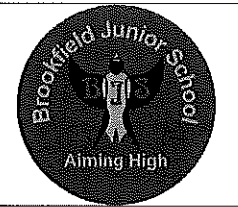




## Proposed Federation of Brookfield Infant School and Brookfield Junior School



19<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Proposal**

The governing bodies of Brookfield Infant School and Brookfield Junior School have resolved to federate under the terms of The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017.

A federation is a formal agreement between two or more schools to work together under a single governing body to raise standards, promote inclusion, find new ways of approaching teaching and learning and build capacity between the schools in a coherent manner.

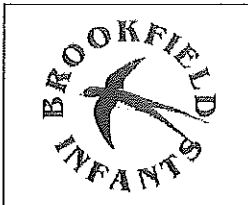
In our case an Executive Headteacher will lead both schools, with a Senior Leadership structure in each school. Staff will usually remain working within the school to which they are appointed, though it may be possible for staff to work across more than one school to provide development opportunities, if this is deemed beneficial. It is possible that newly appointed staff (including those promoted from jobs within) will be offered contracts with a condition that makes it necessary for them to work in all of the schools in the Federation.

Each school will retain its own separate identity in respect of its budget, admissions, performance tables and inspection by OFSTED. However, federation will provide:

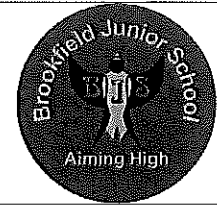
- The delivery of an enriched curriculum that is broader and richer than any single institution, to meet the diverse range of learning needs
- Leadership development allowing the Executive Headteacher more time to focus on strategic issues
- Development of senior leadership team to provide leaders for the future
- The sharing of expert staff and resources to enrich the opportunities of pupils
- Economies of scale through the joint purchasing of goods and contracting of services
- New leadership and governance models determined by the need of the Federation.

The essential features for a successful federation include:

- Sense of shared identity and common purpose
- A strong cohesive leadership across all levels of the schools
- The capacity to deliver (strong management infrastructure)
- A willingness to operate in a united way
- A commitment of both time and resources to ensure federation success



## Proposed Federation of Brookfield Infant School and Brookfield Junior School



### Governing Body

A single governing body will be created to govern both schools, It is proposed that the governing body will be 12 members strong, made up as follows:

- 2 Parent Governors
- 1 Staff Governor
- 1 Executive Headteacher
- 1 LA Governor
- 7 Co-opted Governors

In addition a number of Associate Members may be appointed to take an active part in any committees or working groups.

### Admissions Authority

The Local Authority, Kent County Council is the admissions authority for both schools and the present admissions policy of each school will continue.

### Consultation

You are invited to respond to these proposals in writing by 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017 addressed to:

Rachel Pearson, Clerk to the Governors, Brookfield Infant School and Brookfield Junior School, c/o School Office, Brookfield Infant School, Swallow Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent. ME20 6PY.

Email (for both schools) [clerk@brookfield-infant.kent.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@brookfield-infant.kent.sch.uk)

In addition a public consultation meeting is being held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 9am – 10am at Brookfield Junior School in the Family Room and you are invited to attend, ask questions and share your thoughts on these proposals.

Yours faithfully

Handwritten signature of Mrs J Johnson in cursive.

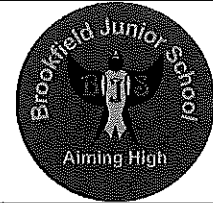
Mrs J Johnson  
Chair of Governors  
Brookfield Infant School

Handwritten signature of Mrs C Pratley in cursive.

Mrs C Pratley  
Chair of Governors  
Brookfield Junior School



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Brookfield Junior School**

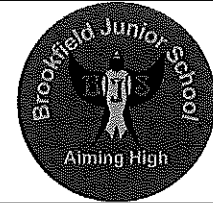


**Differences between Federation and Amalgamation of schools**

	<b>Federation</b>	<b>Amalgamation</b>
<b>Decision</b>	Schools propose. Schools decide after consultation.	LA and/or schools may propose. LA decides after consultation
<b>Consultation</b>	1 stage – 6 weeks	2 stages – first usually for 6 weeks on the proposals. Then issue a statutory notice and allow 4 weeks for representation
<b>School Identity and Legal Status</b>	No school closures. All schools keep existing identity and name.	Involves closure of all but one school and expansion of the remaining school. End up with one expanded school.
<b>OfSTED</b>	All schools keep existing designation	Inspection of one amalgamated school
<b>OfSTED Designation</b>	All schools keep existing designation	Expanded school has designation of expanded school
<b>Governance</b>	One re-constituted governing body for the federated schools.	One re-constituted governing body for the amalgamated school.
<b>Headteacher</b>	Either separate Headteachers for each school or one Executive Headteacher over the federated school, but other models are possible and could involve associate heads heading up certain functions.	Usually one Headteacher or Executive Headteacher over the amalgamated school, but other models are possible and could involve associate heads heading up certain functions or sites
<b>Staffing Structure</b>	Either one staffing structure or separate ones for each school	Usually one staffing structure for the amalgamated school but other models are possible
<b>Budgets</b>	Each school receives separate LA funding by the governing body and may then choose either to keep them all and manage them as one budget	Amalgamated school funded as a single school
<b>Admissions</b>	Admissions are managed separately for each school	Admissions to the one school but distance criteria will take account of the distance from the nearest school site.



