



Two Schools, One Family, One Vision

[FAQ Document on the Proposal to Federate](#)

Sources of further information about school federation and answers to some frequently asked questions – provided by the governing bodies of Westfields Infants School and Westfields Junior School.

This document will be updated as further questions are received during the consultation period. It will be updated at the start of every week and the latest copy will be published on both school’s websites. This is version 1.4.

Key Dates	
5 th December 2022	Consultation Starts
10 th January 2023, after school	Staff session at their respective schools – school staff only
12 th January 2023, 3:15pm-4pm	Drop-in session at Junior School – all welcome
12 th January 2023, 7:30-8:15pm	Drop-in session over Zoom – all welcome https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87827901403?pwd=WnZkRWJnNWNlZ3FzUFFjNHUvdTJuUT09 Meeting ID: 878 2790 1403 Passcode: 012867
16 th January 2023, 8am-8:45am	Drop-in session at Infants School – all welcome
24 th January 2023, 12 noon	Consultation ends; deadline for responses
25 th /26 th January 2023	Both governing bodies meet to consider all responses and vote on whether or not federation will proceed
27 th January 2023	Inform parents, staff and other stakeholders of the decision
Question	Answer
What is Federation?	Federation is the joining together of two or more schools under one governing body. Federation is not an amalgamation, there is no intention to create one large school or close either site.
Why now?	As many will know, the current head teacher of the infants school has announced her intent to retire at the end of the spring term. This event created the opportunity to investigate federation.

<p>If the Federation were to happen, what changes would I see in my child's school?</p>	<p>The main change would be the new governance and leadership structure– there would be one joint governing body for both schools from April 2023. The new governing body would then be responsible for appointing a new Executive Headteacher for both schools.</p> <p>The new leadership arrangements would ensure day to day continuity for children, parents and staff.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher would have overall responsibility for both schools and with a strong focus on improving standards and strategic matters.</p> <p>The Executive Head teacher would spend time in both schools.</p> <p>Within this arrangement we can share and develop leadership across the Federation by using skills and experience flexibly across both schools, so that each school could benefit from a wider pool of talent and expertise.</p> <p>There are no immediate plans to change other aspects of the staffing structure outside the senior leadership team in either school as a result of Federation. Over time we may seek to share staff as roles develop, become vacant, or new ones are created.</p> <p>The individual identity and character of the schools would stay the same.</p> <p>Both schools pride themselves on their caring small school approach where children are known and valued as individuals. This is fundamental to our ideals and would continue if the Federation were to go ahead.</p> <p>Over time we expect that both schools can learn from each other, sharing the best from each and working together to improve teaching and learning.</p> <p>Federations can create opportunities for children to work with children from the other school in the Federation – we hope that this would be the case over time, children would have a wider circle of known individuals and experience of working with different groups of children.</p>
<p>What is an Executive Head teacher?</p>	<p>Executive Head teachers provide strategic leadership across two or more schools; they are supported by leadership in each individual school in the partnership.</p> <p>The Executive Head teacher would have an overview of both schools and would be helping both to improve by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working together to tackle shared priorities • addressing individual school priorities by benefitting from good practice in the partner school • streamlining practice, background management, and support functions to give a sharper focus on teaching and learning

<p>What is a Head of School?</p>	<p>Heads of School are enhanced Deputy Head teachers.</p> <p>Each Head of School would have operational responsibility, under the direction of, and in consultation with, the Executive Headteacher, for the overall day to day operational management of their individual school, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of all staff • CPD • Safeguarding Lead
<p>What would be the impact on staff, including those who provide support services to the school? (caretakers, cleaning, catering etc)</p>	<p>Other than leadership roles, there are no immediate plans to change the staffing structure or services in either school but over time we may seek to share staff as roles become vacant or new ones are created.</p>
<p>Would staff get the opportunity to work at both schools?</p>	<p>This is one of the potential benefits in terms of developing staff and sharing expertise. We would encourage this where it was beneficial and met school improvement priorities. However, this is not something which would be imposed; decisions would be based upon consultation and negotiation.</p> <p>In the future, it is possible that new staff could be appointed to the Federation, which makes them available to work at both sites.</p>
<p>Does Federating the schools ultimately cost them more money?</p>	<p>No - in fact, it provides schools with opportunities to share costs and gain access to staffing and resources that might not otherwise be available to individual schools.</p>
<p>Is this just a government cost saving exercise?</p>	<p>No - the recommendation to federate is a decision taken independently by the governing bodies of both schools collaboratively; no external influence has been applied.</p> <p>The funding of schools is primarily based on pupil numbers and as these numbers would not be affected by federating, the school budgets would therefore remain the same and separate.</p> <p>However, it is true that economic factors have been an element in prompting both governing bodies to consider new ways of working in the light of trends in the funding of schools.</p>

