

CONSULTATION PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A FEDERATION



**DONINGTON COWLEY ENDOWED
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**ST GILBERT OF SEMPRINGHAM
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



*We strive
for success for all*



CONTENTS

What is a federation?	2
Which schools will be part of the federation?	2
What are the key points of a federation?	2
Background to these proposals	3
What is the vision for the federation?	4
Benefits of a federation	5
Governance arrangements	6
Leadership arrangements	7
Admissions arrangements	7
The Federation process	8
Have your say	9
Frequently Asked Questions about Federation	10



WHAT IS A FEDERATION?

A Federation is a formal and legal agreement by which the schools involved work together in a formal partnership. There is a single Governing Body, which has strategic oversight of all schools within the Federation.

WHICH SCHOOLS WILL BE PART OF THE FEDERATION?

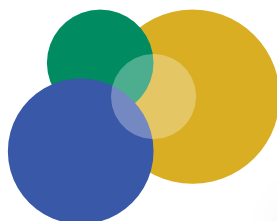
The Governing Bodies of Donington Endowed Primary School and St Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England Primary School have met and agreed to consult on a proposal to federate. The Diocese of Lincoln and Lincolnshire County Council support the consultation exercise and have provided guidance to the Governing Bodies for this governor-led proposal.

Over the last year an informal 'soft' federation has been in existence through a partnership between both schools. Both schools have realised the benefits of formalising this arrangement into what is called a 'hard federation' to secure both of the schools' futures.

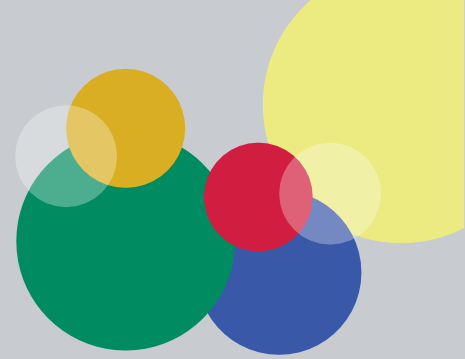


WHAT ARE THE KEY ASPECTS OF A FEDERATION?

- The existing Governing Bodies of both schools will be dissolved, if the proposals to establish a federation proceed – following consultation. A new single Governing Body will replace the individual Governing Bodies and will have responsibility for the strategic oversight of both schools in the federation.
- Each school retains its name, category, budget, and staff. If federated, moving forward the schools will be able to explore the advantages of sharing resources.
- Each school will continue to have its own Ofsted inspections and St Gilbert of Sepringham will continue to have a SIAMS inspection by the Diocese.



BACKGROUND TO THESE PROPOSALS



The two schools are situated in South Lincolnshire, 8 miles apart and have been successfully collaborating since September 2023. Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School is a maintained school with the Local Authority, and St Gilbert of Sempringham Church of England School is Voluntary Aided with the Diocese of Lincoln.

Since September 2023, the schools have been collaboratively working under Mrs Sophie Foston, Interim Executive Headteacher. During this time both schools have seen the positive benefits of working together with standards improving and opportunities to share best practice across both schools. Pupils and staff have also had the opportunity to work collaboratively on developing the curriculum and raising standards.

Both schools have their own school values which are integral to their curriculum and to the ethos of both schools.

Collaborative working practices within schools are vital for the sustainability and effective delivery of education and safeguarding of our children.

The range of provision in the schools ensures appropriate progression for all learners. Both schools have commonality in their vision for success, be this at St Gilbert's reaching high or Donington Cowley striving for success for all.

Our curriculum will be strengthened by cross curricular skills and leadership across both schools to support expertise and competence in all subjects.



WHAT IS THE VISION FOR THE FEDERATION?

The federation will provide a stable base for the provision of nursery and primary education reflecting the context across the communities of Pointon, Donington and their neighboring areas.

Both schools fall within the south Lincolnshire area. The visions of both schools are alike with regards to St Gilbert of Sempringham sowing seed, fostering pride and reaching high for success, alongside Donington Cowley supporting courage, excellence, pride and success.

Both schools will continue to promote and teach children through their curriculum British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance. The proximity of the two schools will facilitate working together and

strengthen the sense of community through collaboration, building on each of their mission statements:

St Gilberts: Sow Seeds, Grow Together, Reach High

Donington Cowley: Determination, Courage, Excellence, Pride and Success

British Values:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance

St Gilberts
Sow Seeds,
Grow Together,
Reach High.

