



# **Goldsborough Church of England Primary and Sicklinghall Community Primary Schools**



## **Consultation by the two Governing Boards on a Proposal for Federation**

The Governing Boards of Goldsborough CE Primary School and Sicklinghall CP School are consulting parents, staff and the local community on a proposal to change how the schools are led and managed.

### **What is being proposed?**

The proposal is to federate the schools from January 2017 and the Governors of both schools would welcome your views on whether we should go forward with this idea. This paper sets out what Federation would mean, how Federation is different from Collaboration and how you can make your views known.

### **What is Federation?**

A Federation is a formal agreement between two or more schools to work in partnership to raise standards, find new ways of improving teaching and learning, and build on the strengths of each school.

In this proposed Federation, the schools would remain separate schools, each retaining their own budget and buildings. The schools would have shared leadership and management working in the best interests of both schools and their pupils. Federation is not an amalgamation of schools and does not involve the closure of either school.

Federation allows partner schools to work together and combine the strengths of both schools through sharing a Governing Board, Headteacher and other resources. This would give more opportunities to pupils in terms of the breadth of what is taught, having access to well-qualified specialist teachers and the extra-curricular and social opportunities open to them.

Federation helps small rural schools to remain sustainable on separate sites, opening up opportunities to share management, administration and Governing Board responsibility. Teaching staff can also support each other, developing and sharing curriculum expertise. The Governing Boards of both schools feel that Federation would help to secure a better future for all pupils by increasing opportunities at a time of challenge.

## **How is Federation different from Collaboration?**

Goldsborough CE Primary School and Sicklinghall CP School have been working in collaboration since January 2015. We already share a Headteacher and specialist staff and we have seen proven benefits to pupils, staff and budgets at both schools.

However, in a collaboration, the Governing Boards of the schools are still separate. The Federation would create a formal partnership that would further benefit pupils, with one Governing Board that would oversee the governance at both schools. The schools remain separate entities within a federation – it is the only governance that changes.

Sharing the leadership and management would mean a joint approach to teaching and learning, drawing on the best ideas from each in developing wider curriculum opportunities for all pupils. Recruitment of staff, including Headteachers, to small schools can be very difficult. Federation can support existing staff in developing their skills and make employment in small schools more attractive for potential members of staff.

A federated Governing Board can provide an effective and accountable mechanism for the two schools to combine resources, purchasing, systems and staff which releases strategic capacity for the Headteacher, offering value for money and helping the schools to remain viable.

Federation can help small rural schools to remain sustainable on separate sites, opening up opportunities to share management, administration and Governing Board responsibility. Teaching staff can also support each other, sharing curriculum expertise.

The Governing Boards of both schools feel that Federation would help to secure a better future for all pupils by increasing opportunities at a time of challenge.

Funding for all schools is uncertain and although the numbers of pupils on roll at both schools are expected to remain steady for some time, both schools are small and therefore vulnerable.

Federation would increase the resilience of both schools.

## **How would the Federation be organised?**

The two schools would still be separate schools legally and would keep their present names so pupils would be registered at Goldsborough CE Primary School or Sicklinghall CP School. Each school would retain its ethos and identity as has already been clearly demonstrated.

**Admissions** to each school would be made separately. North Yorkshire County Council would continue to be responsible for admissions to both schools.

Each school would continue to receive an individual **budget**. These budgets could be pooled, provided a clear audit trail is maintained. As school budgets are funded largely by student numbers, a Federation between the schools would allow the schools' funding to be used more efficiently by making savings through economies of scale to sustain a broad and balanced curriculum.

A new single Federation Governing Board would be created, which, legally must contain the following categories of governors (either by appointment or election):

- Two elected parent governors, elected by parents at both schools.
- One staff governor – elected by staff in both schools
- One governor nominated by the Local Authority
- Two Foundation governors
- The Headteacher would be a governor
- Up to five other governors would be co-opted governors appointed by the Federated Governing Board. Co-opted governors can include parents of pupils at the schools, staff of the schools and other members of the community.

