

# Proposal to Federate Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary School

The Governing Boards of Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary School wish to consult with staff, parents and carers on a proposal to federate Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary School.

## **This paper contains:**

- **A definition of the term ‘Federation’**
- **The rationale for this proposal**
- **An outline of the proposal**
- **Details on how you can access more information**
- **A response form for you to complete and return**

This document contains important information on the proposal and details of virtual events where you can access more information. As important stakeholders in our school community, this is your opportunity to let us know what you think about the proposal. **A response form is attached on page 9.** This can also be accessed at [Online Federation Proposal Form](#) or in paper form at the school offices.

The closing date for responses is **5pm, Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

## What is a Federation?

**A Federation is where two or more schools share a Governing Board.**

- Both schools gain opportunities to work together and share skills and experience.
- Both schools will remain independent; they will not merge into one school.
- Pupils will remain at their present schools, which will retain their school identities.
- The names of the schools will remain the same and both will continue with their present uniforms.
- Both schools will continue to operate with individual budgets.
- Both schools will continue to serve their respective communities.
- Admission policies and enrolment arrangements will remain as they are for both schools.

The Governing Boards of Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary School are proposing to federate from **Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022**, as **Forest Edge Federation**. This was a decision reached by both Governing Boards at duly constituted Governing Board meetings to discuss the federation on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 for Tutshill CofE Primary School and 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 for Woolaston Primary School.

## Why do the Governing Boards think this is the right way forward?

Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary School are two well-established local primary schools serving similar communities and facing many of the same opportunities and challenges. Both schools are of a similar size and have shared an Executive Headteacher since 2020. Both schools have found this a positive period of co-operation and close working and have identified real benefits for our pupils, staff and local communities through being able to work together.

In developing this proposal, both Governing Boards have identified strong alignment in our views and ethos, and in the ways the two schools work to deliver the best education we can for our pupils.

The collaboration model of shared leadership under an Executive Headteacher has delivered clear benefits for both schools by providing a stable and secure

framework for continued educational improvements. Bringing together the Governing Boards will streamline governance arrangements and support this process.

The Ofsted inspection regime challenges all schools to consider how to provide and maintain the best possible education for all their pupils now and into the future. In order to meet this challenge, it is important that focus continues on improving pupil educational outcomes at our schools, whilst making good use of public funding we receive.

The combined Governing Boards fundamentally believe both schools can gain significantly from formalising a closer relationship. The Federation will bring together the skill-sets across the two existing Governing Boards for the benefit of both schools, while recognising the factors which make each school distinct and a valued part of its local community.

Woolaston Primary School and Tutshill CofE Primary School are two of the ten largest primary schools in the Forest of Dean. Nationally, however, as single-form entry schools<sup>1</sup>, each are relatively small and therefore vulnerable to changes in funding, staffing and pupil enrolment. Attracting and keeping experienced school leaders is essential if both schools want to maintain improvements in performance over the short and long term.

### **What will change under Federation?**

Under Federation, the Executive Headteacher will continue leading both schools on a day-to-day basis, and staff and pupils will continue to experience school life within their current school. However, both schools will be better able to co-operate and co-ordinate activities, such as staff training and other events.

In addition, the existing Governing Boards will be dissolved, and a single new Federation Governing Board will be formed. This will streamline governance arrangements and free up school leaders to focus on each school's improvement priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> Taking up to one class of up to thirty children into Reception every year.

## Vision for the Forest Edge Federation

Each school will retain its own individual, distinctive vision, as each will remain an independent school. In addition, the Forest Edge Federation will have an over-arching vision that focuses on how we will work together in partnership:

**Our schools, each with their own unique character, will work together in a strong, supportive, resilient structure to provide high-quality education for our children and to be an asset to our local communities.**

As such, Tutshill CofE Primary School will retain its distinctive Christian vision and Woolaston Primary School will remain a Community School.

## What will the new Federation Governing Board look like?

In accordance with legislation, it is the recommendation of the two current Governing Boards that the new Federation Governing Board should comprise 11 individuals, as this number represents a sensible balance between the requirement to have representation from different parts of our community with the need to operate efficiently as a Governing Board.

Type of governor	Number	Detail
<b>Parent</b>	2	<i>Elected across both schools (i.e. not ring-fenced)</i>
<b>Headteacher</b>	1	<i>Executive Headteacher</i>
<b>Staff</b>	1	<i>Elected across both schools</i>
<b>Local Authority</b>	1	<i>Nominated by the local authority</i>
<b>Co-opted</b>	4	<i>Co-opted governors are appointed by the federated governing board and have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the schools.</i>
<b>Foundation</b>	2	<i>Given Tutshill's status as a Church of England School, Foundation Governors must be appointed by the diocese, after nomination by Tidenham Parochial Church Council. One of these Foundation Governors will be an ex officio Governor<sup>2</sup>.</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	

*The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations set out the composition requirements*

<sup>2</sup> Holding the role as a result of their status or another position that they hold, in this case Vicar of Tidenham parish.

All governors will represent both Tutshill CofE Primary and Woolaston Primary School equally and fully, if federation goes ahead.

## The benefits of Federation

This model provides key benefits:

- Pupils will experience a better quality of teaching through greater joint-working and moderation, and staff collaboration between schools.
- Staff will benefit from stable leadership to support high quality provision.
- Staff will be able to support and learn from one another, further developing their subject knowledge and passing this knowledge to the pupils allowing for better pupil outcomes.
- The locality will benefit from their schools offering, into the long-term, stronger educational outcomes and the capacity to play a key role in their communities.
- Staff will benefit from the potential to develop their careers within the Forest Edge Federation, aiding retention of high-quality teachers.