Donington Cowley:
Determination
Courage
Excellence
Pride



BENEFITS FOR PUPILS

The focus of the Federation will be the pupils who attend both schools. Some of the benefits will be to:

- Overall further development of the quality of teaching through sharing of best practice, research, and expertise beyond one school.
- Increased opportunities for professional development will help us to attract and retain the best staff to educate our children.
- The children will be part of a wider community, broadening their experience.
- Increased opportunities to broaden their experiences as the schools share visits, workshops and continue to offer inclusion of all.
- Efficiencies between the schools will result in savings and this in turn will result with more money to spend directly on the pupils and their education.

BENEFITS FOR PARENTS

Parents are vitally important partners in their children's education. Some of the benefits will be:

- A shared ethos and culture of excellence across both schools.
- Co-ordinated and shared activities and events.
- Each school will benefit from the strength of the federation, yet still retains its own unique identity, its name, uniform etc.



BENEFITS FOR STAFF

Members of staff are the most valuable asset of the Federation and some of the benefits will be to:

- Increased opportunities to share good practice and expertise across the schools.
- Shared curriculum and planning will reduce the workload and improve the education and outcomes for all pupils across both schools.
- There will be a chance for staff career progression within the schools.
- Increased opportunity for professional development.
- Become a more attractive proposition with regards to the recruitment of new staff.

BENEFITS FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY

- The Federation will ensure a higher profile for both schools within the local community and be represented well in the county.
- The Federation will develop to reflect the needs of its children and families sharing its resource, offers and excellence in serving its school communities.



GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS



The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012 state that a federated governing body must consist of no fewer than 7 governors.

CURRENT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The current governance arrangements for the two Governing Bodies are as follows:

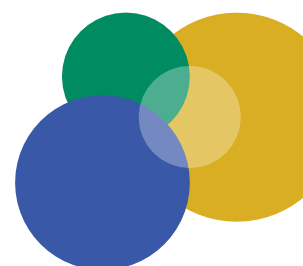
Governor Type	Donington Cowley	St Gilbert
Foundation	2	7
Local Authority	1	1
Parent	3	2
Headteacher	1	1
Staff	1	1
Co-opted	2	0
Total	10	12

POSSIBLE GOVERNANCE MODELS FOLLOWING FEDERATION

Based on the current governance models and regulation the proposed federated governing body will consist of:

Governor Type	Proposed
Foundation (Diocese)	9
Local Authority	1
Parent	2
Headteacher	1
Staff	1
Foundation (Cowley)	2
Total	16

All governors have a four-year term of office, except for teacher and staff governors who have a two-year term of office.



LEADERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS



The Federated Governing Body will provide strategic leadership for both schools.

Should this proposal to federate go forward, there will be an Executive Head Teacher leading both schools. The Federated Governing Body will be responsible for the performance management of the Executive Head Teacher.

The senior leadership team within both schools will then be agreed, developed, and formalised by the Federated Governing Body and Executive Head Teacher in order to provide consistency and to support the Executive Head Teacher.



ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS

Admission arrangements will not change.

The schools will continue to operate as separate schools with individual admission criteria as detailed in their admissions policies. Parents will continue to apply for places through Lincolnshire County Council admissions

selecting their preferred choice of school. Each child will continue to be a registered pupil at their individual school within the federation.

THE FEDERATION PROCESS

In order to establish a Federation certain steps have to be followed:

STEP 1: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL FOR FEDERATION

- An agreement between both Governing Bodies of the schools, together with the Diocese and the Local Authority that they wish to explore Federation options
- The co-creation of a formal proposal with which to consult with all stakeholders
- Informing staff and any key stakeholders at both schools of the process and progress
- Setting a potential date for the proposed Federation to become operational

STEP 2: PREPARING THE CONSULTATION PROPOSAL

- Governing Bodies finalise the proposal with the support of the Diocese and the Local Authority
- Proposal issued for consultation to all stakeholders including pupils, staff, parents, local community and wider community
- Proposal needs to contain:
 - Reasons and benefits for federating
 - Size and composition of the single Governing Body
 - Senior Staff arrangements
 - Admissions
 - Deadline for comments
 - Date for potential federation to take place
 - Consultation arrangements