Total number of governors would be 12

It is important that both schools and their communities are represented, and the ability to co-opt governors ensures that fair representation and the required mix of skills are possible. It is likely that many existing governors would express an interest in being put forward for these posts.

**School staff** would continue to be employed by North Yorkshire County Council and would be under the direction of the Headteacher. Existing staff would be consulted about any changes to their terms and conditions of employment as in the medium term it could be expected that some staff may work in both schools. Newly appointed staff would be expected to teach in both schools if required.

**Both Governing Boards have given considerable thought to this proposal before asking the children, parents, staff and the community for their views.**

### **Next Steps**

At the end of the consultation period, the responses will be analysed on behalf of the Governing Boards by North Yorkshire County Council.

The Governing Boards of both schools will meet together after the consultation period to consider the responses. After that, each Governing Board will meet

separately to decide whether to proceed.

An announcement will be made about the decision. If it is decided to proceed, then a series of meetings will be held between the schools to agree detailed arrangements so that the Federation can start in January 2017.

### **How You Can Find Out More**

Meetings will be held at Goldsborough on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October, 7:30pm and at Sicklinghall on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October at 3:30pm for parents/ carers of pupils attending either of the schools and for any member of the community who would like to learn more. If you would like to submit a written question to be covered at one of these meetings, please do so via the school office before Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

We have purposefully chosen two dates and times to give more opportunity for as many parents/carers as possible to attend but again would stress that no matter which school your child attends, or the community you belong to you are invited to attend a meeting at either school.

The Headteacher, Staff and the Governing Bodies will be present during these meetings to help answer any queries you may have.

### **How to Make Your Views Known**

You may attend the meetings. A note will be taken of the issues raised at the meetings and will be considered as part of the consultation response by the Governing Boards, but we would also appreciate written responses.

You may complete the attached response sheet and return it to either school office or via post to:

Federation Proposal Responses  
Goldsborough CE Primary  
Main Street  
Goldsborough  
North Yorkshire  
HG5 8NJ

Federation Proposal Responses  
Sicklinghall CP School  
Main Street  
Sicklinghall  
North Yorkshire  
LS22 4BD

The closing date for responses is **7<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Liz Corbett  
Chair of Governors  
Goldsborough CE Primary School

Zarana Moon  
Chair of Governors  
Sicklinghall CP School

## **Goldsborough CE Primary and Sicklinghall CP Schools**

### **Consultation by the two Governing Boards on a Proposal for Federation**

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

##### What is a Federation?

A Federation is a formal arrangement between two or more schools which includes joint governance. The Governing Boards are consulting on moving to a Federation.

This is different from an amalgamation, which is a permanent merging of two or more schools, usually by the formal closure of one or more of them.

##### What is the background to this proposal?

The schools are already collaborating and sharing a Headteacher.

##### Why are the schools federating? They are successful, viable schools in their own right.

The Governing Boards feel that to federate now is in the best interests of pupils currently at the schools and those that will attend in the future. Federation would enhance the existing collaborative working, secure better and wider opportunities and would contribute to the long-term viability of the schools. There are particular benefits in Federation for small schools, in terms of educational and social experiences for pupils and professional development for staff.

##### What would the leadership arrangements be?

Mr Shillito would remain Headteacher at both Goldsborough CE Primary and Sicklinghall CP schools. Structures would be reviewed as opportunities arise, as they normally would be in any school.

##### Would pupils share facilities?

Whilst it is expected that there would be some joint activities on an irregular basis for pupils, it is not expected that pupils would move between the schools on a regular basis.

##### Would children at each school keep their present uniform?

Yes

##### How would existing staff be affected?

For both schools, the employer is North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC). Staff would continue to be employed by NYCC and would be under the leadership of the Headteacher. The Federation would have a single governing Board and would continue to work closely with NYCC.

##### What would happen when a member of staff leaves?

When anyone leaves, the Governing Board would review the situation and decide if that position needs to be replaced or if there is a possible different solution. Newly appointed staff would be appointed to the Federation and would be expected to teach in both schools if required. Recruitment of teaching staff is difficult in small rural schools. A Federation could be more appealing and this could ease recruitment difficulties.

