

## AD EDUCATION NETWORK MEETING

6<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 10.00am – midday

Present: Deb Austin (B&H), Brian Pope (Hants), Jane Winterbone (Surrey), Jo Lyons and Mark Storey (B&H), Christine McInnes and Michelle Stanley, (Kent), Hayley Good, Kim James (Oxfordshire), Marie Denny (Milton Keynes), Rebecca Smith and Celia Buxton (Medway), Gareth Drawmer (Bucks), Clodagh Freeston (Southampton), Mike Stoneman (Portsmouth), Marie Denny (Milton Keynes), Paul Wagstaff (W Sussex), Ian Pearson (W Berks), Elizabeth Funge (E Sussex).

Apologies: Cheryl Eyre (Bracknell Forest), Clive Haines (RBWM), Heather Tomlinson (Wokingham), Simon James (Bucks),

Guests: Nicola Archer (RSC office), Zaheer Ahmed (Oxfordshire VSH)

ITEM	Actions
<p><b>1. Schools White Paper</b></p> <p><b>a. Local Authority Established Trusts (LAETs), with Nicola Archer</b></p> <p>Deb welcomed Nicola.</p> <p>Key information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A more detailed guide about LA-established Trusts (LAETs) is expected to be published around half-term (the draft is being discussed with ADCS among others). This will also include a call for LAs to register their interest in being a 'test and learn' site from the autumn.</li> <li>LAETs will be expected to retain the limit of max 19.9% LA appointed reps in the governance board. This potentially presents a problem for mixed-MATs established with a diocesan partner, due to competing proportions of governing places. Could be case by case exceptions.</li> <li>The DfE 'particularly welcomes' LAETs where there are few strong MATs but this is not an excluding criterion.</li> <li>For the future the DfE sees a minimum size of 10 schools for viable MATs. There would also be a presumption against new MATs / LAETs of say 40-50 schools. This could be unwieldy. DfE prefers starting smaller and then growing.</li> <li>DfE is not seeking to give itself additional powers at present to push schools into a MAT.</li> <li>In principle there is no objection to more than 1 LAET within a LA area, nor against an LAET that straddles across one or more LA borders.</li> <li>Funding: LAETs are likely to be eligible for trust converter grants and there will be a new round of the 'trust capital fund' from the autumn, which LAETs will be eligible for.</li> </ul> <p>Points discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools with deficits (especially since these are presently almost impossible to broker to an existing MAT): a request for a position on school deficits if moving into a LAET or MAT to be addressed in detailed guidance.</li> <li>LA capacity to support development of one or more LAETs: concerns about officer capacity to undertake the necessary work on new trusts. However, LAETs were viewed by some to be a means to secure some existing LAs services / support. Withdrawal of the brokerage grant has reduced LA levers locally.</li> <li>Unitaries, in particular, expressed concerns about further fragmentation of the local education system and that this is a concern of HTs and politicians. The lack of acknowledgement of the local political interest in schools / MATs is a concern and thinking about how to support involvement from members is needed.</li> <li>LAs shared examples of discussions and consultations they have had already, for example with maintained headteachers and with diocesan partners. Are school federations helpful</li> </ul>	

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<p>stepping-stones towards a LAET? Some heads were interested in a more cooperative model of LAET, if that is possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standalone school trusts are a challenge. These can be the hardest to engage, they see little need or value for change, even when there are improvement issues needing to be addressed.</li> </ul> <p>Thanks was extended to Nicola.</p> <p><b>b. Other strategic themes in the Schools White Paper</b></p> <p>Christine said Kent broadly welcomed that there is more of a national policy direction for schools. Other themes highlighted include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The erosion of flexibilities and freedoms that had previously been in place for academies and MATs. Greater powers are proposed for the DfE, together with more responsibilities and powers for Ofsted as regulator. What are the issues for existing MATs?</li> <li>Teacher autonomy is also affected by the proposals in the White Paper, including greater direction from DfE about initial teacher education.</li> <li>Does the White Paper's focus of on-going structural change risk losing sight of standards? There are ambitious attainment targets (especially considering the impacts of covid-19 on learning) yet little new or resourced about schools reaching them.</li> <li>Inclusion is a key theme to align the SEND Green Paper with the Schools White Paper, but other national drives focused solely on behaviour feel like they are pulling in a different direction.</li> </ul> <p><u>Action:</u> Chris to invite Nicola to the July meeting, possibly with a policy colleague.</p>	CO
<p><b>2. Notes and Matters arising</b></p> <p>The notes from the March meeting were agreed as accurate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stephen Long from Ofsted South-east has agreed to attend July meeting</li> <li>Trans Toolkit from BHCC has been circulated, and CME staffing summary circulated. Portsmouth Trans Toolkit will be shared too.</li> <li>Forward plan for future meetings has been circulated.</li> </ul>	MS
<p><b>3. Virtual Schools – changes and good practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice developments and challenges: Oxfordshire, Portsmouth</li> </ul> <p>Zaheer Ahmed, Oxfordshire Virtual School Headteacher, presented an overview of recent developments and extensions of role for virtual schools (VS). He also talked through arrangements in place in Oxfordshire and some challenges too, such as continuing increases in children in the care system (slides attached).</p> <p>Portsmouth led discussions about options for staffing structures and sources of funding for a VS: from across LA funds, pupil premium and central grant for VS.</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion about outcomes vs performance measures; e.g. good rates of completion of PEPs and even good attendance for pupils does not necessarily equate with pupils making sustained progress or successful transition to the next phase of education.</li> <li>Representation and governance: both about how the voices of children in the care system are heard, which falls under the remit of some LAs' VS, and about governance of the VS (on example has a formal governing body which is chaired by the lead member for children's services).</li> </ul>	

ITEM	Actions
Zaheer was thanked for his informative presentation.	
<p><b>4. Children Missing Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research with parents who home educate: University of Portsmouth has now been commissioned to work with the CME Group to carry out the project. Aim for results from a survey, plus follow-up interviews and a focus group, to be available the end of September. A reference group of 5 LA reps has been set up to work with the researchers.</li> <li>Education Dashboard: CO raised a proposal to take a look at the current data dashboard (whose scope had to be trimmed due to covid-19). Key questions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does the Network want from the dashboard (the so what question)?</li> <li>Should consideration be given to extending the scope of the dashboard? Should we return to the original scope that included children educated by the LA due to medical needs and those subject to reduced timetables?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Gareth, Ian and Celia agreed to meet with Chris to review the dashboard and make recommendations to bring to the July meeting.</li> </ul> <p><u>Action:</u> CO to set up a meeting for the review group and circulate examples of the SESLIP dashboard. The group will feedback to the next meeting.</p>	Chris
<p><b>5. Summary</b></p> <p><b>Future meetings</b></p> <p>Request for questions and themes to discuss with Ofsted reps next time please.</p> <p>So far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>safeguarding judgements and small primary schools</li> <li>Ofsted's current focus on AP and off-rolling</li> <li>should Ofsted be more interested in data the LA holds about a school prior to inspection?</li> </ul> <p>Next meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1<sup>st</sup> July</li> <li>14<sup>th</sup> Oct</li> </ul>	All