



Department
for Education

Notes of meeting: London Advisory Board

Date of meeting: 27 February 2025

Attendance

Regional Director (RD) chair

- Claire Burton

Advisory Board (AB) members

- Penny Barratt
- Emma Bradshaw
- Cassie Buchanan
- Susan Douglas
- Vanessa Ogden
- Lee Mason-Ellis
- Rama Venchard

Guests

- Angela Cox (Diocesan Schools Commissioner - Archdiocese of Southwark)
- Peter Sweeney (Director of Education - Diocese of Westminster)

Apologies

- None

DfE Senior Civil Servants

- Alan Parnum (Deputy Director)

General discussion points

- Angela Cox and Peter Sweeney presented their respective diocesan strategic plans and discussed roles of Catholic MATs including opportunities and challenges.
- The RD gave some general national and regional updates and invited feedback from the board.

Decisions

Bromley

Converter academy orders

Project: An application from Southborough Primary School (101601), Bromley, to convert and become an academy and join The Pioneer Academy.

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

Southborough Primary School is a two form entry primary school in Bromley.

An Interim Executive Board (IEB) was put in place after the previous governing board raised concerns with the Local Authority around governance and finance management at the school. The IEB considered applications from other trusts for support and identified The Pioneer Academy (TPA) as the trust of choice. Since then, TPA have been providing support to the school including in staff training, curriculum, finance, safeguarding and behaviour. The IEB have agreed it is in the best interests of the school to convert and join TPA.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: Lee Mason-Ellis did not receive any papers and did not provide advice on this project due to a conflict of interest, as he is the CEO of The Pioneer Academy.

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

Ealing

Converter academy orders

Project: Applications from the following schools to convert and become academies and form a new trust called St Carlo Catholic Academy Trust:

- **Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School (101919), Ealing**
- **St Anselm's Catholic Primary School (101922), Ealing**
- **St Gregory's Catholic Primary School (101923), Ealing**
- **St John Fisher Catholic Primary School (101921), Ealing**
- **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (101924), Ealing**
- **St Raphael's Catholic Primary School (101925), Ealing**
- **St Vincent's Catholic Primary School (101926), Ealing**
- **Our Lady of the Visitation Catholic Primary School (101920), Ealing**
- **The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School (101934), Ealing.**

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

This proposal is for nine Catholic Schools in Ealing to form a multi academy trust to be called St Carlo Catholic Academy Trust (St Carlo CAT). The schools state they have a long history of working together and have considered applying for academy status for several years.

AB heard that all the schools are Ofsted 'Good' or 'Outstanding' and performance is above average in all key stages. The schools have forecast surpluses and pupil projections remain stable, and this is corroborated by the LA. Some of the schools are reducing their PAN due to a fall in roll.

AB discussed the governance structure of the proposed new MAT as well as its viability.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Haringey

Converter academy orders

Project: Applications from the following schools to convert and become academies and join Lux Mundi Catholic Academy Trust:

- **St Ignatius RC Primary School (102144), Haringey**
- **St Francis de Sales RC Junior School (102143), Haringey**
- **St Francis de Sales RC Infant School (102149), Haringey**
- **Our Lady of Muswell Catholic Primary School (102142), Haringey**
- **St Mary's Priory RC Junior School (102145), Haringey**
- **St Mary's Priory RC Infant School (102147), Haringey**
- **St John Vianney RC Primary (102152), Haringey**

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

This proposal is for seven Catholic schools in Haringey to join Lux Mundi CAT. The schools state they are already collaborating and wish to join the MAT as a group/hub. They plan to link with the Hackney and Tower Hamlets primary schools currently in the trust to share good practice and benefit from economies of scale and shared services from the central team. The schools are Ofsted 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

AB discussed capacity at the trust which is relatively newly formed and falling rolls which have impacted on some of the schools.

AB also discussed performance data at the schools and the MAT's school improvement strategy.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Hillingdon

Converter academy orders

Project: An application from St Bernadette Catholic Primary School (102423), Hillingdon, to convert and become an academy and join the Diocese of Westminster Academic Trust.

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

St Bernadette Catholic Primary School is a mixed voluntary aided school in Uxbridge, in the London Borough of Hillingdon. The school was Ofsted Good in its last full inspection in January 2014 and continues to be Good (short inspection, November 2023). This is a voluntary conversion application by the school to join the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust (DoWAT).

AB noted the rationale of the proposal to join DoWAT which included the opportunity to strengthen its curriculum provision through collaborative work across the trust as well as giving its pupils opportunities to have strong links with other trust-wide schools, particularly the feeder secondary - Douay Martyrs.

