

FORMAL PROPOSAL
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Governors of the following local authority maintained nursery schools:

Adderley Children's Centre;
Allens Croft Children's Centre;
Gracelands Nursery School;
Highfield Children's Centre, Highfield Nursery School;
Jakeman Nursery School;
Kings Norton Nursery School;
Newtown Nursery School;
Lillian de Lissa Nursery School;
Selly Oak Nursery School;
Shenley Fields Nursery School;
St Thomas Centre Nursery School;
Weoley Castle Nursery School;

propose to form a FEDERATION of the 12 schools with effect from 1st September 2018.

CONSULTATION PERIOD: 9am on 4th May 2018 until 9am on 25th June 2018.

Consultation Circulation List:

- » Parents and Carers of Children registered at the above named schools;
- » All Staff, including Headteachers, at all above named schools;
- » The Governors and Clerks to Governors of all above named schools;
- » Colin Diamond, Interim Corporate Director, Children & Young People's Directorate – Birmingham City Council;
- » City Councillors in whose wards the school catchment areas lie;
- » Shabana Mahmood, MP for Ladywood;
- » Steve McCabe, MP for Selly Oak;
- » Preet Gill, MP for Edgbaston;
- » Jack Dromey, MP for Erdington;
- » Liam Byrne, MP for Hodge Hill;
- » Richard Burden, MP for Northfield;
- » Roger Godsiff, MP for Hall Green;
- » Secretary of State for Education.

This formal proposal was published on 4th May 2018. It follows consideration of the proposal by all Governing Boards who have independently agreed to proceed to formal consultation.

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Brief Summary of the Consultation Paper

What is Federation?

Federation is the formal term used in certain situations where two or more schools work more closely together to achieve the best for their children.

So what would be different if these 12 maintained nursery schools federated?

In essence the main difference would be that all schools would have one shared senior leadership team. The eleven existing Boards of Governors (Jakeman and Shenley Fields Nursery Schools already have a federated Board of Governors) would be merged to provide one Governing Board containing representatives from across all schools.

Each school would retain its own identity, would retain its own budget, and would be inspected separately by OFSTED.

Admission arrangements would remain the same and children would be taught in their own school with the potential opportunity for some joint activities that would benefit all children.

Although it is possible to undo a Federation, it would be intended that a Federation between these schools would be long-lasting, thus bringing certainty and commitment to all schools.

What would be the benefits of Federation?

Federation would secure the continuation and growth of the high quality early years education and integrated provision for their children and families currently offered by this group of 12 Outstanding and Good Nursery schools.

It would enable schools to share their resources and expertise, e.g. curriculum development,

leadership, teaching expertise and facilities, which would help sustain the performance and excellent outcomes for all children in all schools. It would enable more joint activities between children and more cost effective joint training for staff.

It would also provide more professional development and career opportunities for staff. Equally important, it would offer all schools a stronger foundation to embrace the challenges that lie ahead as national policy for education continues to change.

What happens next?

We want to hear your thoughts and views on the proposed Federation. You are encouraged to come to a Consultation Meeting at your nursery school (see page 5 for full details) where we would be able to explain the proposal in more detail, and answer your questions.

Also, Section 13 of the full Consultation Document attached provides a timetable and at the end of the document a confidential Response Form is provided for you to share your thoughts. We really want and need to know what you think, so please share your thoughts with us.

Introduction

One of the three key roles for all school Governing Boards is to set the strategic direction for the schools they have responsibility for.

The current national drive to create a self-improving school system is based on the premise that clusters of schools would work with, learn from and support one another to develop localised solutions to the challenges they might face. This document outlines the proposal for 12 maintained Birmingham Nursery schools to join together under a Federation.

A period of consultation has been agreed for stakeholders to comment on this proposal.

There will be at least one Consultation meeting for parents, carers and stakeholders from each community as set out below. These meetings will provide an opportunity to hear more about the proposal, ask questions, and give your views:

Other interested members of each school community are welcome to attend.

School	Date	Time
Adderley Children's Centre & Nursery School;	23 rd May	9.00 – 4.00 (drop-in event)
Allens Croft Children's Centre;	22 nd June	2.30 – 5.00
Gracelands Nursery School;	24 th May	3.00 – 4.00
Highfield Children's Centre - Highfield Nursery School;	13 th June	9.00 - 10.00; 1.00 – 2.00; 4.00 – 5.00
Jakeman Nursery School;	16 th May	9.00 – 10.00
Kings Norton Nursery School;	23 rd May	2.00 – 3.00
Newtown Nursery School;	13 th June	11.00 – 1.45
Lillian de Lissa Nursery School;	5 th June	10.30 – 1.30
Selly Oak Nursery School;	16 th May	9.00 – 10.00 and 2.00 – 3.00
Shenley Fields Nursery School;	6 th June	9.00 – 10.00
St Thomas Centre Nursery School;	23 rd May	9.00 – 10.00 and 2.30 – 3.30
Weoley Castle Nursery School;	15 th May	9.00 – 10.00
	17 th May	2.00 – 3.00

Opportunities for staff specific consultation meetings will be displayed on school staff notice boards

What is Federation?