STEP 3: AFTER CONSULTATION CLOSES

- The Governing Bodies meet to consider the responses from the consultation process
- Summary report for each Governing Body produced for consideration

STEP 4: DECISION AND IMPLEMENTATION

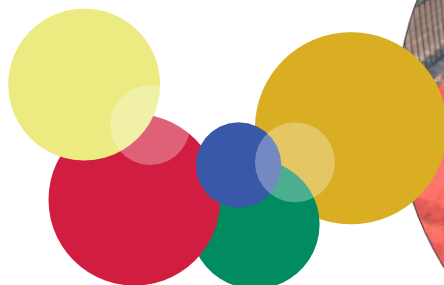
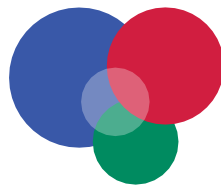
- The Governing Bodies meet to make the final decision on whether or not to proceed with the Federation
- Stakeholders informed of the decision
- If applicable, the Diocese and the Local Authority will work with the Governing Bodies in order to form and appoint the new single Governing Body

STEP 5: DEVELOPMENT

- The newly formed Governing Body meets to elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Federation
- Any new Sub-Committee structures are considered and formed where required
- Senior Leadership Teams confirmed
- Review of systems, policies and practices takes place

STEP 6: MOVING FORWARD

- The embedding of any new polices, practices and systems
- Implementation of monitoring and evaluation procedures.



HAVE YOUR SAY

The Governing Bodies would like to hear the views of as many stakeholders as possible during the consultation process. In order to provide as many opportunities as possible for all stakeholders to take part in this process, the following events will take place.

What?	Where?	When?	For Who?
Donington Cowley Staff Briefing	Donington Cowley Primary School	Wednesday 22 nd May 2024 3.30pm to 4.30pm	Staff
Drop in Q&A Session	Donington Cowley Primary School	Wednesday 22 nd May 2024 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Parents and Stakeholders
St Gilbert Staff Briefing	St Gilbert of Sempringham C of E Primary School	Thursday 23 rd May 2024 3.30pm to 4.30pm	Staff
Drop in Q&A Session	St Gilbert of Sempringham CofE Primary School	Thursday 23 rd May 2024 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Parents and Stakeholders

There are several ways you can provide comments on these proposals:

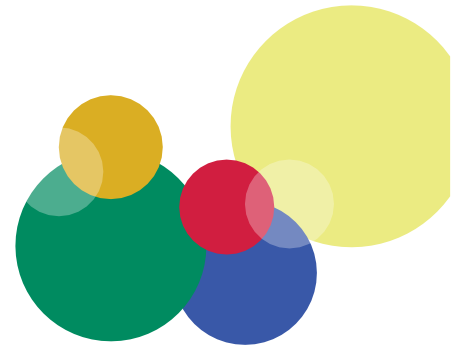
- Attend one of the above events and speak to us in person.
- In writing to either school, marking correspondence for the attention of the Chair of Governors.
- Email: clerk@pointon.lincs.sch.uk
- Complete the online survey here <https://forms.office.com/e/mxiGqrcKDD> or scan the QR code below.

We look forward to receiving your views on this proposal.

The closing date for comments is 30th June 2023.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FEDERATION



Q1. What is a federation?

Federation is used to describe a 'formal partnership' of schools (between two and six) and is a legal and formal agreement where schools share a single governing body. The schools in a federation can be a mixture or maintained nurseries, primary schools, special schools, and secondary schools.

The decision to federate is made either by the governing bodies of the schools involved or by the LA. Each school in a federation remains open in its community and keeps its own budget, character, school uniform, admissions arrangements and ethos and will have its own inspections.

Federations can have a head teacher in every school and/or they can have a single head teacher for all the schools in a federation – the decision is one for the governing body to make.

There is no blueprint for federations. Each one will be tailored to suit the needs of the different schools and communities. A successful federation will allow the children to access a broader curriculum to enrich their experiences and provide a high-quality education to help raise their attainment.



Q2. Why has federation become an option for your school?

There are many reasons why schools of all sizes and type wish to federate or the LA wishes to federate them. Sharing resources such as budgets, teachers and teaching expertise, school leadership and facilities and learning from one another and sharing good practice are just some of the triggers for federation.

