



Notes of Meeting: South West

19 June 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

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Lucy Livings
- Matthew Stevenson

Representations received

- One representation received for Stoborough Church of England Primary School, **Dorset** joining Coastal Learning Partnership.

General Discussion Points

Regional Director Update

- Hannah Woodhouse provided an update on priorities and challenges both national and for South West region.
- AB members shared local intelligence and provided insight on the challenges being faced by the sector.
- 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: To discuss Swanage Primary School, **Dorset** converting to academy status and joining Coastal Learning Partnership (CLP).

Points raised in Discussion: **

- The representation received was acknowledged and the points raised were discussed, assurances were given that the consultation process was followed correctly and was timely.

Strategy:

- Swanage and Stoborough are two of four small rural Local Authority maintained primary schools in Purbeck, Dorset which are looking to join Coastal Learning Partnership (CLP). CLP already have an existing hub of 3 schools in the Purbeck area so it is a good fit geographically.
- Both schools are Ofsted rated good and are close to schools within CLP with good working relationships already established.
- CLP is an all primary MAT that currently comprises of 16 schools in Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset.
- The Diocese of Salisbury support the schools joining CLP.

Governance:

- The schools' current governing bodies will become local governing bodies (LGBs) on joining CLP, with governors remaining in place. The LGBs will join the governance support structures which exist within the Trust.

School Improvement:

- The trust's School improvement model was discussed and how they will support the four Purbeck schools looking to join.

Finance:

- SFSO (Schools Financial Support & Oversight) confirmed that the trust are financially healthy.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project discussion includes Stoborough Church of England Primary School, **Dorset** converting to academy status and joining Coastal Learning Partnership.

Project: To discuss Stoborough Church of England Primary School, **Dorset** converting to academy status and joining Coastal Learning Partnership.

Points raised in discussion: **

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project was discussed together with Swanage Primary School, **Dorset** converting to academy status and joining Coastal Learning Partnership

Project: To discuss Laira Green Primary School, **Plymouth** converting to academy status and joining The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust.

Points raised in Discussion: The board members considered the case and did not raise any concerns with the proposal.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None

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

Project: To discuss Oaktree Nursery and Primary School, **Swindon** converting to academy status and joining The Blue Kite Academy Trust.

Points raised in discussion: The board members considered the case and did not raise any concerns with the proposal.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss Covingham Park Primary School, **Swindon** converting to academy status and joining The Blue Kite Academy Trust.

Points raised in discussion: The board members considered the case and did not raise any concerns with the proposal.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss St James Church of England Junior School, **Gloucestershire** joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT).

Points raised in discussion: **

Strategy:

- St David's CofE Primary School have been considering joining a MAT for a while recognising the benefits that being part of a MAT will bring.
- Hatherley Infant School and St James CofE Junior School have had successive RI or worse Ofsted inspections.
- DGAT has a proven track record of school improvement and as a sponsor of academies within suburban and city settings. DGAT will also be able to bring significant central support for the schools, enabling focus on the core task of quality teaching and learning, to secure good pupil outcomes.
- DGAT has capacity to support both schools and the addition of St David's will bring elements of strong practice and good leadership that will benefit the Trust.

School Improvement:

- The Trust has a well structured model, the capacity to take on the two vulnerable schools was discussed. They have increased the central capacity by bringing more of the SI support in-house with an expanded central team including two School Experience leads and a Quality Assurance lead.

Finance:

- DGAT have strengthened their central capacity. They have proactively requested engagement with an SRMA (School Resource Management Advisor) and this will be discussed with the Trust and the Regions Group team.

Other:

- Hatherley Infants and St James CofE Junior School serve diverse communities and communication will be essential. Regions Group will continue to discuss with the Trust the plans for actively engaging with parents, pupils and the local community.
- If approved DGAT will have grown by five schools this academic year and future growth projects should be considered carefully in discussion with the Regions Group team.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Rachel Howie was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

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

** This project discussion includes Hatherley Infant School, **Gloucestershire** joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

** This project discussion includes St David's Church of England Primary School (SAT), **Gloucestershire** transferring to The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

Project: To discuss Hatherley Infant School, **Gloucestershire** joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

Points raised in discussion: **

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Rachel Howie was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

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

** This project was discussed together with St James Church of England Junior School, **Gloucestershire** joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

** This project was discussed together with St David's Church of England Primary School (SAT), **Gloucestershire** transferring to The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

Project: To discuss Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School, **Somerset** joining The Oak Partnership Trust.

Points raised in discussion: **

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project was discussed together with the application for The Oak Partnership Trust, **Somerset** to become a sponsor.

Sponsor Application

Points discussed in relation to a school sponsor application.

Project: To discuss an application for The Oak Partnership Trust (TOPT), **Somerset** to become a sponsor.

Points raised in discussion: **

Strategy:

- The Oak Partnership Trust (TOPT) was formed in January 2019. It has four schools – three primaries and one all-through special.
- A recent review recommended that TOPT should seek sponsor status and is ready to grow
- Stoke St Gregory has received a second consecutive RI judgement. The school has had several changes of headteacher in recent years.
- TOPT has built a good working relationship with the school, and the governing body is fully supportive of joining the trust.

