



FORMAL PROPOSAL CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Governors of Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery School propose to form a federation of both schools with effect from 2nd January 2018

CONSULTATION PERIOD: Monday 11th Sept 2017 until noon Monday 23rd October 2017.

Consultation Circulation List:

- Secretary of State for Education
 - Milorad Vasic, Strategic Director of People Directorate, Halton Borough Council
 - The Governors and Clerks to governors both schools
 - All staff at the two schools
 - Parents and Carers of children registered at Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery School
 - Trade Unions
 - Regional Schools Commissioner
 - Halton Councillors
 - Derek Twigg MP
 - All Primary Schools in Halton
-

This formal proposal was published on 11th September. It follows consideration of the proposal by the two Governing Bodies who have independently agreed to publish at the following meetings

Ditton Nursery School on Thu 20th July 2017
Warrington Road Nursery on Thu 20th July 2017

Brief Summary of the Consultation Paper

This section provides a brief overview of the Formal Consultation Document regarding the proposal being considered by Governors, for Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery School to share an Executive Head teacher and Governing Board after January 2018.

It contains the main points of the proposal, but you are encouraged to read the full Consultation document which explains in detail what is being proposed.

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 pupils.

What would be different if Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery Schools federated?

In essence the main difference would be the two existing Boards of Governors would be merged to provide one Governing Board containing representatives from the two schools and would have one shared Executive Head teacher

Each school would retain its own identity.

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

Is it possible to undo a Federation?

It would be intended that a Federation between Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery School would be permanent, thus bringing certainty and commitment to the two schools.

What would be the benefits of Federation?

It would enable these schools to share their resources, e.g. staffing, facilities and budgets, which will help improve the performance both schools. It would enable more joint activities between staff, pupils and more cost effective joint training and more professional development opportunities for staff. Equally important, it would offer 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 views on the proposed Federation, at the end of the document there is Response Form for you to complete.

We really want and need to know what you think, so please share your thoughts with us.

Introduction

The Governors from Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery school have come together to put forward the following proposal around a federation. We are very excited to share this document with you and looking forward to hearing your views.

One of the key roles for all school Governing Bodies 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 will work with, learn from and support one another to develop localised solutions to the challenges they may face. This document outlines the proposal for Ditton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery School to join together under a Federation.

A period of consultation has been agreed by stakeholders to comment on this proposal; this will be from Monday 11th September until noon Monday 23rd October 2017.

What is Federation?

Under the Education Act of 2002, schools and local authorities can propose that between two and five schools join together to create a Federation. A Federation is a group of two or more schools with a single Governing Body. It is a way of bringing schools closer together. The schools then combine their Governing Bodies into just one Governing Body 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 mind-set 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)

What stays the same?

- Every child will continue to have their own special key carer
- Children will be taught in their own school with opportunities to join together
- Individual schools will continue to operate daily in the same way
- The name of each school will stay the same
- Each school will continue to have a separate OFSTED inspection
- Admissions policy will stay the same to each school

What will change?

- We will share a board of governors who represent both schools
- We will have an executive head teacher with a strategic role
- We will have a new name for our federation
- More opportunities to work together and share resources and expertise
- Shared budget

Is the decision to Federate reversible?

It is possible for schools to withdraw from a Federation and Governing Bodies must follow a prescribed process, set out in The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012.

What are the reasons for Federating?

To develop this vision for the future of these nursery schools, to ensure the best educational start for the young children in Halton and to ensure sustainable nursery schools for the future.

Halton is in the unique position of maintaining nursery school provision with a long history and we want to work together to make this more effective and strengthen the early year's skills and knowledge across Halton.

OFSTED have been clear in their vision that for schools to be outstanding they need to be looking outward and becoming systems leaders in their own field. The government have given nursery schools a relatively short period of time to restructure themselves into such a model.

