

Consultation 5 February 2018 – 23 March 2018

Proposal for Federation of



Chiddingly Primary School



East Hoathly Church of
England Primary School



St Mary the Virgin Church of
England Primary School

Dear School Community,

As you are aware, the Pioneer Federation (Chiddingly Primary School and East Hoathly Church of England Primary School) have been working closely in partnership with St Mary the Virgin Church of England Primary School since September 2017, in order to strengthen the infrastructure of the schools and continue to enhance school improvement.

The initial rewards of this partnership are clear, with children and staff already benefiting from wider expertise and resources as well as improved teaching and learning opportunities.

We plan to build on this success by establishing a formal federation across the three schools. This will enable us to invest strategically in a forward thinking federation that has the ability to provide the highest of standards across all levels of school life.

The Governing Bodies of all the schools have decided to initiate a consultation to seek the views of everyone that has an interest in our schools. We would like to invite you to share your views on our proposed federation.

This consultation will be open for six weeks from **5 February 2018** until the **23 March 2018**.

We believe that federation is the key to future sustainability, not only maintaining our schools, but helping us grow them and improve them for our children today and in years to come.

Aim

Our key aim is to ensure that our children will have access to successful, well-run schools that provide them with an excellent, well-rounded education, working in partnership with parents/carers and the wider community. We want to encourage our children to have aspirations that lead to great achievements as they learn and grow in a caring, safe and friendly community of schools.

Our schools currently have a strong ethos of care, good behaviour, creativity and hard work. The strong ethos and deep sense of community that exists within each of our schools are all things that we wish to maintain, encourage and develop further - building on the success of our existing partnership.

We would like to formalise the closer working relationship that has been forged between the schools by establishing a federation. We look forward to entering into a consultation period where we can tell you more about our proposals and find out your views.

What is a Federation?

A federation is where two or more schools work very closely together under one governing body. Each school remains legally separate and parents/carers and pupils should see little change. Federation is not a merger or a conversion to an academy; it represents a stable, long term commitment to working in partnership to the benefit of children in the schools.

Federation means that schools:

- continue to be registered separately with Ofsted, retain their existing judgments and continue to be maintained by the local authority.
 - continue to have their own separate budget.
 - have a single governing body that would set the strategic direction across the schools and ensure educational and financial sustainability and accountability.
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Admissions

The current admissions processes would be retained

- ❖ The admissions authority for Chiddingly Primary School and East Hoathly Church of England Primary School would continue to be East Sussex Local Authority
 - ❖ The admissions authority for St Mary the Virgin Church of England Primary School would be the Federation's Governing Body
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Our Proposal

The proposal is to federate Pioneer Federation (Chiddingly Primary School and East Hoathly Church of England Primary School) and St Mary the Virgin Church of England Primary School starting on **1st September 2018**.

In 2017 an opportunity for St. Mary the Virgin Church of England Primary School and the Pioneer Federation to work together was presented to the Governing Bodies. We agreed to form a collaborative partnership with the aim of sharing skills to improve outcomes for pupils.

By working collaboratively the schools have been able to develop consistent educational approaches and share skills, expertise and resources across the school communities.

Should the federation go ahead, it will be led by an executive head teacher and head of school to oversee the continued improvement, with a robust senior leadership structure in place at each school.

What does a Federation Offer?

We are passionate about ensuring the very best education for the children in our communities. We are aware of the vulnerability of rural schools which operate as a single entity and recognise this proposed model as being mutually supportive and one which provides long term stability. It brings an opportunity to achieve economies of scale to secure financial stability and sustainability of our schools into the future. Federation has been fully discussed with governors, the Local Authority and the Diocese and we feel it is the best way to achieve our goals and secure a supportive future for the schools.

The benefits and opportunities of federating

There are greatly improved opportunities for children and staff at all schools to interact, learn from each other and share best practice.

