



Consultation document outlining the
proposal to form a federation between

Broomhaugh Church of England First School
and
Corbridge Church of England First School

to be known as

**“The Broomhaugh & Corbridge Church of England
First School Federation”**

**PROPOSAL TO FEDERATE BROOMHAUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL
AND CORBRIDGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL**

Proposal

Following the successful collaboration and shared leadership of Broomhaugh Church of England First School [Broomhaugh] and Corbridge Church of England First School [Corbridge] since April 2019, the Governors from both schools would like to propose forming a formal federation, to be known as 'The Broomhaugh and Corbridge Church of England First School Federation'.

It has been an extremely challenging year and the crisis is far from over, but our shared leadership and close ties proved a significant asset during the pandemic. We have been able to draw upon the strength of our relationship during the lockdowns and we hope, going forward, to further strengthen these ties as it is clear that we are stronger together.

As you may be aware, Northumberland County Council has asked schools within its remit to do more to ensure their future viability and resilience. It follows a lengthy and challenging schools consultation in 2018 in which 16 schools within the Hexham and Haydon Bridge Partnerships were threatened with closure. While Broomhaugh and Corbridge Church of England First Schools were not among those 16 schools, the message was loud and clear: our excellent schools and three-tier system remain at risk unless schools can work together to ensure their future financial stability.

The decision for Broomhaugh and Corbridge to enter into shared leadership was made in part because it was recognised there was a great deal of alignment between our two schools. In April 2019, the long-standing head of Broomhaugh retired and the Governors, Diocese and other stakeholders felt there was much to be gained from shared leadership between the two schools, led by executive headteacher Jennifer Ainsley and deputy head Sarah Gray.

Following a successful period of shared leadership to date, Governors now feel a formal federation is an excellent option to ensure the long-term sustainability of the two schools, by securing cost savings and efficiencies, improved outcomes for all the children as well as increasing opportunities for our staff.

As you may imagine, the Governors of Broomhaugh and Corbridge have put a great deal of time and discussion into the pros and cons of formally federating the two schools, with the due diligence process taking place over more than 12 months. This has involved several meetings with the Diocese, getting feedback from other school federations and meetings between both Governing Boards. We want to assure you that our decision to pursue a federation has been thoroughly researched and we believe it is in the best interests of our schools.

We recognise that change is never easy, particularly right now with all the additional stresses and uncertainties of the pandemic. We also recognise that the parents, staff and children of Broomhaugh and Corbridge love the unique nature of their schools, and their excellent approach to education which we fully support and know that federation will not change.

In a successful federation, you will barely notice any day-to-day change, other than the fact that it will improve opportunities for the children, including access to a wider and richer curriculum through cross-federation events including arts, sports and music. Both schools will remain on their respective sites and the schools will retain their own budgets.

There will, however, be only one Governing Board with strategic oversight of both schools.

Formal federation will also facilitate staff in the sharing of best practice and expertise. And it will secure our shared leadership, under an executive headteacher and deputy. While both schools have greatly benefited from this close partnership, we believe the time is now right to make this arrangement a permanent one.

So what does this mean for you? We invite you to read this consultation document, which hopefully will answer any of the questions you may have. We invite your feedback and ultimately - we hope - your support.

Due to current lockdown measures we will not be able to invite all parents together for consultation meetings at Broomhaugh and Corbridge. Instead, we will set up a virtual meeting event during the

consultation period and stakeholders are welcome to contact the Chairs of each school or Miss Ainsley at any time to discuss further.

We believe this is a very exciting proposal for the future of children's education in both Broomhaugh and Corbridge schools and we hope you share our enthusiasm.

Consultation

The consultation regarding the Federation commences at **12:00 noon on Monday 22nd March and finishes at 12:00 noon on Monday 10th May 2021.**

We would like to encourage all those with an interest in the future of the two schools to take part in this consultation.

Details of the proposal can be found in this document, along with a number of frequently asked questions (FAQs).

Also included is a copy of the Consultation Response Form for completion and return to either school. These can be handed in to each school's reception areas, emailed or posted. An electronic copy can be downloaded from each school's website.