The London Borough of Hillingdon is supportive of the school's proposed academy conversion.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Islington

Converter academy orders

Project: An application from St Aloysius RC College (100459), Islington, to convert and become an academy and join All Saints' Trust.

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

St Aloysius RC College is an 11-19 Voluntary Aided boys' school (though girls attend the sixth form) based in Islington operating under the Diocese of Westminster. The school was inspected by Ofsted in June 2022 when it was rated 'Good'.

The All Saints' Trust (AST) was established in January 2016 as part of the network of Catholic Academy Trusts under the leadership of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster. There are currently 6 Catholic faith schools in the trust, and these are largely located within the London boroughs of Brent and Harrow. The trust is keen to grow and is now seeking to extend their footprint to the London boroughs of Camden and Islington.

AB noted the planned change to St Aloysius to change from being a school for boys only, to becoming a co-educational school on 1 September 2025.

AB also noted the rationale of the proposal to join All Saints' Trust (AST) which included more financial support and stability and to make best use of shared resources and expertise including greater opportunities for staff development and retention. St Aloysius will also become the founder member of the planned AST Islington Catholic Hub to also include the six Catholic primary schools in the borough.

AB discussed pupil numbers and the school's financial position. A recommendation was made for SRMA deployment to the school.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Lambeth and Wandsworth

Converter academy orders

Project: Applications from the following schools to convert and become academies and join Wandle Learning Trust:

- **Larkhall Primary Campus (100576), Lambeth**
- **Swaffield School (101022), Wandsworth**
- **Hellingly Community Primary School (114396), East Sussex**
- **Grovelands Community Primary School (114393), East Sussex.**

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

Wandle Learning Trust (WLT) is a family of five schools in south London and has a strong collaboration with the Wandle Learning Partnership (WLP) which is the teacher and curriculum development arm of WLT. WLP is home to a Teaching School Hub, English Hub, Maths Hub, Early Years Hub and Little Wandle Letters and Sounds.

This proposal seeks to formalise the existing relationship between the schools and WLT, creating opportunities to improve outcomes.

AB discussed risks and issues including demographics and how school improvement will be achieved considering the distance.

AB also discussed capacity at the trust and noted trust's reserves.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Southwark

Converter academy orders

Project: Applications from the following schools to convert and become academies and form a new trust called The Goldfinch Trust:

- **Maudsley and Bethlem Hospital School (100876), Southwark**
- **St Peter's Centre (134109), Surrey.**

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

The proposal is for a new MAT, Goldfinch Trust (A Hospital Education/ Medical PRU Specialist Trust), to be initially formed of Maudsley and Bethlem Hospital School (a community special school) in Southwark and St Peter's Centre (currently a PRU) in Surrey. The proposed MAT aims to unify hospital education and medical alternative provision academies to deliver a cohesive education for young people with medical and mental health needs.

AB discussed risks including geographical spread of schools.

AB also looked at the governance of the trust and recommended that the model be brought in line with department's Academy trust governance guide.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Tower Hamlets

Converter academy orders

Project: An application from Virginia Primary School (100926), Tower Hamlets, to convert and become an academy and join The LETTA Trust.

Representations received:

- No representations were made for this project.

AB discussion:

Virginia Primary School is a one form entry primary school in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. It was judged outstanding by Ofsted in March 2016, and retained the outstanding judgement in the follow-up inspection in 2021. This is a voluntary conversion application by the school to join The LETTA Trust.

The school has reported that it has worked with LETTA for many years and has strong links through initial teacher training. The school has also worked closely with leaders from LETTA to support its journey of continuous school improvement and now wishes to benefit from cost savings through economies of scale and other support through joining the multi-academy trust.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Decisions taken outside of AB meeting

List of decisions taken outside of AB meetings.

Significant changes to an open academy

Project: Grangewood School (138157), part of The Eden Academy, Hillingdon - to temporarily amend the age from 4 - 11 to 4 - 12.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Project: Forest Academy (140113), part of Inspire Partnership Academy Trust, Croydon - to permanently reduce PAN from 60 to 30, resulting in a capacity of 210, due to removal of physical space.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

Converter academy orders

Project: St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School (102993), Sutton - to convert and become an academy and join Sancta Familia Catholic Academy Trust.

Decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

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

List of projects listed on the published draft agenda but removed before the meeting

Converter academy orders

Project: St Catherine's RC School (101333), Barnet, to convert and become an academy and join All Saints Catholic Academy Trust (ASCAT)

Reason for removal: This project was considered by the East of England Advisory Board.

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