

## PARENTS

### Federation Proposal Questions

#### Consultation Session Questions (CHIS & CHJS – 12<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> Feb)

What has driven the Federation at this time?

Over the last 5+ years government has been increasingly in favour of academising schools, so we feel that this is a positive alternative as through this federation we are able to maintain the small, nurturing feel of the schools whilst still seen to be proactive. Furthermore, in light of increasing competition from other schools in the area which we did not previously suffer from we feel that federating promotes a number of benefits for children, staff and parents alike – including:

#### Benefits for children

- Formalising the current relationship would add to the educational opportunities of the pupils. Entering into a formal federation will provide further stability to the pupils.
- A curriculum that provides a consistent progression of skills.
- A smoother transition between schools; and a greater understanding of a child's progression over time.
- Continued cross-school relationships will provide pupils with opportunities to take part in inter-school activities, to gain broader experiences through inter-school working and to feel part of a wider school community.

#### Benefits for staff

- Opportunities for staff to move between the two schools to further their career development, making the schools better employers.
- Staff networks to share ideas and develop best practice, and more "sounding boards".
- Shared workload e.g. subject leaders – to support the Ofsted "deep dive" approach; greater interlinking of subjects.
- Better understanding of starting points of children.

#### Benefits for parents

- Security and stability for their children.
- Children will experience strong, kind and consistent leadership across the schools.
- Thorough oversight of the most vulnerable pupils and their safeguarding ensures that children are safe throughout their time in school.
- Single access points (payment systems and website); single uniform that can be passed down between siblings.

Who is going to be the Executive Head and what does it look like in terms of structure and workload?

Now that we have come to the end of the consultation period, we can begin the process of establishing the staffing structure for the Federated schools, including the process for selecting the Executive Head. This will be done in line with the recommended guidelines and due processes from County. As a governing board it is our job to ensure that we have a structure well placed to bring

the schools forward keeping the children and staff's wellbeing at the core, whilst keeping high quality of education.

Will there be 1 or 2 SENCo?

Our focus will ultimately be on our children and what each individual child needs and we will ensure we have an appropriate level of SENCo resource to reflect the requirements of each school. Through a Federation we aim to achieve an even more joined up approach to special educational needs across both schools.

How will you manage the transition period and ensure staff morale is positive?

We have been communicating to staff since initial conversations started and throughout the process. We have purposely wanted them to be part of this initiative which is why we have staff on the working committee. Staff have provided some positive feedback especially with regards to the increasing amount of "sounding boards", developmental opportunities, sharing of ideas as well as the benefits of knowing each individual child and their needs in order to make the journey through the infants and juniors even more seamless.

We will continue keeping channels of communication open throughout and, in particular, once we embark on the Autumn term as one federation. We want this initiative to be seen as an opportunity and a positive experience for all stakeholders, therefore will highly encourage staff feedback and recommendations, from both the infants and juniors, as we all embark on this journey.

Will there be a brand new uniform?

We are in the process of consulting with parents and staff (we have already asked children) about the uniform and will hope to have the new uniform ready for purchase at the end of the summer term ready for September. However, there will be a transition period given to allow pupils to grow out of old uniforms first.

### **Other Questions**

When will we be shown the new proposed governance structure and their skillset?

We will adopt the model that we shared in the original proposal document as we consider this to reflect statutory requirements and provide the new governing body with the appropriate range of skills and perspectives. The governor skillsets will be assessed using the National Governors Association ("NGA") skills matrix – we do not propose to share individuals skillsets – the governing body will act to ensure it covers off all the appropriate skillsets required. Parent governors will continue to be elected in the usual manner – and prospective candidates will be able to meet with the Executive Head to understand how they could contribute skills wise.

When will you consult us about having a new name?

We do not propose to consult over the new school name – but we will ensure it reflects the nature of the school and its community. We would anticipate this being along the lines of The Cunningham Hill Schools (Federation).

When will you show us the new proposed leadership structure with key roles and responsibilities?

The proposed leadership structure includes the executive headteacher supported by a senior leadership team. Announcements have been made recently by both schools that cover these roles. All staff will be supported by the broader senior leadership team ("SLT").

What funds from each budget will be pooled and what does that mean for each school? Will there be job losses because of this and how will the job losses affect the children?

Under Federation school funds will not be pooled. Each school will retain its own budget. Only if the schools were to amalgamate would the budget be pooled in its entirety, as we would be one school with one allocation of income. Costs that do need to be allocated (eg. shared staff) will be done on a proportionate basis. It is not the intention of the Federation to remove roles (apart from the change in headteacher reflected in the original proposal) in the short term. We will (as both schools have always done) continue to manage the schools to ensure we have the right people in the right roles to deliver the best outcomes for the children. This could result in changes to staffing over time.

What different opportunities will the children have as part of inter school relationships and activities?

We anticipate building on what we already do – for example Year 6 play leads who currently provide support at the infant school or the involvement of junior school children in helping manage the infants sports day. Areas such as junior children helping children in the infants with reading will be explored for example.

The shared governance structure allows schools to compare curriculum interventions – what are these and what will happen if one school has an intervention that works well but the other school does not have this but feels they would benefit from it how would the costings work?

Both the schools will continue to retain separate budgets under Federation. Both schools will continue to utilise the interventions that currently deliver the best outcomes for the children. Federation will allow a more consistent approach and for best practice to be shared to an even greater extent. Interventions will always be child led and for the benefit of the child. To the extent that this involved sharing resources costs would be allocated on a proportionate measure (eg. hours worked in each school if it were staff related).

Share resources, staff, expertise and facilities – how would the costings work for this? What sort of resources? What facilities?

To the extent that costs are shared these will be pro rata allocated to the relevant budget on an appropriate basis. We already share resources (family support worker; financial advisor). In terms of sharing facilities we can better utilise the space we have across the two schools ensuring we get the best and most effective use out of our estate. In terms of sharing resources, we will continue to share good practice, in particular with things that don't have cost implications. We are already actively reviewing contracts where the schools have a shared provider in order to derive benefits from bulk buying.

Once this has gone ahead will the day to day running of the schools be the same as they currently are or will the school day be the same for both i.e. break times / assemblies etc – what changes will be made?

**It is currently envisaged that initially timings for breaks and assemblies will be kept the same. As we operate and learn under the new structure we may vary these if it benefits the children / improves the rhythm of the school day. Any changes we make to this will be in the best interests of the children and will only be made after consultation with staff and parents as appropriate.**