



Sources of further information about school federation and answers to some frequently asked questions – provided by the governing bodies of Sopley Primary School and Burley Primary School.

We will add to this list as we receive further questions during the consultation period. A paper copy will be available for inspection from each school office.

Key dates	
Tuesday 9 th February 2016	Consultation starts
Wednesday 24 th February 2016 4pm- 6pm	Drop in session at Sopley Primary School – all welcome
Monday 21 st March 2016 9am – 11am	Drop in session at Burley Primary School – all welcome
Monday 29 th February	Staff meeting Burley – school staff only
Wednesday 16 th March	Staff meeting Sopley – school staff only
Mid-day Tuesday 12 th April 2016	Consultation ends - deadline for responses
Monday 25 th April 2016	Both Governing Bodies meet to consider all responses and vote on whether or not federation will proceed.
Within 7 days of joint GB meeting	Inform parents, staff and other stakeholders of the decision.
Thursday 26 th May 2016	Start date <u>if</u> both Governing Bodies decide to federate
Question	Answer
If the Federation were to happen, what changes would I see in my child's school?	<p>The main change would be the new governance and leadership arrangements – there would be one joint governing body for both schools and a new leadership structure from September 2016.</p> <p>The new leadership arrangements would ensure day to day continuity for children, parents and staff by having a Head of School based in each school who would be responsible for the day to day leadership of that school, with a strong focus on teaching and learning.</p> <p>The Head of School would be supported by an Executive Head teacher/Head teacher who 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>There would be opportunities for each Head of School to work with the Executive Head teacher and each other.</p> <p>Within this arrangement we can share and develop leadership across the federation by using skills and</p>



	<p>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 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 including: school uniform; school identity; parent organisations; and sports teams etc. 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 as it could aid transition to secondary school because 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; and ○ streamlining practice, background management, and support functions to give a sharper focus on teaching and learning
<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, new staff would 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 an individual small schools.</p>
<p>Is this just a Government cost saving exercise?</p>	<p>No - the recommendation to federate has been reached jointly by the Governing Bodies of both schools; 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 remain the same.</p> <p>However, it is true that economic factors have been an important 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>St Michaels & All Angels – The Oaks (Lyndhurst, Netley Marsh & Copythorne) http://www.oakscelearningfederation.co.uk/</p> <p>Awbridge & Wellow - part of the Halterworth collaboration of schools (Romsey) http://www.halterworth.hants.sch.uk/family-of-schools/</p> <p>Discovery Federation (Andover) http://www.endeavourprimary.org/topic/federation</p>
<p>Is there evidence to show that such Federations prove successful?</p>	<p>Ofsted published their findings from a review of federations, which found that schools working in partnership are generally of a higher standard than those working alone. You can read this at: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/leadership-of-more-one-school</p> <p>In addition, there was a relevant BBC news article published, “Pupils more confident in federated schools”. This can be found at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-15004918</p> <p>Education Guardian article “Inside federated schools: joining forces to raise standards” http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/apr/10/federated-schools-standards-leadership-management</p>



Can a Federation be dissolved?	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.
How can I find out more about federation?	<p>A selection of resources available online – please ask in school if you cannot access these documents online.</p> <p>http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/mar/04/schools-federations-versus-academies-government</p> <p>http://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/Sept-Dec2014/New-National-College-report-on-Federation-governan.aspx</p> <p>http://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/School-structures-and-constitution/Federations/The-Road-to-Federation.aspx</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/350758/the-governance-in-federations.pdf</p>
What models of partnership working have been considered?	Collaboration, federation and multi-academy trusts - a summary of their pros and cons is shown in the table below.



	Collaboration	Federation	Multi Academy Trust (MATs)
What is it?	Informal commitment to share amongst 2 or more schools – schools have separate governing bodies	Formal agreement to share across 2 or more schools – shared governing body	Formal agreement between academy schools to operate as a 'chain' with an overarching governing body
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Efficiency savings ✓ May support good practice ✓ Flexible ✓ Each school maintains own identity and can choose leadership arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Efficiency savings ✓ Supports good practice ✓ Each school maintains own identity and can choose leadership arrangements ✓ Can 'de-federate' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Efficiency savings ✓ Supports good practice ✓ Consistency across the 'chain'
Cons/Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Lack of commitment makes it harder to plan – different governing bodies can change direction and arrangement could be undermined ✗ Efficiencies likely to be far more limited due to uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Need to ensure that there is a positive partnership from the outset so that there is shared vision and commitment to children and families across both/all schools and that resources are shared fairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Can't easily get out of arrangement – minimum 7 year commitment ✗ Potential loss of individual school identity ✗ Small schools cannot become standalone academies – they would be taken over by an existing larger academy and have no say in what happens to the school