



## Notes of meeting: East Midlands Advisory Board

16 October 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

- Carol Gray

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Sian Hampton
- Paul Heery
- Sarah Armitage MBE
- Paul West
- Julian Scholefield
- Mark Thomas
- Ashfaq Rahman

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Chris Wheatley OBE

### DfE senior civil servants

- Kelly Hughes, Deputy Director, East Midlands Region Group
- SFSO representative

## Representations received

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

## Leicester Region

### Converter academy orders

#### **Project: An application from Nether Hall School, Leicester, to convert and become an academy and join The Mead Educational Trust.**

##### **AB discussion:**

Nether Hall School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join The Mead Educational Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Nether Hall School is a special school, situated on the outskirts of Leicester city. The school has an age range of 4-19 and was rated Good in its 2022 Ofsted inspection.

Nether Hall School is co-located and shares their main school building with Orchard Mead Academy – a secondary school run by The Mead Educational Trust. The 2 schools have built a strong relationship. The Mead Educational Trust also has several nearby designated specialist provision (DSP) facilities in their existing schools: Orchard Mead Academy, Kestrel Mead Primary, Willowbrook Mead Primary Academy and Thurnby Mead Primary Academy. The staff at Nether Hall School have provided SEND focused outreach support to a number of The Mead Educational Trust primary schools and have contributed to school improvement in those schools.

The Mead Educational Trust currently has 13 academies (8 primary and 5 secondary) across Leicester and Leicestershire and has developed a central team dedicated to addressing the needs of disadvantaged children and those with SEND.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended.

#### **Project: An application from New College Leicester, Leicester, to convert and become an academy and join Nova Education Trust.**

##### **AB discussion:**

New College Leicester seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Nova Education Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. New College Leicester is a co-educational foundation secondary school and sixth form for pupils aged 11 to 18, located in the New Parks area of Leicester.

New College Leicester has considered becoming an academy and joining a multi-academy trust over the past 2 years and has decided now is the right time. The school explored

several trusts in the area before agreeing that Nova Education Trust was the right match for the school due to its 'working in partnership' model.

The school also undertook parent and staff consultations. Following the review of the outcomes of these consultations and studies, the board concluded that there are great benefits to being part of a multi-academy trust, particularly Nova Education Trust.

If approved, New College Leicester would be Nova Education Trust's first school in Leicester Local Authority.

Nova Education Trust has been collaborating with New College Leicester for 18 months and understands the support needed.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Sian Hampton and Ashfaq Rahman. Sian Hampton is CEO of Archway Learning Trust which has previously been in communication with New College Leicester. Ashfaq Rahman is the CEO of Nova Education Trust.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

## Derbyshire Region

### Converter academy orders

**Project: An application from Ridgeway Primary School, Derbyshire, to convert and become an academy and join Learners' Trust.**

**AB discussion:**

Ridgeway Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Learners' Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Ridgeway Primary School is a primary school in Derbyshire, situated on the outskirts of the city of Sheffield and rated Good in its last Ofsted inspection.

Learners' Trust are a family of 18 schools across 3 local authority areas, with a collection of 12 schools close to Ridgeway (within an 11 miles radius). Ridgeway Primary School has been working together with Learners' Trust for the past 2 years and have been impressed with the support they have received and now want to make this a formal partnership. The mutual benefits this arrangement will bring to the school and trust includes strengthening teaching, learning and networks.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

## **Project: An application from Mickley Village Primary and Nursery School, Derbyshire, to convert and become an academy and join Christopher Nieper Education Trust.**

### **AB discussion:**

Mickley Village Primary and Nursery School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Christopher Nieper Education Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Mickley Village Primary and Nursery School is a primary school with 55 pupils on roll with an additional 12 nursery pupils, situated in the town of Alfreton in Derbyshire. The school was inspected by Ofsted in May 2024 and judged as requires improvement.

