



Notes of Meeting: East Midlands Advisory Board

5 July 2023.

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

- Carol Gray (Regional Director, East Midlands Regions Group).

Advisory Board (AB) members

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

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.

General Discussion Points

- No discussion points were raised.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: To discuss Hady Primary School, Derbyshire, converting to join Chorus Education Trust.

AB discussion:

Hady Primary School is a community school located in Chesterfield. It was judged good by Ofsted in March 2018.

Hady Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert and join Chorus Education Trust. Hady Primary School approached Chorus Education Trust because the trust shares a similar vision and ethos to the school. A governing body resolution has been passed by Hady Primary School.

Chorus Education Trust is a 5 school multi-academy trust operating in Sheffield and North Derbyshire.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Chorus Education Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and Derbyshire County Council of the decision.

Project: To discuss Round Hill Primary School, Nottinghamshire, converting to join Equals Trust.

AB discussion:

Round Hill Primary School in the district of Broxtowe, is a larger than average-sized primary school. The most recent Ofsted short inspection of Round Hill Primary School in February 2018 found that the school continues to be good.

Round Hill Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Equals Trust, a multi-academy trust that currently runs 12 primary schools in Nottinghamshire.

A governing body resolution has been passed and a consultation has been undertaken.

Round Hill Primary School wants to benefit from the trust's expertise, central support and school improvement capacity.

The school has already been working jointly with the trust on potential benefits that joining would bring, including to address a projected school budget deficit in future years.

Equals Trust has school improvement capacity and in 2019 appointed a strong school improvement lead to drive trust-wide collaborative action.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Equals Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Sian Hampton and Paul Heery. Sian and Paul were not in attendance for this part of the meeting, nor were they in receipt of project papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform school, trust and Nottinghamshire County Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended, as was an external review of governance.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss and agree a sponsor match for Bradwell Junior School, Derbyshire.

AB discussion:

Bradwell Junior School is a community school, located in the village of Bradwell, High Peaks. It was judged inadequate by Ofsted judged in November 2022.

The school was issued with an Academy Order on 26 January 2023. Following the Academy Order being issued, an information gathering exercise was conducted by the department to seek a sponsor for Bradwell Junior School.

Three trusts registered their interest in sponsoring Bradwell Junior School. Whilst the 3 trust options all had their strengths, it was decided that Chorus Education Trust was the right fit. Chorus Education Trust identified the areas of improvement needed at Bradwell Junior School and articulated a clear plan for implementation.

Chorus Education Trust is a 5 school multi-academy trust operating in Sheffield and North Derbyshire.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Chorus Education Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve – Chorus Education Trust.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and Derbyshire County Council of the decision.

Project: To discuss a sponsor match for Sir Edmund Hillary Primary and Nursery School, Nottinghamshire.

AB discussion:

Sir Edmund Hillary Primary and Nursery School is a local authority-maintained school that has been judged by Ofsted as requires improvement on 2 consecutive occasions (November 2017 and September 2021). The school therefore meets the definition of a school which is not making the necessary improvements (Schools Causing Concern guidance - October 2022 update). On 28 March 2023, the school was issued with an Academy Order.

Three trusts were identified as potential sponsor options, all of which could evidence strong school improvement capacity and a track record of supporting schools to secure and maintain positive Ofsted judgements. All 3 trusts also met the ambitions set out in the trust development statement for Nottinghamshire. On balance, it was decided that L.E.A.D Academy Trust would be the best match for Sir Edmund Hillary and Nursery School.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at L.E.A.D Academy Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve - L.E.A.D Academy Trust.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss and agree a sponsor match for Buckminster Primary School, Leicestershire.

AB discussion:

Buckminster Primary School is a small, rural, local authority-maintained community school in Leicestershire for pupils aged 2 to 11 years.

Buckminster Primary School was inspected by Ofsted in January 2023 and was judged to be inadequate. An Academy Order was issued to the school on 23 March 2023.

