

Consultation on a proposal to federate

Llanidloes Community Primary School

&

Llanidloes High School



December 2018

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1. THE PROPOSAL

Governors, headteachers and senior leaders at Llanidloes High School and Llanidloes Community Primary (C.P.) School believe now is the right time to explore federating the two schools.

Collaboration between our two high achieving schools is already well developed. Our transition arrangements are strong, our firm commitment to promoting the Welsh ethos is closely aligned and excellent professional relationships exist at all levels. However, we do not want to stand still at a time of great challenge and change both within Powys and the education sector more widely.

The foundations of deeper partnership working are already laid. We believe that federation will help us meet the diverse needs of our pupils even more effectively. This belief is at the heart of our proposal to federate.

The two governing bodies have agreed to formally consult with stakeholders on the following proposal:

‘That Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School establish a federation under the ‘Federation of Maintained Schools and Miscellaneous Amendments (Wales) Regulations 2014.’

At the moment the working name for the federation is Llanidloes Schools Federation.

This document has been produced to provide information to stakeholders about what federation is and what it would mean for the schools involved.

Your questions, comments and observations on the proposal and the information provided in this document are invited. Information about how to respond is provided at the end of this document. All responses must be received by **Friday 25th January 2019**.

You are also welcome to direct any queries towards members of the two governing bodies.

2. RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

The consultation period will begin on Wednesday 5th December 2018 and will end on Friday 25th January 2019.

In line with guidance, the consultation document has been circulated to the following:

- The local authority
- The school council for each school
- All staff paid to work in the schools
- Parents/carers of registered pupils at each school
- All trade unions
- Any other relevant persons the governing body considers should see the proposal.

After the consultation period, a joint meeting of the full governing bodies will be held to consider the responses received to the consultation, and to decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

You can respond by:

- Completing the online response form which is available at <https://customer.powys.gov.uk/article/6455/Llanidloes-Schools-Federation>
- Completing the response form which is attached to this document at Appendix B and send to the address below:
- Sending a written response to the address below; or
- Emailing a response to school.consultation@powys.gov.uk

School Transformation Team
Powys County Council
County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

TIMETABLE

- 5 December 2018 – Consultation commences
- 25 January 2019 – Consultation ends
- March 2019 – Governing Bodies meet to consider consultation responses and decide whether to proceed with the federation or not
- 1 September 2019 – federation becomes operational (if Governing Bodies decide to proceed)

3. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In March 2018, Cabinet approved a new School Organisation Policy, which set out the Council's aspirations for the schools infrastructure in Powys. The policy states that:

'The Council aims to have an educational model which fulfils the following:

- Provides all learners with the opportunity to achieve their potential
- Has high quality, resilient leadership and management
- Has high quality learning environments, with the long term aim that all schools will be assessed as condition A or B
- Has a greater focus on collaboration and partnership working, in order to enable schools to provide the best possible opportunities for learners
- Enables schools to operate effectively and efficiently within the funding available
- Increases demand for Welsh-medium provision and provides access to provision which will enable pupils to become confident Welsh speakers
- Develops our schools into establishments that are central to community activity
- Has a high quality ICT infrastructure that will enable all schools to provide enhanced opportunities for learners
- Provides access to high quality early years provision
- Provides support for learners with additional learning needs which aligns with the requirements of the new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act
- Provides access to high quality post-16 provision in schools, which is attractive to learners, financially sustainable and minimises learner travel'

The policy also states that a Delivery Plan will be produced which sets out the Council's priorities:

'In order to move towards a more efficient schools network, a new Delivery Plan will be implemented with a greater focus on working in partnership with schools and the communities they serve, and on alternative models of delivering education, such as collaboration models, federation, multi-site schools and all-through schools.

The Council's Delivery Plan will focus on delivering the following priorities:

- Secondary schools to become 'all-through schools', or part of multi-sited arrangements

- Small primary schools¹ to be part of formal collaborations / federations / amalgamations
- Remove infant / junior split by creating ‘all-through’ primary schools
- New Welsh-medium provision to be established
- Improvements to the Powys schools estate, either as part of the Welsh Government’s 21st Century Schools Programme or as part of the Council’s Asset Management Programme
- A new model for delivering post-16 provision to be implemented
- Transforming the delivery of support for pupils with additional learning needs

In addition to the above priorities, the Council will encourage all schools to:

- Identify areas where staff and / or services can be shared across more than one school in order to improve efficiency
- Develop the use of ICT links between school sites to provide distance learning opportunities’

The current proposals in respect of Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School are in line with these priorities.