Christopher Nieper Education Trust was matched to provide Trust and School Improvement support to Mickley following the Ofsted inspection, with staff development and leadership, curriculum review and assessment noted as the key areas of focus. Mickley Village Primary and Nursery School is a small school that is looking to expand on the support it has already been given from Christopher Nieper Education Trust. The school would like to join the trust so that it has opportunity to extend the collaborative work with other schools within the trust and to fully access the professional support networks and expertise including quality first teaching and targeted interventions.

The school has had a strong relationship with David Nieper Academy and Christopher Nieper Education Trust in the past. The school has traded services with the trust and the majority of children move on to David Nieper Academy.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

## **Project: An application from Heage Primary School, Derbyshire, to convert and become an academy and join Transform Trust.**

### **AB discussion:**

Heage Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Transform Trust. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Heage Primary School is a one-form entry primary school located in the Amber Valley in Derbyshire. There are currently 177 pupils on roll. The school's Ofsted in December 2021 assessed the school to be good, the same outcome as their previous full inspection in May 2016.

Heage Primary School has chosen to join Transform Trust as they feel it will allow them to manage their own improvement journey while still retaining their identity and community focus. The school feels pupils would benefit from not only the educational input of a trust, but also from shared experiences with other schools which will raise expectations and aspirations.

Transform Trust have a strong track record of school improvement to support the school in improving their pupil outcomes. Transform Trust is made up of 22 primary schools with

another 4 schools in the pipeline. The Trust itself is based in Nottingham with schools in Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Sarah Armitage and Sian Hampton. Sarah Armitage was a Chair at Embark Federation. The school had previously put an application in to join Embark Federation. Sian Hampton is the CEO of Archway Learning Trust. Archway Learning Trust is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, as is Transform Trust.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust. The supportive deployment of a school resource management adviser was recommended.

## Nottingham Region

### Sponsored Route

**Project: A proposal for Transform Trust to sponsor Cantrell Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham.**

**AB discussion:**

Cantrell Primary and Nursery school was judged to be inadequate in its Ofsted inspection dated 26 March 2024. In May 2024, the school was issued with an Academy Order.

The department undertook an assessment of local sponsor options in accordance with the High-Quality Trust Framework. Transform Trust is the recommended sponsor based on:

- strong outcomes across the HQTF pillars, particularly in school improvement
- evidence of a strong track record of improving inadequate primary schools with high levels of disadvantaged pupils in the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area
- geographical fit
- current capacity to provide immediate leadership support
- familiarity with the local community.

Transform Trust has 8 statistically similar schools in the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Sian Hampton, Paul West and Ashfaq Rahman. Sian Hampton is the CEO of Archway Learning Trust. Archway Learning Trust is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, as is Transform Trust. Paul West is the CEO of Spencer Academies Trust. Ashfaq Rahman is the CEO of Nova Education Trust. As trusts local to the school, both were considered as potential sponsor options

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

# Nottinghamshire Region

## Converter Academy Orders

**Project: An application from Norwell CofE Primary School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and become an academy and join Minster Trust for Education.**

### **AB discussion:**

Norwell CofE Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Minster Trust for Education. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. Norwell CofE Primary School is a smaller than average-sized rural primary school which "continues to be a good school" following a Section 8 Ofsted inspection on 4 June 2024.

In 2016, Norwell CofE Primary School formed The Kite Primary Federation with St Matthew's CofE Primary School, with the aim of improving the educational offer of both schools to the children in their communities. The schools effectively work as one school across two sites with the same curriculum and shared resources, including a single governing body.

The school decided to explore converting to an academy because they want to access additional support, services, achieve greater efficiency in operation and to be part of an outward looking partnership. They are also keen to contribute to a multi-academy trust through their expertise in small schools' leadership, experience of deployment to support others and specific expertise such as in SEN and Religious Education.

The school believes that the Minster Trust for Education's vision and values are very closely aligned with their own and has experience and a good reputation for working with small schools thus understanding the challenges they face.

