



**Consultation on the Formal Proposal to form a Federation
between
The Edge Schools' Federation and Wistanstow CE Primary School
Consultation Period
1st December 2019 - 15th January 2020**

Our aim is to bring three small rural schools together to enable them to grow stronger in partnership; taking advantage of working in a larger learning community, but keeping each school at the heart of its own community and retaining its unique character, ethos and traditions.

1. Introduction

The Governing Bodies of The Edge Schools' Federation and Wistanstow CE Primary School wish to put forward a proposal for the three schools to join together under a single federation to commence on 1st April 2020. This document explains what a federation is, what it might look like in practical terms and highlights some of the issues raised to assist parents, members of staff and other interested parties in responding to the consultation process. The consultation period has been agreed to allow all stakeholders to comment on this proposal.

There will be a number of opportunities for parents, staff, children and other stakeholders to meet during the consultation period to discuss this proposal in more depth either by contacting governors directly or by appointment through each school office.

Following the end of the consultation period on 15th January 2020 each Governing Body will make an independent decision on whether to proceed or not with the proposed federation.

2. What is a federation?

A federation is a governance structure whereby two or more schools share a single Governing Body and it is a way of bringing the schools closer together. The federation is usually overseen by a single Headteacher who is supported by a leadership team across the schools. Each school retains its own individual identity and character.

3. Why do we think federation is right for our schools?

We are aware of many examples of schools thriving under formal partnerships in Shropshire and beyond. We believe that there are a range of benefits for pupils, schools, families and staff and research evidence from other federations supports this belief. Some of the benefits we can see coming from the proposed federation are:

- Improved educational standards for pupils through sharing of expertise and structured staff development across the schools.
- Increased opportunities to attract and retain high quality staff and improved career development.
- Extra capacity to offer a broad, balanced curriculum to children from both schools, sharing facilities and the skills of staff.
- Financial economies of scale and value for money.
- Shared leadership – a single headship across both schools is more secure and sustainable than for one school alone, a particularly important issue for small rural primary schools who often struggle to appoint quality leaders.
- Shared expertise and efficient working of a joint governing body.
- Improved links between our communities. Opportunities for children to work more regularly with pupils from the other school.
- Enhancement of each school's ethos through access to a wider variety of both academic and personal experience.
- Federation can help small rural schools, such as ours, to remain sustainable and viable on separate sites. It can also help develop an outward-looking, collaborative attitude to the world outside of our communities.

4. What stays the same in a Federation?

- Each school retains its own identity and name, it is not a merger of the schools.
- Children continue to be taught in their current school although some activities may be shared.
- Brockton and Wistanstow schools will retain their Christian distinctiveness.
- Shropshire LA continues to be the admissions authority for each school.
- Each school continues to operate with a separate budget but has the opportunity to share and pool resources.
- Current staffing will not change as they are contracted to each school. Staff appointed from 1st April 20 may have a federation contract and could be deployed across any of the schools as required.
- Each school will be inspected separately by Ofsted and the Diocese but Ofsted can be asked to inspect the schools at the same time to form a rounded picture of the work of the federation.
- Terms and conditions for staff will remain unchanged, as will staffing policies and procedures. Staff will remain at their current school, although the specialist knowledge and creativity of individual staff may be shared by all schools. In future, some members of staff could move or work across sites as part of their career development or talent sharing.

5. What will change in a Federation?

- The two separate governing bodies will be dissolved and replaced by a single, newly appointed governing body with responsibility for both schools.
- All land and property, rights and liabilities which immediately before the federation date was held by the governing body of the federating school transfers to the governing body of the federation.

6. Is the decision to federate irreversible?

It is possible for schools to withdraw from a federation and governing bodies must follow a prescribed process set out in The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012.

7. Admissions

Shropshire LA will continue to be admission authority for all schools in the federation.

