



Notes of Meeting: North West Advisory Board

6th February 2024

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

- Vicky Beer (RD)

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Karen Burns
- George Beveridge
- Tania Lewyckyj
- Annette Williams
- Nic Brindle

Apologies

- Helen O'Neill
- Anita Ghidotti-Gibson

DfE senior civil servants

- Jon Howlin, Deputy Director, North West Regions Group

Representations received

2 representations - Linacre Primary School

General Discussion Points

- The board were updated on progress with implementing trust development strategies for Church of England and Catholic schools.

AB member reflections

- None.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: To discuss and consider Lander Road Primary School, Liverpool, to convert and join Great Schools Trust

AB discussion:

- This project was discussed with the project for Linacre Primary School to convert and join the same trust, Great Schools Trust.
- The board reflected on the representations received and discussed the decision making process to come to the recommended trust option.
- The board discussed the trust's track record of school improvement and strategic growth plan.
- The board discussed how the trust's central team had grown to take on the cross-phase process, and the trust's plan to increase pupil numbers at Linacre Primary School.
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to offer a supportive School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to talk through the trust's financial plans.
- The board reflected that the schools were a good pairing for the trust.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Lydiate Learning Trust:

- **Knotty Ash Primary School, Liverpool**
- **The Grange Primary School, Sefton**

AB discussion:

- The board reflected on how the trust had been working with the schools for some time.
- The board discussed both schools' specialist provision and the trust's commitment and expertise in supporting this.

RD decision: Approve with one condition.

1. Trust to review governance and board membership, ensured a balanced skill set including primary expertise.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Cranmer Education Trust:

- **St Matthew's CofE Primary, Oldham**
- **The Radclyffe School, Oldham**

AB discussion:

- The board reflected on the trust's track record and discussed the trust's capacity. They were informed that the trust had provided assurance and evidenced its ability to support another secondary school.
- The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) informed the board that the trust has already accepted a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment and is working closely with the ESFA team.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the Hazel Grove Primary School, Stockport to convert and join The Laurus Trust

AB discussion:

- The board raised no questions in relation to this project.
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to offer a supportive School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) to talk through the trust's financial plans.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the Washacre Primary School, Bolton to convert and join The Quill C of E Trust

AB discussion:

- The board discussed the trust's plans to address low pupil numbers, including the addition of a nursery and wrap around care, and the trust's prior expertise is delivering this.
- The board reflected that the trust board would benefit from recruiting trustees who are not involved in their schools, to bring an independent voice.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust

- **St John Vianney's Catholic Primary School, Blackpool**
- **Our Lady of The Assumption Catholic primary School, Blackpool**

AB discussion:

- The board raised no questions in relation to this project.
- The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) informed the board that the trust has proactively asked for and are receiving a School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) deployment in March 2024.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the following schools to convert and join Mater Christi MAT:

- **Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Lancashire**
- **St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Wigton, Cumberland**
- **St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Penrith, Westmorland and Furness**

AB discussion:

- The board were informed that the trust has worked closely with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for its financial planning.
- The board reflected on the diocesan strategy and primary capacity. They were informed that the trust is building its central team and core offer.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the Linacre Primary School, Sefton, to be sponsored by the Great Schools Trust

AB discussion:

- Discussed alongside Lander Road Primary School.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider the proposal of the Cadishead Primary School, Salford to convert and join the United Learning Trust

AB discussion:

- The board reflected on other schools within the trust and the need for the trust to continue to demonstrate impact.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust and Local Authority of decision.

Project: To discuss and consider Accrington Benjamin Hargreaves Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, to be sponsored by The Learning Together Trust

AB discussion:

- The board reflected on the trust's track record.
- The board discussed the need for more granularity in the trust's School Improvement plan for the school.
- The board reflected on the trust's plans to manage the distance between Accrington Benjamin Hargreaves and the other The Learning Together Trust's schools.
- The board were informed that the school has worked closely with the LA and trust, and the school has shown good signs of progress.

RD decision: Approve with one condition

1. Trust to provide further details on the school improvement plan for the school.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform Trust, Local Authority and Diocese of decision.

Decisions taken between AB meetings:

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

Project: Crosshill Special School, Blackburn with Darwen, to increase capacity and add KS1 and KS2 age range

Decision type: Significant change

RD decision: Approve with two conditions

2. The trust work with the local authority to secure funding for the additional places.
3. The trust work with the local authority to secure suitable classroom space.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform trust and diocese of decision.

Project: St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Halton, to convert and join Chester Diocesan Academies Trust

Decision type: Converter Academy Order

The project was discussed at the October meeting where the board raised no queries. The RD proposed making a decision between AB meetings once the trust was ready to progress.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: Delivery Officer to inform trust of decision.

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