##### How would Federation affect the financial position of the schools?

The budget for each school will remain completely separate. However, the Federation Governing Board would be able to look at ways of giving value for money through joint purchasing, service provision or future cross-federation working.

##### Is the real reason for this to save money?

There is the potential for the schools to make savings so that they are in a stronger position as a Federation to protect provision in an uncertain economic climate. Both schools would continue to receive the same budget

allocation whether they are in a Federation or not and so there is no potential for the Local Authority to save money.

Would money from the budget be used to subsidise the other school?

No. Each school would continue to receive an individual budget. Although these budgets can be pooled, a clear audit trail is required. There is no intention at this time to pool budgets.

Would our school lose its identity, ethos and traditions?

No. Federation is beneficial for schools because it supports the continuing resilience of separate institutions, but with benefits often seen in larger schools.

Goldsborough School would remain a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School and Sicklinghall would remain a Community School and, therefore, the ethos and vision of both schools would continue to be distinct and unique. Each school would remain a part of its own community, but with a close relationship between the schools which would continue to benefit all pupils.

What would the Governance arrangements be? Would there be representation from each school on the Governing Board?

In a Federation a single Governing Board is responsible for the governance of both schools. The new Governing Board would be drawn from both the schools and the wider communities.

What would happen to admissions?

NYCC will remain as the Admissions Authority and the admissions arrangements for the schools will remain separate.

What about Ofsted?

The schools will continue to be inspected by Ofsted as separate schools.

Is it possible for new members to join the Federation after it has been formed?

Yes, it is possible for other schools to seek admission into the Federation. They would be required to conduct a statutory consultation process, and to gain approval from the Federation Governing Board.

Can a Federation be removed or dissolved?

There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that Federations do work and benefit their pupils and wider communities. However, as a worst-case scenario, it is possible to dissolve a Federation through a statutory process.

Have Governors already decided to federate?

No. The schools are already working together on a collaborative basis, but the Governing Boards are consulting on moving to a formal Federation with a single Governing Board. They will consider consultation responses before making a decision about Federation.

Will the Headteacher be less 'visible' following federation?

Federation brings the governing boards together and will not change the way in which the schools run on a day to day basis. Structures are already in place for days when the Headteacher is not working on site.

What benefits to collaboration have there already been and what further benefits would federation bring?

There have been a number of benefits to collaboration to date, all of which have been communicated via school newsletters. Some key developments include:

- A comprehensive programme of shared residential visits.
- The use of a partnership minibus.
- The opportunity to appoint high caliber staff who work across both schools.
- Increased opportunity for colleagues to work in collaboration on curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Federation would enable governors to play a strategic part in such developments continuing for the benefit of each and every pupil. Tasks/protocols that currently need to be replicated by both governing boards need only be considered once, leaving valuable time to analyse, question and provide critical friendship to the schools' leaders.

**Goldsborough CE Primary School and Sicklinghall CP School Consultation  
by the two Governing Boards on a Proposal for Federation**

**Response Form**

Observations and/or suggestions on the proposal

You are not required to complete the personal information below. However, it will be helpful to the Governing Boards if you do so.

Name

Address

Postcode  Date

Your interest in Goldsborough CE Primary School and/or Sicklinghall CP School - please tick appropriate box

Parent/carer of pupil at Goldsborough CE Primary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/carer of pupil Sicklinghall CP School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pupil of at Goldsborough CE Primary School – please state year group	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pupil of Sicklinghall CP School – please state year group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member of staff at Goldsborough CE Primary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of staff at Sicklinghall CP School	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (Please state)

**The closing date for this consultation is 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, responses to the consultation may be accessed by members of the public

Please detach the response form before returning to:

Federation Proposal Responses  
Goldsborough CE Primary  
Main Street  
Goldsborough  
North Yorkshire  
HG5 8NJ

Federation Proposal Responses  
Sicklinghall CP School  
Main Street  
Sicklinghall  
North Yorkshire  
LS22 4BD