



**Rotherfield**  
Primary School

## **Consultation on the Federation of Newington Green and Rotherfield Primary Schools- Report to the Governing Board.**

**January 2022**

### **Background**

The consultation ran from 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 to the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022 for both schools.

From 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021, pages were set up on both school websites with the consultation document and dates of meetings parents could attend. An electronic link was set up so that stakeholders could respond via an e form. The consultation information was in both school newsletters for the entirety of the consultation period.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the electronic forms were closed and it was found that there were no responses for either school. The consultation was extended until midnight on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and text/email sent to all parents and staff about new extension date.

### **Summary of responses**

The majority of respondents to the consultation for the federation of Newington Green and Rotherfield agreed with the proposal. Rotherfield had 17/18 responses in favour (98%), as 'not sure' responses were test emails. Newington Green had 20/33 in favour (61%).

The Newington Green response was more mixed from parents, and the Governing Body will need to give further detailed consideration to some of the issues and questions raised.

Governors should be mindful that the consultation does not serve as a determinative vote; rather, it serves as a process which supports governing bodies in making an informed decision regarding whether to proceed with federation, and whether to make modifications to the original proposal.

There are a number of common themes emerging across many responses, raising matters which the governing bodies of the respective schools may wish to consider as part of their decision-making process. It may be advisable for the governing bodies, whether or not they decide to proceed with federation, to ensure that their final decision addresses these issues, including:

- Ensuring that the size and composition of the governing board balances the need for representation, diversity and efficient decision making;
- Board accountability and how the recruitment process for governors will work;
- Effective and ongoing communication about the work of the board, with clear information about the decisions reached available to parents and staff;
- Confirming that federation is not a precursor to academisation;
- How to ensure that both schools would benefit from federation;
- Whether differences in Ofsted grades or pupil rolls might potentially affect resource allocation between the schools or mean senior leaders' time is diverted to address imbalances or weaknesses in one school at the expense of the other;

- Whether federation could be reversed in the future if the situation changed; and
- Whether anticipated cost savings would mean an increase in staff workload or affect the personalised support available for children?

Outcomes of meetings and discussions are recorded in the Annex below for each school. A summary of the electronic form response is also provided below for each school.

## Annex: Outcomes of meetings and e form responses for each school

### Meetings

NG Parent consultations	Number attended	Questions/queries
Zoom: 1/12/2021 at 12.30-1.30pm	1 (but left due to no other attendees)	
Zoom: 8/12/2021 at 17.00-18.00pm	0	
For Reception and Nursery Parents: 1/12/2021 at 8.00-8.45am	1	I thought we were already Federated when I chose the school. How will it be different?
For Reception and Nursery Parents: 15/12/2021 at 17.00pm	0	
For Y1 and Y2 parents: 8/12/2021 at 8.00-.8.45am	1	Concerned to make sure that board is a balanced size for representation and efficient decision making Would welcome improved communication about the work of the board Would welcome a diverse board Would welcome ensuring papers and minutes have clear information about decisions for both or either school Welcome strategic commitment to work together
For Y1 and Y2 parents: 7/12/2021 at 17.00pm	2	Is this a precursor to academisation?
For Y3 and Y4 parents: 15/12/2021 at 8.00-8.45am	0	
For Y3 and Y4 parents: 4/01/2022 at 17.00pm	0	
For Y5 and Y6 parents: 16/12/2021 at 8.00-8.45am	0	
For Y5 and Y6 parents: 5/01/22 at 17.00pm		
Informal discussions on gate/playground etc with SLT Dates various.		Is the partnership truly 2 sided- so both schools equally benefit? Is this a precursor to academisation? I thought we were already Federated when I chose the school.

<b>RF Parent consultations</b>	<b>Number attended</b>	<b>Questions/queries</b>
zoom: 3/12/2021 at 12.30-1.30pm,	0	
zoom: 9/12/2021 at 17.00pm.	0	
8.00am on 9/12/2021,	0	
6/01/2022 at 8.00am	0	
15.45pm on 16/12/2021	0	
7/01/2022 at 15.45pm	0	
Informal discussions on gate/playground etc with SLT Dates various.		'I thought we were already with them.'

