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Dear Parents and Carers

As you may be aware there have been a lot of changes within education recently which have challenged school communities to think more creatively to ensure that we are best placed to maintain the best possible educational experience for all our children. Financial pressures are also forcing schools to look at innovative and cost effective solutions. Our schools took the decision to form a management partnership in January 2021 when the Connect Federation needed to secure experienced leadership. Governors have monitored the success of this partnership and would now like to propose to make the arrangement a permanent one by moving into a formal federation whereby all three schools will continue to share the Executive leadership of Mrs. Rachel Pattison.

A federation is a family of schools, with each school retaining its unique character, its own budget and performance tables and having a separate Ofsted inspection. The current admissions processes will remain the same. The schools within the enlarged Federation will share one governing board made up from representatives from all three school communities.

There is no single blue print for federation; each federation is tailored to the needs of the different schools and communities that are involved. There are currently approximately 30 federations across Devon involving over 80 schools, with the first federations in Devon forming in 2006 and many others considering this as a successful and sustainable model for their school's future.

We are proposing to build on the solid foundations established by the Connect Federation and ensure continuing strong leadership and high standards in teaching and learning whilst maintaining each school's individual ethos and values. We aspire to keep each school's unique values the same. For reassurance we are not looking to change the uniform or the branding of any of the schools. We will however develop a Federation identity for use when required.

What will the benefits be for our schools?

- Sharing strong and proven leadership;
- Sharing teaching expertise;
- Increased availability of teaching resources;
- Increasing opportunities for the children to mix with a wider group both academically and socially;
- Greater access to a wider range of resources (human and physical), and opportunities to make some savings to reinvest in children's learning;
- Joint planning and curriculum development opportunities for staff;
- Joint training of staff to impact on children's learning;
- Likely to prove more attractive when recruiting new staff in the future;
- Provide the children with even wider opportunities to prepare them for a more secure transition process.

How will this work?

There will be one Executive Headteacher across our new Federation with a Head of School leading in each individual school. The Heads of School will be enabled to focus their energies on teaching, learning and standards.

The new Federation will have one governing board composed of representatives from each school community. The make-up of the governing board has to adhere to the 2012 Constitution Federation Regulations, as amended in 2016



The membership of this single governing board includes representation for parents and staff, co-opted governors and a local authority governor. Together this group of people will take overall responsibility for both schools within the Federation. The proposed size of the federated governing body would be 14, this would include:

- 2 Parent governors
- 2 Staff governors (including the Executive Headteacher)
- 1 Local Authority appointed governor
- 2 Foundation governor appointed by the Avocet Learning Trust
- 7 Co-opted governors

The Governing Boards are proposing that the Federation start date would be Monday 16th May 2022.

There is a Federation consultation process

The Governors of all the schools involved have set up a consultation process to seek the views of parents, staff, the community, the local authority, and other key partners. The consultation process will last 6 school weeks, starting from Monday 28th February. Governors would welcome your views and comments and invite you to attend one or more of the following meetings:

- Monday 7th March 9.00am and 6pm at Countess Wear Community School
- Wednesday 9th March 9.00am and 6pm at Clyst Heath Primary School.
- Thursday 10th March 9.00am and 6pm at Marpool Primary School.

If you are unable to attend any of the above meetings and would like to discuss the Federation with your Chair of Governors please contact your school to make an appointment in the usual manner.

Written responses should be addressed to 'The Chair of Governors' of your school and must be received by **Monday 25th April at 3.30pm**. A box for written responses will be provided in each school. You can also share your comments via email to either:

c.foster@marpoolprimary.co.uk or skeatt@connectfederation.co.uk

It is the Governors who will make the final decision, drawing upon a broad evidence base including the views of parents. Each governing board from each school considering federation takes its own decision. As with any governing board decision this is a simple majority taken at a meeting of the full governing board.

We look forward to hearing from you and will, of course, keep you fully informed regarding our final decision in April.

Yours sincerely

Sue Keatt

Chair of Governors
Countess Wear and
Clyst Heath

Claire Foster

Chair of Governors
Marpool Primary School

Rachel Pattison

Executive Head
Management Partnership