4. THE AFFECTED SCHOOLS

Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School are co-located in the town of Llanidloes. Llanidloes C.P. is an English-medium school that provides education for pupils aged 5 to 11, and Llanidloes High School, a dual-stream school, provides education to pupils aged 11 – 18. Both schools have permanent headteachers.

i) Number on roll and projected numbers

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Llanidloes C.P. School	283	290	284	273	280
Llanidloes High School	545	565	593	627	647

¹ The Welsh Government defines a ‘small school’ as a school that contains fewer than 91 registered pupils in the Education (Small Schools) (Wales) Order 2014: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/1133/made>

ii) Capacity

	Capacity	Number on roll	Over/under capacity
Llanidloes C.P. School	269	283	14 Over Capacity
Llanidloes High School	692	545	147 Under Capacity

iii) School building condition

	Condition	Suitability	Sustainability
Llanidloes C.P. School	C	B	C
Llanidloes High School	C	B	C

5. WHAT IS 'FEDERATION'?

The term 'federation' describes a formal and legal agreement by which the schools involved work together in formal partnership under a single governing body.

'The Welsh Government's policy objective is to promote collaboration between all parts of the education system to improve outcomes. School federation is a more formal way of extending collaboration and promoting closer working relationships and is the principal initiative for achieving formal partnership working amongst schools to improve performance and narrow the attainment gap for deprived pupils.'²

The federation of schools is a legal process which enables schools to work together through a formal structured process by sharing a governing body that will make decisions in the best interest of all the schools, staff and pupils in that federation. Each school retains its name, category, budget, staff and remains in its community.

Estyn carries out inspections of individual schools within a federation, and the Local Authority and Welsh Government collects data from each school individually.

In rural communities across Wales, federation is seen as an opportunity to strengthen the sustainability of schools, and to ensure that schools are retained in their local communities. Federation also enables smaller groups of pupils and staff to network and share good practice, ideas and resources.

² p3 'Federation process of maintained schools in Wales Guidance for governing bodies and local authorities'

6. THE FEDERATION PROCESS

A proposal to establish a federation can either be taken forward by the local authority or by the governing bodies of the schools involved in the federation. This proposal is being taken forward by the governing bodies of Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School.

There is a defined process, which needs to be followed in order to establish a federation. This process is outlined in the Welsh Government Circular 011/2014, 'Federation process of maintained schools in Wales: Guidance for governing bodies and local authorities', which was issued in May 2014.

The process is summarised in Appendix A.

The full guidance document can be found on-line at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/fundingschools/school-governance/federation-of-maintained-schools/?lang=en>.

Once a federation is established, if any individual school wanted to leave the federation, this would have to be agreed by the federated governing body, following a written request from the school or schools wishing to leave the federation.

The federated governing body can also decide to break up a federation if it is considered that the federation is not working for pupils, parents, staff or governors.

7. BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF FEDERATION

A growing body of research suggests that federations are highly effective at improving pupils' progress, quality of teaching and leadership in participating schools (see table below).

Welsh Government's Curriculum for Life states, '*the current separation of the curriculum into phases and key stages should be removed... the period of statutory schooling, at least, should be seen as a coherent and progressive whole, including the move between the primary and secondary sectors.*' Federating the primary and secondary schools in Llanidloes will help ensure both schools work effectively in partnership to secure excellent progression for pupils as they move between phases.

Benefits
Pupils and teachers
A survey undertaken by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) in September 2011 on the impact of federated schools in England found improvements were evident in the three key areas of teaching and learning , behaviour and pupil achievement . ³
In schools where the federation bridged primary and secondary age groups, Ofsted found that there was better transition between schools and less disruption to pupils' progress . In all cases, a single system of assessing and tracking pupils' progress was used.
In good federations, Ofsted found that leaders made the most of increased resources and opportunities for professional development and used these to achieve their priorities. Crucially, training and development were carefully tailored to meet the needs of the school. Federations enable participating school to become more effective learning institutions for the staff who teach in them due to pooled expertise .
In his report of his review of the future delivery of Education Services in Wales Robert Hill states that federations and other types of formal school partnership provide a strong platform for both increased autonomy and raising school attainment .
Federations facilitate greater sharing of best practice that will help drive up standards and improve performance.
The governing body of a federation cannot require existing staff to work across all schools within the federation, but they can negotiate with the school staff unions over whether flexible contracts can be introduced. New staff can be appointed to work across schools in the federation.
The governing body of a federation can use budget, resources and new staff across the federation to improve the educational outcomes for all pupils. An audit trail must be kept and

³ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/leadership-of-more-one-school>

<p>separate accounts produced for each school in the federation.</p>
<p>Federation presents opportunities for the creation of new roles that can be shared across schools i.e. bursar, ICT network manager, drama teacher, peripatetic teachers etc.</p>
<p>Federation can help: secure greater consistency of teaching and learning methodology especially cross-phase; reduce transitional dips in pupil performance; and enhance opportunities for pupil activities as schools come together to provide access to each other's facilities, leading to improvements to the quality of learning for staff and pupils.</p>
<p>Leadership</p>
<p>The Ofsted report stated that leaders and governors interviewed were positive about the benefits of federation. They saw professional development, staff retention, greater availability of resources and the ability to attract high-quality leaders as the key reasons why federation led to improvements to provision.</p>
<p>Unlike with an all through school, in a federation each school can retain its headteacher. By doing so, both schools can retain their overall leadership capacity</p>
<p>Helps overcome governor recruitment issues in rural areas where long term vacancies exist.</p>
<p>Federation can help: streamline policies and structures and increase opportunity for middle management development.</p>
<p>A governing body of a federation can choose a constitution and membership which suits their particular circumstances as long as they have a minimum of 15 governors and no more than a maximum of 27 governors and adhere to the minimum and maximum numbers of governors set out in the regulations. Deciding on the membership of the single governing body will be an important step for the governors as they will want to achieve the right balance of skills and experience to meet the needs of all the schools and help reduce the burden on senior staff. They will be able to draw upon members' skills from both governing bodies to help provide the specific skills needed to improve governing body effectiveness, such as financial management skills.</p>
<p>Resourcing</p>
<p>Ofsted found that Initial concerns that staff, parents and children had about federations were almost always overcome by good communication and consultation. The appointment of a business manager or bursar was often a key factor in overcoming practical problems to do with finance and the site.</p>
<p>Schools in a federation are able to explore the advantages of sharing resources such as facilities, IT, staff, buildings etc. to achieve financial efficiencies and economies of scale.</p>
<p>Community and identity</p>
<p>Federation can help improved social opportunities for pupils through joint activities.</p>
<p>Feedback from headteachers and governors of schools that have federated demonstrate that once the federation has had time to bed down, the schools in the federation and the governors</p>

are more comfortable with the arrangements.
Schools that federate remain in their communities and keep their individual identity .
Schools in a federation will also be able to maintain their own delegated budget, name, character, school uniform and ethos .
The partnership strengthens rather than threatens the characteristics and qualities of individual schools within the federation.
Each school has its own Estyn inspection , though increasingly these are co-ordinated to happen at the same time for all schools within the federation to minimise stress and disruption.
It is a statutory requirement to seek the views of stakeholders on federation proposals, whether the federation has been proposed by the respective school governing bodies or the LA.
General
Federations can be dissolved if they do not work. Schools included within a governing body implemented federation may leave if the federated governing body agrees to a written request.

Challenges
Increased workload for governors, especially during inception and first year .
Potential loss of experienced governors .
Governors, school staff and parents may be concerned that their school will be treated less favourably to other schools in the federation.
Llanidloes HS and primary school have not experienced significant governor recruitment issues . Federation is, therefore, not likely to add value in the area of governor recruitment.
Potential initial mistrust amongst governors, parents and staff – time needed to bed down

The governors are of the view that all challenges and issues can be mitigated, but that this will require commitment and resources.

8. ALTERNATIVE MODELS CONSIDERED

The governors considered the merits of establishing an All Through School in Llanidloes. This would mean that Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School would amalgamate and a new 4 – 18 school would be created.

There are several reasons why, in the opinion of governors, headteachers and senior leaders, it is preferable to opt for federation rather than all through schooling in Llanidloes at this time:

- All Through Schools have one headteacher. When federating small schools, this can be seen as a desirable efficiency. However, when federating larger schools, opting for a single headteacher can have unintended negative consequences. These include:
 - significant loss of leadership capacity on one or both school sites;
 - possible job losses leading to low morale and limited buy-in from participating schools;
 - significant increase in workload for the remaining headteacher;
 - insufficient primary/secondary school expertise on senior leadership team leading to ill-informed decision-making relating to primary/secondary phase matters;
 - loss of excellent primary/secondary school leaders due to lack of progression opportunities.

