



Notes of Meeting: West Midlands Advisory Board

Date of meeting – 19 July 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

- Andrew Warren

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Dame Mo Brennan
- Mike Donoghue
- Sarah Finch
- Amarjit Cheema
- Dan Parkes

Guests

- None.

Apologies

- Tom Leverage
- Lizana Oberholzer

DfE senior civil servants

- None.

Representations received

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

General Discussion Points

Local Update

- None.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Paganel Primary School, Birmingham, to convert and become an academy and join drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Paganel Primary School, Birmingham is an Ofsted “Good” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust to bring about effective school improvement for underserved children and communities.
- drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust consists of 9 academies across Birmingham and Dudley.
- The school is collaborating with the Trust to develop the curriculum offer, inclusion and the quality of education. The school is currently utilising the Trust's central infrastructure such as finance and HR support.
- The board discussed the school’s data and governance.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Lakey Lane Junior and Infant School, Birmingham, to convert and become an academy and join Prince Albert Community Trust, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Lakey Lane Junior and Infant School, Birmingham is an Ofsted “Good” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust to improve in systems and policies in an NLE capacity.
- Prince Albert Community Trust consists of 6 academies across Birmingham.
- The SLT and Governing Body agree that the values and beliefs of PA Community Trust align with the values of Lakey Lane Primary School.
- The board discussed finance and governance whilst considering recommendations to help improve the proposal.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Frederick Bird Primary School, Coventry, to convert and become an academy and join Inspire Education Trust, Coventry.

AB discussion:

- Frederick Bird Primary School, Coventry is an Ofsted “Requires Improvement” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust to enable collaborative working.
- Inspire Education Trust consists of 6 academies across Coventry and Warwickshire.
- There is already a working relationship between Frederick Bird and Inspire with the trust providing school-to-school support via an SLA since October 2022.
- There have been improvements made at Frederick Bird under the school-to-school support provided by the trust which have been externally validated by Coventry LA.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Arley Primary School, Coventry, to convert and become an academy and join Inspire Education Trust, Coventry.

AB discussion:

- Arley Primary School, Coventry is an Ofsted “Good” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust for collaborative working and access to shared knowledge, expertise and best practice to improve standards.
- Inspire Education Trust consists of 6 academies across Coventry and Warwickshire.
- Arley has been in a trust partnership with Inspire since February 2023. The support from Inspire has been well-received at Arley.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Sherbrook Primary School, Staffordshire, to convert and become an academy and join Manor Hall Academy Trust, Staffordshire.

AB discussion:

- Sherbrook Primary School, Staffordshire is an Ofsted “Good” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust to gain an insight into the workings of the Trust and evaluate the benefits a conversion would bring to the school and its pupils.
- Manor Hall Academy Trust consists of 14 academies across Staffordshire, Cheshire East, Sandwell, Solihull and Knowsley.
- Since becoming an associate school Sherbrook Primary School have built strong working relationships with the schools from Manor Hall Academy Trust.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to The Braybrook Centre, Wolverhampton, to convert and become an academy and join Youth Engagement Schools Trust, Shropshire.

AB discussion:

- The Braybrook Centre, Wolverhampton is an Ofsted “Good” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust to enable the continuation of collaborative working.
- Youth Engagement Schools Trust consists of 4 academies across Cheshire East and Shropshire, with one due to open in September 2024.
- The Management Committee for the campus are happy with the relationship they have built with YEST.
- The board sought assurances on Trust capacity.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Orchard Centre (The Nightingale Home and Hospital Service), Wolverhampton, to convert and become an academy and join Youth Engagement Schools Trust, Shropshire.

AB discussion:

- Orchard Centre (The Nightingale Home and Hospital Service), Wolverhampton is an Ofsted “Good” school who have requested to convert and join a Multi Academy Trust to enable the continuation of collaborative working.
- Youth Engagement Schools Trust consists of 4 academies across Cheshire East and Shropshire, with one due to open in September 2024.
- The Management Committee for the campus are happy with the relationship they have built with YEST.
- The board sought assurances on Trust capacity.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be issued to Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of the decision.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss a sponsor for Bentley West Primary School, Walsall.

AB discussion:

- Bentley West Primary School, Walsall is an Ofsted rated "Requires Improvement" school who require a sponsor to develop improved school outcomes.
- Leigh Trust consists of 5 schools placed across Birmingham.
- Ofsted reports for Leigh's academies confirm that the trust has strengths in the areas for improvement identified at Bentley West. Feedback indicates that this initial engagement with the school has been positive and will rapidly create the right environment for improvement.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the School and Sponsor.

Project: To discuss a sponsor for Burton Borough, Telford and Wrekin.

AB discussion:

- Burton Borough, Telford and Wrekin is an Ofsted rated "Requires Improvement" school who require a sponsor to develop improved school outcomes.
- Learning Community Trust consists of 9 schools placed across Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire.
- LCT has an existing relationship with the school, providing TSI support.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Sarah Finch was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: To inform the School and Sponsor.

Project: To discuss a sponsor for Glebefields Primary School, Sandwell.

AB discussion:

- Glebefields, Sandwell is an Ofsted rated "Requires Improvement" school who require a sponsor to develop improved school outcomes.
- Elston Hall Learning Trust consists of 6 schools placed across Wolverhampton.
- The trust has an existing relationship with the trust having offered TSI support to the school.

- The board discussed the capacity of the trust.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the School and Sponsor.

Project: To discuss a sponsor for Rowley Hall Primary School, Sandwell.

AB discussion:

- Rowley Hall Primary School, Sandwell is an Ofsted rated “Requires Improvement” school who require a sponsor to develop improved school outcomes.
- The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust consists of 32 academies placed across the West Midlands, London and East of England.
- There is an existing relationship between the school and TEFAT has already worked with Rowley Hall Primary School in school improvement. They also have a shared culture and ethos.
- The board discussed the West Midlands Hubs.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the School and Sponsor.

Project: To discuss a sponsor for Midpoint Centre, Wolverhampton

AB discussion:

- Midpoint Centre, Wolverhampton is an Ofsted rated “Inadequate” school who require a sponsor to develop improved school outcomes.
- Youth Engagement Schools Trust consists of 4 academies across Cheshire East and Shropshire, with one due to open in September 2024.
- YEST has already been supporting Midpoint through ESIF and their support has had a tangible impact.
- The board sought assurances on Trust capacity.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the School and Sponsor.

Significant Change

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

Project: To discuss a reserved provision of 30 places at Tile Cross Academy.

AB discussion:

- Tile Cross Academy, Birmingham, is an Ofsted rated 'Requires Improvement' from October 2021. The Academy wish to establish a reserved provision of 30 places for students with a designated Special Educational Need of Cognition and Learning.
- The trust has already developed expertise in running SEND Resource Bases at two of its other schools.
- This provision would help to meet demand within the city and in the local area, supporting vulnerable children to access specialist provision close to where they live.
- The board sought assurances around transparency.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an Autistic Specialist Resource Base for 16 children at Heathfield Primary School, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Heathfield Primary School, Birmingham is an Ofsted rated 'Good' from June 2018. The Academy wish to create an Autistic Specialist Resource Base from 1st September 2023 to cater for 16 children in EYFS/KS1 and KS2 groups.
- Recent Pupil Place Planning engagement has confirmed that this planned project forms a key element of the LA's plan to meet community needs.
- Birmingham City Council's SEND & inclusion strategy includes a commitment to establish more resource provision in mainstream settings providing a bridge between mainstream and specialist provision. There is currently a shortage of primary ASD resource provision in the local area.
- The board discussed capacity and transparency.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an Autistic Specialist Resource Base for 24 children at Highfield Junior and Infant School, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Highfield Junior and Infant School, Birmingham is an Ofsted rated 'Good' from January 2019. The Academy wish to create an Autistic Specialist Resource Base from 1st September 2023 to cater for 24 children in EYFS/KS1 and KS2 groups.
- Highfield Primary will undergo small scale internal reconfiguration including improving sensory rooms/areas and development of the outside areas to support the curriculum development and ensure safety.
- Recent Pupil Place Planning engagement has confirmed that this planned project forms a key element of the LA's plan to meet community needs.
- Birmingham City Council's SEND & inclusion strategy includes a commitment to establish more resource provision in mainstream settings providing a bridge between mainstream and specialist provision. There is currently a shortage of primary ASD resource provision in the local area.
- The board discussed capacity and transparency.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an Autistic Specialist Resource Base for 20 children at Sutton Park Primary, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Sutton Park Primary, Birmingham has not received an Ofsted inspection since joining the trust. The previous school (Banners Gate Primary School) was inspected in June 2018 and judged Inadequate. The Academy wish to create an Autistic Specialist Resource Base from 1st September 2023 to cater for 20 children in EYFS/KS1 and KS2 groups.
- Sutton Park Primary will undergo small scale internal reconfiguration including improving building alterations and development of the outside areas to support the curriculum development and ensure safety.
- Recent Pupil Place Planning engagement has confirmed that this planned project forms a key element of the LA's plan to meet community needs.
- Birmingham City Council's SEND & inclusion strategy includes a commitment to establish more resource provision in mainstream settings providing a bridge between mainstream and specialist provision. There is currently a shortage of primary ASD resource provision in the local area.
- The board discussed capacity and transparency.

- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss a 12 place Autistic Specialist Resource Base at Prince Albert Junior and Infant School, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Prince Albert Junior and Infant School, Birmingham is an Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' from February 2015. The Academy wish to create a 12 place Autistic Specialist Resource Base from 1st September 2023 to cater for children in EYFS/KS1 and KS2 groups.
- Prince Albert Primary will undergo small scale internal reconfiguration including improving sensory rooms/areas and development of the outside areas to support the curriculum development and ensure safety.
- Recent Pupil Place Planning engagement has confirmed that this planned project forms a key element of the LA's plan to meet community needs.
- Birmingham City Council's SEND & inclusion strategy includes a commitment to establish more resource provision in mainstream settings providing a bridge between mainstream and specialist provision. There is currently a shortage of primary ASD resource provision in the local area.
- The board discussed capacity and transparency.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an Autistic Specialist Resource Base for 56 children at Prince Albert High School, Birmingham.

AB discussion:

- Prince Albert High School, Birmingham is a Free School that opened in 2021 and has not received an Ofsted Inspection. The Academy wish to create an Autistic Specialist Resource Base from 1st September 2023 to cater for 56 children.
- Prince Albert High will undergo small scale internal reconfiguration including sensory rooms/areas and development of the outside areas to support the curriculum development and ensure safety.

- Birmingham City Council's SEND & inclusion strategy includes a commitment to establish more resource provision in mainstream settings providing a bridge between mainstream and specialist provision. There is currently a shortage of primary ASD resource provision in the local area.
- The board discussed capacity and transparency.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an expansion of the Special Resource Provision at Whittle Academy, Coventry.

AB discussion:

- Whittle Academy, Coventry is an Ofsted rated 'Good' from June 2018. The Academy wish to establish an SEN unit for up to 10 pupils. The provision will support pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD), speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).
- Whittle Academy and Inspire Education Trust approached Coventry City Council (CCC) to help initiate the LA's sufficiency strategy to create a series of Extended Resource Provisions (ERP) across the city.
- The project forms a key part of the LA's plans to meet the needs of the local SEND population.
- The board discussed the schools' approach to SEND.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss a new Special Resource Provision at Courthouse Green Primary School, Coventry.

AB discussion:

- Courthouse Green Primary School, Coventry is an Ofsted rated 'Good with potential for Outstanding' from February 2020. The Academy wish to establish a SEN unit for up to 10 pupils with complex cognition and learning needs.
- There is increasing demand for specialist placements across Coventry LA. Courthouse Green already has a purpose built provision in which to accommodate these additional 10 pupils.

- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Guy Shears was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an expansion of the Special Resource Provision at Alderman's Green Primary School, Coventry.

AB discussion:

- Alderman's Green Primary School has not received an Ofsted inspection since converting to an academy on 1 April 2021. Prior to conversion, the school was judged RI in December 2018. The Academy wish to expand the Enhanced Resource Provision to create 6 additional places, 26 places in total.
- There is increasing demand for specialist placements across Coventry LA. Courthouse Green already has a purpose built provision in which to accommodate these additional 6 pupils.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Guy Shears was not present and did not receive the papers for this project.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss an expansion of the Special Resource Provision at Rokeby Primary School, Warwickshire.

AB discussion:

- Rokeby Primary School, Warwickshire, wish to increase the academy's Special Resource Provision (SRP) from 7 places to 10 at the request of the Local Authority.
- The LA identified that Rokeby Primary School was demonstrating strong practise in Special Educational Needs, which led to them opening a resource provision for children with Speech, Communication and Language needs.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Project: To discuss a physical expansion at Regency High School, Worcester.

AB discussion:

- Regency High School, Worcester, is an Ofsted rated 'Good' from 2015. The academy wishes to expand the premises of the special school.
- The Local Authority has requested that Regency High School increase its intake by 30 students in addition to the yearly cohort from September 2023.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss The Priors School SAT, Warwickshire, to transfer to The Warriner MAT, Oxfordshire.

AB discussion:

- The Priors School SAT, Warwickshire, is a Single Academy Trust that is on Church of England Voluntary Controlled (VC) articles. WMAT has several schools with a similar profile (small, rural) and The Priors feels that it will be well-supported.
- The Warriner MAT consists of 14 academies across Oxfordshire and South Northamptonshire.
- There is an established working relationship between The Priors and WMAT, with the school contributing to the further development of the trust's primary curriculum, benefitting the trust schools' pupils and staff.
- The board discussed the trustees and the geography.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the Trusts.

Project: To discuss United Endeavor Trust, Staffordshire, to transfer to Windsor Academy Trust, Dudley.

AB discussion:

- United Endeavor Trust, Staffordshire, decided to merge with a larger trust following publication of the SWP.
- Windsor Academy Trust consists of 9 academies across Dudley, Staffordshire and Walsall.
- WAT's culture and values align very closely with UET's and the transfer of UET to WAT meets WAT's seven principles of growth.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the Trusts.

Free School Presumption

Project: To discuss and consider the sponsor for the new Free School in Staffordshire.

AB discussion:

- Staffordshire County Council has identified the need to establish a new primary free school, with early years provision, at the Dunstall Farm housing development site in Tamworth. The school will open in September 2024.
- It is proposed to open a 1 FE (210-place) primary free school at the Dunstall Farm development site in Tamworth by the earliest date of September 2024. The school will be designed to enable further expansion by 0.5FE in the future if required.
- Staffordshire County Council are supportive of ATLP as the strongest bidder, Regions Group and ESFA colleagues support the choice of ATLP for this project.
- The board discussed secondary performance.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the LA and Trust.

Project: To discuss and consider the sponsor for the new Free School in Staffordshire.

AB discussion:

- Staffordshire County Council has identified the need to establish a new primary free school with early years provision at the former Tamworth Golf Course site. This new free school is required to mitigate the impact of the Tamworth Golf Course housing development of 1100 dwellings. The school will open in September 2024.
- It is proposed to open a 1 FE (210-place) primary free school. The school will be designed to enable further expansion by 1FE in the future.
- Staffordshire County Council are supportive of Fierté Multi-Academy Trust as the strongest bidder, Regions Group and ESFA colleagues support the choice of FMAT for this project.
- The board supported the recommendation.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the LA and Trust.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Madeley School.

Decision type: Significant Change – To physically expand the school by 0.5FE.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: To inform the school of the decision.

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.

Project: To discuss issuing an Academy Order to Akaal Primary School, Derby, to convert and become an academy and join Nishkam School Trust, Birmingham.

Type of decision: Converter Academy Order.

Reason for why it was taken off agenda: Following new DfE guidance, as the school is based in the East Midlands region this project only needed to be taken to the East Midlands Advisory Board.

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