

Formal Consultation to establish a  
School Federation incorporating  
Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools

**3rd June 2019 -  
14th July 2019**



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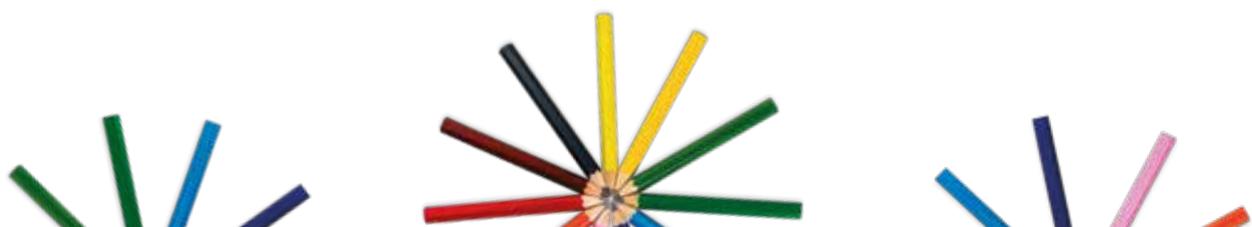
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Urdu

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## I Foreword

Federation of schools is a legal process which enables between two and six schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing governance arrangements and a single governing body that will make decisions in the best interest of all the schools, staff and pupils within that federation.

The governing bodies of Eveswell Primary School and Somerton Primary School have met individually and collectively with the Local Authority and have confirmed that they wish to promote a formal federation between the two schools.

If this proposal is approved, both schools will continue to maintain their own individual identities with regards to name, culture and ethos and will continue to manage their own individual budgets. The arrangement merely involves establishing a single governing body to govern the two schools. The two governing bodies have worked collaboratively since September 2016 during which time the two schools have been managed by a single Executive Headteacher. This arrangement has impacted positively on both schools.

The Local Authority is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having effective leaders in its schools is intrinsic to this.

This consultation document therefore sets out the case for a change to the leadership and governance arrangements at Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools and has been prepared jointly by the two governing bodies and the Local Authority. The main purpose of the document is to provide information to, and gather views from, identified stakeholders. The document should provide sufficient information to allow you to make an informed decision as to whether or not you support the proposal. A consultation response pro-forma is included within the document and can be returned to either Eveswell Primary School, Somerton Primary School or the Civic Centre.

This proposal is being taken forward jointly by the two governing bodies and the Local Authority. We look forward to receiving your views.

John Routley  
Chair of Governors  
Eveswell Primary School

Alan Speight  
Chair of Governors  
Somerton Primary School

Sarah Morgan  
Chief Education Officer  
Newport City Council



## 2 The Proposal

The governing bodies of Eveswell Primary School and Somerton Primary School (the governing bodies), together with Newport City Council (the LA), proposes to use the powers granted under the Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 to establish The Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership (the Federation).

The term 'federation' describes a formal and legal agreement by which the schools involved work together in formal partnership with shared governance under a single governing body. The existing governing bodies will be dissolved and replaced by a new, single governing body with strategic oversight of both schools.

The two schools have worked on a collaborative basis since September 2016 and have shared a single Executive Headteacher during this time. The governing bodies have consulted with the LA and all parties are in support of the proposal.

The aim of the Federation is for the two schools to work in partnership to:

- develop the excellent shared practice that guarantees outstanding experiences and increased opportunities for pupils and staff, and
- develop the common goals and reflective approaches to teaching and learning that will ensure that both communities benefit from a quality education.

This will ensure significant positive outcomes and improved standards for both school communities.

The proposed name of the Federation is 'The Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership'. If the proposal is approved, the federation will commence on 1st January 2020.

## 3 Background

The two schools have worked on a collaborative basis for almost three years and have shared a single Executive Headteacher since September 2016. This arrangement has been successful and has had a positive impact on both schools.

