



Department  
for Education

## Notes of meeting: South West Advisory Board

Date of meeting: 21 July 2025

### 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

- Lucy Livings, Regional Director, South West Region

### Advisory Board (AB) members

- Steve Savory
- Adele Haysom
- Mark Ducker
- Jackie Fieldwick
- Jennifer Blunden
- Rachel Howie
- Margaret Simmons-Bird

### Guests

- None

### Apologies

- Stuart Ingram

### DfE senior civil servants

- Jessica Trahar, Deputy Director, South West Region
- Matthew Stevenson, Deputy Director, South West Region

## General discussion points

- Lucy Livings, RD presented to the board on the Regions Group focus and the Government priorities.
- AB members shared local intelligence from the sector at this time and provided insight on the challenges being faced.

## Decisions

### Devon

#### Converter academy orders

**Project: An application from Haytor View Community Primary School (URN 133893), Devon to convert and become an academy and join Connect Academy Trust.**

#### **Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

#### **Points raised in discussion:**

- Haytor View Community Primary School is a 3-11 primary school in Devon, this is a voluntary conversion. The school received an overall Requires Improvement judgement from Ofsted in February 2023 with RI in Quality of Education and Leadership and Management, with Good in all other sub-judgements.
- Connect Academy Trust is made up of 8 primary schools located in Plymouth and Torbay and has a strong profile of Ofsted outcomes.
- Regions Group have undertaken an assessment using the High-Quality Trust Framework and are supportive of the school's application to join Connect Academy Trust. Haytor View will benefit from the support and collaboration provided by a MAT structure.
- The school has recently experienced a period of transition following changes in senior leadership. Members of the Advisory Board were assured that the recruitment process for a permanent Headteacher is progressing, with an interim executive head appointed to maintain stability and continuity in the meantime.
- Commentary was provided by the Schools Financial Support and Oversight (SFSO) Directorate, who confirmed that ongoing monitoring and engagement with the Trust will continue to ensure compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook.
- Advisory Board Members recommended a review of aspects of the Trust's School Improvement model. Regions Group provided assurances that they would follow up on this recommendation

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Significant changes to an open academy

**Project:** An application for Lapford Community Primary School (URN 137780), Devon (Chulmleigh Academy Trust), to make the following change:

- Change in faith designation

### **Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**Points raised in discussion:** The board members considered the case and did not raise any concerns with the proposal

**Decision:** Approve.

**Conflicts:** None.

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Bristol, City of

### Trust Changes

**Project:** A proposal for the following twelve academies from Cathedral Schools Trust, Bristol, City of, to merge with Trust In Learning (Academies) and form a new trust:

- Ashton Gate Primary School (URN 150919), **Bristol, City of**
- Bristol Cathedral Choir School (URN 135575), **Bristol, City of**
- Cathedral Primary School (URN 139828), **Bristol, City of**
- Headley Park Primary School (URN 144864), **Bristol, City of**
- Henleaze Infant School (URN 150940), **Bristol, City of**
- Henleaze Junior School (URN 137518), **Bristol, City of**
- Hotwells Primary School (URN 140728), **Bristol, City of**
- St Werburgh's Primary School (URN 142853), **Bristol, City of**
- Stoke Park Primary School (URN 146261), **Bristol, City of**
- Trinity Academy School (URN 147072), **Bristol, City of**
- Victoria Park Primary School (URN 144863), **Bristol, City of**
- St Katherine's School (URN 142853), **North Somerset**

### **Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

### **Points raised in discussion:**

- Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) and Trust in Learning Academies (TiLA) have voluntarily applied to re-structure and merge to form a larger multi-academy trust based in Bristol.

