



CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED FEDERATION OF WICKFORD PRIMARY AND BEAUCHAMPS HIGH SCHOOLS



The governing bodies of Wickford Primary and Beauchamps High schools have been considering a proposal to create a Federation to govern both schools from 14th March 2022. The name of the proposed federation is **The Wickford Federation**.

This document sets out the reasons why the governing boards of each school believe this proposal is a good idea and the benefits for students, parents and staff. It also provides information about the vision that the federation has for its family of schools.

What is a Federation?

A federation is a formal and legal agreement between schools to operate with a single governing body. The decision to federate is made by the governing bodies of each school following a consultation process with key partners such as parents, staff and the Local Authority.

Many of the potential benefits of a federation have already been seen as the schools have had a close working relationship for some time, however Governors of both schools believe that a formal collaboration will further increase benefits to the pupils by enhancing educational provision.

Federation is a mechanism aimed primarily at reinforcing leadership and governance of, and collaboration and co-operation between, schools.

The two schools will remain as separate legal establishments with their individual identities. There will continue to be an OFSTED inspection in each school, results will be published for each school and their funding will be determined separately.

Why is a Federation being proposed?

Beauchamps High and Wickford Primary have enjoyed a close working relationship for several years. It is now felt that this working partnership should be formalised in a federation with a single Governing Body.

Working closely with other schools in a federation can:

- ensure the schools retain their own identity while being part of a larger community
- facilitate the sharing of best practice and professional expertise
- enable much closer alignment of curriculum progression and improve transition
- enable access to a wider range of facilities
- offer development opportunities for staff across the schools
- create a synergy of financial economies of scale and improve purchasing power and cost savings

The two schools would remain as individual schools and the single Federation Governing Body would discharge its functions accordingly for each school. Federation gives opportunities for professional development of the staff within both schools, allowing for wider professional growth. The schools also become a more exciting place for new staff to want to work; and this should be reflected when attracting the right person for any roles within the schools. There will continue to be strong and experienced leadership, greater scope for sharing resources between the two schools and greater collaborative working. This would include professional

development opportunities for staff, both teaching and non-teaching which would benefit not only the individuals themselves but most importantly the students.

What will the Federation look like?

The federation would come into effect on 14th March 2022. Following federation there would be a newly appointed governing board responsible for both schools. The federation's governing body members will be selected for their skills, expertise and understanding they bring to benefit the strategic development of the federation of schools to secure the best possible outcomes for every student. In doing so, the governing body will look to secure a membership which has a balance of knowledge and regular interaction with each of the schools. It is proposed that the new governing board will consist of 12 governors, as set out in the table below. However, the instrument of governance will allow for this number to increase should additional schools wish to join the federation or if the appointment of additional governors fills a perceived skills gap.

The composition of the governing body of the proposed federation of the schools is shown below. This proposed composition reflects statutory requirements.

The number of governors in each category will be as follows:

Foundation - 6

Staff - 1

Local Authority - 1

Parent – 2 (1 per school in the federation)

Headteacher – 2 (1 per school in the federation)

The federation will have a Lead Headteacher, who will be responsible for the performance management of the other Headteachers in the federation.

The priority for the federation in its first year will be to secure and embed the new governance structures, while maintaining the strong academic performance of the schools.

The Instrument of Government will come into effect on 14 March 2022, the day of Federation.

There will not be sub-committees of governors, nor will there be local governing groups in the individual schools. Headteachers from all schools in the federation will report to the full governing body of the Federation once per half term. The focus of these meetings will be different in each meeting, and will include

- Full statutory governance matters
- Curriculum and Standards
- Finance and Premises
- Personnel

Working groups of governors may be formed to focus on specific areas of school improvement.

There will be no change to the proposed arrangement for staffing the schools within the Federation.

As a foundation school, staff at Beauchamps High School are employed by the governing body. As the current governing body will be dissolved, staff will be automatically transferred over to the new governing body on

the federation date under a TUPE system. Staff employed and working at Wickford Primary School will remain Local Authority employees working to the new federation governing body.

How will this affect the students?

There will be no change at all to the admissions of each of the schools. Essex County Council will remain the admissions authority for Wickford Primary School and Beauchamps High School will remain its own admissions authority.

The schools remain committed to maintaining their productive working relationship with families and other schools.

Next steps

Parents, staff and other stakeholders are invited to comment on these proposals. The consultation period is six weeks and the deadline for written representations regarding the proposal is 17 February 2022. All representations should be sent to BHS-consultation@beauchamps.essex.sch.uk

There will be an opportunity to discuss the details of the proposal further at the consultation events being held on Thursday 20 January 2022 at:

Wickford Primary School at 2.00pm

Beauchamps High School at 5.00pm

If you are interested in attending either of these meetings, please contact us using the email address above by Thursday 13 January so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Process for federation

Date	Action
Consultation starts	6 January 2022
Face to face consultation meetings at schools	20 January 2022
Consultation ends	17 February 2022
Governing bodies consider responses and decide whether to formally federate	7 March 2022
Federation implemented	14 March 2022

If at any time the Governors decide not to proceed with the federation the schools remain as they are.

On the federation date, the existing governing bodies are dissolved, the new federated governing body is incorporated. The outgoing governing bodies will deliver a report of all action taken in discharge of their functions and a new instrument of government is incorporated. As a foundation school, Beauchamps High School governing body holds the responsibility for staff, land and property, which will be transferred to the new federated governing body. As a local authority school, Essex County Council holds the responsibility for staff, land and property at Wickford Primary school.

The Governors are committed to achieving the best educational experience for the students and this is the start of a six-week consultation to share the proposal details and to gather feedback before taking any further steps towards a final decision.

While the Governors unanimously support the proposal, it is important to hear from as many stakeholders as possible. Please do provide your comments and suggestions by 17 February 2022.

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