Governance:

- The academy trust has four members, although the preference is that trusts should have at least five members, this is due to its mixed articles and the need for Diocesan representation.
- Stoke St Gregory currently has 11 governors and the existing Local Governing Body will form the Local School Committee on transfer to TOPT.

School Improvement:

- The Trust has a clear action plan for delivering school improvement, and has developed strong values in consultation with its schools. There is an emphasis on middle leaders playing a key role in driving SI and all are supported to make changes and work together.
- TOPT has provided school improvement support to other schools on request from Somerset LA.

Finance:

- The financial position of TOPT was discussed. An SRMA review has been undertaken recently and the Trust has responded to all recommendations.

Other:

- TOPT is engaged with a number of Somerset networks, and is also involved in meetings with Somerset LA about SEND and inclusion in the West Somerset Priority Education Investment Area.
- It was noted in the Ofsted monitoring inspection for Stoke St Gregory – Jan 2023, that TOPT provides considerable support to the leadership of the school and governors ensure that this additional capacity is put to good use. The rate of improvement has increased significantly.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project discussion includes Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School, Somerset joining The Oak Partnership Trust.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss Churchdown Village Infant School (SAT), Gloucestershire transferring to Gloucestershire Learning Alliance.

Points raised in discussion: The board members considered the case and did not raise any concerns with the proposal.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Steve Savory and Adele Haysom were not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

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

Project: To discuss St David's Church of England Primary School (SAT), **Gloucestershire** transferring to The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

Points raised in discussion: **

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Rachel Howie was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

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

** This project was discussed together with St James Church of England Junior School, **Gloucestershire** joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

** This project was discussed together Hatherley Infant School, **Gloucestershire** joining The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

Project: To discuss Oasis Academy Longmeadow, **Wiltshire** (Oasis Community Learning) transferring to Acorn Education Trust.

Points raised in discussion:

Strategy:

- This is a voluntary transfer in view of Oasis Academy Longmeadow being isolated from other Oasis schools, and is a recommendation based on geography. The school was Ofsted rated inadequate May 2017 and following an intensive period of school improvement, was Ofsted rated good March 2022. Oasis Community Learning consider this is the appropriate time for the school to transfer to a trust that is more local and will provide stability.
- Acorn Education Trust (AET) is a strong trust in the Wiltshire area that has a good track record in delivering school improvement and improving pupil outcomes. Their established SI approach and capacity will support the school to continue to improve.

School Improvement:

- AET have a robust school improvement strategy with internal monitoring and support led by an Executive Headteacher and senior leadership team. School Improvement is tailored to meet the needs of each school and supported by a central team.
- The trust have invested in capacity for school improvement and are confident in the direction of all their schools.

Finance:

- Financial management by AET is strong. All schools receive the resources they need to drive improvement.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None

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

Project: To discuss Shaw Ridge Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion: **

Strategy:

- Shaw Ridge, Millbrook and Peatmoor have voluntarily applied to transfer into Grove Learning Trust (GLT).
- The three SATs, are part of an alliance and already work together successfully.
- GLT is a growing MAT of four primary schools in Swindon.
- The ethos of GLT, their focus on school improvement and collaboration with the schools in the trust align with the aims and ambitions of all.

Governance:

- The diversity of the board was discussed. GLT have recently recruited a new Trustee with educational expertise along with two additional trustees.
- All three SATs have experienced trustees who will continue to contribute to the GLT governance framework, which is considered a strength for them joining.

School Improvement:

- School improvement is led by the Director of Education (DoE) who works closely with the head of school/head teacher in each school, the CEO and the Chief Finance and Operating Officer, forming a Trust Leadership Team. The group meet monthly to share effective practice, agree projects and to review the impact the SI strategy is having on the standards of education in their schools.
- GLT is committed to developing professional relationships with other schools, SATs, MATs and external providers. All academies will therefore receive access to a range of external SI partners on joining the Trust.

Finance:

- Financial statements reflect that the three trusts are in a good financial position.

Other:

- GLT recognise they are going through a period of rapid growth, and that there should now be a period of consolidation. This will be subject to regular review with the Regions Group team and the Trust.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project discussion includes Millbrook Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

** This project discussion includes Peatmoor Community Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

Project: To discuss Millbrook Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion: **

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project was discussed with Shaw Ridge Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

** This project was discussed with Peatmoor Community Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust

Project: To discuss Peatmoor Community Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

Points raised in discussion: **

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

** This project was discussed with Shaw Ridge Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

** This project was discussed with Millbrook Primary School (SAT), **Swindon** transferring to Grove Learning Trust.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

All of the projects have gone through previous Advisory Board meetings for consideration and discussion. These projects are checked for any legal inconsistencies to ensure they are in line with departmental requirements and that all conditions are met.

Project: Callowell Primary School, **Gloucestershire** (Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 July 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Worlebury St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, **North Somerset** (Diocese of Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 July 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: To approve a significant change for Millbrook Primary School, **Swindon** to change its existing Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) to a Specialist Educational Needs (SEN) Unit, allowing a phased expansion from the current 8 places to 14 for September 2023 and 18 for September 2024.

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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