



## Notes of meeting: London Advisory Board

21 March 2024

### Attendance

AB members who sent their apologies for the meeting but sent in their comments on agenda items, are listed under the apologies section. These members' views are reflected in the discussions below unless the AB member(s) declared a conflict of interest.

### Regional Director (RD) chair

- Claire Burton

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Gill Bal
- Lee Mason-Ellis
- Rama Venchard
- Susan Douglas
- Emma Bradshaw
- Penny Barratt
- Cassie Buchanan

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Vanessa Ogden.

### DfE senior civil servants

- Alan Parnum
- Anna Barker

## General Discussion Points

- None

## Sponsored Route:

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

### **Project: To discuss a proposal for Byron Court Primary School, Brent, to join The Harris Federation**

#### **Representations received:**

- 118 representations received regarding the item 'To discuss a proposal for Byron Court Primary School, Brent, to join The Harris Federation', which is a Sponsored Route project.

A summary of these representations was shared in advance of the meeting with all attendees and considered alongside the corresponding item.

**AB discussion:** Byron Court Primary School (BCPS) is located in Wembley, within the constituency of north Brent, BCPS is a community school catering for 4–11-year-olds with 872 pupils on roll.

The school was judged inadequate by Ofsted in all areas following a section 5 inspection in November 2023; having previously been judged outstanding in March 2012. It was noted that the governing body of BCPS had informed the Regional Director on 20 March 2024, that an active complaint had been submitted to Ofsted regarding the published inspection report for BCPS. The Regional Director acknowledged the representations received and the views expressed regarding BCPS joining Harris Federation and the school becoming an academy.

AB noted the strength of feeling in the local community but also the need for sustained improvement at the school. AB discussed the need for community engagement and an inclusive approach. AB discussed the Commissioning High Quality Trusts Guidance and its application to sponsor decisions.

The RD noted the concerns raised in the representations but was confident that Harris Federation had the capacity to very quickly provide the support that the school needed to improve and provide a high quality education for all pupils at the school.

The Harris Federation was approved as the sponsor for BCPS due to its very recent strong track record for tackling underperformance and its capacity to provide targeted support aimed at improving the quality of education to enable the school to move out of special measures.

**RD decision:** Approve subject to the outcome of the active complaint lodged with Ofsted.

**Conflicts:** Gill Bal, CEO of Wembley Multi-Academy Trust until January 2023, was not present for this item due to previous professional connection.

**Further actions required:** Formal notification to be issued to the school, Harris Federation and Brent local authority of the decision.

## Significant Change

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

### **Project: To discuss the addition of a SEND base at Cirrus Primary Trust, Sutton**

#### **Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**AB discussion:** Cirrus Primary Academy Trust (CPAT) was formed in 2015 and comprises of five successful primary schools located in the London borough of Sutton.

The trust is requesting to open a 16 place SEN satellite site which will be an expansion of the existing Avenue Primary Academy SEN unit. As the current base is already significantly over subscribed, the trust has identified accommodation on another trust school site, Wallington Primary Academy. The Local Authority have agreed to fully fund the project as it will increase the capacity of the borough in meeting the growing need for ASD places.

AB discussed SEND provision in Sutton.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Inform the trust and local authority of the decision.

## Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

### **Project: To discuss the merger of Partnership Learning with QED Academy Trust**

#### **Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**AB discussion:** QED is a MAT of four schools in Hillingdon. Partnership Learning (PL) has 13 schools. If the proposal is agreed, QED will cease to exist and will merge with PL. Hillingdon LA is supportive of the merger. Strong primary school improvement experience at PL: 5 primary schools improved from RI to Good.

AB discussed risks, including trust finances and capacity, and looked at mitigations proposed by PL.

AB discussed PL's secondary school improvement strategy.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** Susan Douglas, previously headteacher at Coteford Junior School (part of QED), was not present for this item due to previous professional connection.

**Further actions required:** Inform the trusts and local authority of the decision. Strategic conversation with PL to include developing their secondary school improvement strategy.

### **Project: To discuss Hurstmere School, Bexley, joining The Howard Academy Trust, Medway (transfer of SAT to MAT)**

#### **Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**AB discussion:** Hurstmere School is a single-sex boys' secondary school that was inspected by Ofsted on 28/09/2022 and rated Requires Improvement (RI) in all areas. The school was previously inspected on 18/09/2018 and rated RI in all areas.

After due-diligence, the school feel Howard Academy is a good match.

AB discussed risks, including financial deficit at school.

The LA is also supportive of the project.

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Inform the school, trust, and local authority of the decision.

## Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

### **Project: Holy Innocents' Catholic Primary School (Single-academy trust), Bromley - Lowering age to 2-11years.**

**Decision type:** Significant change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Inform the trust and local authority of the decision.

### **Project: To discuss the addition of ARP/SEN units to:**

- Brimsdown Primary School, Enfield
- Fleecefield Primary School, Enfield
- Houndsfield Primary School, Enfield
- Raynham Primary School, Enfield
- Lavender Primary School, Enfield

**Decision type:** Significant change

**RD decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Inform schools, trusts and local authority of the decision.

## Cases referred to Regions Group Director General or ministers for a decision

List of decisions that have been made by the Director General of Regions Group and/or ministers.

### **Project: To discuss the conversion of Blessed Sacrament RC Primary School, Islington - to join The Cardinal Hume Academies Trust, Westminster.**

**Decision type:** Converter Academy Orders

**RD decision:** Declined by Minister

**Conflicts:** Penny Barratt, CEO of The Bridge MAT, was not present for this item and did not receive the papers.

**Further actions required:** Inform the trust and local authority of the decision.

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