

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES -
11 APRIL 2016**

**REPORT ON THE PROPOSED FEDERATION OF THE SLADE
NURSERY SCHOOL AND WOOD FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. This report follows a public consultation period relating to the proposal of the two governing bodies to federate the two schools. The proposal has been supported by Oxfordshire County Council officers working together with the Governing Bodies of the schools.
2. The schools' public consultation ran from 11 January 2016 – 26 February 2016. All parents/carers of pupils at the schools, appropriate county council teams, District, Council councillors, were made aware of the consultation. It was available on the county council consultations webpages through its "current consultations" listing.
3. The consultation document contains the reasoning behind the schools' proposals, and council officers' support of it, therefore this is not duplicated in this report.
4. The decision-making power in terms of determining the proposal in this case lies with the two governing bodies concerned. At their meeting on Monday 21st March 2016, the governors will make their formal decision on whether they wish to proceed with the federation.

The Plan

5. The governors' proposal is to federate the two schools from September 1st 2016. The schools will remain as separate educational organisations, with discrete budgets, and will continue to be inspected separately. There will be one governing body and one Headteacher. Some aspects of the schools' work can be jointly funded eg premises costs and caretaking.
6. The nursery school governors also manage the Slade and Headington children's centre. The future of this children's centre is uncertain and the transition time will be managed by the new governing body, with the advantage of services for vulnerable children and families from birth to age 11 now being covered rather than separate consideration of under fives.

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7. The nursery school governors also manage the daycare provision. Management of the daycare at The Slade will continue under the new governing body.
8. Governors plan to appoint an executive Headteacher internally across the two schools. The executive Headteacher will line manage the early years leader. The early years leader will manage the nursery school, transitional arrangements for the children's centre and the daycare, as well as the reception classes in the primary school. Continuity for staff and families is assured.
9. The two chairs of governors and two current headteachers (one acting) have been involved throughout the process.
10. The Governing Body now seeks formal support for its proposal from Oxfordshire County Council through the Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families, to further cement the joint working that is already taking place.

Representations

11. The public consultation generated seven responses. Six explicitly supported the proposal while one did not.
12. The main reasons given for support were:
 - These two schools share a site and it makes sense with reducing budgets overall.
13. The concern raised was:
 - The quality of the nursery school (daycare) needs to improve and needs dedicated leadership.

Legal background

14. The [Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies on federations](#) has been consulted by the governing bodies concerned and the process fulfils requirements.

Financial and Staff Implications

15. The federation only has implications for the Headteacher role (as described above). There is only one permanently employed Headteacher across the two schools. He would be appointed as the Executive Headteacher in line with the requirements. The current staffing of the two schools will otherwise continue, but there will be more flexibility across the two schools. Arrangements for the children's centre staffing sit outside the federation process.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

16. Both governing bodies are paying due care and attention to equality issues throughout this process.

Decision

17. In considering the proposals for a school expansion, the Cabinet Member can decide to:
- Formally support the Governing Body's proposals;
 - Withhold formal support for the Governing Body's proposals.

RECOMMENDATION

18. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to support the proposed federation of The Slade Nursery School and Wood Farm Primary School.**

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Director for Children's Services

Annexe 1: Consultation document

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