

Dear Parents and Carers,

27<sup>th</sup> November 2023

As you 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 keep our thriving village schools open for children in future years. Financial pressures are forcing schools to look at innovative and cost effective solutions. Our two schools took the decision to form a management partnership in April 2023 when the Headteacher from Upottery was absent long term. 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 both schools will continue to share the Executive leadership of Steve Mellor.

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 federation will share one governing board made up from representatives from both 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 28 federations across Devon involving over 81 schools, with the first federations in Devon forming in 2006 and many others considering this as a successful sustainable model for their school's future.

We are proposing to federate to ensure continuing strong leadership and high standards in teaching and learning whilst maintaining each school's individual ethos and values.

### **What will the benefits be for our schools?**

- Sharing strong and proven leadership;
- Sharing teaching expertise;
- 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;

### **How will this work?**

There will be one Executive Headteacher with a Head of School within each school. The Heads of School will be enabled to focus their energies on teaching, learning and standards.

The 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, foundation (church) governors, co-opted governors and a local authority governor. Together this group of people will take overall responsibility for all schools within the federation. The proposed size of the federated governing body would be 20, this would include:

2 Parent governors  
2 Staff governors (including the Executive Headteacher)  
1 Local Authority appointed governor  
4 Foundation governors (to include an ExOfficio)  
2 Trust Governors  
9 Co-opted governors

The Governing Boards are proposing that the federation start date would be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

### **There is a Federation consultation process**

The Governors of both Upottery Primary School and Devon Moors Federation 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 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Governors would welcome your views and comments and invite you to attend one or more of the following meetings:

- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 6.30pm at Upottery Primary School

If you are unable to attend the above meeting and would like to discuss 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 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**. A box for written responses will be provided in each school. You can also share your comments via email to either:

[federation@upottery-primary.devon.sch.uk](mailto:federation@upottery-primary.devon.sch.uk) or  
[clerk@devonmoorsfederation.devon.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@devonmoorsfederation.devon.sch.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 body.

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

Yours sincerely



Nicola Cornish  
Chair of Governors  
Upottery Primary School



Chris Dack  
Chair of Governors  
Devon Moors Federation



Steve Mellor  
Executive Head  
Devon Moors Federation