Both schools are 3-11 English-medium community primary schools. The following characteristics apply to the schools as at January 2019:

Characteristic	Eveswell Primary	Somerton Primary
Capacity (excluding Nursery)	420	203
Admission Number	60	29
Pupils on roll (excluding Nursery)	419	168
Free School Meals (FSM) – 3 year average	10%	45%



Characteristic	Eveswell Primary	Somerton Primary
Attendance Target	95.8%	94.3%
Pupils achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2	95%	100%
Pupils achieving the expected outcome in the Foundation Phase	97%	84%
Support Category	Green	Yellow

Eveswell Primary School has been in a “green” support category since categorisation was first introduced. This means that it is a highly effective well run school with strong leadership and clear priorities for improvement.

Somerton Primary School has improved from “amber” to “yellow” under the current collaborative arrangements. This demonstrates that the current arrangements are working well and have already supported significant school improvement which is predicted to continue.

By entering into a formal federation, the two schools will continue to work together under shared leadership to utilise their strengths to improve standards across the federation and together address areas in need of improvement. By federating under one governing body, the climate of trust, openness and willingness to work together that already exists can be further enhanced.

Geographically the two schools are located only 0.7 miles apart. However, they are located in different clusters, with Eveswell Primary School forming part of the Llanwern cluster and Somerton Primary School being included in the Lliswerry cluster.

The current collaborative arrangement commenced in September 2016 when the long-standing and experienced Headteacher of Eveswell Primary School was also appointed as the Executive Headteacher of Somerton Primary School, initially on only a temporary three-year basis until August 2019. The success of the arrangement has however led to this being extended pending the establishment of a formal federation.

Each of the two schools benefits from a full-time Deputy Headteacher, who both have a reduced classroom commitment to support the Headteacher when she is located at the other school.

A shared Senior Management Team, comprising of the Executive Headteacher and both Deputy Headteachers, oversees strategic planning. This ensures that operational systems are robust and cater for the needs of both individual schools.

Staff training days are mostly shared, and this provides both sets of staff with relevant continued professional development opportunities and reduces the overall cost to each school. Periodic joint staff meetings, monitoring, triad observations and moderation activities further support the raising of standards for all pupils across both schools. There have also been opportunities for staff, at their desire, to move across the two sites to support continued professional development.

Over the past three years, there have been numerous examples of ‘best practice’ that have been developed and then shared across the two schools, which has enabled both schools to deliver improved outcomes for learners.



## 4 Federation Regulations and Principles

The Welsh Government's policy objective is to promote collaboration between all parts of the education system to improve outcomes. School federation is a more formal way of extending collaboration and promoting closer working relationships and is the principal initiative for achieving formal partnership working amongst schools to improve performance and narrow the attainment gap for deprived pupils.

The federation of schools is a legal process that enables schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing a governing body that will make decisions in the best interests of the schools, staff and pupils within that federation.

To be successful, federation needs to be based on a commitment to work as a group of schools and a willingness to do things differently for the added benefit of all pupils, their wellbeing and achievements.

One of the advantages of federation is that the schools within the federation remain in their communities and keep their individual identities. However, the existing governing bodies will be dissolved and replaced by a new, single governing body that will have oversight of, and equal responsibility for, the work of all schools within the federation.

The membership of a governing body for a federation of schools is almost identical to the membership of an ordinary governing body with all stakeholders being represented although there is more flexibility in the proportions of representation of each category of governor. This means that a governing body of a federation can choose a constitution and membership that suits their particular circumstances as long as they meet the minimum (15) and maximum (27) numbers of governors set out in the regulations.

Schools in a federation will maintain their own delegated budget, name, character, school uniform and ethos, and will also be able to explore the advantages of sharing resources such as facilities, IT, staff, school buildings etc. Any decision to federate will not however override the need for a LA to intervene or act on school improvement or school organisation issues where appropriate.