Under the Education Act of 2002, a Federation is a group of two or more schools with a single Governing Board. It is a way of bringing schools closer together. The schools then combine their Governing Boards into just one Governing Board for the Federation. This allows the federating schools to pool resources.

'The creation and membership of a Federation is not just about structural change. It is also about a different mindset where the Governors and school leaders share a commitment to improving the outcomes and life chances for all children across the

Federation, as opposed to just a single school, through a school-led system of raising standards and driving improvement.' (NCTL The Governance of Federations, 2014).

Nationally, a common reason for Federation has been the need for a school to work with a good/outstanding school in order to raise standards. This is not the case with this proposed Federation of 12 OFSTED rated Good and Outstanding schools who want to continue to deliver high quality early education in the face of ongoing challenges as set out above.

What Would Stay the Same?

- Each school would keep its own identity and name. It is not a merger of schools.
- Children would continue to be taught in their school although some activities may be shared. Eg family services, professional services, out of school provision, provision for children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Each school would continue to receive its own budget and be subject to all current funding protocols, reporting mechanisms and financial regulations .
- Each school would be inspected separately by OFSTED.
- Admission arrangements would not change.
- Existing members of staff would remain employed by Birmingham City Council on the same contract of employment.

What Would Change?

- The Federation would need to have a name as it is a separate legally constituted corporate board.
- The 11 separate Governing Boards would be dissolved and replaced by a single, newly appointed Governing Board with responsibility for all schools. Further details of the composition of the Governing Board are set out later in this document.
- The new Governing Board would be responsible for all school budgets and would determine how expenditure could be most effectively used across the Federation.
- There would be a single shared senior leadership structure.
- Closer working between schools would provide opportunities for career progression and professional opportunities.

Is the Decision to Federate Irreversible?

No – although the move to federate is intended as a long term approach it is possible for schools to withdraw from a Federation and Governing Boards must follow a prescribed process, set out in *The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012*.

Why are the Governing Boards Considering Federation?

All these schools have a shared vision to achieve a single sustainable organisation, city wide, with strong strategic governance and leadership delivering an inclusive and safe child led learning experience, strong family partnerships and outstanding outcomes for all children.

Through a long and successful history of Birmingham nursery schools working together, our 12 schools have experienced some of the benefits that joint working can bring for the children. National Studies by the NCTL (National College for Teaching and Leadership), the NGA (National Governors Association), and OFSTED Inspections conducted over the last 5 years show these benefits can be extended and improved by federating.

At the time of publication, four of our schools have had recent (2018) successful Ofsted inspections, and received recommendations to consider future sustainability. Eg ‘Leaders, and those responsible for governance should ensure that a strong business model is developed to ensure that current outstanding provision is maintained in the current challenging financial climate’.

Federation brings a better opportunity to secure strong, strategic leadership. Bringing all schools under one leadership structure would ensure that the best practice from each school can be

applied to all.

There is now a growing body of evidence nationally that Federations are successful and have led to improved outcomes for children and better professional opportunities for staff.

Contextually, all 12 nursery schools are experiencing:

- a greater need to support themselves and each other;
- increased accountability leading to pressure on Governing boards to provide effective support and challenge, in order to maintain and improve education standards while ensuring support for senior leaders in dealing with finance, business and estate issues;
- significant changes in local delivery of integrated early years services;
- a growing national problem of recruitment of quality leaders and teachers to small schools. increasing numbers of collaborative school groups, as schools seek solutions to current challenges;
- ongoing challenges to ensure delivery of high quality early education and improving outcomes for children and young people within the current funding framework.

Some of the Benefits of Federation

For Children & Families:

- They would benefit from a greater variety of teaching expertise, resources, facilities and additional specialist provision which would be shared across all schools.
- Their own school would continue, but with access to a larger range of opportunities.
- They would have increased opportunities to work with children from other schools.
- Confidence that strong and proven successful leadership of the schools is being utilised and strengthened for the benefit of all schools and their communities.
- In times of curriculum/school change, a strong Federation would be much better placed to manage those changes thus enabling children to receive maximum benefit.
- An integrated family service which wraps around, supports and enhances the quality early education in our schools and keeps safeguarding and inclusion at the heart of our schools.