<b>NG Staff consultation</b>	<b>Number attended</b>	<b>Questions/queries</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	56	From research, do you foresee any problems with Federation, and how would they be dealt with? If one school was a higher Ofsted grade than the other, would one school get more or less resource or attention than the other?

<b>RF Staff consultation</b>	<b>Number attended</b>	<b>Questions/queries</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	43	Can the schools ever come out of Federation? How is the Governing body selected? Will Federation protect both schools as pupil numbers fall?

### **Feedback from e-consultation forms**

#### Summary from electronic feedback forms- **Newington Green**

33 responses-20 agree, 5 disagree, 8 not sure. 25 parents responded. 5 disagree, and 4 are unsure. 8 staff responded- 7 staff agree, 1 unsure.

Records of written responses(verbatim):

<b>I welcome the following...</b>	<b>I am concerned about the following...</b>	<b>My questions are...</b>
Opportunity for savings to be made.	Staff being moved across schools	How can specialist teachers give personalised care being spread across 100's of pupils? How can these teachers effectively build rapport with students? Students need structure especially after the last few years, how will you make

		children with special needs comfortable with regular change of staffing?
Helping each school to achieve the best.	No concerns	None at the moment.
If it makes everything more efficient and increase opportunities for the pupils then it is a good idea	Human resources and expertise being diverted to address imbalances or areas of weakness at the expense of one school or the other at any given time; focus and effort of leadership at risk of being diluted.	Please respond to this concern at the following email... Again more light should be shed on the entire matter.
Joint collaboration and better sharing of expertise. Federation stays within the Local Authority.	To much changing is scary for me as a adult I can't imagine about my child.	No questions
Certainty about the future governance structure and for staff affected. Efficiencies in procurement and administration, provided that savings are used to enhance the facilities and quality of provision for children. Possibilities of continued/more specialist teaching	Sometimes I feel that Newington Green suffers as it loses staff. I am not sure how Newington Green benefits, it seems as if NG shares staff, as I am not aware of Rotherfield staff coming to NG (Though we did have to ask / campaign about getting the Librarian -	
In principle it sounds like a great idea and the time that it started since 2017, the results in the classrooms have had a change for good or worse. The NGPS school board should perhaps inform us as parents the result of improvements since 2017.	Human resources and expertise being diverted to address imbalances or areas of weakness at the expense of one school or the other at any given time; focus and effort of leadership at risk of being diluted.	
My answer is no.	if the yield drops what would be plan B would have another strategy	
Stream line of processes.	No concerns	
The proposed federation	Saving costs will just increase workload for staff.. this will not be reflected on their salaries and on the voluntary positions for parents. Less accountability to parents at each school because of lack of reflection on board. Less representation from BAMER parents.	

I find it exhausting to divide employees where there could be a low academic performance for the children.	Students will not have as personalised care communication could be a problem between staff, due to the scale of specialist educators being shared across 100's of pupils.	
Because I believe together both schools will be stronger under one governing body.	Children will be most effective of this Because Federation schools is relying on private donations and voluntary work which usually they have Profoundly Effect of future education on the children's	
All of the above.	None of the things noted.	
I know that right now is very difficult for schools and schools struggles for money but I still know the Federation schools is not something I welcome		
Financial flexibility		
Yes		
The creation of the Federation and I am happy to be involved as a co opted governor		
I welcome the federation		

4. Do you agree/disagree with the proposal? (please select only one box)

[More Details](#)

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Agree	20
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> Disagree	5
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Not Sure	8



**Summary from electronic feedback forms- Rotherfield**

Not sure responses were 'test' emails. So 17 agree, 1 disagree. 6 parents agree, none disagree. 11 staff agree, 1 disagrees.

Records of written responses(verbatim):

I welcome the following...	I am concerned about the following...	My questions are...
Support the whole federation	No concerns, but interested to see who the GB will be made up of and how this will work	Would there be further sharing of non-class based staff e.g. office staff / SLT?

The opportunity for one GB and the opportunity to work together on long term strategic planning.	Amalgamation of schools due to low numbers	
Strategic sharing of resources	Possible reduction in staff numbers	
Partnership can improve quality of resources and teachers can consult and improve by training and exchange of experience.		

4. Do you agree/disagree with the proposal? (please select only one box)

[More Details](#)

- Agree 17
- Disagree 1
- Not Sure 2

