
**Meeting of the Executive Members for
Children's Services and Advisory Panel**

8 June 2006

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Federation of Derwent Infant School and Derwent Junior School

Summary

1. This report:
 - describes the background to a joint proposal from the governing bodies of Derwent Infant and Derwent Junior schools to federate the two schools with effect from 1 September 2006
 - explains the statutory framework for the establishment of federated schools, including the requirement for the governing bodies to consult with the LA
 - invites comments on the draft consultation document produced by the governing bodies of the two schools attached at Annex 1.

Background

2. In February 2006 the governing bodies of Derwent Infant and Derwent Junior schools met with a representatives of the LA to discuss the future provision of primary age education in the area. This was prompted by the early retirement on health grounds of the headteacher of the Junior School and declining pupil population in the catchment area.
3. It was agreed at this meeting that the headteacher of the Infant School should be invited to be headteacher of the Junior School and be responsible for the leadership of both schools for one term whilst the governing bodies considered federation.
4. In early May both governing bodies met and agreed that they wanted to propose federation for the following reasons:
 - one governing body and one headteacher would provide stability and a clear direction for education on the school site
 - separate budgets would be maintained under this arrangement

- continuation of the present staffing establishment would ensure minimal disruption to education for the children currently in the schools.

Members will recall that agreement was reached on federation in two other similar contexts. Rawcliffe Infants and Clifton Without Junior schools were federated from April 2005 and English Martyrs' and Our Lady's will be from September 2006.

Consultation

5. The following timeline is guided by the School Governors (Federation) (England) Regulation 2004.

26 April	meetings of the two governing bodies to discuss and agree a Proposal for Federation
8 May	meeting of the Steering Group to draft the consultation document
15 May	meetings of full Governing Bodies to agree draft consultation document
22 May	6 week consultation period to begin. Consultation document issued to parents and other stakeholders
7 June	two meetings for parents to be held in the schools. These will provide an opportunity for questions.
3 July	Close of consultation period
6 July	Governing Bodies of Derwent Infant and Derwent Junior consider responses to consultation and decide whether or not to proceed with federation
7 July	Parents and other stakeholders informed of decision of Governing Bodies
Autumn Term	Depending on outcome take the next necessary steps

Options

6. It should be noted that authority to take the decision about whether or not to federate rests with the two governing bodies and not the LA. However, there is a statutory requirement for the governing bodies of the two schools to consult with the LA.

Corporate Objectives

7. The Local Authority policy on federation is attached at Annex 2.

Implications

8. This section identifies the implications of supporting the proposal by the governing body.

- **Financial**

The two schools will continue to be funded separately, but the governing body has the authority to combine the two budgets subject to any specific requirements for demonstrating accountability on individual funding streams. There are no other costs associated with federation other than those for printing the consultation document. This will be paid for jointly by the schools and the LA.

- **Human Resources (HR)**

Contractually, staff retain their existing contract, continuing to be employed by the individual school rather than the federation. However, they may choose to change the terms and contract if they so wish and the governing body may decide that in future, staff will be recruited to the federation rather than to individual schools. This would allow greater flexibility in the deployment of staff across both schools.

- **Equalities**

None.

- **Legal**

Section 24 of the Education Act 2002 provides that schools may federate under one governing body if they so wish. The statutory framework for federation is set out in The Federation of Schools (Community Schools, Community Special Schools, Voluntary Controlled Schools and Maintained Nursery Schools) (England) regulations 2003 and accompanying guidance.

The regulations make clear that, legally, federated schools remain separate entities, but with a single governing body and with the option of appointing a single headteacher. The governing bodies of the two schools are required jointly to consult with the staff, parents and LA, following which they can decide to federate on a single majority vote of the governing body.

The consultation period must be no less than 28 days, following which each governing body must separately consider the responses and decide whether to proceed with the federation.

- **Crime and Disorder**

None.

- **Information Technology (IT)**

None.

Risk Management

9. Risk associated with federation is minimal as the decision can be rescinded if governors find it is not appropriate in serving the needs of the schools.

Recommendations

10. The Executive Member is recommended to:
- Support the proposal by the governing bodies of Derwent Infant School and Derwent Junior School to federate.

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Report
Approved



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For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Authority Policy

Annexes

Annex 1: The Proposed Federation of Derwent Infant and Nursery School with Derwent Junior School Consultation Document – Copies available from the Report Author

Annex 2: Use of Powers Under the Education Act 2002 on the Federation of Maintained Schools