- Headteachers of All Through Schools can be perceived as not sharing their time fairly between all school sites. Primary/secondary school communities may feel overlooked or treated as the poorer relation depending upon whether the headteacher is a primary or secondary specialist. This can build resentment and tension that hinders effective collaboration. In a federation with two headteachers of equal status, these issues are avoided.

- Estyn inspection reports of all through schools are currently dominated by secondary school evaluation and analysis. This adds to the perception that primary partners in all through schools are undervalued.⁴

Llanidloes primary school is a large primary school and, as such, deserves to have a headteacher on site throughout the week.

⁴ <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/Ebbw%20Fawr%20Learning%20Community.pdf>

9. THE IMPACT OF FEDERATION

i) HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT PUPILS AND PARENTS?

On a day-to-day basis, there would be no noticeable change. Each school would retain its ethos, identity and uniform, and children at both schools would continue to learn in their present classes.

It is intended that federation would enable the schools involved to build on our recent success and see continued improvements in school performance. It is anticipated that pupils would have greater opportunities to develop, both educationally and socially.

Pupils and parents would benefit from the following:

- The sharing of practice and quality learning experiences
- The continued provision of a local school, reflecting the particular needs of the local community
- Shared teaching expertise across the schools
- A collaborative approach to new initiatives
- Increased and wider opportunities for friendship, physical and cultural activities
- A co-ordinated approach to school based events and use of buildings and use of site assets

ii) HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT THE GOVERNING BODY?

Following federation, the current governing bodies would be abolished and replaced by a single governing body. Based on the current guidance (federation Process of Maintained Schools in Wales, May 2014), the new governing body would have no fewer than 15 and no more than 27 governors.

The maximum number of members on the governing body is detailed in the table below:

MEMBERSHIP CATEOGRY	NUMBER
Parent	4
Teacher	2
Staff	2
Local Authority	4
Community	4
Headteachers	2
Additional community governor	1

The Welsh Government consulted on new regulations for the composition of governing bodies during 2017. Should any new regulations come into effect in the future, it is likely that changes will be required to the composition of the governing body.

iii) HOW WOULD FEDERATION IMPACT ON FINANCE?

Revenue Funding

There would be no impact on either school's revenue budget, as both would continue to be funded according to the Council's fair funding formula – schools in a federation continue to be funded separately, although they are able to pool budgets. However, the federation would be able to explore the advantages of **sharing resources** such as facilities, IT, staff, buildings etc. to achieve financial efficiencies and **economies of scale**.

The Council is currently carrying out a review of its fair funding formula, which is expected to be implemented from the 2019/20 financial year. As the outcome of the review of the fair funding formula is currently unknown, it is not possible to estimate what the financial impact would be. However, the schools in the federation would be expected to operate within the budget allocated to them, based on the new fair funding formula.

Capital Funding

No capital funding would be required in order to implement the proposal. The federation would operate on the current sites of Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School. The current accommodation can accommodate current and projected pupil numbers.

However, as governors, we are concerned about the quality of the buildings and facilities at both schools and are very keen that Powys County Council prioritises investment in our schools estate. The Council's Schools Asset Management Plan (September 2018) states that capital investment in schools is prioritised based on the following criteria:

- *Condition; Suitability, Sustainability*
- *Sufficiency; and*
- *Health & Safety issues.*

Consideration is also given to whether a school is part of a current or future strategic school reorganisation development'.⁵

⁵

<https://powys.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s31000/Appendix%201%20SAMP%20FINAL%2025%20Sept%202019.pdf>

The governors are also concerned that Llanidloes C.P. School is already over its capacity and the forecasted pupil numbers for Llanidloes High School indicate that numbers are increasing which will impact on capacity in future.

iv) HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT LEADERSHIP AND STAFFING?

Both schools would continue to have separate headteachers. However, it is intended that there is a close working relationship between the two headteachers, senior leadership teams and other staff within the federation. No changes would be made to the current contracts of teaching and non-teaching staff prior to the federation.

Any new staff starting after the date of federation would be employed directly by the federation, and appropriate flexibility clauses would be built into their contracts of employment.

v) HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT SCHOOL ADMISSIONS?

Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School are both local authority maintained schools. Applications for places at these two schools are submitted to Powys County Council, and places are allocated in accordance with the council's Admissions Policy, which is available on request from each school.

Should a federation be established, the admissions arrangements for both schools would continue as they are currently.