For Staff:

- Increased opportunities to observe, build, and share best practice through innovative and reflective approaches to early education.
- Develop mutual support across schools.
- An enhanced Continued Professional Development (CPD) programme.
- Wider career opportunities and progression at all levels.
- Access to a greater range of resources and professional support.
- Continued focus on pre-birth to 5 year old children.

Federation Wide:

- Improved opportunities for the recruitment and retention of outstanding staff; maintaining and developing high quality teaching and learning.
- The development of a collaborative culture supported by Federation leadership, built on current strengths to manage and sustain in a landscape of ongoing change
- A sustainable model with schools remaining at the heart of their local community.
- An opportunity to rationalise and reduce duplication across multiple sites thereby increasing leadership capacity to develop our role in a school led system.
- An opportunity to develop and embed a shared philosophy and value base which includes commitments to:
 - Social Justice, Equity, and social mobility;
 - Community focussed, participatory practice;
 - Democratic and professionally generous conduct;
 - Integrated early years services;
 - Being fully inclusive up to and including high levels of individual need;
 - High quality education/pedagogy and a commitment to lifelong learning;
 - Being informed by evidence, knowledge and practice with a view to create and share new knowledge.

Admissions

Admissions to each school would continue to be under the current arrangements. Parents and carers would continue to apply for a place at the school of their choice in the usual manner in line with Birmingham City Council policy.

Governance

After federating there would be a single Governing Board covering all schools, supported by sub-committees. The Governing Board and its sub-committees are required to focus on providing strategic leadership, holding the senior leadership to account, overseeing the financial performance of the schools and making sure the money is well spent.

This is a demanding task for which all Governors need to have, or develop, relevant and appropriate skills.

All potential Governors of the new single board would complete a skills audit. Governors would be appointed on the basis they have the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of all schools.

It is proposed that the Federated Governing Board will be constituted as shown below. This should allow us to ensure a balance of representation from across all communities.

Constitution of the Governing Board

Category of Governor	Who appoints them?	Number
Headteacher	Ex Officio	11
Elected Parent Governor	Elected by all parents/carers of children on roll at the schools	2
Staff Governor	Elected by all the staff employed at the schools	1
Local Authority Governor	Proposed by Birmingham City Council	1
Co-opted Governor	Appointed by Governing Board according to skills	up to 21 (Depending on the number of Headteachers serving as Headteacher governors)

Leadership and Staff

Initially, there will be no changes to staff leadership structures in the individual schools. Current Governing Boards have discussed a proposal to appoint a shared school senior leadership structure across the whole Federation in the future. Any decisions regarding this would be made by the Federated Governing Board.

Staff would remain employed by Birmingham City Council on their existing contracts, working within the school to which they were appointed; it may be possible for staff to work across other schools if this is deemed beneficial to them and the children. It is possible that in the future, newly appointed staff (including those promoted to jobs from within) could be offered contracts to work across the Federation, rather than limited to one school, so that they can be deployed in one or other school. Staff teams at all schools have been made aware of these proposals and it is our intention that there would be a designated senior leader at each school site.

What Next?

How to Respond to the Consultation

The Governing Boards of all schools would really like to hear your views. If you have any comments please let the Governing Boards know by the deadline, which is 9am on 25th June 2018

You can share your comments by: Completing the attached response form; writing a letter; or writing an email.

You may hand in the response form, or a letter, in an envelope marked FEDERATION RESPONSE to the School Administrator.

Or you may post your response form, or a letter, in an envelope marked FEDERATION RESPONSE to the respective School Administrator at the following postal addresses:

Adderley Children's Centre & Nursery School;	St Saviour's Rd, Birmingham B8 1HN
Allens Croft Children's Centre;	Allens Croft Rd, Birmingham B14 6RP
Gracelands Nursery School;	Grace Rd, Birmingham B11 1DS
Highfield Children's Centre - Highfield Nursery School;	Highfield Road, Birmingham B8 3QU
Jakeman Nursery School;	Jakeman Rd, Birmingham B12 9NX
Kings Norton Nursery School;	Camp Lane Birmingham B38 8SY
Newtown Nursery School;	Hockley Cl, Birmingham B19 2NS
Lillian de Lissa Nursery School;	Belle Vue, Birmingham, B5 7LX
Selly Oak Nursery School;	Tiverton Rd, Birmingham B29 6BP
Shenley Fields Nursery School;	Woodcock La, Birmingham B31 1BU
St Thomas Centre Nursery School;	Bell Barn Road, Birmingham B15 2AF
Weoley Castle Nursery School;	Weoley Castle Road, Birmingham, B29 5QD

You can also email comments to the respective Clerk of Governors:

