

Committee(s): Board of Governors of the City of London School	Date(s): 19 June 2012	Item no.
Subject: Headmaster as Chair of the Local Governing Body of ARK Bentworth Primary Academy	Public	
Report of: The Headmaster	For Decision	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report seeks endorsement from the Board of Governors for the Headmaster to become the Chairman of the Board of Governors at Bentworth Primary School in White City. It also seeks the support of the Board to include Bentworth Primary School in the City of London School's (CLS) outreach programme.</p> <p>Bentworth is an underperforming primary school. The governing body and local authority approached ARK at the end of last year to discuss converting to academy status in September 2012. The Headmaster has been invited to become the Chairman of the ARK Bentworth Primary Academy governing body. This is an individual appointment and is not linked to the CLS or the City Corporation.</p> <p>CLS will, however, become more involved with Bentworth as it is anticipated that several CLS alumni will become governors and this report seeks the support of the Board to include Bentworth in its outreach programme. This will see CLS pupils mentoring pupils at the academy.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>It is proposed that the Board of Governors:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse the appointment of the Headmaster as Chairman of the Board of Governors of Bentworth Primary School; and • Supports the inclusion of Bentworth Primary School in the City of London School outreach programme. 		

Main Report

Background

1. Bentworth School is a 1 form entry primary school serving a diverse community in White City. Around half of its pupils are eligible for free school meals and 64% speak English as an additional language. Despite being rated 'Good' by Ofsted in April 2010, attainment was rated 'Satisfactory' and has continued to decline at key stage 1 and key stage 2 over a number of years. In 2011, only 60% of pupils achieved at least a level 4 in English and maths. Following considerable research into the options available and local consultation, the local authority and the governing body concluded that becoming an ARK academy provided the best opportunity for delivering sustainable improvement in standards at Bentworth.
2. From September 2012 Bentworth will become an ARK academy, following a consultation process involving governors, parents, pupils, staff and the local community. Created in 2004, ARK Schools is an education charity and academy sponsor which works with the Department for Education and local authorities to create inner city schools under the academies programme. Its schools are non-selective, non-denominational and community focused. These schools are generally established in deprived urban areas and attract a high proportion of pupils on free school meals.

Headmaster's role

3. With the endorsement of the Board, the Headmaster will become the founding partner's representative of the school in an individual capacity and not linked to the City Corporation. As an individual sponsor the Headmaster would not be able to provide the financial or back office support functions that an established schools operator and academy sponsor, such as ARK, would provide. These relate to school improvement and monitoring as well as school business support systems such as payroll, insurance, pension funding and administrative support, and building maintenance functions to name a few. The hedge fund, Brevan Howard, has therefore agreed to donate £250,000 to ARK. The Headmaster would be their representative on the local governing body.

4. As a member of the School Commissioner's Task Force, set up to encourage independent schools to adopt failing state-maintained primary schools converted to academies, the Headmaster understands the expectations being placed on independent schools to support other schools. As the outgoing Chairman of the Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference (HMC) this opportunity would represent a positive move for the independent sector and be fully in-line with the Government's ideology for school improvement.
5. As the Chair of the Local Governing Body, the Headmaster, jointly with the ARK Schools Director of Education, will provide strategic oversight of the school, including school's new Headmaster, and ensure the governing body provides support and critical challenge to the academy's senior leadership team to ensure a rapid improvement in standards. The governing body will meet at least six times a year and the Chair will also attend meetings at the central ARK office once a term. The exact time commitment will vary but is estimated to be around a day a month.

Impact on the City Corporation

6. To avoid any reputational risk to the City Corporation as a result of the Headmaster's role as Chairman of the governing body, ARK is preparing an agreement between itself and Brevan Howard that will codify the Headmaster's responsibilities as a Chair and of Brevan Howard's as a donor and founding partner. This will make it clear that the role is separate to his role as Headmaster of the CLS. The Comptroller and City Solicitor will be invited to comment on the agreement to ensure that the City Corporation is satisfied with the arrangements.
7. Whilst the City Corporation is not seeking to sponsor this school, it does support the improvement of educational opportunities across London. The Headmaster's sponsorship, although separate from his role with the City Corporation, compliments the City Corporation's educational ethos.
8. There will be an indirect link to the City Corporation, separate to the Headmaster, as several CLS alumni are being considered to sit on Bentworth's governing body.
9. The Headmaster has been made aware that the City Corporation's insurance policy will not cover him when performing functions associated with Bentworth. ARK has comprehensive governors liability and trustees indemnity insurance. Its policy also includes libel and slander as well as personal accident insurance. The Comptroller and City

Solicitor has been made aware of this insurance policy and is satisfied that it will effectively cover the Headmaster.

10. It is expected that, because of the infancy of the role and the need to ensure that Bentworth's leadership and governance structures meet regulatory requirements, there will be an impact on the Headmaster's time during school hours. It is expected to be less than the constraints imposed on the Headmaster and the school when he was Chairman of HMC. The Headmaster is confident that the senior leadership team will be able to absorb the pressures that this will bring to the school and a separate report on how the school intends to manage this is also being presented to this Board.

Outreach programme

11. The CLS operates a successful outreach programme that involves pupils mentoring students in other schools and centres, including Coin Street in Lambeth. However, since the establishment of their own recreational centre, Coin Street has terminated the homework and mentoring programme. It is proposed that the same programme will be undertaken at Bentworth.

Consultees

12. The Town Clerk, Comptroller, Chamberlain, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the CLS Board of Governors have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Conclusion

13. The Headmaster has the opportunity to become the founding partner's representative and chair of the Local Governing Body of ARK Bentworth Primary Academy in White City, alongside the hedge fund Bevan Howard. Whilst it is recognised that this will have an impact, albeit minimal, on his duties as Headmaster at CLS, it is believed that the school will be able to absorb these additional pressures.

14. CLS will have a more direct link to Bentworth subject to the Board supporting the inclusion of Bentworth in the school's outreach programme, which will see CLS pupils acting as mentors to Bentworth students.

15. In addition, the Headmaster's role is in thinking with national government education policy, which could have a positive indirect effect on the City Corporation.

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