Appendix A

Summary of the federation Process

Step One – Exploration

- Expressions of interest from schools
- Agree drivers and purpose for federation
- Schools seek information and guidance from the local authority and hold early discussions
- Inform staff of process and any implications. Keep Unions informed
- Set up a Governor Working Group with representatives from all schools to lead the process
- Determine a date for the operative start of federation
- Consider talking to or visiting other schools that have federated

Step Two – Preparation

- Governors agree to prepare a report to consult with stakeholders
- Governors decide on a governance structure – membership and constitution of the federated governing body
- Agree a name for the federation
- Explore the management and staffing structure
- Investigate any financial and HR Issues

Step Three – The Report and Consultation

- Seek help from the LA to prepare the report for consultation, which must be at least 6 weeks. (Powys County Council have offered to manage the consultation process on our behalf)
- Draft reports to be considered by governing bodies at their next meeting
- The report must be an Agenda item for which at least five days notice has been given
- Each governing body must decide it wishes to continue
- The report should:

- Include full details of the proposal including the size/composition of the single governing body, management and staffing arrangements, admissions, authorities
- Explain reasons for federation, benefits and how potential challenges will be met
- Include the date from when the federation takes place – must be at least 125 days from the date proposals are published
- Consultation with stakeholders – Local Authority, parents, staff of all schools, staff unions, diocese

Step 4 – Defining

In consultation with the Local Authority

- Start to consider and define leadership roles across the federation
- Start to prepare job descriptions and contracts for any new posts and roles
- Include proposed staffing structure in consultation report

Step 5 – Post Consultation

- Joint meeting of governors to consider responses – plan this meeting at the start of the consultation process to allow for full attendance asap
- Provide summary report of responses for each governing body to consider

Step 6 – Implementation

- Individual governing bodies meet to make the final decision on whether they wish to proceed – simultaneous meetings in separate rooms
- Inform stakeholders of decision
- Liaise with LA and Diocese
- Senior leadership roles and responsibilities formalised
- Governor working group established to provide strategic planning and roll out
- Agreement with governor support in LA to provide continuity

Step 7 - Evolution

- Single governing body meets to elect Chair and Vice Chair
- Governors agree committee structures and meeting calendar

- New staff roles operating
- School Improvement Plan targets resources and expertise at raising standards across federation
- Calendars and professional processes aligned

Step 8 – Embedding

- Resources and staffing used flexibly to raise standards
- Headteacher build overview of federation effectiveness through monitoring
- Governors review federation to have systems in place to ensure good knowledge of individual schools

Step 9 – Strategic Development

- Key LA officers are able to offer well informed support
- Overview of federation arrangements and impact on standards and school improvement capacity
- Wider opportunities for professional development
- Model practices, processes, policies and documentation in place

Appendix B

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM – LLANIDLOES SCHOOLS FEDERATION

The Governing Bodies of Llanidloes C.P. School and Llanidloes High School are consulting on a proposal to federate the two schools.

A consultation document which provides more information is available from the two schools, or on the Council's website at <https://customer.powys.gov.uk/article/6455/Llanidloes-Schools-Federation>. This consultation response form gives you the opportunity to share your views on the proposal.

The response form can also be completed online – a link to the online form is available by following the link above.

The closing date for this consultation is the **25th January 2019**. All responses must be received by this date.

All information received via this survey will be administered under the rules of the General Data Protection Regulation Act. For full details of how Powys County Council works to these rules, visit <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/information-mangement/data-protection-and-privacy/>

1. Please indicate how you are associated with the schools affected by this consultation:

Parent, carer or guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prospective parent, carer or guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of the community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governor	<input type="checkbox"/>	No association	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

2. Please specify which school you are associated with:

Llanidloes C.P. School Llanidloes High School Another school No association with any school

Please indicate your responses to the questions below.

4. If you have any further comments related to the proposed federation that have not been explained in the consultation document, please provide them below:

Equalities Information

We want to ensure that we include all sectors of the community in our consultation, and are requesting that you provide this information to enable us to identify whether the consultation has been inclusive.

However, these questions are optional. We will take all responses into consideration when determining how to proceed, regardless of whether or not this information has been provided.

5. Can you understand, speak or write Welsh?

Yes No Don't want to say

6. If you have school-aged children, are they entitled to receive free school meals?

Yes No Don't want to say

7. If you have school-aged children, do they have any additional learning needs?

Yes No Don't want to say

8. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Yes No Don't want to say

9. What is your ethnic group?

White	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or British Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other ethnic group	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Completed questionnaires should be sent to the following address, to arrive **no later than Friday 25th January 2019:**

*School Transformation Team,
Powys County Council,
County Hall,
Llandrindod Wells,
LD1 5LG*

E-mail: school.consultation@powys.gov.uk