Five trusts expressed an interest in sponsoring Buckminster Primary School. It was decided that Mowbray Education Trust was the best fit.

Mowbray Education Trust is a Leicestershire-based trust, and it would benefit the locality if the trust was to grow. It has a track-record of school improvement, an ability to provide an all-through offer for pupils, and good geographic location for Buckminster. The trust consists of 7 academies (5 primaries and 2 secondaries) in Leicestershire, of which 6 are judged by Ofsted as good and 1 as requires improvement (Iveshead School, joined the trust in December 2022).

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Mowbray Education Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve – Mowbray Education Trust.

Conflicts: Inderjit Sandhu and Paul Heery. Inderjit and Paul were not present for this part of the meeting, nor were they in receipt of associated project papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the school, trust and Leicestershire County Council of the decision.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Anthony Gell School.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 August 2023.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Kingsway Primary School.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 August 2023.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Significant Change

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

Project: To discuss a physical expansion of premises at Whitemoor Academy (Primary and Nursery) (Shine Multi-Academy Trust), Nottingham, for the addition of a SEND Unit.

AB discussion:

Whitemoor Academy (Primary and Nursery) is part of Shine Multi Academy Trust and has a capacity of 470 and 450 pupils on roll. The school was judged good by Ofsted in its last full inspection in November 2022.

Whitemoor Academy (Primary and Nursery) seeks to establish a 10-place SEND Unit on site. The physical expansion of premises as a result of the new SEND Unit will increase overall school capacity from 470 to 480.

This proposal is part of Nottingham City Council's strategy to support SEND pupils in mainstream education. The project is being led, delivered, and funded by the local authority.

The academy currently supports pupils with EHCP in 3 separate locations within the academy. The new 10-place SEND Unit will be within the existing school grounds located in the area formerly used for gardening activities and will not impact on playground space.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss an increase in SEND places at Wreake Valley College (Bradgate Education Partnership), Leicestershire, from 15 to 45.

AB discussion:

Wreake Valley Academy is an 11-18 secondary school located in Syston, Leicestershire. It opened as a standalone academy in April 2012. The school later joined Bradgate Education Partnership in September 2018 and was inspected by Ofsted in February 2022. It was judged as good across all categories having previously been judged as requires improvement.

Wreake Valley Academy has an enhanced provision for up to 15 pupils with communication and interaction difficulties. This proposal is to increase the unit's capacity by 30 places to a maximum of 45 students in line with the local authority requirements for this type of provision.

Although there is no physical expansion required, there will be some reconfiguration of the school's existing buildings.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Bradgate Education Partnership and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

The Board recommended that the trust would benefit from working alongside a trust with expertise in delivering SEND support at this scale through the department's Trust and School Improvement Offer (TSI).

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the school and trust of the decision.
Delivery officer to work with the trust to broker support through the TSI Offer.

Project: To discuss the addition of a 30 place SEND Unit at Moulton School and Science College (single-academy trust), West Northamptonshire.

AB discussion:

Moulton School and Science College is a single-academy trust in Moulton, West Northamptonshire. The school is a secondary school with a capacity of 1393 and 1349 pupil on roll, aged 11-18.

The school was judged by Ofsted to be good in its last full inspection in 2013. Since then, there have been two section 8 inspections (January 2017 and March 2022) which confirmed the school remains good.

Moulton School and Science College seeks to establish a 30 place SEND unit on site for pupils with a primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

The proposal has been developed in full collaboration with West Northamptonshire Council and forms part of a wider programme that seeks to add almost 500 new SEND places across the area to address the current deficit of SEND places.

A consultation was run from 23 January 2023 to 19 February 2023. Only 3 responses were received – 2 were in favour and 1 was undecided.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Moulton School and Science College and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

The Board recommended that the trust would benefit from working alongside a trust with expertise in delivering SEND support at this scale through the department's Trust and School Improvement Offer (TSI). An external review of governance was also recommended.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the school and trust of the decision.
Delivery officer to work with the trust to broker support through the TSI Offer.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss Akaal Primary Academy (single-academy trust), Derby, joining Nishkam School Trust (multi-academy trust).

