

Learning Federation Expansion Proposal – Bitterne

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Federation?

Federation is a means where schools can make a formal agreement to work together. It is different to the academy process because the schools agreeing to federate remain as Local Authority Community Schools where they will continue to be regarded as individual schools, keeping their existing DfE category and their funding structure etc. The change to their status only comes at governance level, as the governing bodies of the schools federating become a single governing body.

Why could the governors decided to take this route?

Our informal Partnership is made up of Bitterne Park Primary, Mansel Park Nursery and Primary, Sinclair Primary & Nursery School with Holy Family and OLSJ linked in as partner schools. Currently, Sinclair Primary & Nursery & Mansel Park Nursery are in a formal Federation called the Learning Federation. I am keen that we all formalise the Federation so that we are all protected by the Learning Federation. Working together in this way embraces the ethos of all schools to provide the best possible education for our communities as well as continuity and consistency in education for children throughout their time in school.

Hardmoor Nursery and Early Years Centre is now part of the partnership and wishes to join with the Federation.

Why didn't all schools decide to become a Trust or Academy?

These are all options that schools have looked at individually and together. The federation model meets the aims of all schools best, as it will provide a firm mechanism for partnership whilst keeping all school's autonomy and individuality.

Will it change staff employment contracts?

No, all schools will remain under local authority control and all staff contracts and pensions etc will remain as they are today.

How will it alter the management structure?

All schools will continue to be run with a similar management structure with a principal / head of school with an overarching Executive Headteacher leading all schools – this will be Gerida Montague and the formal link between the schools will afford opportunities to continue to share best practices across all environments.

Are there financial implications?

All schools will continue to be funded individually by the local authority and on the same basis that they are now. There may be some areas where it will prove advantageous and demonstrate good practice to share services which could draw some financial savings.

Will there be opportunities for staff to work across schools?

Yes, the partnership will encourage an open sharing of knowledge and skills across all schools that could offer opportunities for staff to gain experience and expertise in both primary and nursery sectors.

Are schools going to change its uniform or name?

We will keep our name and be part of a new federation. There will be no change to the uniforms or names of any of the schools.

Will the admissions policy be affected?

Admission to each school will remain unchanged and continue to be determined by Southampton City Council. Secondary feeder schools will remain the same.

How are the staff being consulted.

The staff will be consulted in the same way as all stakeholders and will be able to feedback directly to their respective governing bodies through the existing Staff Governor representatives.

Can this decision be reversed?

All schools will have one Executive Headteacher shared and a lead of school each. A federated school can decide to leave the federation or all schools within the federation may decide to dissolve the arrangement, but not without a full consultation much the same as this one to bring us together.

Where can I get more information?

We will be holding Zoom meetings where presentations will be made and questions can be raised. These will be on Monday 16th January at 11.00am & Wednesday 18th January at 4.30pm. A link to these meetings has been sent in a separate letter.

Queries or comments / feedback can also be emailed to: federation@bpps.live.net or posted/handed in to the school offices marked 'for the attention of the Governing Body - Federation'.

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