



Notes of Meeting: East Midlands Advisory Board

21 February 2024.

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).
- Kate Copley (Regional Director, East Midlands Regions Group).

Advisory Board (AB) members

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

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 Kinoulton Primary School, Nottinghamshire, converting to join Equals Trust.

AB discussion:

Kinoulton Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Equals Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Ofsted last inspected the school in September 2021 leading to a good judgment.

Kinoulton Primary School's governing body identified Equals Trust as the trust that best matched their ambitions and values and could support the school.

This proposal is aligned with the department's published Trust Development Statement for the area, which is to: "raise education standards by both growing high quality trusts already operating in the area and across the East Midlands region, and creating 2 or 3 new, high-quality primary trusts". The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the Commissioning High Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

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 Heery, CEO of The White Hills Park Trust. Paul was conflicted for published agenda item 1B (Wadsworth Fields Primary School discussion), which was discussed alongside this project. Paul was not present for this part of the discussion, nor was he in receipt of associated papers.

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

Project: To discuss Wadsworth Fields Primary School, Nottinghamshire, converting to join Equals Trust.

AB discussion:

Wadsworth Fields Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Equals Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Ofsted last inspected the school (short inspection) in February 2018, and it continues to be a good.

Wadsworth Fields Primary School governors' view was that, by joining Equals Trust, the school will continue to flourish and benefit from greater collaboration and joint working with other primary schools.

This proposal is aligned with the department's published Trust Development Statement for the area, which is to: "raise education standards by both growing high quality trusts already operating in the area and across the East Midlands region and creating 2 or 3 new, high-quality primary trusts". The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the Commissioning High-Quality Trusts Framework were considered against the school's strategic needs.

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 Heery – CEO of The White Hills Park Trust. The White Hills Park Trust gave a presentation to a number of schools in 2022, including Wadsworth Fields Primary School. Paul was not present for this part of the discussion, nor was he in receipt of associated papers.

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

Project: To discuss Wilby Church of England Primary School, North Northamptonshire, converting to join Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.

AB discussion:

Wilby Church of England Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Peterborough Diocese Education Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. The school was judged requires improvement by Ofsted in September 2023.

Wilby Church of England Primary School has been receiving support from Peterborough Diocese Education Trust since June 2023, following the school's Ofsted judgement.

The Diocese of Peterborough support Peterborough Diocese Education Trust as the preferred trust for this school.

This proposal is aligned with the department's published Trust Development Statement for the area, which is to: "raise education standards by both growing high quality trusts already

operating in the area and across the East Midlands region and creating 2 or 3 new, high-quality primary trusts". The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the Commissioning High-Quality Trusts Framework were considered against the school's strategic needs.

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

The supportive deployment of a school resource management advisor was recommended.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Stanley Common Church of England Primary School.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 March 2024.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: E-ACT The Grange School.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 March 2024.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: The Richmond Primary Academy.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 March 2024.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: No action required.

Project: Wrangle Primary Academy.

AB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 1 March 2024.

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 an increase in capacity at Cowley Academy, Lincolnshire, to increase capacity from 600 to 650 places.

AB discussion:

Lincolnshire County Council and South Lincolnshire Academies Trust are proposing an expansion of the physical capacity of Cowley Academy, via the construction of one new classroom and the modification of the internal layout of a pre-existing block, to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers in the coming years.

The trust intends to increase the published admission number (PAN) from the current 120 Year 7 intake to 130. An over offer of 10 places would occur in September 2024 with a permanent increase in PAN from September 2025. This would increase the pupil numbers at the academy from its current number of 600 to 650 from 2028.

There is a basic need for additional places at the school due to growth in local housing in the surrounding areas. Lincolnshire County Council has initiated this request to expand capacity. The construction of this will be led by the local authority and completed for the start of the 2025-26 academic year.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at South Lincolnshire Academies 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 Lincolnshire County Council of the decision.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss the transfer of Montsaye Academy (Pathfinder Schools), North Northamptonshire, to United Learning Trust.

AB discussion:

Montsaye Academy converted as an academy in August 2011. Following an Ofsted inspection in November 2023 where the school was judged to be inadequate across all categories, the trust's board passed a resolution for the school to be transferred to another trust.

United Learning Trust is a national sponsor, operating across 8 regions and has 3 secondary schools in the local area.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to potential sponsor trusts as outlined in the Commissioning High-Quality Trusts framework were considered against the school's strategic needs. Based on this analysis, United Learning Trust is the recommended sponsor.

United Learning Trust has been providing support to the school since November 2023 and has already begun to address areas of improvement raised in the Ofsted report.

The financial health of the school, the strength of financial management and governance in place at United Learning 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, trusts, and North Northamptonshire Council of the decision.

Project: To discuss the transfer of Gedney Church End Primary Academy (Keystone Academy Trust), Lincolnshire, to Voyage Education Partnership.

AB discussion:

Gedney Church End Primary Academy was inspected by Ofsted in March 2023 and judged inadequate, requiring special measures. Keystone Academy Trust agreed to work with the department to transfer the school into a new trust to lead the school improvements required.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to potential sponsor trusts as outlined in the Commissioning High-Quality Trusts framework were considered against the school's strategic needs. Based on this analysis, Voyage Education Partnership is the recommended sponsor.

Voyage Education Partnership has confirmed it is willing to bring the school into their trust and has the capacity to drive the necessary improvement. Moving Gedney Church End

Primary Academy into this trust would enable a cluster to be formed with the two closest Voyage Education Partnership schools.

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

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery officer to inform the trusts of the decision. The supportive deployment of a school resource management advisor was recommended.

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