Consultation Proposal for the Federation of Broomhaugh Church of England First School and Corbridge Church of England First School under one Headteacher and one Governing Board

The Governing Boards of Broomhaugh Church of England First School and Corbridge Church of England First School have been looking at possible ways of working more closely together to make the best of the educational provision for children in both communities.

The opportunity to consider the option of federation has resulted from the collaboration and shared leadership of the two schools, and the belief by the Governing Boards of the two schools that closer links, building upon existing close working, will ensure continuity, financial resilience and provide the best education for our children. The Governing Boards have both voted unanimously to undertake consultation with regard to federation.

This document sets out our proposal and how we believe this federation could work. It sets out what federation would mean for children, parents, staff and the local community, and it forms part of a seven week consultation process, during which we are seeking the views of everyone who has an interest in the school. It includes a response form for you to complete and return should you wish.

No decision has been made as yet. At the end of the consultation period, the Governing Boards of the two schools will make their own independent final decision on whether to federate, taking into account everyone's views and comments.

Federation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

<p>What is a federation?</p>	<p>When two or more schools work together under a single Governing Board, this is called a federation. This single Governing Board can share resources and expertise across the schools and work to raise standards and improve teaching and leadership of the schools. See Ofsted and NCSL research:</p> <p>https://www.nga.org.uk/thenga/media/NGA-Image-Library/Ofsted_federations.pdf</p> <p>https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/7054/1/download%3fid=17200&filename=hard-federations-of-small-primary-schools.pdf</p> <p>This is not a proposal to create one school; the two schools would remain separate and retain their own unique identity, premises and school uniform.</p>
<p>If the federation were to happen, what changes would I see in my child's school?</p>	<p>On a day-to-day basis there would be little, if any, change.</p>
<p>What would the federation mean for our school?</p>	<p>It would mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two schools would remain as separate schools but under the shared leadership structure which we currently have: one headteacher (known as the Executive Headteacher) and a deputy; • A shared vision for the federation whilst maintaining each school's unique identity and ethos; • A single Governing Board responsible for strategic vision, governance and staffing in both schools; • Shared policies and procedures (where appropriate).
<p>How will the executive head and deputy spread their time between the two schools?</p>	<p>It will remain as it is now with a split of time between each school.</p>
<p>Would the schools lose their individual characteristics?</p>	<p>No - both schools would retain their individual identities, names and ethos.</p> <p>The schools would also retain their own uniform, class teachers and buildings.</p> <p>Federations do create opportunities for children to work closely with children from the other school in the Federation (for instance, the children from the Whittonstall and Broomley First School Federation are</p>

	able to enjoy joint swimming lessons, events and school trips).
Will we do everything exactly the same as Broomhaugh/Corbridge?	No. The individual ethos of both schools will remain.
How would the schools be different?	<p>Each school would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep its own name, identity and uniform; ● Have its own separate budget; ● Keep its current arrangements for admissions; ● Be accountable for their own children's achievement at EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2; ● Have separate Ofsted inspections.
Will the teaching and curriculum be the same?	There are significant differences between our two schools (e.g. Broomhaugh is roughly a third of the size of Corbridge and has shared year group classes) so there are always likely to be differences in what and how we teach. However, subject leads from each school are likely to work closely together to develop a strong curriculum and this will strengthen our offer to children.
Will my child get to meet children from Broomhaugh/Corbridge?	Given that Broomhaugh and Corbridge both feed into Corbridge Middle School, we feel there could be more opportunities for children to mix (post pandemic) and build and expand friendship groups, especially in Year 4 (e.g. joint residential).
What are the benefits of federation?	<p>There are multiple benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A wider and richer curriculum through cross federation events including arts, sports and music; ● Access to a wider range of skills and talents of staff; ● Future appointments to school could bring some shared staff, including specialist teachers who could add to the strengths of the teams, better training and wider career opportunities (making our proposed Federation a more attractive proposition for talented and experienced teaching staff); ● Economies of scale, resulting in greater financial resilience; ● Savings in planning and administration time; ● Strengthened governance combining experience across schools;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimately, better outcomes for the children of both schools. <p>This should lead to overall school improvement and better standards of education.</p>
What would federation mean for parents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a wider support network for teachers and support staff to ensure they bring the very best for all of our children • a reduced workload for staff through shared responsibilities to ensure teachers can focus on enabling our children to be the best they can be • a confidence that as small, rural schools we are stronger together, can remain viable and our village schools are safe and sustainable
How can parents get involved with the schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the same way as you do now. We welcome your feedback at any time. • We are also always looking for governor succession and anyone interested in a place on the board should a vacancy arise, should talk to the current Chair of their school and Miss Ainsley.
What does federation mean for staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be no changes to existing staff and no roles will be made redundant; • Current staff will be employed by the federation but with no changes to their terms and conditions; • New members of staff would have scope to be employed on Federation contracts with flexibility to work across both schools, if desired or required; • Existing staff would only work in the partner school by request or agreement; • The size of the combined schools would allow for increased opportunities for continuing professional development and career development and joint procurement; • Development of continuity and quality by identifying best practice from both schools and applying it across the federation including target setting, assessing, moderating teaching and learning, and tracking pupil progress; • Access to shared expertise and resources, and shared training.
What happens to the Governing Board?	By Friday 16th July 2021 , both Governing Boards would cease to exist and a new