The key principles of a federated approach can be defined as follows:

- There will be a single governing body with strategic oversight of all schools within the federation;
- Each school retains its name, category, budget, staff and remains in its community;
- Each school will have its own Estyn inspection, although increasingly these are co-ordinated to happen at the same time for all schools within the federation to minimise stress and disruption;
- The governing body of a federation can use resources and staff across the federation to improve the educational outcomes for all pupils, although an audit trail must be kept;
- Separate accounts are produced for each of the schools within the federation;
- The governing body of a federation cannot require existing staff to work across all schools, but they can negotiate with the school staff unions over whether flexible contracts can be introduced;
- New staff can be appointed to work across the schools in the federation.



## 5 The Consultation Process and Timeline

The **Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014** outline a statutory requirement to seek the views of stakeholders on federation proposals. This document therefore represents the responsibility of the governing bodies and the LA to consult with appropriate stakeholders.

Appropriate stakeholders for this purpose are defined as follows:

- The staff of both schools;
- The parents, carers and guardians of pupils attending both schools;
- The pupils attending both schools (exercised via the two School Councils);
- Teaching and support staff unions representing teachers and staff at both schools;
- Local Ward Members for both schools;
- The Headteachers of all schools within the Llanwern and Lliswerry cluster areas;
- The Education Achievement Service for South East Wales;
- Estyn.

The proposal and consultation document will be published on the Eveswell Primary School website, the Somerton Primary School website and the Newport City Council website. Hard copies will be available for inspection at all reasonable times at both Eveswell Primary School and Somerton Primary School. The consultation period will commence on Monday 3rd June 2019 and will conclude at midnight on Sunday 14th July 2019. During the consultation period, views can be expressed in writing to either of the two governing bodies or to the LA at the following addresses:

- The governing body of Eveswell Primary School  
Chepstow Road  
Newport, NP19 8GX
- The governing body of Somerton Primary School  
Hawthorne Fosse  
Newport, NP19 9AB
- Chief Education Officer  
Room 425w  
Civic Centre  
Newport, NP20 4UR

Following conclusion of the consultation period, a report will be prepared which will outline any comments received. Early in the Autumn Term 2019, each governing body will then decide whether they wish to put forward the proposal for formal approval by Newport City Council's Cabinet Member for Education & Skills.

The remainder of the Autumn Term 2019 will be used to develop an Instrument of Government (a legal document that records the constitution of a governing body) for the single governing body, and to elect and appoint governors as appropriate including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the federation.

The federation will be formally established with effect from 1st January 2020 at which point the governing bodies for the two individual schools will be dissolved.



## 6 Admission Arrangements

The admission arrangements for each school will be unchanged by this proposal, and the LA will remain the Admission Authority for both schools.

Parents will be required to apply for a place for their child at the school of their choice, not at the federation, as each school will continue to operate as a separate and distinct establishment.

In instances where an application made to one of the two schools is unsuccessful, there will be no automatic consideration of the other school unless parents have specifically outlined this when completing the application form.

## 7 Composition of the Governing Body

The membership of a governing body for a federation of schools is almost identical to the membership of an ordinary governing body with all stakeholders being represented although there is more flexibility in the proportions of representation of each category of governor. This means that a governing body of a federation can choose a constitution and membership that suits their particular circumstances as long as they meet the minimum (15) and maximum (27) numbers of governors set out in the regulations.

The regulations outline however that there is:

- At least one but no more than two parent governors representing each school;
- At least one but no more than two teacher governors for the federation;
- At least one but no more than two staff governors for the federation;
- At least two but no more than four LA governors for the federation;
- At least two but no more than four Community governors for the federation;
- The Head or Acting Head of the Federation.

The agreed composition of this federated governing body is therefore as follows:

Governor Type	Number
Parent	4
Teacher	2
Staff	2
LA appointed	4
Community	4
Headteacher	1
Total	17

The federated governing body can also appoint additional non-voting “observer” governors where appropriate and where specific skills or experience are required.