8. Governance and Leadership

After federation there will be a single governing body and a single set of committees covering all schools. It should be noted that governors are elected to represent the wellbeing and education of all children in all schools of the Federation and NOT a particular school. It is proposed that the new governing body is constituted as follows:

- 2 Parent governors
- 1 Staff governor
- 1 Local Authority governor
- Headteacher (Ex-officio governor)
- 2 Foundation governors
- 5 Co-opted governors

The substantive Head teacher at The Edge Schools' Federation will become the Executive Head teacher over all schools. There will be a substantive Assistant Head Teacher appointed at each school.

9. The process and timescale

The governing bodies of each school met in September 2019 and agreed to investigate federation.

A steering group made up of governors from each school was formed to prepare this proposal.

Both governing bodies have independently approved this proposal for consultation.

The key dates and actions to date and proposed future dates are set out in the table below:

Summer 2019	Information gathering and exploration of options
September 2019	Formal decision by each Governing Body to investigate the option of a federation between the two schools Establishment of a Joint Collaborative Committee with representation from each school.
17th Sep 2019	Joint meeting of governing bodies (invitees - Local Authority representatives, Diocese of Hereford Education Board representative and local clergy) Preparation of consultation document by Joint Collaborative Committee
October/ November 2019	Proposal to be considered at both formal full governing body meetings. Governing Bodies vote on whether to proceed with the proposal to the next stage - agreement will lead to formal consultation.
1st Dec 2020	Issue formal consultation document to all stakeholders (minimum 6 weeks consultation period)
15th Jan 2020	Consultation period closes
29th Jan 2020	Collation of responses from the public consultations by the Joint Collaborative Committee
Feb/Mar 2020	Presentation of the collated responses to all Governors (Joint meeting of FGBs). Following the presentation each individual Governing Body will meet independently to make their final decision. If both Governing Bodies resolve to proceed with the federation from 1st April 2020, the existing Governing Bodies will then be dissolved and the new Federation Governing Body will be constituted. (A new instrument of Government for the federation is drafted by the Local Authority/Diocese and approved)
1st April 2020	The three schools begin operating as a federation
April 2020	Parent Governor elections are held for the new Governing Body

10. How to respond to the Consultation

The Governing Bodies of The Edge Schools' Federation and Wistanstow CE Primary School would really like to hear your views. If you have any comments please let the Governing Bodies know by the deadline, which is 12 noon on 15th January 2020, using the response form below.

11. Consultation circulation

- Parents and carers of all pupils at the three named schools
- Known prospective parents for both schools
- Staff employed at the three named schools
- PCCs of catchment parishes for the named schools
- Volunteers working at the named schools
- Each local community via appropriate means
- Shropshire Council
- Hereford Diocese
- Secretary of State for Education

RESPONSE FORM to consultation document outlining the proposal to form a federation from 1st April between Wistanstow CE Primary School and The Edge Schools' Federation (Brockton CE Primary School and Church Preen Primary School).

Responses must be received by midday on 15th January 2020

Name:

Address: (Optional)

1) I am a (please tick appropriate box)

Parent/Carer of a pupil at Brockton CE Primary School	
Parent/Carer of a pupil at Church Preen Primary School	
Parent/Carer of a pupil at Wistanstow CE Primary School	
Member of staff at Brockton CE Primary School	
Member of staff at Church Preen Primary School	
Member of staff at Wistanstow CE Primary School	
Other interested party (please state)	

2) What is your view of the proposal for federation of the three schools? (please tick box as appropriate)

I support the proposal for federation	
I do not support the proposal for federation	
I am not sure	

3) Would you like to provide more detail to support your view? Do you have any further comments? (continue on the reverse of this page if required)

Please send your response to the chair of governors at any of the named schools. This can be done by post to the addresses below or electronically to the listed emails.

Please note your responses will remain confidential to the schools' governing bodies.

Thank you for your response.



Chair of Governors
Wistanstow CE Primary School

The Edge Schools' Federation

**Brockton CofE Primary School
Brockton
Much Wenlock
TF13 6JR**

Chair of Governors
The Edge Schools' Federation

**Church Preen Primary School
Church Preen
Church Stretton
SY6 7LH**

**Wistanstow C.E. Primary School
Wistanstow
Craven Arms
SY7 8DQ**