

Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School

FEDERATION PROPOSAL - CONSULTATION

Introduction

This is a proposal from the governing bodies of Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School to establish a hard federation between the two schools.

A federation is made up of a group of schools with a formal and legal agreement to work together to make the best use of facilities, staff expertise and resources for the benefit of all children.

Schools in a federation are overseen by a single governing body which is responsible for working with the schools to ensure the delivery of a high quality education for all children. Together with the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School's who are responsible for the day-to-day management of their schools, the governing body is responsible for the strategic direction and financial performance of both schools and the overall federation.

Schools within a federation continue to receive separate budgets, which are unaffected by the formation of the federation, and they continue to be monitored and judged separately by Ofsted.

Unlike an amalgamation where separate schools become one single school, schools in federations continue to be individual schools and admission to each school continues to be determined by the appropriate admission authority (Hillingdon).

1. Background

In 2016 the governing bodies of Harefield Infant and Harefield Junior schools embarked upon a strategic planning exercise to identify the steps needed to position our schools on an optimal path for dealing with the challenges we face. Governors noted that the majority of children at Harefield Infant School progress to Harefield Junior School and benefit from the informal collaborative partnership which exists between the two schools. Governors concluded that the creation of a federation between Harefield Infant and Harefield Junior schools, formalising this partnership, would create more ways to share resources and expertise between the two schools which in turn would increase the impact our finite resources have on the life chances of our children.

2. What would a federation between Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School look like?

Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School once federated would:-

- continue to provide an environment and learning culture that is in the best interests for the children at both schools..
- continue to track children's progress and attainment at each school with school leaders and governors having the highest expectation of standards in both achievement and behaviour.
- retain their own name, ethos and values; have separate pupil attainment data and separate OFSTED inspections.

- continue with receiving and managing their own budgets.
- have opportunities for increased efficiencies through economies of scale by joint purchasing and shared deployment of resources, including staff.
- share specific resources and expertise.
- collaborate over specific areas to improve the provision of education.

The federation would have:-

- an Executive Head Teacher working in partnership with the governing body to deliver a shared vision and to provide line management of the Head of Schools with oversight of the day-to-day management of the schools.
- greater opportunity to recruit and retain the best teachers offering them experiences to share ideas and develop best practice with increased opportunity for career development and management responsibilities that a federated school will offer.
- existing staff will keep the same terms and conditions of employment.

The federation would have a single governing body across both schools responsible for:-

- the strategic direction of the schools and the federation.
- working in partnership with the Executive Head Teacher to set the strategic direction of both schools.
- holding the Executive Head Teacher and Head of Schools to account.
- the financial management of both schools to make sure that all money is well spent.

The admission authority for the federated schools will remain the London Borough of Hillingdon.

3. Why is federation being proposed?

Co-operation between the governing bodies of Harefield Infant and Harefield Junior Schools to set the strategy for a shared vision and values and oversee the alignment of curriculum and policies has existed for over 20 years and remains a strength of both schools. Over the last 18 months, sharing an Executive Head Teacher between the two schools has built on the close co-operation that already existed between our two schools at a working level.

Given that close co-operation has been amply demonstrated, the respective Governing Bodies feel that a closer, more formal partnership would be a mutually beneficial way forward and embed the informal partnership that continues to exist between the two schools. In this regard, the governing bodies propose to create a formal federation between Harefield Infant and Harefield Junior Schools which will open the way for further co-operation and resource sharing to meet the challenges our schools are facing.

Within the federation, collaboration and co-operation will be a requirement for both governors and staff in delivering a seamless, quality education to children from their first day in the Nursery through to their last day in Year 6.

4. What are the benefits of federation?

Federation between Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School would ensure a shared vision and culture for both schools leading to the development of a common curriculum that delivers an outstanding learning environment enabling all children to reach their full potential. In addition, Federation would ensure shared strategies in areas such as behaviour management, performance management of staff and development of teaching and learning. Our children would experience the benefits of a 'through' primary school, whilst allowing both schools to retain their own identity. Children moving up to the Junior School would enter a familiar environment and culture and engage with staff they may have met and worked with in other contexts. Common tracking and assessment tools across all phases would mean more is known about the children's progress and their learning needs.

Staff would get to know the children and families very well and our approach to Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) / Child Protection through shared knowledge will be significantly enhanced.

Resources would be available for children across both schools along with the opportunity for joint activities. Alignment of the curriculum's and teaching strategies for both schools ensure better progress and outcomes for our children.

Though there are no firm plans to materially alter the staffing structure at this time, federation will provide opportunities for staff to share expertise and experience covering all three phases of the primary years which would significantly enhance career development and training opportunities as well as helping to recruit and retain staff to improve stability.

The proposal to federate rather than amalgamate means that both schools retain the block funding (£110k) and remain separate for DfE and Ofsted purposes. Note that amalgamation was considered and rejected by both Governing Bodies in 2009 and again in 2012.

In contrast to amalgamation, federation will ensure each school will remain separate in terms of funding allocation from the Local Authority. In-year and carry forward deficits or surplus remain with the individual schools. Cost savings would be achievable through joint procurement of services, goods and training and any savings made will be fairly reinvested according to need. Costs relating to shared resources (e.g. Executive Head Teacher) will be shared in proportion to the benefit obtained. Within a federation there is scope to pool a small proportion of each school's individual budgets if it meant that both schools would get better value for money. However, the federation governing body would be responsible for ensuring the budget for each school balanced.

5. What is the process of federation?

Six week consultation with the schools' stakeholders will start on 6th June 2018 and end at midnight on 18th July 2018. Stakeholders will be sent a copy of the proposal document, set of FAQ's and feedback form. Stakeholders are:

- All staff at both schools
- All parents/carers of children at both schools

- The Local Authority
- The Secretary of State
- Executive Head Teacher
- Head of School for each school

A copy of the proposal will be made available at both schools' receptions and on both schools' websites.

6. Next Steps

One informal session will be organised for parents/carers after school where interested parties can give their opinions and ask further questions.

A joint staff session will be arranged.

Responses to this consultation can be made via the feedback form or in a letter via a box in either the Infant or Junior school reception or by email to info@harefieldinfants.co.uk

Consultation on the proposal will end at midnight on Wednesday 18th July 2018, following which separate meetings of both governing bodies will be held to assess all responses and for a final vote to be taken on whether or not to proceed.

If both governing bodies agree to federation then the Local Authority and Secretary of State will be notified of our intention and, if agreed, a federation between Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School will be established on 4th October 2018 and the newly established governing body will start from this date.

Barrie Evans
Chair Governors Harefield Infant School
Chair Governors Harefield Junior School

Rowena Scott
Vice Chair Governors Harefield Infant
School
Vice Chair Governors Harefield Junior
School

CONSTITUTION OF PROPOSED FEDERATED GOVERNING BODY

Governing Body Constitution

The governing body for the federation will be made up of governors presently serving on the governing body of each school and include the Executive Head Teacher and both Head of School.

Type of Governor	Number
Elected Parent governors (3 from each school)	6
Elected staff governor (HOS)	2
Co-opted governors	5
Executive Head	1
Local Authority governor	2
Associate Governor	1
Clerk	1
Total	18

Term of office where applicable will be 4 years.

Supporting the Governing Body will be 5 Sub-Committees these being Finance, Personnel, Premises, Curriculum and Inclusion as well as adhoc committees for Appeals, Exclusions, etc