For some schools, working more closely in a federation can mean sharing heavy workloads amongst the staff whilst allowing schools to continue to provide a wide curriculum that offers real choices and options for pupils, that smaller schools cannot provide with fewer staff.

Federation can also offer career opportunities for staff not normally available to them, for example working in another school in the federation. This can help aid the recruitment of new highly qualified teachers to the school. Some schools also face difficulties recruiting good head teachers and federation allows schools to adopt more creative solutions to leadership appointments.

Q3. What advantages does federation offer the pupils?

Federation can bring many benefits, but these will vary depending on the focus and purpose of the federation. Generally, though, the federation should offer opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities to meet and work as part of a larger group. Other benefits include pupils being able to access specialist teaching, more sustained and structured social and educational opportunities, team sports, wider curriculum expertise and a wider choice of curricular or out of school activities and clubs.



Q4. How is federation going to work?

Federations will work in different ways. How a federation is structured and operates will be decided by the governing body or Headteachers. These people are best placed to ensure the federation workings and arrangements match the needs of all the schools involved. Every federation should have a detailed action plan and agreed staffing structure which provides the framework for more detailed planning and the day-to-day organisation and management of the schools.

Q5. Will governors or the LA listen to the views of the parents when they consult on federation proposals?

Governors and LAs are required in law to seek the views of stakeholders on the proposals to federate. The stakeholders are parents, staff, unions, pupils, and other partners such as diocesan authorities. Views can be sought in a number of different ways which might include written responses, questionnaires, information surgeries and formal meetings. Once all the views are submitted to the governing body, they must consider the points raised and make their decision based on a majority of votes taken at a governing body meeting. Where a LA is establishing a federation, it will consider the responses received and make a decision.

Q6. Is federation about financial savings?

No. It is about schools pooling resources to improve performance, raise standards of attainment and achieving more for the children whether that is providing access to opportunities and facilities children would not normally be able to access, or jointly funding, for example, a teacher or support teachers.

Q7. Does federation mean that our school will receive less money from the LA?

No. The way in which an individual school's budget is calculated is not affected by federation - each school in the federation should continue to receive its own budget based on the number of registered pupils at the school plus any other factors. However, schools will be able to share their budgets. For example, if the schools wished to employ a specialised teacher or to purchase or upgrade equipment, they would each contribute a share of the costs from their budget, lessening the burden on each of the schools' budgets.

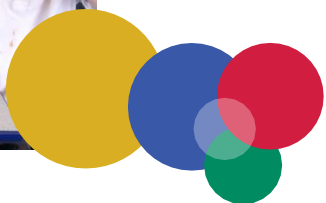
The governing body of a federation should be in a position to take strategic decisions on the deployment of their resources including budgets, staff and facilities. Each school will need to keep a clear audit trail and accounts for their budget spend.

Q8. What are the financial benefits of federation?

Federations can increase capacity within the schools to achieve better value for money improving standards and provision. Some of the benefits include: a more cost effective way of increasing the opportunity for specialist teaching (if required); curriculum entitlement; extended after-school curricular activities; out of hours clubs sharing the costs of purchasing goods and facilities etc.; purchasing to achieve economies of scale and avoiding duplication; saving on curriculum; strategic planning and administrative time; being able to pool funding to award higher salaries and recruit more experienced staff.

Q9. 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 Ofsted/SIAMS Inspections. 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. Federation works on the basis that all schools have their own strengths and advantages, whether it is facilities, staff, or resources.



Q10. What are the Inspection arrangements for Federated Schools?

The Ofsted inspection arrangements would remain the same for each school and they would continue to be inspected as an individual school. The Local Authority would still attend each school as they do now routinely to consider the curriculum and finances.

Q11. Do the teachers and children move from school to school?

There may be some opportunities for school staff to move between sites depending on their contractual arrangements and willingness to do so. There also may be opportunities for the children from both schools to work together on projects and through special events, which could include use of technology, facilities (such as sports equipment and visits/trips).

Q12. Can a Federation be time-limited?

A federation should be seen as a long-term commitment and not as a quick fix. The LA or respective governing bodies will have considered in depth the benefits and risks of establishing a federation in relation to the impact on children and young people's achievements. A federation would put in place strategic and operational plans to ensure the sustainability and development of the schools. That will require medium to long term planning. Nonetheless, the regulations do allow individual schools to leave a federation and for a federation to be dissolved.

