



Notes of Meeting: London Advisory Board

14 December 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

- Claire Burton.

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Rama Venchard
- Vanessa Ogden
- Gill Bal
- Emma Bradshaw
- Cassie Buchanan
- Penny Barratt
- Lee Mason-Ellis

Guests

- None

Apologies

- Susan Douglas

DfE senior civil servants

- None

Representations received

- No representations were made for any items discussed at this meeting.

General Discussion Points

- None

Data

- Discussed KS2 and KS4 data for London.
- Discussed KS5 data.
- Discussed sharing good practice with LAs.
- AB are interested in looking at disadvantaged data and impact on schools.

AB member reflections

- AB reflected on how being part of a trust felt locally. Discussion included introducing isolated schools to good trusts to give them more capacity and expertise.
- Discussed student strikes and how trusts can build on good practices to minimise disruptions.
- Discussed falling rolls in LAs.
- Discussed staff recruitment challenges.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: To discuss the conversion of Eldon Primary School, Enfield - to join Children First Academy Trust, Enfield

AB discussion: Eldon Primary School is a 2 to 11 community primary school in Enfield. It has applied to convert to academy status and join Children First Academy Trust, a trust comprising of five primary schools in the same local authority. Eldon Primary School was rated good by Ofsted in Feb 2022.

AB members discussed rationale for school to join the trust including sharing good practice, financial sustainability and enhanced curriculum.

AB members discussed risks including falling school rolls and recruitment.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Project: To discuss the conversion of Dollis Primary School, Barnet - to join Bellevue Place Education Trust (BPET) MAT, Wandsworth

AB discussion: Dollis Primary School is a 2FE community school in Barnet with 454 pupils on roll. In 2019, Dollis Infant School and Dollis Junior School amalgamated to form Dollis Primary School. Dollis Primary was rated good in September 2023.

The school has applied to convert to academy status and join Bellevue Place Education Trust (BPET), a primary based MAT with 11 schools, all judged good or outstanding.

AB members discussed BPET's growth strategy and geographical spread of its schools.

AB members discussed risks including pupil rolls and trust finances.

Recommendation to deploy SRMA.

AB members discussed site survey carried out by BPET on the school building for Dollis Primary School.

AB members discussed the trust's school improvement strategy.

RD decision: Defer

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision. Discussion with trust regarding the strategic plan and school improvement model.

Project: To discuss the conversion of Columbia Primary School, Tower Hamlets - to join The Letta Trust, Tower Hamlets

AB discussion: Columbia Primary School (CPS), a 3 to 11 community primary school in Tower Hamlets, has applied to convert to academy status and join The LETTA Trust. CPS was rated good by Ofsted in July 2023.

The LETTA Trust is a small two school trust with strong educational performance which has capacity and is keen to grow. The addition of CPS will help the trust to be more sustainable in the longer term. Noted, that relationships across the two organisations are already strong and well established.

AB discussed risks including financial management.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision. Conversation with trust about their strategic plan.

Project: To discuss the conversion of St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Newham - to join Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust, Newham

AB discussion: St Michael's Catholic Primary School, a 3-11 voluntary aided school, has applied to convert and join Our Lady of Grace (OLOG) Catholic Academy Trust, which is an established trust in the Diocese of Brentwood, operating 6 primary academies in Newham - five rated Ofsted Good and one rated Ofsted Outstanding.

St Michael's already has a relationship with the trust and by joining the trust they will formalise their collaborative working and benefit from the shared services offered.

AB discussed risks including finances. Recommendation made for an SRMA deployment.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision.

Sponsored Route:

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

Project: To discuss the conversion of London Nautical School, Lambeth, to join City of London Academy Trust, City of London

AB discussion: London Nautical is a specialist maritime school in central London. The school had been considering options for academisation before Covid.

Recent Ofsted has judged the school to Require Improvement, this will be the school's second judgement of RI.

They have been working with the City of London Academy Trust for several years.

AB discussed exclusion rates.

AB supportive of the proposal.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision. To organise a strategic review with the trust.

Significant Change

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

Project: To discuss expansion of specialist resource unit at Kensington Aldridge Academy, Kensington and Chelsea - to allow 16-18 students to utilise the provision

AB discussion: Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA) is a 11-18 mixed secondary single academy which opened in September 2014. The academy is non-selective with students across the ability range with most students living close to KAA. The school's lead Sponsor is Aldridge Education, and the co-sponsor is the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

In August 2022, the Regional Director approved a significant change application from Kensington Aldridge Academy to expand the school by 8 classrooms and increase the PAN by 180.

The trust is now seeking approval for provision to be expanded at the school's Grandin Centre autism unit; 4 students in Y12 and 4 in Y13, which will extend provision at the centre to year 7 to year 13.

This will reduce the need for some KAA pupils to leave the school after the age of 16 and move to other schools and colleges in the LA or further afield as well as allowing students with EHCPs at other schools to potentially take post 16 qualifications at KAA.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school and LA of the decision.

Project: To discuss Alexandra Park School (part of New River Trust), Haringey - expanding its sixth form

AB discussion: Alexandra Park School (APS) is the only school in the New River Trust. It converted to become an academy in 2011. The school was judged Outstanding in its last two Ofsted judgements.

The school is proposing to expand the size of the existing sixth form from the published PAN of 275 to 385. This will help address the shortage of sixth form places across the borough.

The LA is supportive of this proposal as the Haringey School Places Planning Review 2022 and 2023 indicated that schools in its borough with sixth form places are either full or close to capacity.

Noted that the new building will be self-funded.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision. Conversation with the trust about their strategic plan.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to another trust.

Project: To discuss the transfer of The Jubilee Academy AP School (part of The Harrow Alternative Provision Academy Trust), Harrow - to join Tithe Academy Trust, Harrow

AB discussion: The Jubilee Academy (TJA), an alternative provision (AP) secondary free school and a single academy trust, has made a voluntary transfer application to join Tithe Academy Trust. TJA was judged Outstanding by Ofsted in April 2023.

Tithe Academy Trust has two academies, Rooks Heath Secondary and Earlsmead Primary. The CEO of Tithe, Dr Reavley, led on establishing TJA free school and has also been the Executive Headteacher at TJA since 2014.

If approval is given to TJA to join Tithe Academy Trust, the trustees of TJA will become the Local Governing Body within the Tithe governance structure.

AB members discussed places available at the trust.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision. Discussion with trust about DfE best practice model for Governance.

Project: To discuss the transfer of Thomson House School (part of STAMP Education Trust), Richmond upon Thames – to join Wandle Learning Trust, Wandsworth

AB discussion: This proposal is for Thomson House School (THS), a 2FE primary free school based in Richmond upon Thames, to voluntarily join Wandle Learning Trust (WLT).

WLT is a mixed MAT of one secondary school, Chestnut Grove School, and three primary schools, Chesterton Primary School, Paxton Academy Sports and Science and Ravenstone Primary School. The trust currently operates in Wandsworth and Croydon. Trust schools have 'good' and 'outstanding' Ofsted judgements.

AB members noted that the project was low risk, however challenged the high level of reserves held by WLT. AB members supported the transfer being approved with the recommendation for a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) review at WLT next academic year.

RD decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision. To discuss trust's strategic plan including MAT growth.

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Stebon Primary School, Tower Hamlets, to change the age limit from 3-11 to 2-11

Decision type: Significant Change

RD decision: Approve

Further actions required: Inform the school, trust and LA of the decision.

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 Haberdashers' Borough Academy, Southwark - proposal to open a sixth form

Type of decision: n/a

Reason for why it was taken off agenda: The project was not discussed as not requiring consideration by advisory board.

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