



# Yardley Hastings Primary School

Castle Ashby Road, Yardley Hastings,  
Northampton, NN7 1EL.  
Tel: 01604 696268



Vicarage Lane, Denton,  
Northampton, NN7 1DT  
Tel: 01604 890330

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Dear Parent, Carer, Staff Member or other Stakeholder,

## **CONSULTATION ON THE POTENTIAL FEDERATION OF YARDLEY HASTINGS AND DENTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS.**

Following in depth discussions between governors from both schools, a due diligence process overseen by both sets of governors and the recent informal consultation meetings, the Governing Boards of Yardley Hastings and Denton Primary Schools are today beginning a formal consultation process with key stakeholders on the formation of a federation between the two schools led by a single board of governors.

The Consultation Paper that accompanies this letter sets out three things:

1. The nature of the consultation process and the ways in which you can contribute to it.
2. The proposed structure for the new Board of Governors.
3. The Governing Boards' recommendations (Federation Plan) and the reasons for these, including their vision for the two schools as part of a federation.

These papers are accompanied by a Consultation Response Form, which you are encouraged to complete and return. The consultation process begins **today** and closes **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2018** at midnight.

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

If you have any further questions, please do contact us via either the School Office at either Denton Primary School or Yardley Hastings Primary School.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Anthony Williamson**

Chair of Governors

Yardley Hastings Primary School

**Arthur Brenton**

Chair of Governors

Denton Primary School

# CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF YARDLEY HASTINGS AND DENTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

## A. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THIS CONSULTATION PROCESS.

### SUMMARY

As part of any move to a federation, the Governing Boards at each of our schools are required to seek your views on any recommendation or proposal. They are also required to consult with other stakeholders, including the Local Authority, Northamptonshire County Council. 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 members - but they wish to hear your views and are required to demonstrate that they have taken these views into account. 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 considered.

### KEY QUESTIONS

#### 1. WHEN DOES THE CONSULTATION PROCESS BEGIN AND WHEN DOES IT FINISH?

This consultation process opens **28<sup>th</sup> March 2018** and closes at midnight on **11<sup>th</sup> May 2018**.

#### 2. HOW CAN I RESPOND?

**Parents, Carers and Staff:** Please make your views known to us by handing in your completed Consultation Response Form that accompanies this document to one of the schools (there is a sealed box in each school's reception area), by sending the form by post to either school at the above addresses, or by e-mailing your comments or queries to either school using one of the following email addresses:

bursar@yardleyhastings.northants-ecl.gov.uk **or** bursar@denton.northants-ecl.gov.uk

**Children:** The federation process will feature in school assemblies and other aspects of school life during the consultation period.

**Other Stakeholders:** By completing a Consultation Response Form available from either school.

### 3. HOW WILL A DECISION BE REACHED?

The two Governing Boards are responsible for making the final decision. However, Governors are required to and indeed wish to take account of the responses to this consultation process.

As well as consulting with parents and staff we are required to consult with the Local Authority, Northamptonshire County Council, and to gain the approval of the Secretary of State for Education.

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 it supports the formation of a federation. Both Governing Boards must independently agree to the formation of a federation for it to be created.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have questions about federation or the process that we have not addressed here in this document, please contact either Chair of Governors of either school via the respective School Office.

## B. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS UNDER THE FEDERATION

The key role of the Governing Board is:

- **To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.**
- **To hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.**
- **To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.**

Under a federation, a single, newly appointed Governing Board would be established and would be responsible for both schools in the '**Federation of Denton and Yardley Hastings Primary Schools**'.

Having a single Board of Governors delivers advantages for both schools, it would ensure that:

**The two schools move forward together with a shared vision for our children.**

If the recommendation to form a federation is accepted, the existing Governing Boards will begin the process of establishing a new single Board of Governors for the Federation.

It is proposed that the new Board of Governors would be constituted initially with **13 members** as set out in the table overleaf:

<b>Category of Governor</b>	<b>Number of Governors on Board</b>
Executive Headteacher	1
Staff Governor	1 elected from across the Federation
Parent Governors	2 elected from across the Federation
LA Governor	1 (who cannot be employed at either school)
Co-opted Governors	8 co-opted governors who might come from staff, the wider parent community, local businesses and/or the local community, or a local community organisation.

The members of the new Federation's Board of Governors would be appointed with due regard to:

- The skills and experience of the individuals concerned – retaining the right to co-opt a significant proportion of the membership of the new Board of Governors is a way of ensuring that it has a broad and appropriate mix of skills and experience across the group.
- Their commitment to education, and the success of the children at both schools, whatever their professional, parental or community background.
- Best practice, current thinking and existing regulations in school and federation governance.
- The wish to ensure that parents and staff at each school, and the local community, are appropriately represented and can offer a local perspective to the strategic decision-making process. To this end we would seek to ensure that at least one parent and one staff member from each Federation school sits on the Federation Governing Board. In respect of the second 'Staff' governor this will be as a co-opted governor as legislation states there should only be one elected 'Staff' governor on a Federation Governing Body. If the two 'Parent' governors elected come from the same school, we will seek to co-opt an additional governor with an appropriate skill set from the other school's parent body. Historically, both schools have appointed effective governors from their parent bodies and we wish this valuable tradition to continue.

