



Department
for Education

Notes of Meeting: South East Advisory Board

Date of meeting – 21 November 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

- Dame Kate Dethridge

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Sarah Bennett
- Sarah Brown
- Sir Andrew Carter
- Stuart Gardner
- Paul James
- Claire Lowe
- Sue Samson MBE

Guests

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- Paul Schofield, Deputy Director South East Regions Group

Representations received

- Representations were received for the following item:
 - A proposal for Harris Federation to sponsor Sunbury Manor School, Surrey.

General Discussion Points

- A temperature check was completed for the region.

Trust Change

Project: A proposal from Horsham Learning Alliance, West Sussex, to form a new trust.

AB discussion:

- The board discussed the positive aspects of the proposal.
- The board discussed the small number of schools that would form the potential new trust.
- The relatively small number of Multi Academy Trusts in the local area was discussed.
- The growth strategy and proposed trust structure was discussed.

RD decisions: Approve with conditions:

- To recruit an experienced trustee with recent and strong primary experience to the trust board.
- To continue to review the trust's financial operating model to ensure it best fits with strategic priorities and future growth

Conflicts: Sue Samson. The College of Richard Collyer previously approached Sue for advice on forming a MAT. Papers were not provided for this item, and Sue was not present during the discussion.

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

Establishing a new academy through the free school presumption route

Project: A proposal for a sponsor for Hartland Point Primary School, Hampshire.

AB discussion:

- The board discussed the trust strategy for growth.
- The geographical locations of Hartland Point Primary School and other proposed schools was discussed.
- Trust board experience and skills was discussed.

RD decision: Awaiting final decision.

Conflicts: Sir Andrew Carter. Chief Executive Officer, South Farnham Educational Trust. The trust applied to sponsor Hartland Point Primary School. Papers were not provided for this item, and Andrew left the room during the discussion.

Further actions required: To be submitted for ministerial decision.

Sponsored Route

Project: A proposal for the Harris Federation to sponsor Sunbury Manor School, Surrey.

AB discussion:

- The board discussed the strengths and weakness of several other trusts that were also considered by the regional team and how they compared to the Harris Federation.
- The board discussed the use of the High-Quality Trust Framework when selecting a potential sponsor.
- The challenges faced by Sunbury Manor School and the importance of selecting a trust with a strong track record of turning around schools in similarly challenging situations were discussed.
- The ability and experience of the Harris Federation in turning around challenging schools was discussed.
- The growth plans of the Harris Federation were discussed.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Trust Change

Project: A proposal for Chiltern Hills Academy, Buckinghamshire, to transfer to Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust.

AB discussion:

- The board discussed Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust's growth plans and whether a period of consolidation was required.
- The potential to increase secondary capacity was viewed as a positive development.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

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

Decisions taken between AB meetings

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

Project: Hawkedon Primary School, Orchard Learning Alliance, Wokingham.

Decision type: Significant change – admissions variation.

RD decision: Decline.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Project: Grazeley Parochial Church of England Aided Primary School

Decision type: Proposal for Grazeley Parochial Church of England Aided Primary School to join the Keys Academy Trust, Wokingham.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Project: Steyning Grammar, West Sussex.

Decision type: Significant change - Removal of physical capacity/ Expansion (increasing physical capacity)

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Project: Cold Harbour Church of England School, Milton Keynes

Decision type: Proposal for the conversion of Cold Harbour Church of England School to join Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Project: Wooden Hill Primary and Nursery School, Bracknell Forest

Decision Type: Proposal for the conversion of Wooden Hill Primary and Nursery School to join Greenshaw Learning Trust.

RD decision: Approve.

Conflicts: None.

Further actions required: None.

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open on 1 December 2024

- **Project:** Addington School, Wokingham, joining Ascendancy Partnership Trust.
- **Project:** Ashmead Combined School, **Buckinghamshire**, joining Insignis Academy Trust.
- **Project:** Bordon Infant School, **Hampshire**, joining University of Chichester (Multi) Academy Trust.
- **Project:** Brooklands School, **Surrey**, joining Weydon Multi Academy Trust.
- **Project:** Crawley Down Village CofE School, **West Sussex**, joining Hurst Education Trust Limited.
- **Project:** Emerson Valley School, **Milton Keynes**, joining 5 Dimensions Trust.
- **Project:** Manor Green School, Windsor & Maidenhead, joining Ascendancy Partnership Trust.
- **Project:** Merebrook Infant School, **Milton Keynes**, joining 5 Dimensions Trust.
- **Project:** St Mary's Wavendon CofE Primary School, **Milton Keynes**, joining Inspiring Futures Through Learning.
- **Project:** St Michael's CofE Primary School, Steventon Village, **Oxfordshire**, joining Abingdon Learning Trust.
- **Project:** Summerlea Community Primary School, **West Sussex**, joining Schoolsworks Academy Trust.
- **Project:** Tickford Park Primary School, **Milton Keynes**, joining The Grand Union Partnership