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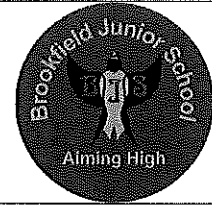


**Sources of further information about school federation and answers to some frequently asked questions**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
<p>If the Federation were to happen, what changes would I see in my child's school?</p>	<p>The main change would be the new governance and leadership arrangements – there would be one joint governing body for both schools and a new leadership. The new leadership arrangements would ensure day to day continuity for children, parents and staff by having a Senior Leadership Team based in each school who would be responsible for the day to day leadership of that school, with a strong focus on teaching and learning. The Head of School would be supported by an Executive Head teacher who would have overall responsibility for both schools and with a strong focus on improving standards and strategic matters. The Executive Head teacher would spend time in both schools. There would be opportunities for each Head of School to work with the Executive Head teacher and each other. Within this arrangement we can share and develop leadership across the federation by using skills and experience flexibly across both schools, so that each school could benefit from a wider pool of talent and expertise. There are no immediate plans to change other aspects of the staffing structure in either school as a result of federation. Over time we may seek to share staff as roles develop, become vacant, or new ones are created. The individual identity and character of the schools would stay the same including: school uniform; school identity; parent organisations; and sports teams etc. Both schools pride themselves on their caring school approach where children are known and valued as individuals - this is fundamental to our ideals and would continue if the Federation were to go ahead. Over time we expect that both schools can learn from each other, sharing the best from each and working together to improve teaching and learning. Federations can create opportunities for children to work with children from the other school in the Federation – we hope that this would be the case over time.</p>
<p>What is an Executive Head teacher?</p>	<p>Executive Head teachers provide strategic leadership across two or more schools; they are supported by leadership in each individual school in the federation.</p>



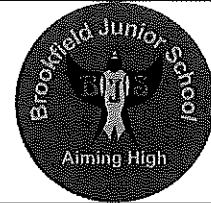
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	<p>The Executive Head teacher would have an overview of both schools and would be helping both to improve by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ working together to tackle shared priorities;</li> <li>○ addressing individual school priorities by benefitting from good practice in the partner school; and</li> <li>○ streamlining practice, background management, and support functions to give a sharper focus on teaching and learning</li> </ul>
<p>What would be the impact on staff, including those who provide support services to the school?</p>	<p>Other than leadership roles, there are no immediate plans to change the staffing structure or services in either school but over time we may seek to share staff as roles become vacant or new ones are created.</p> <p>Several of our support services, administration, premises maintenance etc are already working across the schools, we would look to formalise this arrangement under the new Federation.</p>
<p>Would staff get the opportunity to work at both schools?</p>	<p>This is one of the potential benefits in terms of developing staff and sharing expertise. We would encourage this where it was beneficial and met school improvement priorities.</p> <p>However, this is not something which would be imposed; decisions would be based upon consultation and negotiation. In the future, new staff would be appointed to the Federation, which makes them available to work in both schools.</p>
<p>Does Federating the schools ultimately cost them more money?</p>	<p>No - in fact, it provides schools with opportunities to share costs and gain access to staffing and resources that might not otherwise be available to an individual school.</p>
<p>Is this just a Government cost saving exercise?</p>	<p>No - the recommendation to federate has been reached jointly by the Governing Bodies of both schools; no external influence has been applied.</p> <p>The funding of schools is primarily based on pupil numbers and as these numbers would not be affected by federating, the school budgets would remain the same.</p> <p>However, it is true that economic factors have been an important element in prompting both governing bodies to consider new ways of working in the light of trends in the funding of schools.</p>
<p>Is there evidence to show that such Federations prove successful?</p>	<p>Ofsted published their findings from a review of federations, which found that schools working in partnership are generally of a higher standard than those working alone.</p> <p>In addition, there was a relevant BBC news article published, "Pupils more confident in federated schools". This can be found at:  <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-15004918">http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-15004918</a></p>



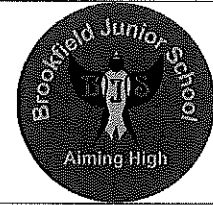
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Can a Federation be dissolved?	Yes - De-federation is a straightforward process if two schools decide to separate again. It is considered good practice for a Federation to be reviewed every two years.
How can I find out more about federation?	A selection of resources available online – please ask in school if you cannot access these documents online. <a href="http://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/Sept-Dec2014/New-National-College-report-on-Federation-governan.aspx">http://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/Sept-Dec2014/New-National-College-report-on-Federation-governan.aspx</a>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/350758/the-governance-in-federations.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/350758/the-governance-in-federations.pdf</a>
What models of partnership working have been considered	Collaboration, federation and multi-academy trusts - a summary of their pros and challenges is shown in the table overleaf.



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	<b>Collaboration</b>	<b>Federation</b>	<b>Multi Academy Trust (MATs)</b>
<b>Status</b>	Informal commitment to share amongst 2 or more schools – schools have separate governing bodies	Formal agreement to share across 2 or more schools – shared governing body	Formal agreement between academy schools to operate as a „chain“ with an overarching governing body
<b>Pros</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Efficiency savings</li> <li>✓ May support good practice</li> <li>✓ Flexible</li> <li>✓ Each school maintains own identity and can choose leadership arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Efficiency savings</li> <li>✓ Supports good practice</li> <li>✓ Each school maintains own identity and can choose leadership arrangements</li> <li>✓ Can „de-federate“</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Efficiency savings</li> <li>✓ Supports good practice</li> <li>✓ Consistency across the „chain“</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Lack of commitment makes it harder to plan – different governing bodies can change direction and arrangement could be undermined</li> <li>✗ Efficiencies likely to be far more limited due to uncertainty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Need to ensure that there is a positive partnership from the outset so that there is shared vision and commitment to children and families across both/all schools and that resources are shared fairly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Can’t easily get out of arrangement – minimum 7 year commitment</li> <li>✗ Potential loss of individual school identity</li> <li>✗ Small schools cannot become standalone academies – they would be taken over by an existing larger academy and have no say in what happens to the school</li> </ul>