## How will Federation benefit our children?

*“Going to sporting events with the other school has been great! It’s been good cheering each other on but provides healthy competition between us!”* Year 5 Pupil

**Federation** will secure the highest possible standards of education, and deliver strong outcomes for all pupils, through greater collaboration.

- Children are taught by inspiring teachers, with a sound knowledge of the subjects they deliver. Staff will continue to improve subject expertise and to deliver the highest-quality teaching, leading to better pupil outcomes.
- A wider range of extra-curricular activities will be offered through the increased sharing of facilities and resources. As such, the children have already benefited from joint competitions, visits, and educational visitors.
- Learning will be enhanced through joint educational visits, visitors, workshops, and resources.
- More opportunities will be available to all pupils, so that they can access the benefits of a larger school within a small-school setting.
- Children will receive a school curriculum that has been designed by school leaders that understand their school community and its needs.

## How will Federation benefit our staff?

### Proposed Staffing Arrangements

The Terms and Conditions of all staff in both schools will remain the same and cannot be changed without agreement. It would be at the discretion of the Federation's Governing Board to make new appointments, teaching and non-teaching, to the Federation or to individual schools. Federation provides staff the opportunity to work at either school within the Federation with agreement.

**Federation** will provide the opportunity:

- To continue to share knowledge and expertise. For example, staff from both schools are currently taking part in joint training as part of close collaboration, recognising the individual natures of the schools.
- To continue to share responsibilities and reduce staff workloads.
- To gain new informal networks and subject matter knowledge, with the potential to develop innovative and inspiring teaching methods
- For staff to collaborate professionally in a rewarding environment, with opportunities that might not otherwise exist.
- To increase access to resources across schools, to allow teachers at both schools to efficiently deliver a wider curriculum to all our pupils.
- To develop leadership skills across the Forest Edge Federation, creating high-quality leaders as part of professional development.
- For staff to benefit from consistent leadership and communication across the Forest Edge Federation to help maintain our progress towards improved pupil outcomes.

## How will Federation benefit parents and the local community?

**Federation** will secure the schools as vibrant and innovative centres of learning within our local communities, by:

- Helping to protect the future of both schools and their villages.
- Providing increased opportunities for a quality education for every child.
- Sharing sporting opportunities for pupils.
- Establishing consistent leadership and expectations across both schools.
- Providing consistent communication to all parents and carers.
- Developing and maintaining strong and positive reputations of the two local schools.

## How can you access more information?

Recognising that Covid-19 continues to constrain our ability to bring people together for formal events, we are keen to ensure parents, carers and any other interested parties have the opportunity to speak to governors and staff about the proposed federation. As such, we are holding the following drop-in virtual events:

<b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March - 6.30pm-7.30pm</b>	Tutshill school community
<b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March - 7.40pm-8.40pm</b>	Woolaston school community
<b>Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March - 6.30pm-7.30pm</b>	Woolaston school community
<b>Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March - 7.40pm-8.40pm</b>	Tutshill school community

All stakeholders are welcome to attend any of the above meetings. To access joining details, register your interest with [clerk@woolaston.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@woolaston.gloucs.sch.uk) or [clerk@tutshillcofe.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@tutshillcofe.gloucs.sch.uk) by 5pm on the day before the relevant event.

We encourage all stakeholders to utilise these events to gather all the information they require. If you cannot attend, however, **questions can also be submitted to the same email addresses. We will endeavour to answer submitted questions within three school working days.**

## The next steps...

The publication of this document launches a six-week consultation period on the proposal to federate which will close at **5pm on Wednesday 30th March 2022**. The consultation process is governed by regulation and is a statutory part of the procedure for forming the Forest Edge Federation between the two schools. During the consultation period, the Governing Boards of the schools proposing to federate must consult with:

- Gloucestershire County Council
- Staff paid to work at the schools and their unions
- Parents/carers of registered pupils at the schools
- Diocese of Gloucester Board of Education
- Existing Foundation governors at Tutshill CofE Primary School
- Any other persons the Governing Boards consider appropriate

A letter will be sent to the Secretary of State within one week of publication of this document informing him of the start of consultation by the Governing

Boards of Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary Schools on Federation.

We are eager to hear the thoughts and views of the Tutshill and Woolaston communities on this proposal and will strive to answer any questions which people might have. Governors will reflect on all responses as part of making their final decision, and consider your views as important. We encourage all parents, staff, and other interested parties to submit a response so we can understand the balanced view of the school community.

A response slip is attached to this document. Please complete and place in the box at each school or send to:

**The clerk to the governors at either school at:**

**[clerk@woolaston.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@woolaston.gloucs.sch.uk) or [clerk@tutshillcofe.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@tutshillcofe.gloucs.sch.uk).**

*Closing date for the return of the response forms is **5pm on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022***

# Proposal to Federate Tutshill CofE Primary School and Woolaston Primary School

## Consultation Reply Form

Please give us your views on the proposal for the Federation. If you have any questions please include them in the comments box.

**Name** **(optional):**

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Please tick the boxes that apply.

	<b>Tutshill</b>	<b>Woolaston</b>
<b>A parent/carer of a child or children at one of the schools</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A governor of one of the schools</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A member of staff at one of the schools</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>A parent of a pre-school child</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some other link to one of the schools</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Someone else with an interest – please give details</b>		

Please tick below in the appropriate box.

I support the Federation	I do not support the Federation	I am undecided

**Comments :**

(Please use the other side of this sheet if required)

Please complete the form and place in the box at each school or return by post. Please return by **5pm, Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022** to [clerk@woolaston.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@woolaston.gloucs.sch.uk) or [clerk@tutshillcofe.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@tutshillcofe.gloucs.sch.uk).