



29th April 2019

Dear Parents, Carers and Colleagues,

As you will be aware, since June 2018, the United Schools Federation (comprising St. Michael's, Kingsteignton, St. Catherine's, Heathfield, Brixton, St. Mary's, Marldon and Ipplepen Primary Schools) and Stokeinteignhead School have been working in a management partnership. During this time, leadership of all schools has been provided by the Executive Headteacher of the federation, Mr. Martin Harding. The partnership has secured rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning at Stokeinteignhead. It has also allowed expertise to be shared and has been of mutual benefit to all schools. The governors are keen to develop the federation for the benefit of all the children within our communities.

The governing boards of the United Schools Federation and Stokeinteignhead have initiated a proposal that would mean, if agreed, one governing board to oversee all six schools.

We wanted to take this opportunity to explain our reasons behind this proposal, and offer you the chance to respond. Where schools federate with one governing board, each individual school keeps its separate identity and ethos. The schools do not amalgamate; there are just greater opportunities for sharing and pooling resources, including staff.

We foresee further opportunities under this proposal for much more effective use of resources and for ensuring that the pupils of all schools have access to a wider and more flexible curriculum. Overall, we believe that there are likely to be many benefits to the pupils of all schools through federation arrangements.

Under the current Management Partnership process the six schools have already been working together and there have already been many mutual benefits; federation will further enhance and strengthen these along with additional benefits.

Examples include:

- The ability to retain and reinforce our vibrant schools, each with their own identities;
- The opportunity to develop a strong and sustainable leadership model and to have the potential to further develop our 'middle leaders';
- Staff expertise in specialist areas will be enhanced and raise standards e.g. Lead Literacy and Numeracy teachers will work with staff across all schools. Staff will have greater opportunities for shared planning, assessment and moderation work;

- Ability to retain and attract high quality staff and offer increased professional development challenges, opportunities and motivation for staff;
- The budgets of each school can be used more effectively and creatively to support children's progress;
- Increased opportunity for new joint projects e.g. residentials, school trips, academic challenges, sports events, arts and creative opportunities etc.,
- Pupils will have opportunities to meet and work as part of a larger group;
- Further opportunities to share resources e.g. transport to different venues and events

How the new arrangements will work:-

- Martin Harding will remain as Executive Headteacher of all six schools
- Kate Arnold will remain as Head of School at St. Michael's
- Marcus West will remain as Head of School at St. Catherine's
- Adrian Clements will remain as Head of School at Brixton, St. Mary's
- Jonathan Arnold will remain as Head of School at Marlton
- Amanda Lacey will remain as Head of School at Ipplepen
- Joanna Crathorne will remain as Head of School at Stokeinteignhead

The membership of the single governing board will include representation by parents of the schools, staff, foundation governors, a Local Authority Governor and co-opted governors. Together, this group of people take overall responsibility for all six schools within the federation.

The proposed size of the federated governing board would be 20. In line with the School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2016, the proposed governing board would be:

- ❖ 2 Parent Governors
- ❖ 1 Staff Governor
- ❖ 1 Executive Head
- ❖ 8 Foundation Governors (including Ex-officio) (Diocese of Exeter)
- ❖ 5 Co-opted Governors
- ❖ 1 Local Authority Governor
- ❖ 2 Foundation Governors (United Schools Learning Partnership)

The current admissions arrangements would remain the same.

The governing boards are proposing that the federation start date would be 1st September 2019.

There is a Federation consultation process

The Governors of Stokeinteignhead and the United Schools Federation have set up a consultation process to seek the views of parents, staff, community, the Local Authority and other key partners. The consultation process will last six weeks, starting from Monday 29th April 2019. Governors would like your views and comments and invite you to attend a meeting at **Stokeinteignhead School on Tuesday 7th May 2019 at 6pm.**

If you are unable to attend the above meeting and would like to discuss this proposal with the Executive Headteacher, your Head of School or your Chair of Governors, please contact your school to make an appointment in the usual manner.

Written responses should be addressed to the Chair of Governors of your school and must be received by **Tuesday 18th June 2019 at 3.30pm**. For all schools these can be emailed to federation@stcatherines.education or in writing c/o the Clerk to the Governors, St. Catherine's C. of E. VA Nursery and Primary School, Musket Road, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 6SB or handed in to the School Office at any of the six schools addressed to 'The Chair of Governors'.

It is the Governors who will make the final decision, drawing upon a broad evidence base including the views of parents. Each governing board from each organisation considering federation takes its own decision. As with any governing board decision this is a simple majority vote taken at a governing board meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you and will, of course, keep you fully informed regarding our final decision in June.

Yours sincerely,



P.P

Viv Thorn
Chair of Governors Stokeinteignhead School



Elizabeth Thompson
Chair of Governors United Schools
Federation