## 8 Benefits and Challenges

Benefits of a federated approach include:

- Consistency of teaching and learning methodology especially cross-phase;
- Reduced transitional dips in pupil performance;
- Streamlining of policies and structures;
- Sharing of best practice, preparation materials and resources;
- Enhanced opportunities for pupil activities;
- Enhanced opportunities for staff professional development;
- Increased opportunity for middle management development;
- Ability to choose a senior leadership structure which suits local circumstances leading to easier recruitment of staff;
- Opportunities for school leadership beyond a single school;
- Opportunities for the creation of new roles that can be shared across schools;
- Improved social opportunities for pupils;
- Opportunities to maximise resources and professional expertise and achieve financial efficiencies from economies of scale;
- Builds knowledge, adds capacity and supports efficiency by providing an economy of scale for undertaking key activities;
- Promotes the broader welfare of students by offering potential for bringing together pastoral, health, careers, youth and other services to meet their all-round needs;
- Support for schools in difficulty;
- Schools with strengths can contribute to the learning of others;
- Supports school improvement by enabling schools to draw on the resources of other schools to tackle problems, share expertise, raise expectations and address the needs of particular groups of pupils;
- Possible easier recruitment of governors with fewer governor vacancies.

The keys to making this a successful federation will be:

- Building trust between the LA, the governing body and the school communities;
- Commitment of time and resources from both schools;
- A shared vision and common purpose of what needs to be done to improve attainment and achievement at all levels;
- A shared identity between the two schools eg., common aims on curricular and non-curricular activities;
- Clear leadership and management structures;
- Sufficient time for all parties to be at ease with the proposed changes;
- Ensuring that all parties feel like they are equal partners;
- A sense of ownership by both schools;
- Good communication with parents and staff over the changes that will be implemented as a result of the federation.

Notwithstanding these benefits, the federation will no doubt create some challenges such as:

- An increased workload for governors during the inception and first year;
- Potential loss of experienced governors;
- Initial concern amongst governors, parents and staff whilst the change is being embedded.

In this case however, it is not perceived that these will be significant barriers given that the schools have been working together collaboratively since September 2016. A fairness and equalities impact assessment has been conducted for this proposal and is available on the Newport City Council website.



## 9 Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is a Federation?**

A federation is a legal governance structure where between two and six schools share a single governing body. The schools will retain their individuality, their own name, ethos, budget and school uniform but could share resources, facilities and good practice.

### **Why should schools federate?**

Working together through a single governing body structure enables schools to raise standards and maintain local education provision by sharing resources, staff, expertise, and facilities, as well as sharing best practice. A single governing body also provides an effective and accountable mechanism for schools to pool resources, including staff and budgets, release capacity in the senior management team and gain economies of scale and efficiencies.

### **Will my school lose its identity within a Federation?**

Schools within a federation will not lose their individual identity though they will share a single governing body. The schools retain their separate legal status and have their own budget allocations and will be subject to their own Estyn Inspection. The schools will also remain in their community and retain their own character, name, ethos and school uniform. Whilst each school receives and must account for its own separate budget, there is scope, through the single governing body, to use pooled budgets across the schools in the federation.

### **What are the inspection arrangements for Federated Schools?**

The Education (School Inspection) (Wales) Regulations 2006 require Estyn to inspect maintained schools every seven years and produce an individual report for each school. This would also apply to schools in the federation. Estyn cannot move a school inspection to later than seven years but may carry out inspections in a way that the schools in a federation are inspected in the same term. Estyn will consider requests from a governing body or LA to inspect schools in the same term and would try to ensure that the inspection teams for the schools in a federation have overlapping membership.

### **What happens to staff within a federation?**

In a federation, all staff would be employed on the same conditions of service as now and by the same employer. In this circumstance, the employer is the LA, although the governing body of the federation retains responsibility for certain staffing functions i.e. staff grievance, capability, redundancy, staff disciplinary and dismissal matters and appointments. The governing body of a federation would also be able to appoint new staff to work across all schools in the federation.

### **Can a federation have a single Headteacher with responsibility for all the schools in that federation?**

Yes, and this is the preferred model under this proposal.