There are many positive reasons to look at a hard federation at this time as a first step towards an exciting future -

- Become stronger together and have more impact/voice
- Future proofing high quality nursery school provision and continue the legacy for children in Halton
- Creating a centre of excellence for Early Years
- Spreading Early Years knowledge and expertise across the borough
- Creating capacity for change and development
- To attract and retain high quality staff
- Increasing Continuous Professional Development opportunities for all staff
- Flexibility in deployment of staff but consistency in offer
- Integrated approach to learning and development
- Improving and developing leadership and management opportunities
- Redefining roles and responsibilities
- Financial Sustainability for the future

Admissions

The Local Authority will remain the admissions Authority.
Admissions to each school will continue under the current arrangements.

Governance

After federating there will be a single Governing Board and a single set of committees covering both schools. Governing Boards are expected to focus on providing strategic leadership, holding the Executive Head teacher to account, overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure the school's 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 body will complete a skills audit. Governors will be appointed on the basis they have the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the schools.

It is proposed that the new Governing Body is constituted with 12 governors for January 2018. This should ensure a balance of representation from the two communities. Following the leadership restructure the constitution of the governing body may need to be reviewed.

Table 2. Consitution of the Governing Body

Category of Governor	Number proposed in Initial governing body Jan 2018	Notes
Head teacher (s)	1	Where Head teachers are in post they will be on the board as ex-officio members unless they choose to opt out.
Parent Governor	2	One from each school is the regulation number
Staff Governor	1	One from each school is the regulation number
Local Authority Governor	1	A minimum of one is required- suggested by the LA and appointed by the board.
Co-opted Governor	7	The minimum number is determined by the number of school staff on the board – which should comprise no more than one third of the total
Associate Governor	As required	Appointed as required on the basis of their skills. Associates have no voting rights.

Leadership and Staff

Both schools in the proposed federation are community schools with the Local Authority as their employer.

The existing staffing structure in all schools will remain the same for January 2018; As the Federation moves forward the new formed Governing Board would be responsible for any future staffing re-alignments in full consultation with relevant parties in order to maintain best practice and sustainability.

What Next?

How to Respond to the Consultation

The Governing Bodies of the two nursery schools would really like to hear your views. If you have any comments please let the Governing Bodies know by the deadline, which is **noon Monday 23rd October**.

You can share your comments by completing the attached response form.

Please send your reply on the official form to one of the following:

Barry Quinn Chair of Governors Ditton Nursery Ditton Early Years Centre Dundalk Road Widnes WA8 8DF	Claire Lomax Chair of Governors Warrington Road Nursery Castle Street Widnes WA8 0BS
--	--

Please mark your envelope: **FEDERATION RESPONSE** when posting your response to the relevant Nursery School.

All responses will be considered by the Governing Bodies meeting together. They will then have separate meetings to decide whether to proceed or not. We aim to reach a decision in October 2017.

Public Open Meetings will be held-

Tues 26th Sept – 3.45-4.30pm Ditton Nursery, Dundalk Road, WA8 8DF

Wed 27th Sept– 3.45-4.30pm Warrington Road Nursery School, Naylor Road, WA8 0BS

Information for this will be available on the two Nursery Schools website and the Halton Borough Council website.

www.warringtonroad.halton.sch.uk

www.ditton-nur.halton.sch.uk

www.halton.gov.uk



Consultation Response Form

In response to the consultation document outlining the proposal to form a Federation between Dilton Nursery School and Warrington Road Nursery Schools from 1st September 2017.

Responses must be received by noon Monday 23rd Oct 2017.

Date:

Name:

Address (Optional).....

.....

I am a (please select)

Parent / Carer of a child at Dilton Nursery	
Member of staff at Dilton Nursery	
Parent / Carer of a child at Warrington Road Nursery	
Member of staff at Warrington Road Nursery	
Other interested Party (please specify)	

In agreement of the Federation	YES or NO
--------------------------------	-----------

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

.....

All information provided will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We will only use this information to help in the decisions made on this consultation.