



Department  
for Education

**Department for Education**

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Mr Neil Houchen  
The Eastwood Academy  
Rayleigh Road  
Leigh-on-Sea  
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SS9 5UU

24<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Dear Mr Houchen

I am pleased to confirm that the Department for Education considers Eastwood Park Academy Trust to be an appropriate organisation to sponsor an academy.

Please note that being placed in this pool does not guarantee that projects will be allocated to you, as all projects are carefully matched on a case-by-case basis. It is the role of the Department to consider which of our sponsors will provide the best possible solution for a particular school(s), and Ministers will make a final decision as to whether the proposed sponsor should take forward a specific academy project, based on that advice.

Please note that the Department regularly reviews approved sponsor status. If the Secretary of State considers that a sponsor no longer meets the required standards, she may remove their approved sponsor status.

The Department's policy on not for profit requires that sponsors that support particular academies do not derive a profit from their involvement with those schools. An academy trust must pay no more than cost for goods or services provided to it by an individual or organisation with a governing relationship to an academy such as members, trustees and the trust's sponsor. Information on the not for profit principle is contained in 2.6.2 of the Financial Handbook: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-financial-handbook-2013>.

### **Recruiting the board your trust needs for the future**

Following your recent sponsor approval, I would like to alert you to the service provided by Academy Ambassadors, a non-profit organisation which supports academy trusts across England by recruiting senior figures from the world of business and the professions to join their boards as pro bono non-executive directors or chairs.

A strong board is integral to building, growing and sustaining high-performing academy trusts and many trusts say they wished they had invested more time and thought into

getting the right board in place from the start. In particular, finding the right chair to take the trust into the next phase of its development is not always easy.

After their own successful careers, many individuals from business are attracted to the academies movement by the inspiring social mission of improving life chances for all children, but particularly for the most deprived.

Please contact Academy Ambassadors - [academyambassadors@newschoolsnetwork.org](mailto:academyambassadors@newschoolsnetwork.org) / 0207 952 8556 to explore recruiting a new chair or trustee. This introductory service is free, the trust makes free and open decisions to appoint or not and Academy Ambassadors can help to ensure that the new chair is introduced to other high-calibre chairs in order to ensure that new appointees are effective in the role as quickly as possible.

Congratulations on your approval and thank you for your commitment to raising standards of education for young people.

*Yours sincerely*  
*T. J. Coulson*

Tim Coulson  
**Regional Schools Commissioner, East of England and North East London**