### **Are parent governors elected by the parents from their school only or from parents across all schools in the federation?**

In law, every school must have at least one parent governor elected by the parents at that school, but no more than two parent governors per school. It is reasonable therefore, that once a decision has been made as to how many parent governors each school would have, the parents of only that school should vote in the parent governor elections. If no parents in a particular school stand for election, the federated governing body may appoint a parent of a registered pupil at the school; or the parent of a registered pupil from another school in the federation; or the parent of a child of compulsory school age as a parent governor.



### **Can a federation be time-limited?**

A federation should be seen as a long-term commitment and not as a quick fix. In taking forward this proposal, the LA and governing bodies have considered in depth the benefits and risks of establishing a federation in relation to the impact on children and young people's achievements. Nonetheless, the 2014 Federation Regulations do allow individual schools to leave a federation and for a federation to be dissolved.

### **What are the differences between school federations and school mergers?**

If two schools merge they may remain open in their community but they become one multiple site school with a single name, governing body, Headteacher, ethos, budget, character and school uniform. It is possible there would be redundancies or staff would have to re-apply for posts in the new single school. In a federation, the schools remain open in their communities but they also retain their own individuality, name, ethos, character budget and school uniform. Staff would also keep their jobs and may have wider opportunities for further professional development by working across the schools in the federation.

### **Can schools establish a joint governing body before formally federating?**

No. The governing body of the federated schools comes into being on the date the federation comes into force which must be at least 125 days from the date the federation proposals are published. This means that the governing bodies of the schools that are federating will have to have held elections for the core governors, i.e. parents, teacher and staff, and the LA will have to have appointed their LA governors. On the date the federation comes into force the newly constituted single governing body can meet and appoint their community governors.

### **Can we change the name of the school and or give all the schools in the federation the same name?**

One of the key drivers and benefits for federation is that schools do not lose their individuality, name and identity and remain as separate establishments. The names of all the schools in the federation will appear on the new instrument of government as well as the name of the federation. All schools in a federation must retain their individual reference number and budget and it could become quite complex and confusing if all the schools decided to change their name and adopt a single name when they have to account for separate budgets.



# Consultation Response Pro-forma

## Establishment of a School Federation incorporating Eveswell Primary School and Somerton Primary School

Your views matter. Please tell us what you think about the proposal by completing this response form and returning it to one of the addresses at the bottom of the form. Please note that any comments you make may be included in the consultation report that will be publicly available. Any information you provide will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

### 1. Do you support the proposal to establish a formal school federation incorporating Eveswell Primary School and Somerton Primary School?

YES

NO

### 2. Please use this box below to provide any specific comments you might have on the proposal:

### 3. Do you believe that the proposal will have a positive or negative effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Positive

Negative

No effect

### 4. If you think it will have a negative effect, what steps could we take to lessen or remove this and improve positive effects?

### 5. Do you believe that the proposal will treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language?

Yes  No



Please select your Ethnic group			
White British		Asian-Bangladeshi	
White Irish		Asian-Indian	
Any other White background (please state): _____		Asian-Pakistani	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller		Any other Asian background	
White and Asian		Black Caribbean	
White and Black African		Black African	
White and Black Caribbean		Any other Black background	
Any other Mixed background (please state): _____		Arab	
Asian-Bangladeshi		Chinese	
Asian-Indian		Any other ethnic group (please state): _____	
Asian-Pakistani		Prefer not to say	

### Welsh language

Do you consider yourself a Welsh speaker?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say
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### Caring Responsibilities

Do you care for children of school age?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say
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Do you care for children of pre-school age?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say
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Do you care for a dependent adult or child above school age?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say
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Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Category of respondent (e.g. parent): \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a parent, please outline which school your child(ren) currently attend(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Once completed, please return to one of the following addresses or alternatively by emailing the response to **school.reorg@newport.gov.uk**: Eveswell Primary School, Chepstow Road, Newport, NP19 8GX, or Somerton Primary School, Hawthorne Fosse, Newport, NP19 9AB, or Newport City Council (Education Service), Room 425w, Civic Centre, Newport, NP20 4UR.

**The closing date for your response is midnight on Sunday 14th July 2019.**