- The proposed merger between CST and TiLA builds on the strategic location of their schools, their established collaborative approaches, and the alignment of their values and vision. This will establish a strong organisation with the capacity to make a meaningful impact and lead educational innovation and improvement across both the city and the wider region, also recognising the increased extra-curricular opportunities it will bring to all pupils.
- Recent Ofsted inspections have highlighted significant curriculum and leadership strengths across both trusts.
- AB members discussed the different communities that the trusts serve and how they will come together with a shared vision and values. Regions Group provided reassurance that the new Trust is committed to ensuring that there are strong relationships and communications with its schools and their communities as the merger progresses.
- The trusts will determine a new name for the MAT once approved.
- The structure and diversity of the trust board for the new trust was discussed, and the value of appointing members external to both existing trusts to strengthen governance through enhanced support and effective challenge. The new Trust has appointed a governance professional (NLG) to support the process of selecting their board.
- The Trust's school improvement model was discussed and the importance of this developing as the new trust grows.

**Decision:** Approve with conditions

- The trust to keep the department updated on trustee appointments and formation of the new board.
- The trust to keep the department updated on recruitment to the CFO position and what support will be available to the appointed CFO.
- The trust to provide more in-depth information about the school improvement model and how the vision and values of the new trust are taking shape.

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Somerset

### Trust Changes

**Project: A proposal for Pyrland School (URN 136193), Somerset to transfer from Richard Huish Trust to Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership.**

**Representations received:**

- No representations were made for this project.

**Points raised in discussion:**

- Pyrland School became part of the Richard Huish Trust (RHT) in 2015, following an Ofsted judgement of Requires Improvement in June 2014. Despite some progress, the school was rated Inadequate in January 2017. Subsequent inspections in September 2018 and September 2022 resulted in Requires Improvement

judgements. However, the Trust has not succeeded in delivering rapid or sustained improvement.

- Following the January 2025 Ofsted inspection, which placed Pyrland School into special measures, the Richard Huish Trust Board made the decision to voluntarily transfer the school to another trust.
- Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership (MNSP) has 36 academies (including 12 secondary schools) and includes primary, secondary, special, and AP schools. MNSP is a well-established high-quality trust and has demonstrated its ability to support secondary schools on their school improvement, as evidenced by improved outcomes and Ofsted data.
- Since February 2025, Richard Huish Trust (RHT) and MNSP have been working together to support Pyrland School. MNSP has provided leadership support, including an executive headteacher, and with improvement planning in preparation for the school's transfer to another trust.

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Academy opening approved in principle

List of academies approved to open the following month.

None

## Decisions taken outside of AB meeting

List of decisions taken outside of AB meetings.

## Converter Academy Orders

**Project:** An application from Cannington Church of England Primary School (URN 123786), Somerset, to convert and become an academy and join The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust.

**Decision:** Defer

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

## Significant changes to an open academy

**Project:** Calton Primary School, Gloucester, (SAND Academies Trust) to make the following change:

- To change the age range 2 – 11 to 3 -11 years

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Kingfisher CE Academy, Swindon, (The Park Academies Trust) to make the following change:**

- To add a 24-place SEN resource base

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: The Deanery CofE, Swindon, (The Park Academies Trust) to make the following change:**

- To add a 60-place SEN resource base

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: OakTree Nursery and Primary School, Swindon, (The Blue Kite Academy Trust) to make the following change:**

- To add a 24-place SEN resource base

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Bellefield Primary and Nursery School, Wiltshire, (Equa Mead Learning Trust) to make the following change:**

- To change the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to include nursery provision

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Dauntsey Academy Primary School, Wiltshire, (Equa Mead Learning Trust) to make the following change:**

- To change the age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to include nursery provision

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Charmouth Primary School, Dorset, (The First Federation Trust) to make the following change:**

- To change the age range from 3-11 to 2-11

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Orchard Vale Community School, Devon, (The Harbour Schools Partnership) to make the following change:**

- To change the age range from 3-11 to 0-11

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: Our Lady and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary School, Devon (Plymouth CAST) to make the following change:**

- To change the age range from 3-11 to 2-11

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: St Michael's Church of England Primary School (SAT), Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole to make the following change:**

- Retrospective change to the age range from 3-11 to 4 -11 and close the pre-school

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

**Project: St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Marnhull, Dorset (Plymouth CAST) to make the following change:**

- To change the age range from 3-11 to 2-11

**Decision:** Approve

**Conflicts:** None

**Further actions required:** Delivery officer to inform the schools, trust and Diocese (where relevant).

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

None

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