Adderley Children's Centre & Nursery School;	julie.white@addleyn.bham.sch.uk
Allens Croft Children's Centre;	t.lane@allenscn.bham.sch.uk
Gracelands Nursery School;	joyandgeoffmcedg@blueyonder.co.uk
Highfield Children's Centre - Highfield Nursery School;	enquiry@hifieldn.bham.sch.uk
Jakeman Nursery School;	moorhousejj@talktalk.net
Kings Norton Nursery School;	Rhian.Thompson@sipseducation.co.uk
Newtown Nursery School;	jasdol@hotmail.com
Lillian de Lissa Nursery School;	m.tyler@ldelissa.bham.sch.uk
Selly Oak Nursery School;	z.sheppard@selyoak-nur.bham.sch.uk
Shenley Fields Nursery School;	moorhousejj@talktalk.net
St Thomas Centre Nursery School;	l.kaur@stcn.bham.sch.uk
Weoley Castle Nursery School;	enquiry@wlycstln.bham.sch.uk

Each Governing Board will individually meet to review consultation responses to decide whether their school will proceed or not with this proposal.

All Governing Boards aim to reach a decision in June 2018

Frequently asked questions

Would the name of the schools change?

No. Each school would keep its own name but there may be a separate over-arching name for the Federation and a single Governing Board.

Would school uniforms and logos change?

No. Each school would keep its current uniform and logo and unique identity.

Who would lead the new Federation?

Our proposal is for an overarching senior leadership structure working across all schools which the Federated Governing Board would strategically lead.

Who would lead each school?

It is our intention that there would be a designated senior leader at each school site.

Would there be any change to admission arrangements?

No. The current admissions policy would continue to apply for each school.

Would school start and finish times change?

In the short term NO but they could be reviewed in the light of experience.

Would children be registered to the Federation or a single school?

Children would be on roll at their individual school within the Federation.

Would the schools share a single budget?

No. Each school would continue to receive its own funding, manage separate budgets and keep separate records of its accounts.

However, there may be occasions when the schools share costs or combine purchasing if this means that they would be able to get

better value for their money to continue to ensure good opportunities for children.

Would the Federation be inspected by OFSTED?

No. Each school would have separate OFSTED inspections and be graded separately, as they are now.

Would there be any changes in the conditions of service for staff?

No. There would be no changes and staff would continue to be employed on the same conditions of service as defined by Birmingham City Council contracts. This means that, for example, all employment rights and pension arrangements would stay as they are now.

Would staff work across all schools in the Federation?

Existing members of staff would continue to work in the school as they presently do. However, there may be opportunities for staff to work across schools. We hope that staff would be able to take these opportunities as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and sharing of good practice to improve the pupil outcomes.

Would the schools have the same Inset/Training Days?

Yes, wherever possible. Each school would be able to choose when to hold these days, as they do now, and it is likely that they would take the opportunity to have the same Inset/Training Days.

Continued overleaf...

Do schools in a Federation share a Governing Board?

Yes. The previous Governing Boards of each of the schools would be dissolved and a new single Governing Board would be set up.

Would one school take the lead over the other?

No. The schools in the Federation would collaborate and work together as equal partners. We would try to ensure that the single Governing Board has representation from across all schools, although the reconstitution would be skills-led.

Is there any research on the impact of Federations?

OFSTED has reported that, where schools work together and share leadership, standards have been raised and there have been improvements in children's achievement and behaviour. (Leadership of More than One School; OFSTED, September 2011). There is a growing body of other evidence.

If Federation of the schools goes ahead, when would this happen?

If a decision is made to federate, the proposal is that this would take effect from early in September 2018.

If the Federation goes ahead, what work would be done between now and September 2018?

The lead-in would provide an opportunity to carefully plan as many matters as possible in advance. It would also give those people appointed to the new Governing Board an opportunity to work closely with existing Governors to achieve as much continuity as possible.

Can a Federation be dissolved?

Yes. The Governing Board can choose to end a Federation if it is believed that it is no longer in the best interests of the children and stakeholders. This is not an action that would be taken lightly or without due diligence and consultation.

Confidential Response Form

In response to the consultation document outlining the proposal to form a Federation between 12 maintained nursery schools from 1st September 2018.

All responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence, however we will not be able to take anonymous comments into consideration. **Responses must be received by 9am on Monday 25th June 2018. Governing Boards will not be able to consider any responses received after this deadline.**

Name:

Address (Optional):

Postcode (Optional)

I am a (please select):

Parent/Carer of a child at _____ Nursery School Member of Staff at _____ Nursery School

Other interested party (please specify):

Your response (please select):

I support the proposal I do NOT support the proposal I am not sure

Please give your reasons/view if you wish. (If necessary use the reverse side of this form):