For children:

- Children will have greater access to specialist expertise from each school's current staff and a wider range of resources to broaden their curriculum.
- Children within the federation will continue to receive the highest quality teaching and learning, enriched by collaborative working and enhanced resources across the schools.
- Stability and continuity with increased opportunity to meet and work with other children in a wider community.

For parents/carers and communities:

- It strengthens the ability of our schools to develop and improve while maximising our ability to cope with changes in educational policy, enabling us to continue to provide excellent education in our villages.
- It extends the opportunities available to children and their families by creating a long term, stable school structure.

For staff:

- Leadership will be secured for the future and staff development opportunities will enable our schools to retain valued staff.
- Shared staff meetings and combined staff training have the effect of widening the circle of peers that our staff can call upon for fresh and creative ideas and support.
- Shared ideas and resources help staff avoid needless duplication of effort and materials and will allow for more time to be devoted to teaching and learning.
- Increased joint working enables us to develop our subject leads across the schools as well as giving us an opportunity to jointly develop and plan our school curriculum to the benefit of all our pupils.

For governors:

- A single governing body will be formed to replace the existing governing bodies. This new single group of governors will be able to benefit from shared experience and good practice.
- The membership of the governing body will be skills based.

The governing body

The role of the federated governing body will be to:

- Ensure that the character of each school is maintained whilst moving forward as one.
- Define a shared vision and strategic direction for the schools that places the children at its heart.
- Ensure due diligence and financial probity; honest and effective financial management.
- Hold the executive head teacher to account for the educational performance of the schools.

Staffing

A new single governing body would be formed as required by the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012, to take overall responsibility for all schools within the federation.

The existing senior leadership team would continue, currently led by Mr. James Procter as Executive Headteacher for the Federation. **Alongside the Executive Headteacher, the**

leadership team in the schools will consist of a Head of School (with Headteacher qualification), an Assistant Headteacher and/or Senior Teachers.

Staff will continue with their current terms and conditions of employment.

New Staff employed by the governing body would be transferred to be employed by the new Federation governing body.

The Governing Body

The proposed new federated governing body would comprise 12 members. This would comprise:

- 2 Parent governors (elected by the parents of all schools)**
- 1 Head teacher**
- 1 Staff governor (elected by the staff of all schools)**
- 1 Local Authority governor**
- 1 Co-opted governor**
- 6 Foundation governors**

Federation consultation process

The governors of all the schools have set up a consultation process to seek the views of parents, staff, community, the local authority, the Chichester Diocesan Board of Education and other key stakeholders. The consultation process will last six weeks, starting on **Monday 5 February 2018 and ending on Friday 23 March 2018.**

Governors welcome your views and comments and invite you to any of the following meetings, regardless of which is your child's school:

Day	Date	Time	Location
Wednesday	21 Feb 2018	9 am	Chiddingly
Wednesday	21 Feb 2018	6 pm	East Hoathly
Thursday	22 Feb 2018	9 am	St Mary the Virgin
Thursday	22 Feb 2018	6 pm	St Mary the Virgin

If you are unable to attend one of these meetings, and would like to discuss this proposal, informal group sessions will be arranged, depending on demand. Please contact your school to make an appointment in the usual manner.

How do I submit my views?

Comments and views must be received by Friday 23 March 2018 at 3.30pm.

Written responses should be addressed to the **Clerk to the Governing Body** of your school.

A box for written responses will be provided in each school.

Alternatively, you may use the appropriate email address:

Pioneer Federation clerk@pioneerfederation.co.uk

When will the decision be announced?

Following the consultation period the 2 Governing Bodies will consider the views and comments before meeting to make a final decision on this proposal.

The governing body from each school will make its own decision at extraordinary meetings held at the same time.

We look forward to hearing from you and will, of course, keep you fully informed regarding our final decision by **Tuesday 27 March 2018**

Yours sincerely,



Amanda Watson
Chair of Governors
Pioneer Federation



James Procter
Executive Headteacher



Lorna Simm
Chair of Governors
St Mary the Virgin