



Notes of Meeting: South West

20 November 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

- Hannah Woodhouse

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Mark Ducker
- Jennifer Blunden
- Margaret Simmons-Bird
- Adele Haysom
- Steve Savory
- Jackie Fieldwick
- Stuart Ingram

Guests

- None

Apologies

- Rachel Howie

DfE senior civil servants

- Lucy Livings
- Matthew Stevenson

Representations received

- None

General Discussion Points

Regional Director Update

- 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.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: To discuss the conversion of the following schools to form a new trust, The Mosaic Partnership:

- Gillingstool Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Raysfield Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- The Ridge Junior School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Broadway Infant School, **South Gloucestershire**
- St Michael's Church of England Primary School, Winterbourne, **South Gloucestershire**
- St Stephen's Church of England Junior School, Soundwell, **South Gloucestershire**
- The Park Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Parkwall Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Redfield Edge Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Barrs Court Primary School, **South Gloucestershire**
- Neston Primary School, **Wiltshire**
- Box Church of England Primary School, **Wiltshire**

Points raised in Discussion:

Strategy:

- The Mosaic Partnership Trust is a Multi Academy Trust that will be based in South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. It will be a primary school trust initially responsible for 12 schools and accountable for over 3200 children between the ages of 4-11.
- South Gloucestershire is one of the least academised local authorities, with the primary sector significantly less academised. The establishment of a further primary focussed MAT would provide capacity for schools in both South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire LA areas.
- This group of schools in South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire want to work together in collaboration with an emphasis on providing opportunities for all, establishing a new MAT which is child and people centered.
- The Partnership is defined by its core values of integrity, innovation, and partnership which it believes will help the future of their children, families, communities, and staff.

Governance:

- The composition of the trustees and the board structure was discussed. The Regions Group team will review this with the trust.

School Improvement (SI):

- The proposed SI model for the trust was questioned and the need to develop this further. This will be discussed with the trust and the Regions Group team.

Finance:

- The requirement for a strong finance lead as the trust is being established was raised by AB members. The recruitment of a CFO will be subject to external advert to maximise access to a high quality field.

RD decision: Approve with conditions:

- The trust to consider adding more diverse experience to its board, including private sector backgrounds.
- The trust to provide the job description for the CFO role, confirm the details and CV of the individual to be appointed ahead of the trust's formation.
- The trust to submit a revised and more detailed school improvement model.
- CEO to have a mentor to provide positive and constructive support, working with both CEO and Chair in the first 12 months.
- The trust to review the proposed reserves policy and consider its flexibility to provide a central offer to schools within 3 years.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss the conversion of the following two schools joining The Priory Learning Trust:

- Burnham-On-Sea Community Infant School, **Somerset**
- St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School, **Somerset**

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

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: Adele Haysom has completed a review of governance for Burnham-On-Sea Community Infant School hence did not receive the papers and was not present for the discussion.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss the following three academies from Waycroft Multi Academy Trust, Bristol transferring to Cabot Learning Federation:

- Waycroft Academy, **Bristol**
- Wicklea Academy, **Bristol**
- Woodlands Academy, **Bristol**

Project: To discuss Queen Margaret Primary School, **Gloucestershire** joining Cabot Learning Federation.

Points raised in Discussion: **all projects for Cabot Learning Federation (trust change and sponsored route) were discussed together.

Strategy:

- Waycroft Academy was judged RI (Requires Improvement) in November 2021 and Wicklea Academy was judged RI in September 2021. Woodlands Academy was judged to be Good in July 2022.
- The trust has been in discussion with Regions Group about joining with another trust. Following an external review of governance several actions for the Trust to address were identified, including the Trust merging into a larger trust with capacity and track record to bring about rapid improvement for the schools and a strong governance structure.
- The Waycroft MAT trustee board has voted for the schools to transfer to Cabot Learning Federation (CLF).
- Queen Margaret (QM) is a primary school in Tewkesbury with high levels of children eligible for FSM (free school meals) and children who are disadvantaged. It is a maintained school which has received two consecutive RI judgements from Ofsted. The school governing body set out their preference to join CLF. This school is part of the planned growth of a Tewkesbury hub in Gloucestershire for CLF.

Governance:

- The trustee and board structure was discussed. It was confirmed that the trustees of the CLF board have changed recently and that the Regions Group team are in contact with the trust to review and identify appropriate support to newly appointed trustees.

School Improvement (SI):

- CLF will discuss the SI needs at the Waycroft schools by working closely with the trust and its team. CLF is already providing school improvement support and the Waycroft schools have access to CLF networks.

Finance:

- No concerns. Good financial controls are in place.

