCPT), **Somerset** transferring to (merging with) Uffculme Academy Trust (UAT).

- The Castle School, **Somerset**
- Wellesley Park Primary School, **Somerset**
- Court Fields school, **Somerset**
- Isambard Kingdom Brunel Primary School, **Somerset**

**Points raised in discussion:**

**Strategy:**

- The growth plans of the merged trust was discussed, future growth would be subject to regular updates with the trust and the Regions Group team.
- The opportunity to rebrand the new organisation – proposed name Blackdown Education Partnership was positively acknowledged as indicating the collaborative working of both trusts to create a new entity with its own culture, vision, and ethos.

**Service Improvement:**

- The SI model of the merged trust was discussed. UAT and TCPT have a well-established relationship having worked together on several strands of school improvement work. The trusts are actively developing the SI strategy and curriculum for Blackdown Education Partnership. Both trusts recognise that there is more that they need to do, and this will be subject to regular updates with the trust and the Regions Group team. There is ongoing discussion about commissioning external support to help shape the SI strategy.

**Finance:**

- Both trusts currently have good track records of financial management and delivering balanced budgets.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve The Sky Academy, **Somerset** transferring from Learn@MAT to Cabot Learning Federation (CLF).

**Points raised in discussion:**

**Strategy:**

- Cabot Learning Federation's strategy for growth includes expanding into the special and AP sector and are considered a strong option in terms of capacity in SEMH to drive forward rapid improvement. The growth strategy of CLF will be subject to regular updates with the trust and the Regions Group team. The need for other Trusts both existing and new in the Somerset region with the expertise and capacity to be able to support intervention was acknowledged.

## **Finance:**

- The school's financial position represents a risk for the Trust if they are not able to negotiate higher top-up funding levels. Assurances were provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Regions Group that they will undertake a full review with continuing support through regular updates with the Academy and the Trust.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Margaret Simmons-Bird was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve the following three academies from Bay Education Trust, **Torbay** transferring to The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT).

- Curledge Street Academy, **Torbay**
- Kings Ash Academy, **Torbay**
- Paignton Academy, **Torbay**

**Points raised in discussion:**

## **Strategy:**

- TSAT operate 21 schools across five geographical hubs and are considered as a strong option to address key areas specific to the Bay Education Trust schools. Regions Group team will maintain regular engagement with TSAT on their future growth plans.

## **Other:**

- TSAT and Bay have both been pro-active in agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding. Regular steering groups are in progress comprised of leaders from both trusts, working towards a clear due diligence process and shared culture, vision, and ethos.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

## **Academy Opening Approved in Principle**

List of academies approved to open.

**Project:** Ann Cam Church of England Primary School, **Gloucestershire** (Primary Quest Multi-Academy Trust).

**Points raised in discussion:** No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 April 2023.

**Conflicts:** None.

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

**Project:** St Nicholas Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Child Okeford, Dorset (Sherborne Area Schools' Trust).

**Points raised in discussion:** No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 April 2023.

**Conflicts:** None.

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

**Project:** Wynstream Primary School Academy, Devon (Education South West).

**Points raised in discussion:** No questions or concerns were raised.

Opening date 1 April 2023.

**Conflicts:** None.

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

## Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application Nine Maidens Alternative Provision Academy, Cornwall (Wave Multi Academy Trust) to increase capacity from 60 to 80 places.

**Decision type:** Significant Change.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a significant change application for St Uny CofE Academy, Cornwall (Aspire Academy Trust) to change the age range from 4 – 11 years to 2 – 11 years to incorporate nursery provision.

**Decision type:** Significant Change.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

**Project:** Whether to approve a retrospective significant change application for Tregolls Academy, **Cornwall** (Aspire Academy Trust) to increase capacity from 210 – 420 places and to change the age range from 4 – 11 years to 3 – 11 years.

**Decision type:** Significant Change.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust.

## **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.

None

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