

BROOKLAND INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs A. Atkinson

BROOKLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs M. Barton

Monday 12th February 2024

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED FEDERATION BETWEEN

Brookland Junior School

Brookland Infant & Nursery School

Dear Parent, Carer and/or Member of Staff,

The Governing Boards of the two schools would like to inform you about their proposal to form a Federation between Brookland Infant and nursery school and Brookland Junior School. The schools have increasingly worked together for a few years and the formalisation of this through a federation is, we believe, in the interests of the children, staff and community for both schools.

The Governing Boards at each school are today beginning a consultation process with parents, staff, and other stakeholders (such as Hertfordshire County Council) on the formation of a federation between the schools – a federation that would be led by a single Governing Board.

The **Consultation Paper** that accompanies this letter sets out to address three items:

- A. The nature of the consultation process and the ways in which you can contribute to it.
- B. Governance arrangements under the Federation.
- C. Recommendation of the two Boards and the rationale.

The consultation process begins on **Monday 12th February 2024** and closes on **Thursday 28th March 2024** at midnight.

There are several ways in which you can find out more and there will be opportunities for you to learn more about the Governing Boards' proposal in face-to-face sessions at the two schools.

We look forward to your engagement in this consultation, which is important to the future development of our two schools.

We have engaged a HFL Education consultants to help us with this process, Cathy Irons and Lisa Holroyd. Contact details are provided in the consultation documents should you need more information. Translated versions are available via the office of each school.

Yours sincerely,

David Warner
Chair of Governors
Brookland Infant & Nursery School

and

Amy Claydon
Chair of Governors
Brookland Junior School

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED FEDERATION

A. The nature of the Consultation Process and ways in which you can contribute.

Summary

- As part of any move to a federation, the Governing Boards of each of our Schools are required to seek your views on any recommendation or proposal.
- The Governing Boards are also required to consult with other stakeholders, including the Local Authority – Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).
- After these consultations, the two Governing Boards are required to come to a decision. They are not bound by the responses of any one group – for instance, parents or staff – but they are required to demonstrate that they have considered these views. For this reason, it is important that you respond.
- If either or both Governing Boards feel that there is insufficient support for the formation of a federation, other alternatives will be sought.

B. Governance Arrangements under the Federation

The role of governance in any education setting is as follows:

- To set, in collaboration with both Headteachers, the strategic direction and vision of the school federation;
- To hold the Headship/SLT team including both Headteachers, to account for the achievement of any objectives set.
- Oversee the financial management of each school.

Under a federation, a single, newly appointed Governing board would be established and would be responsible for both schools in the federation.

Having a single Governing Board delivers advantages for both schools: it would ensure that the two schools move forward together with a shared vision for our children, staff and respective communities.

If the recommendation to form a federation is accepted, the existing governing boards will begin the process of establishing a new single Governing board for the federation.

It is proposed that the new Governing board would be constituted as below:

Category of Governor	Eleven
Headteacher	1
Staff	1 from across the federation
Parent	2 from across the federation
Local Authority	1
Co-opted	6

The members of the new Federation Governing board would be appointed/elected with due regard to:

- Best practice, current thinking and existing regulations in school and federation governance.
- The need to ensure that parents and staff and the local community, are appropriately represented.
- The skills and experience of the individuals concerned – retaining the right to ensure that the Governing board has a broad and appropriate mix of skills and experience.
- Their commitment to education, and the success of the children at both Schools, whatever their

professional, parental or community background.

It should also be noted that:

- The new Federation Governing board may differ in size from the current boards.
- It is proposed that those who are currently local authority or co-opted members of either Governing board would be offered the option of being an Associate Member. Associate members are not full governors, but are brought onto a governing board for their expertise or experience.
- Any vacancies that arise for the position of Parent Governor would be filled following an election in which all parents across both school communities would have a vote.
- Any vacancies that arise for the position of Staff would be filled following an election in which all staff across both school communities would have a vote.
- The new Federation Governing board would be encouraged to actively explore how to best engage the voice of our children in the governance and leadership of their Schools.
- The new Federation Governing board, whatever its formal constitution, would also be expected to give opportunities for all stakeholders to have a voice.

C. The Recommendation of the Governing boards.

The Governing boards at both Brookland Infant & Nursery School and Brookland Junior School recommend that they:

FORM A FEDERATION WITH A SINGLE GOVERNING BOARD FROM 2nd SEPTEMBER 2024.

Rationale for consulting about Federation

As part of the Federation, both boards feel that the interests of both school communities are best served by creating a clear line of governance, rather than two boards, thus progressing to a federation would be the next logical step.

We believe the benefits of federation are as follows;

- One clear line of governance for both existing Headteachers
- Opportunities for staff development - with the possibility in the future for them to work across either school with a contract with the Federation. (*when contracted to the federation*)
- A clear joint vision
- A jointly, well planned curriculum
- Closer working links between the two schools
- Sharing of best practices and resources between our schools
- Consistency of policies and procedures across both schools

Both boards believe that a federation offers the opportunity for a genuinely shared vision and educational philosophy across both schools, one that translate into a positive and joined-up experience for all our children and staff in both our school communities. Parents would not, in the immediate future, notice any difference in delivery. But in time, witness an enhanced pupil provision as we are enabled and strengthened by working together.

