

Consultation document outlining the proposal
to form a federation between

St John the Baptist Church of England
(Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

&

Bomere Heath Church of England (Voluntary
Controlled) Primary School

The Governing bodies of both St John the Baptist CE Primary School & Bomere Heath CE Primary School present this document for consultation.

This is your opportunity to let us know what you think about the proposal.

This paper contains:

1. An explanation of the proposal; the reasons why we are recommending the federation of the two schools and it also sets out the proposed timeline for implementation.
2. A response form for you to complete and return to us, letting us know your views.
3. Details of 'surgery style', meetings for parents/carers and the wider community that have been arranged to help the consultation.

Circulation:

Parents and Carers

Staff

Governors

The Lichfield Diocese

Head of Education, Improvements & Efficiency, Shropshire Council

Cllr Nick Bardsley

Cllr John Overall

Cllr Daniel Kawczynski

Mr Colin Case, Ruyton XI Towns Parish Council

Mrs Jan Burgess, Bomere Heath Parish Council

Rt Hon Owen Patterson MP for North Shropshire

Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP Secretary of State for Education

Why federation?

Both schools would benefit from working collaboratively in a formal partnership as it would ensure sustainability at a time when locally, year on year, pupil numbers of Reception age pupils are falling. It would also provide greater opportunities for pupils to work in partnership with peers in another school. Financial savings can be made by both schools through working in federation which can be then spent on improving provision.

St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School was inspected by Ofsted in November 2014 and judged to be a good school. Leadership and Management was judged to be good. At Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School a key priority recently has been to strengthen leadership and management. The governing body and staff are working to achieve this, and the Local Authority is actively encouraging a federation whilst retaining the identity of each school.

As Church of England Controlled schools the schools have a shared, common ethos, governance structures, responsibilities and values. The Local Authority (LA) favours a federation as it will work to address concerns in a supportive, effective and timely way whilst providing significant benefits across both schools.

The LA has some significant experience in brokering and supporting federations and has found that the system offers an excellent model for both short term and long term sustainable school improvement whilst being beneficial for pupils and staff of schools involved.

What is federation?

A federation, which may be referred to as a formal, 'hard' federation, is two or more schools that share a single governing body. The ability to federate is provided for by Section 24 of the Education Act 2002. Unlike an amalgamation, or merger of schools (where two schools amalgamating would become a single school) schools in a federation retain their identity, their name, school budget (if determined to do so by the governing body) and have their own Ofsted Inspection. Governors will have joint responsibility for the schools in the federation. The federation is therefore a true partnership as governors work to secure the interests of the schools. This is NOT an amalgamation of schools.

What are the benefits?

One strategic governing body means that schools can work formally together to improve opportunities for children.

The key considerations for the existing governors of both schools are:

Maintaining and improving further our schools' educational standards through effective leadership in both schools which has a relentless focus on delivering high quality teaching and learning opportunities

Ensuring the individual character of both schools is maintained, recognising their significance in their communities

Maintaining the strong Christian ethos of both schools

Securing long term sustainability

Federation brings:

- Strong leadership using more strategic leadership and management structures, allowing school-based leaders to focus on teaching, learning and raising standards for all children;
- Shared responsibilities and accountabilities for children across communities rather than just within a specific school.
- Opportunities to develop future leaders through mentoring and sharing expertise;
- Attractive recruitment opportunities and retention of staff by providing a range of professional development and new career pathways for staff across the federation;
- New opportunities for staff to work together, increasing motivation reducing workload and isolation through shared planning and activities;
- Ways to maximise the sharing of resources, take advantage of economies of scale and avoid the duplication of resources and effort;
- The offer of extended services across schools and a variety of activities, childcare, parent support and community access which an individual school may not be able to provide;
- Community cohesion to help sustain education provision within semi-rural communities.

Long term vision of the federation:

As a federation, St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School and Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School will provide an excellent education for all pupils centred on Christian values. Our schools will be safe, stimulating and happy environments for children, parents and staff. We will provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and expect staff to believe in the ability of all pupils; having high expectations of what they can achieve. Children at our schools will experience consistently high quality teaching to enable each child to achieve his or her full potential. We will encourage each child to develop a sense of self-esteem, self-discipline, personal responsibility and respect for others. We will have high expectations of behaviour.

The federation will foster an environment of innovation and continuous improvement. Staff will be expected to take ownership of their professional development and engage with the opportunities presented. The two schools will exist in a mutually beneficial relationship, sharing resources and building on their respective strengths to deliver a high quality of education for ALL pupils.

What is the process?

- Informal discussions and decision in principle to proceed by each school considering federation
- Statutory Consultation – a minimum of 6 weeks by which written representations may be made regarding the proposals
- A joint meeting of governing bodies to consider outcomes from the statutory consultation
- Individual governing bodies make their final decision
- If both governing bodies decide to proceed, a new Instrument of Government for the federation is drafted by the Local Authority and Lichfield Diocese and subsequently approved by the federated governing body.
- Federation takes effect from the agreed date.