Minster Trust for Education supports schools in the form of deployments of trust or school leaders, Minster Leaders of Education (MLEs), or Expert Practitioners, visits to other schools or work with external agencies. The school will also have a nominated school improvement partner.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Sian Hampton. Sian Hampton is the CEO of Archway Learning Trust. Archway Learning Trust is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, as is Minster Trust for Education.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

**Project: An application from St Matthew's CofE Primary School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and become an academy and join Minster Trust for Education.**

## **AB discussion:**

St Matthew's CofE Primary School seeks to voluntarily convert to academy status and join Minster Trust for Education. A resolution has been passed by the school's governing body. St Matthew's CofE Primary School is a smaller than average-sized rural primary school which "continues to be good" following a Section 8 Ofsted inspection on 6 February 2019.

In 2016, St Matthew's CofE Primary School formed The Kite Primary Federation with Norwell CofE Primary School, with the aim of improving the educational offer of both schools to the children in their communities. The schools effectively work as one school across two sites with the same curriculum and shared resources, including a single governing body.

The school decided to explore converting to an academy because they want to access additional support, services, achieve greater efficiency in operation and to be part of an outward looking partnership. They are also keen to contribute to a multi-academy trust through their expertise in small school leadership, experience of deployment to support others and specific expertise such as in SEN and Religious Education.

The school believes that the Minster Trust for Education's vision and values are very closely aligned with their own and has experience and a good reputation for working with small schools thus understanding the challenges they face.

Minster Trust for Education supports schools in the form of deployments of trust or school leaders, Minster Leaders of Education (MLEs), or Expert Practitioners, visits to other schools or work with external agencies. The school will also have a nominated school improvement partner.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Sian Hampton. Sian Hampton is the CEO of Archway Learning Trust. Archway Learning Trust is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, as is Minster Trust for Education.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

**Project: An application from Phoenix Infant and Nursery School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and become an academy and join The White Hills Park Trust Ltd.**

## **AB discussion:**

A voluntary application from Phoenix Infant and Nursery School to convert to academy status and join The White Hills Park Trust. The school received a good Ofsted judgement (short inspection) in January 2022.

Phoenix Infant and Nursery School felt that by joining The White Hills Park Trust, the school will continue to flourish and benefit from greater collaboration and joint working with other infant and nursery school provision within the trust. The school is already benefitting from being part of the trust school improvement ('Better Together') partnership. The school is keen to work with the trust to further develop the EYFS networks and provision.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Paul Heery. Paul Heery is the CEO of The White Hills Park Trust Ltd.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

## **Project: An application from Priory Junior School, Nottinghamshire, to convert and become an academy and join The White Hills Park Trust Ltd.**

### **AB discussion:**

A voluntary application from Priory Junior to convert to academy status and join The White Hills Park Trust. The school received a good Ofsted judgement in May 2023.

The school is already working with The White Hills Park Trust under the trust's 'Better Together' improvement strategy and would benefit from further collaboration with the trust and other local schools by joining the trust.

Priory Junior School's governing body identified The White Hills Park Trust as their preferred trust having already established a working relationship with the trust through the trust school improvement ('Better Together') offer. The trust is already working with the school, adding leadership capacity and support with governance.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the trust as outlined in the High-Quality Trust Framework was considered against the school's strategic needs.

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** Paul Heery. Paul Heery is the CEO of The White Hills Park Trust Ltd.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.

## **Academy opening approved in principle**

List of academies approved to open the following month.

**Project:** Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School

**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Buckminster Primary School

**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Shirland Primary School

**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Booth Wood Primary School

**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further action required:** No action required.



**Project:** The Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton  
**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.  
**Conflicts:** None.  
**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Higham Ferrers Nursery and Infant School  
**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.  
**Conflicts:** None.  
**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Higham Ferrers Junior School  
**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.  
**Conflicts:** None.  
**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Billingborough Primary School  
**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.  
**Conflicts:** None.  
**Further action required:** No action required.

**Project:** Maun Infant and Nursery School  
**Points raised in discussion:** Proposed school opening date – 1 November 2024.  
**Conflicts:** None.  
**Further action required:** No action required.

## **Decisions taken between AB meetings**

List of decisions taken outside of AB meetings.

**Project: To discuss the proposal for Sir Christopher Hatton Academy to increase its capacity by 35 for the academic year 2024/25.**

**RD decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Feedback decision to the school/trust.