In this context, we are committed to achieving excellence through collaboration between our two vibrant and successful schools. We want to value, inspire, nurture, and further develop the strengths and identities of both Schools, whilst working together to enhance outcomes for our children. Our aim is to maintain outstanding provision and deliver excellent progress and achievement – and cherished and memorable educational experiences.

We want to continue to give every child in our care the opportunity to fulfil their potential as a confident, informed, sociable, and well-rounded individual, ready for the next stage of their personal, developmental, and educational journey, and for the world beyond. We believe this can be achieved more effectively by our schools working closely together, led by both headteachers.

In short, we believe that evolving into a federation with one Federation Governing board, is in the interests of pupils, parent/carers and teaching/support staff. It would provide a shared strategic direction, strengthen ties between Schools and enable shared approaches to assessment, curriculum, and improved purchasing power.

THINGS THAT WILL NOT CHANGE SHOULD A FEDERATION BE ESTABLISHED

Should a federation be established between our two schools:

- Admission arrangements to both Schools would remain the same (and HCC would continue to be the Admissions Authority for each school).
- The schools would retain individual budgets and keep their own clear audit trails for all income and expenditure.
- The schools would be inspected separately by the schools' inspectorate, Ofsted.
- The same excellent practice will continue at both schools.
- The key arrangements for existing staff will continue as per current Terms & Conditions

In this context, the Governing boards believe that a federation would have a positive impact on the whole community.

Further Information

We have engaged HFL Education Consultants to support this process. Cathy Irons (Head of Governance Services) and Lisa Holroyd (Consultancy Manager and Operations Lead). If you have questions about the proposed federation that we have not addressed here or questions about the process outlined in this document, please contact them at cathy.iron@hfleducation.org and lisa.holroyd@hfleducation.org

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. When does the Consultation Process begin and when does it finish?

The consultation process begins on **Monday 12th February 2024** and closes on **Thursday 28th March 2024** at midnight.

2. How can I respond?

Parents and Carers:

There are five ways on which you can make your views known:

- By raising your comments or queries at scheduled face to face meetings (see below)
- By emailing your comments or queries to – cathy.irons@hfleducation.org and lisa.holroyd@hfleducation.org
- By posting your comments/queries to the Headteacher of either school (clearly marked Federation Queries).
- By sending your child in with comments/queries in a sealed letter addressed to the Headteacher (clearly marked - Federation Queries).
- By completing an online form by following this link for Brookland Infant and Nursery:
<https://forms.gle/Esrft2oNvo6XiUPj6>
- By completing an online form by following this link for Brookland Junior School:
<https://forms.office.com/e/ZQnmvRmEXx>

Parent/carers meetings have been scheduled to enable parents and carers to meet with the school and governing board representatives to discuss the federation proposal.

The dates/times and venues are detailed below:

Brookland Infant & Nursery – Wednesday 20th March 2024 2-3 pm and 5–6pm.

Brookland Juniors – Thursday 21st March 2024 2-3 pm and 5-6 pm.

Staff

Staff will be consulted via staff meetings at their respective schools. In addition, meetings specifically dedicated to this proposal are scheduled for the staff of both schools.

The dates and venues are detailed below:

Brookland Infant & Nursery – Monday 18th March 2024 3:45-4:45pm

Brookland Juniors – Tuesday 19th March 2024 3:30–4:30pm

Staff are welcome to consult their trade unions and professional associations should they have concerns and queries. Staff can also invite them to the meetings above and we will ask that staff please inform the Headteacher of their school if their representative will be attending.

Pupils

- The federation process will feature in school assemblies and other aspects of school life during the consultation period.
- If any child wishes to express a concern, they can do this via their parent or carer.

3. Are there any FAQs I can look at first to see if my question is covered?

Both schools have a 'Federation Proposal' link on their respective websites at:

Brookland Infant and Nursery School: <https://brooklandinfants.herts.sch.uk/parents/brookland-federation-proposal/>

Brookland Junior School: [Brookland Junior School - Brookland Federation Proposal \(brooklandjm.herts.sch.uk\)](https://brooklandjunior.herts.sch.uk/brookland-federation-proposal/)

In the event your question is not answered, please see 'How can I respond above'.

4. How will a decision be reached?

The two Governing boards are responsible for making the final decision. However, governors are required to take account of the responses to this consultation process, and we shall do so, via the following:

- Once this consultation process is complete, a report setting out the consultation findings will be presented to a joint meeting of the Governing boards of our two schools.
- Each Governing board will then meet on its own to decide whether or not it supports the formation of a federation.
- Both Governing boards must independently agree to the formation of a federation for it to be created.
- As well as consulting with parents and staff, we are required to consult with the local authority (Hertfordshire County Council) and to gain the approval of the Secretary of State for Education.

5. How will the outcome be communicated?

Once a decision has been reached, all stakeholders will be informed about the outcome in writing.