	<p>Federated Governing Board of 14 members would be formed.</p> <p>The members of the Governing Board will be appointed with due regard to their skills (per current regulations), and the needs identified by the skills' audits undertaken, which is in alignment with our current practice.</p>
<p>How will Broomhaugh or Corbridge governors get up to speed with each school quickly to ensure adequate support?</p>	<p>The Chairs already work closely together and the governors forming the federated board will spend time at each school in their new roles.</p>
<p>What would the new governing body look like?</p>	<p>The total membership of the Federated Governing Board has to be no less than 12 members, with representation from both schools and a board who are all fully committed to the development of <i>both</i> schools.</p> <p>Specifically, we would propose a federated governing board structure to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two parent governors elected or appointed in accordance with regulation 14 in respect of each school in the Federation (=2); • The Executive Head of the Federation (=1) • A staff representative from at least one school (but we propose having one from each school) (=2); • A Local Authority Governor (=1); • Foundation Governors (=8). Foundation governors need to outnumber all other governors by 2. It is proposed that this will include one ex-officio foundation Governor (the parish priest of one of the parishes, 2 appointed by the parochial church council of St James (Broomhaugh), 2 appointed by the parochial church council of St Andrews (Corbridge) and 3 by the Newcastle Diocesan Education board). <p>It is proposed that the current Chairs of Governors from each school would co-chair the federation.</p>
<p>What is the vision for the Federation Governing Board?</p>	<p>The vision for the Federated Governing Board would be to build on the strong foundations and Christian values of the highly successful and well-loved schools of Broomhaugh Church of England and Corbridge Church of England First Schools.</p>

	<p>It would harness the passion, commitment and expertise of staff, children and the school communities to take the best from both and build a stronger shared future, which places the needs and potential of the children at the heart of the new Federation and strives to be the best we can be in all that we do.</p> <p>Both schools have a strong ethos and work hard to develop creative environments in which children feel happy, safe and secure and where they can develop their self-esteem, their role in the community and achieve their full potential.</p> <p>Governors recognise that this lies at the heart of the success of both schools and the Federated Governing Board would be guided by these principles in its decision making.</p>
Are parents' views taken into account?	Yes. We value the opinion of all parties and we urge everyone to use the consultation period to provide the governors with their valued opinions.
When will the proposed federation start?	We would expect to formally federate by the end of the summer term, Friday 16th July 2021.
What if we do not federate?	<p>If federation does not take place the governing boards of each school would have to consider a new staffing structure and we would most likely need to end the partnership if the shared leadership model was not made permanent through federation.</p> <p>This would result in a loss of all benefits which have been gained during shared leadership. A few of these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthened leadership and capacity due to both schools benefiting from a head and deputy. ● Shared staff and expertise resulting in enhanced staff development opportunities and staff skills being utilised to support both school teams' professional development. ● Additional resources available to enhance teaching and learning and curriculum opportunities. ● Joint procurement opportunities and shared resources, allowing budgets to be focused in other areas, including specialist teachers.

