



## Notes of Meeting: London Advisory Board

22 June 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
- Gill Bal
- Lee Mason-Ellis
- Susan Douglas
- Vanessa Ogden
- Penny Barratt

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Rama Venchard
- Emma Bradshaw

### DfE senior civil servants

- Anna Barker

## **Representations received**

- Representations received from a parent group regarding decision on Pooles Park Primary School.

## **General Discussion Points**

### **RD update**

- Minutes of last meeting agreed.

## Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

### **Project: To discuss 7 schools becoming academies to form a new Catholic MAT: Sancta Familia Catholic Academy Trust**

- **St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Merton**
- **Ursuline High School Wimbledon, Merton**
- **St John Fisher RC Primary School, Merton**
- **St Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls, Sutton**
- **St Elphege's RC Junior School, Sutton**
- **St Elphege's RC Infants' School, Sutton**
- **Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School, Croydon**

**AB discussion:** There is an existing partnership between 15 catholic schools across Croydon, Sutton, Merton and Lambeth. The plan is for 7 of the schools to form a MAT in the first wave.

The governors viewed that building on the trust and shared relationships within this group of schools, and in line with the Diocesan vision, a move to a Catholic Academy Trust (CAT) will secure Catholic education locally and regionally, as well as provide schools with the security needed to face current and future challenges.

AB discussed risks and issues.

AB discussed school finances including reserves.

**RD decision:** Approve in principle.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Recommendation for an SRMA visit. To consider carefully the make-up of the board of trustees to ensure the board fully represents the communities that the trust will serve.

**Project: To discuss 4 schools becoming academies and one trust change to form St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust. The schools are:**

- **Bonus Pastor Catholic College, Lewisham**
- **Our Lady and St Philip Neri Roman Catholic Primary School, Lewisham**
- **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Southwark**
- **St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Southwark**
- **St Michael's Catholic College (SAT), Southwark**

**AB discussion:** A federation of schools across Lewisham and Southwark Catholic Schools has been serving the Catholic community in South London successfully across both secondary and primary sectors. St Michael's Catholic College (SAT) is also part of the established collaborative relationship. The formation of the new trust will formalise the already established relationships.

Noted all schools joining the trust are Ofsted-rated Good or Outstanding.

**RD decision:** Approve with condition.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Recommendation for an SRMA visit. Additional trustees to be appointed by April 2024, with the trust carefully considering the make-up of the trustees to ensure the board fully represents the communities that the trust will serve.

## Significant Change

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

### **Project: To discuss the merger of Harris Primary Academy Peckham Park and Harris Primary Free School Peckham**

**AB discussion:** Harris Federation propose to merge Harris Primary Academy Peckham Park (HPAPP) and Harris Primary Free School Peckham (HPFSP), with effect from September 2023, creating one, 1FE primary school. This proposal is being made due to the falling numbers at both schools. There is an oversupply of places in Southwark across all year groups in the borough's primaries. The trust plans to retain the HPFSP site and repurpose it as the London/SE campus for its Teacher Training Programme.

The March 2023 consultation was positive and the LA have indicated it has no objections to the proposal.

AB supported the proposal.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

### **Project: To discuss the addition of a Special Resource Provision (SRP) at Chelsea Academy, Kensington and Chelsea**

**AB discussion:** The Chelsea Academy is a co-educational Church of England secondary school with a sixth form located within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. It opened in September 2009 and has a capacity of 1200 including a sixth form of 350 students. It is sponsored by The London Diocesan Board of Schools and The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Following a consultation on their SEND strategy in 2021, Bi Borough (Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council) are seeking to open Special Resource Provisions in schools across their local authority areas. Chelsea Academy has been asked to open such a provision for a total of 14 pupils which will be funded by the LA.

AB supported the proposal.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

## **Project: To discuss the extension of age range at Riverside Bridge School, Barking and Dagenham**

**AB discussion:** Riverside Bridge is a special school located in Barking for children aged 4-16 years with special educational needs (ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulty, SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty and PMLD - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty). It is part of Partnership Learning trust.

Riverside Bridge operates from two sites. The primary provision is based at the Thames Road site and the secondary provision at the Riverside Campus site, these sites are approximately 3 minutes' drive apart. The additional post-16 pupils will be accommodated on the Riverside Campus.

The proposal to extend the age range of Riverside Bridge School from 4-16 to 4-19 is at the request of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

AB supported the proposal.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** The board would like to have a detailed understanding around what the provision will offer in terms of the curriculum.

## Sponsored Route

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

### **Project: To discuss Pooles Park Primary School, sponsor status**

**AB discussion:** Islington LA along with other inner London boroughs, has surplus places at primary level. Islington have devised a School Organisation Plan, in which they set out how they will manage surplus capacity in schools through a range of measures including PAN reductions, collaboration, amalgamation and federation, and making alternative use of the school estate. As part of their plans to reduce the size of the school estate in the area, they are seeking to close Pooles Park Primary School following the November 2022 Ofsted inspection in which the school was judged Inadequate.

The Regional Director acknowledged the representations received from a parent group on 21st June, consisting of 133 families. The families strongly supported for the school to become an academy and remain open and demonstrated a preference for a trust with an inclusive ethos which reflects the cohort in the school. The school is a key part of the local community and the environmental factors of garden and wider school estate brought much needed green space to the council estate that would otherwise lack it.

AB noted the significance of the school in the local community. AB discussed pupil numbers at Pooles Park and viability of the school. AB considered sponsor options and financial risk to trusts.

The Regional Director stated she was mindful of the LA concerns about surplus places in the borough but noted that Government policy is to seek a sponsor for any inadequate school and to proceed with conversion where there is an appropriate match. The Regional Director felt that on balance the proposal from the Bridge Trust was sensible and pragmatic and made strategic sense.

The Bridge Trust was approved to be the preferred sponsor as the trust has experience of successfully taking an inadequate mainstream primary school in the same local authority to a good Ofsted judgement through its work with Hungerford, though the trust acknowledges more work to be done to improve outcomes. The trust is also proposing a shared resource structure between Pooles Park and Hungerford which will make both the schools more viable for the long term.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Penny Barratt and Rama Venchard did not receive the papers and were not present for this item.

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

## Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

**Project:** Grangewood School (part of The Eden Academy Trust), Hillingdon – temporary relocation to a satellite site.

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Susan Douglas

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

**Project:** Capital City Academy, Brent – to join Harris Federation.

**Decision type:** Trust Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

**Project:** St Luke's Church of England Primary School, West Norwood (Southwark Diocesan Board of Education MAT), Lambeth – To lower the age-range of the school, opening a 21-place nursery.

**Decision type:** Significant Change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

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

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