It is proposed that those people who are currently members of either Governing Board would be offered the option of being co-opted onto the new Board of Governors should they wish to contribute their time and skills to the new governing body. This would provide as smooth a transition to the new governance structure as possible and would also ensure individuals with experience of both schools and the right skills are in place immediately on federation.

We may also choose to recruit Associate Members. These are not full governors but are brought onto a governing board for their expertise or experience.

Vacancies that arise for the position of Parent Governors or Staff Governors would be filled following an election in which all parents across the Federation, or staff across the Federation would have a vote. These elections would take place as early as possible after 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018.

## **C. THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE GOVERNING BOARDS (Federation Plan).**

The Governing Boards at Yardley Hastings Primary School and Denton Primary School recommend that:

**YARDLEY HASTINGS AND DENTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS FORM A FEDERATION WITH A SINGLE BOARD OF GOVERNORS FROM 1st SEPTEMBER 2018.**

In the first instance the federation will be known as:

**‘The Federation of Denton and Yardley Hastings Primary Schools’.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Both Governing Boards feel that to strengthen the leadership of the school and to enable better sharing of resources, progressing to a federation would be the next logical step.

*“A Federation is a maintained school structure where a number of schools come together under one governing body. The schools individual governing bodies are disbanded, and a new single over-arching governing body is formed which is the accountable body for all the schools and sets the strategic direction for the group of schools” – National Governors Association 2016*

Within the Federation, both participating schools remain as separate legal entities and continue to retain their individual budgets and admission arrangements. They retain their individual names and are assessed by both the Local Education Authority and Ofsted as individual schools in terms of performance.

In 2011, Ofsted produced a report on federations and found many benefits gained by schools federating. It found that achievement and behaviour had improved in all the federations visited. Federation was also seen to aid staff retention and development, providing more opportunities for staff to gain experience in different types of schools and more progression opportunities. The National College of Teaching and Leadership supports these findings and specifically they found that federation can have a positive effect on pupil outcomes.

As Governing Bodies, we believe that Federating will produce better outcomes for the children at both schools by working together, sharing best practice and learning under a single Strategic Governing Body working for the best interests of all.

Our schools are different and must retain their unique individual identities however they also have many similarities where a wider shared approach can be utilised to best effect.

This Federation would formalise the current partnership between the two schools, giving a legal framework to protect the direction of both schools via a single Governing Body and Executive Head Teacher, rather than an arrangement based on goodwill.

## VISION

**Our aim is to offer outstanding provision and deliver excellent progress and achievement, whilst fostering cherished and memorable educational experiences.**

*‘Coming together, sharing together, succeeding together’*

*‘Aspiring for sustainable excellence through collaboration’*

*‘Creating greater opportunities for achieving at our best’*

We believe the benefits of collaborating further under a Federation are as follows:

- Increased opportunities for all our children, leading to better educational outcomes.
- Increased opportunities for friendships and peer support to be developed.
- Greater integration of staff development provision, giving extra opportunities to staff and saving on CPD costs.
- Special Federation events, including some joint school events for parents and pupils in addition to some joint fundraising events organised by FOYS and FODS.
- Shared policies on issues like Child Protection, Safeguarding, Attendance and Behaviour.
- An opportunity to maximize resources and finances by sharing and rationalising to ensure sustainability for now and the future.

However, both Governing Boards believe that the benefits of federation are not limited to the kind of practicalities and associated cost savings set out above, important as these are.

We believe that a federation offers the opportunity for a genuinely shared vision and educational philosophy across both schools, one that translates into a positive and joined-up experience for our children in both of our school communities.

In this context, we are committed to achieving excellence through collaboration between our two vibrant and successful schools.

We want to value and develop the strengths and identities of both individual schools, whilst working together to enhance outcomes for our children.

We want to give every child in our care the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential as a confident, educated and well-rounded individual, ready for the next stage of their personal, developmental and educational journey, and for the world beyond.

In short, we believe that evolving into a federation, with one Board of Governors, is in the interests of children, parents and carers, and teaching and support staff.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF FORMING A FEDERATION

The Governing Boards believe that there are specific benefits for children, parents, carers and staff in forming a federation including:

**Children:** Governors believe that a federation would enable each school to further develop the quality of its teaching and learning and provide a broader curriculum that encourages each child to fulfil his or her maximum potential.

