

New Castle Federation plans to strengthen school links

Two Berkhamsted schools are beginning a public consultation to formalise their close collaboration (8 January 2018).

Victoria Infant & Nursery School and The Thomas Coram School – both Church of England schools in the East Berkhamsted ward – are asking parents, staff, pupils and the local community for their thoughts on becoming the Castle Church of England Federation.

The schools already share an Executive Headteacher, Mr Rob Halls, but changes under the new proposal include appointing a single Governing Body to oversee both schools.



Mr Halls commented: “Our two Christian school families have always worked closely together, but by formalising this collaboration within a Federation, we’re able to fully integrate teaching and learning experiences and pool resources – putting all our energies into making sure each individual pupil achieves their full potential.”

Under the proposal Thomas Coram and Victoria will still operate from their existing school sites and keep their separate names and uniforms. It is a priority for both schools to continue the close working relationship with the other neighbouring school, Swing Gate Infant and Nursery School.

Mr Halls continued: “The proposed Federation is a natural fit, as we share the same culture of high expectations and continual improvement, underpinned by effective and inspirational leadership from both senior teachers and governors. We also remain committed to working with our partner school Swing Gate to provide a cohesive learning experience for every child coming through the primary stage, this side of Berkhamsted.”

New benefits of the Federation include developing a shared strategic direction for both schools, streamlining decision-making to make more effective use of resources and offering career development opportunities for staff across the whole primary stage.

The consultation will run for six weeks, from 5 January to 16 February 2018. The full proposal is available at www.victoria.herts.sch.uk/our-school/our-collaboration or www.thomascoram.herts.sch.uk/collaboration/

Anyone with an interest in Thomas Coram or Victoria is invited to complete an online response form (available on the websites above) by midday 16 February. Copies of the proposal and the response forms are also available from both school offices.

All are welcome to attend information drop-in sessions on 15 January, between 7.30pm and 8.30pm at Thomas Coram, and on 16 January between 2.00 and 3.00pm at Victoria.

The new Castle Church of England Federation is proposed to start on 16 April 2018.