<p>Are there examples of other Federations within the County?</p>	<p>There are hundreds of Federated Schools throughout the country and the number is growing. Within Hampshire some examples include:</p> <p>Alderwood School https://www.alderwood.hants.sch.uk A federation of infants, junior and seniors.</p> <p>Green Oaks Federation https://greenoaks.org.uk A federation between Oakwood Infant School and Greenfields Junior School.</p> <p>The Oaks http://www.oakscelearningfederation.co.uk A federation of three infants schools: St Michaels & All Angels, Netley Marsh & Copythorne.</p> <p>Woolton Hill https://www.schoolsofwooltonhill.co.uk A federation between St Thomas' Infants School and Woolton Hill Junior School.</p>
<p>Is there evidence to show that such Federations prove successful?</p>	<p>A relevant BBC news article published, <i>"Pupils more confident in federated schools"</i>: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-15004918</p> <p>Education Guardian article <i>"Inside federated schools: joining forces to raise standards"</i>: http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/apr/10/federated-schools-standards-leadership-management</p> <p>Headteacher best practice article on the topic: https://www.headteacher-update.com/best-practice-article/the-road-to-school-federation/66963</p> <p>National Governance Association article on the topic: https://www.nga.org.uk/News/Campaigns/Federation-First.aspx (Some links are member only, but the full report can be found here: https://www.nga.org.uk/getmedia/9d5fbf46-c38e-4825-96b3-0911318a31a1/The-road-to-federation-full-report.pdf)</p>
<p>Can a Federation be dissolved?</p>	<p>Yes – de-federation is a straightforward process if two schools decide to separate again. It is considered good practice for a Federation to be reviewed every two years.</p>
<p>What models of partnership working have been considered?</p>	<p>Collaboration, Federation and Multi-Academy Trusts.</p>
<p>Will this result in a lack of focus on outcomes in the infants?</p>	<p>Absolutely not. Both schools will still be measured upon their own pupil outcomes and will strive to do the best for their children as they do now. Each school will remain separate from an OFSTED perspective under a federated model.</p>
<p>Specific staff questions.</p>	<p>Staff related questions have been asked from both sides and will be addressed and answered via a staff only FAQ document we will place in each staffroom over the coming days, as well as the invitation to have one-on-one meetings.</p>

Does a federation increase school budgets?	No, the funding stays the same. Each school has their own budget. The senior leadership team will be funded from the existing two school budgets and will be divided fairly (based on pupil numbers) between the two schools. We do not anticipate this cost significantly increasing, especially in the current economic climate i.e. we are not simply adding an extra executive head teacher. The precise management structure will be finalised in coming months should the decision to federate be taken.
Access to facilities, coordination of timetables/calendars and general increased collaboration	Whilst the two schools successfully collaborate in many areas already, we strongly believe there is more that can be done via federation. With a single executive headteacher with an overall view of both schools daily, more opportunities to collaborate will inevitably be found. This may be in areas such as shared facilities to benefit the children, better timetabling of events to assist parents with children in both schools, etc. Other schools report that this has been an advantage of federation.
Continuity of support	We would look at opportunities to have more and better coordination of support for children when moving between schools. Other schools who have done this have reported this as being a very positive outcome of federation.
How would this affect the PTAs?	This is a decision for both PTAs and not governors or the executive head teacher. It was anticipated that they would remain separate, but other schools have combined PTAs. But this is completely a decision for the PTAs.
Will parents still need to apply for a place at the Junior school when leaving the infants?	Yes. The two schools remain separate in this regard.