Timeline for proposed federation:

June/July 2015	Information gathering
8 th July 2015	Governing bodies agree to investigate the option of federation between the two schools.
16 th /17 th July 2015	Preparation of a proposal consultation document for presentation to the Joint Collaboration Committee.
3 rd August 2015	Presentation of the proposal document for governors and public consultation draft document to Joint Collaboration Committee for consideration. (Documents revised if required in light of discussion).
St. Johns Governors 7 th September 2015	The governing bodies consider proposal document from the joint collaboration committee at formal full governing body meetings.
Bomere Governors 7 th September 2015	Governing bodies vote on whether to proceed with the proposal to next stage. If agreement is given... Governing bodies consider public consultation document. If changes are required, the revised document to be presented to the joint collaboration committee for approval.
9 th September 2015	Issue formal consultation document to all stakeholders (minimum of six weeks consultation period)
St John's Ruyton 15 th September 2015	Surgery style meetings for parents/carers and the wider community. The Chair and Vice Chair of governors for both schools will be available on both dates.
Bomere Heath 16 th September 2015	(Parents/Carers are welcome to attend a surgery at either school, regardless of which school you use).
<i>Both surgeries will run from 3.30pm to 5pm and then from 6pm to 7.30pm.</i>	
21 st October 2015	Last day for responses to the Consultation Document
22 nd October 2015	Collation of responses from public consultation (Joint Collaboration Committee).

23 rd October 2015 4.00pm (St John the Baptist)	Presentation of collated responses from public consultation to all governors (from both governing bodies). Individual governing bodies then withdraw to meet and make final decision on whether they wish to proceed with federation.
9 th November 2015 4.00pm (Bomere Heath)	If both governing bodies resolve to proceed with federation from 9 th November 2015, the existing governing bodies will be dissolved and the new Federation Governing Body will be constituted. (A new Instrument of Government for the federation is drafted by the Local Authority/Diocese and approved)
9th November 2015	Schools operate as a federation.
	Parent governor elections

Context of the two schools in the proposed federation:

	St John The Baptist CE Primary School	Bomere Heath CE Primary School
Number of roll:	117	122
Number of classes:	5 Reception to Year 6 made up of R/Y1, Y1/2, Y3/4, Y4/5, Y6	5 Reception to Year 6 made up of R, Y1/2, Y2/3, Y3/4/5, Y5/6
Percentage of Special Educational Needs/Disabilities:	8.5%	17%
Number of Pupils with Statements	5%	2.4%
Percentage of Pupils at School SEN Support	3.4%	14.6%
Percentage currently eligible for free school meals:	9%	6.1%
Attendance	96.8%	96.6%

What will this mean for our schools?

What will stay the same?

Each school will retain its own identity and name.

Children will continue to be taught in their local school although some activities may be shared. Both schools will retain the Christian distinctiveness

Present staff will remain employed by their current school

What will change?

The federation will have a name as it is a separate legally constituted corporate body. (We welcome suggestions for a name for the Federation as part of your consultation response).

All land and property, rights and liabilities which immediately before the federation date was held by the governing body of the federation school transfers to the governing body of the federation

Under the proposal, the two separate school governing bodies will be dissolved and replaced by a single, newly-appointed governing body with responsibility for both schools within the federation. The new governing body will be made up of 18 governors in the following categories (Regulations determine degree of flexibility)

Constitution of the federated governing body:

2 x Headteachers

2 x Parent governors; 1 from each school

1 x Staff governor

1 x Local Authority governor

4 x Foundation governors

7/8 x Co-opted governors

Proposed leadership structure:

The current Headteacher of St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School will become Executive Headteacher across both the schools. The current Headteacher will remain in post as Headteacher of Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School. They will both be accountable to a single governing body.

Staffing:

Terms and conditions for staff will remain unchanged, as will staffing policies and procedures. Staff will remain at their current school, although the specialist knowledge and creativity of individual teachers may be shared by both schools. In future, some members of staff could move or work across sites as part of their career development or talent sharing. New staff joining either school after federation may be offered a 'federation' contract.

How do I respond?

The governing bodies of both St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School and Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School would really like to hear your views. If you have any comments please let the governing bodies know by the deadline, which is at midday on 21st October 2015.

You can share your comments by:

- 1) Completing the attached questionnaire or writing a letter, sending it to:

St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School, Church Street, Ruyton XI Towns, Shropshire, SY4 1LA. Marked for the attention of Ms S Bayliss, Chair of Governors.

Or;

Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School, The Crescent, Bomere Heath, Shropshire, SY4 3PQ. Marked for the attention of Mrs L Holland, Chair of Governors.

- 2) Emailing your comments to;

chair@ruyton.shropshire.sch.uk

or

chair@bomereheath.shropshire.sch.uk

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) can be found in the consultation area of each of the schools' websites.

RESPONSE FORM to consultation document outlining the proposal to form a federation from 1st September 2015 between St John the Baptist Church of England (VA) Primary School and Bomere Heath Church of England (VA) Primary School.

Responses must be received by midday on 21st October 2015.

Name:

Address(Optional):

Postcode(Optional):

1) I am a: (please tick box as appropriate)

Parent/Carer of a pupil at St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School	
Parent /Carer of a pupil at Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School	
Member of staff at St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School	
Member of staff at Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School	
Other interested party (Please state).....	

2) What is your view of the proposal for federation of the two schools? (please tick box as appropriate)

I support the proposal for federation	
I do not support the proposal for federation	
I am not sure	

3) Would you like to provide more detail on your view? Do you have any further comments? (continue on reverse of page if required)

4) Whilst both schools will retain their names, a name is needed for the federated governing body. If you have a suggestion for this name then please share it here.

Please send your response to either: St John the Baptist C of E (VC) Primary School, Church Street, Ruyton XI Towns, Shropshire, SY4 1LA. Marked for the attention of Ms S Bayliss, Chair of Governors or Bomere Heath C of E (VC) Primary School, The Crescent, Bomere Heath, Shropshire, SY4 3PQ, marked for the attention of Mrs L Holland, Chair of Governors.

Please note that your responses will remain confidential to the schools' governing bodies.

Thank you for your response.