- Financial stability for both schools and opportunities to ensure budget is focused on maintaining high staff to pupil ratios which ensure our children are receiving the best academic and pastoral care.
- Stability in a larger team (the combined BFS and CFS staff) working to achieve the best in our schools and share workload enabling responsibilities to be shared more widely and relieve pressure on individuals to manage multiple roles as part of a small staff.
- Opportunity to develop staff and future proof the continued success in both schools by ensuring career opportunities are available for all giving all the capacity to grow and develop .

Governors have moved to consult following continuous review of the shared leadership since it was established in Summer Term 2019 and following the findings of positive impact measures in both schools we wish to secure the structure and all the benefits through federation.

Opportunities to discuss the proposal and ask questions

The consultation regarding the Federation commences at **12:00 noon on Monday 22nd March 2021 and finishes at 12:00 noon on Monday 10th May 2021**. This time period has been extended to take into account the Easter holidays, to give stakeholders plenty of opportunity to participate in the consultation.

We hope this document answers your questions but if you have any other questions please contact your Chair of Governors or Miss Ainsley at any time.

Additionally, on **Thursday 22nd April** we will organise a virtual session via Zoom for parents to book onto if they wish where we will answer any further questions. The session for Corbridge parents will be 4 - 5pm and the session for Broomhaugh parents will be 5 -6 pm. The virtual meeting will be hosted by BFS chair of governors Elisabeth Charman, CFS chair of governors Gayle Baty, Director of Education at the Diocese of Durham and Newcastle Paul Rikeard, and Assistant Director of Education at the Diocese of Durham and Newcastle Liane Atkin. Executive Headteacher Jennifer Ainsley and other governors will also attend.

The session will be an opportunity to ask any questions you feel have not so far been addressed. We will ask you to pre register and submit questions in advance. This will be done via a Parentmail sent out after the Easter holidays.

This proposal and the Federation Response Form are also available on both school websites.

Paper copies of these are also available from both school offices.

How to comment on the proposal

Please complete the Federation Response Form and email it to your current Chair of Governors by **12:00 noon on Monday 10th May 2021**

Broomhaugh elisabeth.charman@broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk

Corbridge gayle.baty@corbridgefirst.northumberland.sch.uk

Or paper copies to the School Office. These should be returned FAO Chair of Governors.

What happens next?

After the consultation period ends, both Governing Boards will meet to review all the responses before making an informed decision.

The decision will be communicated to children, parents, staff and others with an interest in the schools by **Monday 21st June 2021**.

If a decision to proceed with the proposal is made, the intention is for the Federation to be in place by the end of the Summer Term, **Friday 16th July 2021**. This date is provisional and dependent upon the completion of all statutory requirements by this date.

Consultation on the federation between Broomhaugh Church of England First School and Corbridge Church of England First School

RESPONSE FORM to consultation document outlining the proposal to form a federation, known as 'The Broomhaugh and Corbridge Church of England First School Federation' from **Friday 16th July 2021** between Broomhaugh Church of England First School and Corbridge Church of England First School.

Please complete the Federation Response Form and email it to your current Chair of Governors by **12:00 noon on Monday 10th May 2021**

Broomhaugh elisabeth.charman@broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk

Corbridge gayle.baty@corbridgefirst.northumberland.sch.uk

Or paper copies to the School Office. These should be returned FAO Chair of Governors.

Name:

Address (Optional):

1) I am a (please tick box as appropriate):

Parent/Carer of a child at one of the schools	
Member of teaching staff	
Member of support staff	
School Governor	
Member of the community	
Member of the PCC	
Other (please describe)	

2) What is your view of the proposal for federation of the two schools? (Please tick box as appropriate):

Yes, I agree with the proposal to federate	
No, I disagree with the proposal to federate	
I have no opinion either way	
I am undecided	

3) Which of the following best describes your connection to the school? The school I am mainly connected to is:

Broomhaugh Church of England First School	
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Corbridge Church of England First School	
Other	

4) Would you like to provide more detail on your view? Do you have any further comments? (Continue on reverse of page if required)

Please note that your responses will remain confidential to the schools' Governing Boards.

Thank you for your response.