

Consultation

Proposed Federation of Emerson Valley School and Merebrook Infant School

What is this consultation proposing?

We are writing to tell you about an opportunity to make an exciting difference to the futures of both Emerson Valley School and Merebrook Infant School. We believe that a federation of the two schools would be a very positive change; however, before we consider it any further, we would like to tell you about it and find out your views.

Background

At present, both schools have their own headteacher and, while they work closely together in some areas, they are run as two separate schools. In August 2017, the current headteacher of Merebrook Infant School will be leaving and this creates an opportunity for the two schools to forge closer working relationships, improve learning opportunities for pupils and create a consistent educational experience, strengthening the position of both schools.

There are two types of federation: a soft federation where the two schools maintain their own governing boards, head teachers but share resources and a hard federation where the two schools normally share one executive head teacher and one governing board, while retaining their own identities.

The proposal

The Governing Boards of both schools are proposing that a hard federation is created between the two schools, starting in September 2017.

There would be one shared executive headteacher, with robust senior leadership arrangements in place at each school. This model currently operates successfully across other federated schools in Milton Keynes.

The role of the single governing board would be to:

- define the shared vision and strategic direction for both schools;
- ensure proper management of financial resources and
- hold the executive headteacher to account for the educational performance of both schools.

There would be a total of 14 governors, of which there would be:

- 2 x parent governors (ideally one from each school);
- 1 x elected staff governor;
- 1 x headteacher;
- 1 x local authority-nominated governor;
- 9 x co-opted governors to include one member of staff (from the school without the elected staff governor) and 2 parents (ideally one more from each school) and the remaining six to be selected based on skills and experience.

This would mean that:

- The schools would keep their names and individual identities - existing as separate schools, on separate sites;
- The schools would continue to be registered separately with Ofsted, and retain their existing judgements;
- The schools would continue to have their own separate budgets;
- The governing board would set the strategic vision across the schools and ensure educational and financial accountability;
- The schools would work in very close partnership for the benefit of all the children;
- Existing staff contracts would not change because of this federation;
- Admission arrangements for the schools would not be affected.

We believe that this is a good idea because it will:

- Assure a strong future for the schools by securing strong leadership, particularly for Merebrook Infant School
- Provide a consistently high-quality education for your children;
- Allow best practice, facilities and expertise to be shared between the schools offering a consistent educational experience for children;
- Provide opportunities for shared costs and efficiencies, maximising the money available in the schools for high quality teaching and learning;
- Offer benefits in terms of head/staff retention, recruitment and development.

Admissions Authority

As the schools are community schools, the local authority, Milton Keynes Council is the admissions authority.

Next Steps

This consultation will end on 29 June 2017 and, after this time, we will jointly consider any responses to the proposal and each governing board will decide whether to proceed or not. If it is decided that the proposal should go ahead, the new arrangements would start in September 2017.

How can I find out more and contribute to this consultation?

The schools have arranged drop in sessions for people to find out more and give their views. Drop in sessions will take place on the following dates:

Emerson Valley Junior School – Wednesday 17 May 3:30-6:00 and Friday 19 May 9:00-11:00
Merebrook Infant School – Friday 19 May 2:00-4:00

These are open to anyone to attend.

Staff sessions will also be held at:

Emerson Valley Junior School – Monday 15 May 8:00-9:30 and 3:30-4:30
Merebrook Infant School – Friday 12 May 3:15-5:00

This consultation seeks views from parents and staff and any other interested parties. We are keen to hear as many views as possible about this proposal. Please go online and complete the web form at:

<http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations>

If you are unable to access the online form you may respond by email to:

sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk

or in writing to Education Sufficiency, Milton Keynes Council, Saxon Court, 502 Avebury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3HS or by telephone to 01908 253338