Consultation on the Federation of Beaufort School and Langley School

Monday 9th January – Friday 24th February 2012
Consultation on the federation of Beaufort School and Langley School

What is this information about?

The governing bodies of Beaufort School and Langley School have decided to consult with the Local Authority, staff, parents and carers on a proposal to form a federation between the two schools. This is your opportunity to let them know what you think about this proposal.

Within the current educational climate on both a local and national level the governing bodies believe that forming a Federation will be to the benefit of these two successful schools together safeguarding the future of the two schools.

This paper contains:

• An outline of the proposal;
• A response form for you to complete and return.

The following events will provide parents / carers with an opportunity to speak to governors about the federation.

Monday 23rd January, 1.30pm
Parents and carers consultation at Langley School

Monday 6th February, 10am
Parents and carers consultation at Beaufort School

Further meetings will be arranged at each school if necessary and advertised via the schools’ newsletters.

Please send your completed response form to either:

• Beaufort School Office FAO Muriel Castle, Chair of Governors
• Langley School Office FAO Lynda Thomas, Chair of Governors

If you have specific questions about the proposal, please contact Fiona Woolford (Head Teacher, Langley and Acting Executive Head, Beaufort) on 0121 675 2929/8500 or email f.woolford@langley.bham.sch.uk.

This document and response form is also available online by visiting our websites: www.langley.bham.sch.uk / www.beaufort.bham.sch.uk

The consultation will close on Friday 24th February 2012.
Vision Statement for the Federation

Our vision for the federation is to create two schools where every learner achieves their full potential through a relentless focus on high quality provision taking account of the specific and individual needs of the learner.

Our main purpose will be to:

- Provide an environment which nurtures emotional well being that allows all learners to enjoy and achieve goals in all areas of learning;
- Make the environment safe, giving all learners the opportunity to explore their physical potential and strive to make the most of their abilities;
- Promote all aspects of physical and mental health ensuring that learners are given the best possible care; and
- