



Notes of Meeting: East Midlands Advisory Board.

08 Nov 2023.

Attendance data is published annually on the GOV.UK website.

Advisory Board 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

- Kate Copley.

Advisory Board (AB) members

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

Guests

- Elizabeth Horne CBE (Advisory Board member, North of England Region).

Apologies

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

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 Forest Town Primary School, Nottinghamshire, converting to join Nova Education Trust.

AB discussion:

Forest Town Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Nova Education Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. The school was inspected by Ofsted in October 2022 and received a requires improvement judgement.

In January 2023, a local authority Interim Executive Board was established to improve the governance of the school and lead the decision-making about joining a strong academy trust. After extensive deliberation and feedback from staff, Nova Education Trust emerged as the preferred trust.

Forest Town Primary School is one of the feeder primary schools for The Garibaldi School and is also close to a number of Nova Education Trust's other primary schools. This opens opportunities for the school to work in partnership as part of the trust. Nova Education Trust also has a good track record of supporting and improving schools.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Chris Wheatley. Chris was not present for this part of the meeting, nor was he in receipt of associated project papers.

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

Project: To discuss Shirland Primary School, **Derbyshire**, converting to join Christopher Nieper Education Trust.

AB discussion: Shirland Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Christopher Nieper Education Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. The most recent Ofsted inspection in 2022 judged the school to be good.

Shirland Primary School is based in Alferton and feeds into David Nieper Academy, which is the lead school in Christopher Nieper Education Trust. The school has a well-established relationship with the trust and, in joining the trust there are further opportunities to enable

smoother transitions and continuation of education provision between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Christopher Nieper 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 Palterton Primary School, Derbyshire, converting to join Redhill Academy Trust.

AB discussion: Palterton Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Redhill Academy Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. The most recent Ofsted inspection in 2022 judged the school to be good.

Redhill Academy Trust has 16 academies across Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire (6 primary and 10 secondaries). Palterton Primary School wish to benefit from a wider pool of expertise and support offered by joining the Redhill Academy Trust. In addition, Scarcliffe Primary School, already part of the trust, is 1.3 miles away from Palterton Primary School and both schools feed into The Bolsover School. Palterton Primary School has been an associate member of Redhill since June 2020.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at Redhill 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, trust, and Derbyshire County Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management advisor to Redhill Academy Trust was recommended.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss and agree a sponsor match for Derrymount School, Nottinghamshire.

AB discussion: Derrymount School, is a community special school in the district of Gedling with an age range of 3-19 and it is split across 2 sites. Derrymount School was inspected by Ofsted in May 2023 and judged as inadequate (serious weaknesses), with safeguarding arrangements not being effective. An academy order was issued on 7 July 2023.

The department identified several strong trusts with potential to support the school. After working with Nottinghamshire County Council to understand the specific needs of the school and the local context, Nexus Multi Academy Trust was proposed as a suitable trust option for the school.

Nexus Multi Academy Trust has a small hub of 2 special schools in Nottinghamshire (Fountaindale School and The Beech Academy) and a growth strategy which includes consolidating existing hubs to drive school improvement in that geographical area. In total, the trust has 15 schools (14 special and 1 primary) spread across Doncaster, Nottinghamshire, Rotherham, and Sheffield.

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

RD decision: Approve – Nexus Multi Academy Trust.

Conflicts: Paul West, Julian Scholefield and Paul Heery. Paul, Julian 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 Nottinghamshire County Council of the decision.

Project: To discuss The Forge Trust as the sponsor match for Maun Infant and Nursery School, Nottinghamshire.

AB discussion:

Maun Infant and Nursery School is a local authority-maintained school which has been judged as requires improvement in 2 consecutive Ofsted inspections (June 2018 and June 2022). The school is therefore in scope for intervention by the department under The Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022.

On 7 March 2023, the school was issued with an Academy Order.

The board requested additional information on this proposal before a decision can be taken by the Regional Director.

RD decision: Defer.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the school, and Nottinghamshire County Council of the decision.

Project: To discuss and agree a sponsor match for The Fourfields Church of England Primary School, Sutterton, Lincolnshire.

AB discussion:

The Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton is a voluntary controlled school located in the village of Sutterton, Lincolnshire. The school was inspected by Ofsted in July 2022

and found to be requires improvement. As the school also received a requires improvement judgement in September 2018, the school is in scope for intervention by the department under The Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022. An academy order was issued to the school on 7 June 2023.

An information gathering exercise was conducted by the department to seek a sponsor for The Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton. Two trusts expressed an interest in sponsoring Fourfields school. It was recommended that Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust was the best fit.

Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust has a strong track-record of primary school improvement, and the trust has capacity for growth.

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

RD decision: Approve – Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust.

Conflicts: None.

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

Free School Presumption – Sponsor Approval

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

Project: To discuss a sponsor match for Gateford Park presumption primary school, Nottinghamshire.

AB discussion: Nottinghamshire County Council has identified a need for, and seeks to establish, this new, 210-place presumption primary free school to serve the new housing development at Gateford Park, Worksop. The new school will have an age-range from reception to year 6 and is planned to open in September 2024. There will also be a 26-place nursery in the school. The creation of this 210-place primary school will meet the projected demand for primary phase places in the Gateford - Shireoaks primary planning area.

Nottinghamshire County Council issued their invitation to submit sponsor proposals on 22 May 2023 with a response deadline of Monday 17 July 2023. From the 5 trusts that responded, 3 were invited to the interview stage. Following interviews on 18 September 2023, the local authority recommended the Secretary of State approves Flying High Trust as their preferred trust to run the new primary free school at Gateford.

Flying High Trust presented a clear vision and evidenced the capacity to deliver a new free school within the timeframe, and to create the best possible learning environment. The department supports this proposal as Flying High Trust has a good track-record of supporting and improving schools.

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 – Flying High Trust.

Conflicts: Sian Hampton and Chris Wheatley. Sian and Chris 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 Nottinghamshire County Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management advisor to Flying High Trust was recommended.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Bradwell Junior School.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Marston Montgomery Primary School.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Scafford Church of England Primary School.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Long Lane Church of England Primary School.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Kingsway Primary School.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Sir Edmund Hillary Academy.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss the transfer of Ash Field Academy (single-academy trust), Leicester, to Discovery Schools Academies Trust (multi-academy trust).

AB discussion:

Ash Field Academy seeks to voluntarily transfer and join Discovery Schools Academies Trust. Ash Field Academy's governing body has passed a resolution to do this. The school was judged outstanding in a full inspection in 2013 and was judged to continue to be outstanding in a short inspection in 2017.

Ash Field Academy has worked closely with Discovery Schools Academies Trust and wants to formalise this partnership.

Discovery Schools Academies Trust currently has 15 schools across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. This includes 13 mainstream primary schools and 2 special schools in Leicester. All schools in the trust are either good or outstanding and it has a track-record of providing school improvement support.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: Chris Wheatley. Chris was not present for this part of the meeting, nor was he in receipt of associated project papers.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the trusts and Leicester City Council of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management advisor to Discovery Schools Academies Trust was recommended.

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