Other:

- CLF has taken on a number of vulnerable schools recently. This is the last of the trust's planned growth in this academic year and the future focus will be on a period of consolidation. The Regions Group team will discuss growth plans with the trust.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

Project: To discuss the following five academies from North Cornwall Learning Trust, Cornwall transferring to Westcountry Schools Trust:

- Camelford Community Primary School, **Cornwall**
- St Teath Community Primary School, **Cornwall**
- Otterham Community Primary School, **Cornwall**
- St Breward Community Primary School, **Cornwall**
- Sir James Smith's School, **Cornwall**

Points raised in Discussion:

Strategy:

- North Cornwall Learning Trust (NCLT) consists of 4 primary schools and 1 secondary school with the four rural primary schools feeding into the single secondary school.
- Three of the trust's academies are judged Good, one is Outstanding and one Requires Improvement.
- Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST) is an established MAT which comprises 26 schools; 19 primary schools and 7 secondary schools. These schools are within close proximity across Plymouth, Devon and South East Cornwall.
- WeST has been supporting NCLT since April 2023 and the two trusts have evidenced their ability to work together towards joint objectives.
- The merger would see WeST form a Cornwall Hub consisting of two secondary schools and 4 primary schools.
- The trust's vision and ethos is for every child to be in a great school and this aligns well with NCLT.

Governance:

- The diversity of the trust board and educational expertise was discussed. The Regions Group team will review with the trust and suggest an external review of governance following the transfer of the NCLT schools.

School Improvement (SI):

- WeST has a good track record for improving schools.
- The trust operates with a central and a well-resourced SI team overseen by the Deputy CEO.
- The Cornwall Hub model and trust wide SI was discussed.

Finance:

- The Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) are working with the trust and the option of a SRMA (School Resource Management Adviser) will be discussed.

Other:

- The future growth strategy of the trust was discussed, this will be reviewed with the trust and the Regions Group team.

RD decision: Approve with conditions.

- Trust undertakes an external review of governance following the transfer of the NCLT schools.
- Strengthen educational expertise on the trust board.

Conflicts: Jennifer Blunden is a director of Westcountry Schools Trust hence was not present for the discussion.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

Project: To discuss Brookside Community Primary School (SAT), Somerset transferring to Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust (BTCT).

Points raised in Discussion:**Strategy:**

- Brookside is a large, consistently Good 470-place primary Academy including a 50-place Specialist Provision unit and a Nursery.
- The leadership team of Brookside is highly experienced, the Headteacher will add strong leadership and SEN expertise to the overall capacity of a trust.
- The board voted to join BTCT as the ethos and values of Brookside align with those of the trust, and the relationship is considered to be mutually beneficial.
- BTCT and Brookside have already established a working relationship and Brookside have transferred some financial and school improvement services to BTCT.

Governance:

- The structure of the Trust Board and the need to strengthen the education expertise was discussed. The Regions Group team will review with the trust and recommend an External Review of Governance.

School Improvement (SI):

- BTCT's aim is that every child will be supported and challenged to be highly successful and well prepared.
- The SI knowledge and capacity that Brookside and the Headteacher will bring to BTCT was positively acknowledged.
- Two of BTCT academies have recently been judged as RI (West Somerset College, Bridgwater College Academy), therefore the trust's capacity will need to focus on addressing the challenges in these schools.
- The strength of the trust's performance and SI model was discussed.

Finance:

- The financial resilience of the trust was referenced. The ESFA and the Regions Group team will review with the trust and recommend an SRMA (School Resource Management Advisor).

RD decision: Approve with conditions.

- The trust sets out a strong school improvement model identifying their leadership capacity for both primary and secondary phases.
- An external review of governance is commissioned.
- The trust enters a formal partnership with a high performing, strong trust approved by Regions Group, with the purpose of strengthening the trust's school improvement model.
- The trust accepts the offer of an SRMA.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss Queen Margaret Primary School, Gloucestershire transferring to Cabot Learning Federation.

Points raised in Discussion: **

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the schools and trust and Diocese (where relevant).

** This project was discussed together with the three academies from Waycroft Multi Academy Trust, **Bristol** transferring to Cabot Learning Federation

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: Alderbury and West Grimstead Church of England Primary School, **Wiltshire** (Pickwick Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Broad Chalke CofE Primary School, **Wiltshire** (Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Castle Cary Community Primary School, **Somerset** (The Academies for Character and Excellence)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Dinton CofE Primary School, **Wiltshire** (Acorn Education Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Heathfield Community School, **Somerset** (Cabot Learning federation)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Longford CofE (VC) Primary School, **Wiltshire** (Pickwick Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lyme Regis, **Dorset** (Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Porton, **Wiltshire** (Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School, **Somerset** (The Oak Partnership Trust)

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

Opening date 1 December 2023.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary and Nursery School, **Devon** (The Academies for Character and Excellence)

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

Opening date 1 December 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 discuss a significant change for Landkey Newlyn Community Primary Academy, **Devon** (Tarka Learning Partnership) to change the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to incorporate nursery provision.

Decision type: Significant Change.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Project: To discuss a significant change for ACE Schools Plymouth, **Plymouth** (Transforming Futures Multi Academy Trust Limited) to relocate the existing satellite provision and increase capacity from 10 - 15 places.

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.

Project: To discuss Dorset Studio School (SAT), **Dorset** transferring to Wessex Multi Academy Trust.

Type of decision: Significant change

Reason for why it was taken off agenda: Necessary papers were not ready.