AB discussion:

Akaal Academy Trust Derby Limited is a single-academy trust that contains Akaal Primary Academy, as its only academy.

Akaal Primary School has been inspected twice by Ofsted (June 2018 and March 2022) and was judged as requires improvement on both occasions. The school therefore meets the definition as one which is not making the necessary improvements (Schools Causing Concern guidance).

On 23 January 2023, Akaal provided representations to the department confirming their preference was to join Nishkam School Trust to help drive improvements at the school.

Nishkam School Trust are a 4-school multi-academy trust with a trust footprint in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and West London (Osterley), priding itself on its multi-faith approach to education. Akaal Primary School is a faith-based, Sikh school and their designated faith body would welcome working with a Sikh faith-based trust.

Three out of 4 schools in the Nishkam School Trust are currently graded outstanding (all judged within the trust with one of those schools judged in 2022), and the remaining school being graded good.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Nishkam School Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss Netherfield Primary School (Greater Nottingham Education Trust), Nottinghamshire, transferring to join Equals Trust.

AB discussion:

Netherfield Primary School, is a larger-than-average primary school that converted to academy status in March 2018. The predecessor school was judged inadequate by Ofsted in September 2016.

During the summer of 2022, Netherfield Primary School was inspected by Ofsted (July 2022) and judged to be good across all areas.

Netherfield Primary School seeks to voluntarily transfer and join Equals Trust. Equals Trust board gave consent on 7 December 2022 for the school to join the trust subject to the agreement of the Regional Director and satisfactory completion of the due diligence process.

Equals Trust was established in 2016 as a primary multi-academy trust based at Keyworth Primary and Nursery School in Nottinghamshire. All 12 open academies in the trust's portfolio are rated good by Ofsted.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Equals Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Paul West and Sian Hampton. Paul and Sian were not present for this part of the meeting, nor were they in receipt of associated project papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform the academy and trust of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended, as was an external review of governance.

Project: To discuss Blue Bell Hill Primary and Nursery School (Blue Bell Hill Academy Trust), Nottingham, transferring to join Flying High Trust.

AB discussion:

Blue Bell Hill Primary and Nursery School has voluntarily applied to join Flying High Trust.

The academy opened in October 2013, part of Blue Bell Hill Academy Trust in Nottingham, the only school in the multi-academy trust.

Ofsted judged that the school continues to be good in a short inspection in February 2019.

Blue Bell Hill Primary and Nursery School seeks to share their strengths and to benefit from the experiences and expertise of other schools and the central trust team offer. The school has been working with Flying High Trust for the previous 18 months engaging with key professional learning communities.

Flying High Trust has a good track-record of supporting and improving schools and has the capacity and capability needed to support improvements at Blue Bell Hill Primary and Nursery School.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Flying High Trust and the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Rothersthorpe Church of England Primary School (Innovative Multi Academy Trust), West Northamptonshire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Mears Ashby Church of England Primary School (Peterborough Diocese Education Trust), North Northamptonshire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Milton Parochial Primary School (Peterborough Diocese Education Trust), West Northamptonshire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Cranford CofE Primary School (Peterborough Diocese Education Trust), North Northamptonshire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Blakesley Church of England Primary School (Peterborough Diocese Education Trust), West Northamptonshire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Great Addington CofE Primary School (Peterborough Diocese Education Trust), North Northamptonshire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a change in age-range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School (Peterborough Diocese Education Trust), North Northamptonshire

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve an increase in capacity from 420 to 630 (PAN from 60 to 90) at Rothley Church of England Primary School (single-academy trust), Leicestershire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss whether to approve a physical expansion along with an increase in capacity from 147 to 210 and change in PAN (from 21 to 30) at Old Dalby Church of England Primary School (single-academy trust), Leicestershire.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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