In addition, Governors believe that a federation is likely to enable the more effective use of resources, so that more energy is put into enriching our children's experience, within the curriculum and beyond.

**Parents and Carers:** Governors believe that parents would see a range of tangible benefits from the formation of a federation, for instance in terms of shared approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, opportunities for jointly planned extra-curricular activities, the use of shared systems and shared expectations of achievement and behaviour.

Governors also believe that the shared strategic direction offered by a single governing board is likely to reassure parents about the consistency of the curriculum offer and approaches to assessment and curriculum.

Governors believe that a federation would allow the two schools to build on the increased collaboration that has taken place in recent years, for instance in better aligning school policies and procedures to facilitate more efficient schools.

**Staff:** Under a federation, Governors believe that staff would have access to a wider range of professional and career development opportunities, enabling both schools to further strengthen their ability to attract and retain the best teachers and support staff. This will enable everybody in the Federation's employment to reach their personal and professional potential.

Governors also believe that a federation would strengthen recruitment and retention through enabling staff to have the potential opportunity to teach in different settings and to gain experience working across more than one site. This is something that is likely to become increasingly common especially in small schools as they seek to find ways of working together to share resources and professional experience.

In addition, under a federation, new employees would be contracted to work across the Federation. Governors believe that this would enable teaching and support staff to be deployed where their skills and experience are in most need. This could be across both schools where they have a specialism needed on each site and where this is thought most beneficial to the children and the organisation.

Taken together, the two Governing Boards believe that a federation is likely to deliver enhancements for children throughout their educational journey while retaining what they regard as the clear benefits of our small, caring schools. They also believe that a federation is likely to deliver tangible benefits in terms of 'buying power', such that greater resource can be devoted to enhancing teaching and learning and, therefore, positive outcomes for the children.

Parents, Carers and Staff should be assured that a federation would not mean "all change" and many day-to-day operations would remain the same.

## **THINGS THAT WILL NOT CHANGE SHOULD A FEDERATION BE ESTABLISHED**

A federation is not the same as a merger or amalgamation.

Each school would retain its existing character and identity, with uniforms continuing to remain unique to each school, with individual badges and colour schemes and with children based at their existing school sites for classes and lessons.

Admissions arrangements for both schools would remain the same (and Northamptonshire County Council 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 as separate schools by the schools' inspectorate, Ofsted

In this context, Governors do not believe that a federation would have any impact on arrangements that are popular with children, teachers, parents and carers, and which work well at present.

# Federation Consultation Response Form

We very much welcome your feedback and views on the potential federation between Yardley Hastings and Denton Primary Schools.

Please complete your feedback below and return it to either Denton Primary School Office or Yardley Hastings Primary School Office by **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2018**. Please include name and contact details if you would like us to get back to you individually.

Alternatively, you can email your feedback via one of the following email addresses:

[bursar@yardleyhastings.northants-ecl.gov.uk](mailto:bursar@yardleyhastings.northants-ecl.gov.uk) or [bursar@denton.northants-ecl.gov.uk](mailto:bursar@denton.northants-ecl.gov.uk)

**Please circle as appropriate:**

**I do/do not believe that Denton and Yardley Hastings Primary Schools should form a federation.**

**Additional comments:**

**Additional questions:**

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Carer**

**Member of Staff**

**Other Stakeholder**

**Please circle as appropriate.**

## Appendices:

### 1: FAQs

### 2: A Vision for the Future – Informal Consultation Presentation (January 2018)

## 1. Frequently Asked Questions – Federation.

#### **Why not amalgamate to become one Primary School?**

The Governing Boards believe, at this time, that the benefits of Federation outweigh those of amalgamation.

#### **How will the Federation affect the workload of the Headteacher and Staff?**

The Governing Boards believe that there would be a positive impact on the workload of Executive Headteacher and staff. The workload would be spread across a larger team of staff allowing some tasks to be streamlined.

#### **Will the name of each school change?**

No. Each school would keep its own name but there may be a separate overarching name for the Federation and a single Governing Body.

#### **Will school uniforms change?**

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

#### **Will there be any change to admission arrangements?**

No. Each school would continue to be its own admissions authority with its own admissions policy.

#### **Will pupils be registered to the Federation or a single school?**

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

#### **Will 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 two schools share costs or combine purchasing if this means that they would be able to get better value for their money.

#### **Will the schools combine their pupil results?**

No. Results would continue to be attributed to the individual schools.

#### **Will the Federation be inspected by OFSTED?**

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

#### **Will one school take the lead over the other?**

No. The schools in the Federation would collaborate and work together as equal partners. This would be facilitated by having a single Governing Board which would have representation from each school.

#### **Can a Federation be ended?**

Yes. It is intended that a Federation between the two schools would be permanent, bringing certainty and commitment to both schools. However, it is possible to end a Federation if the Governing Board believes that it is no longer serving the best interests of pupils.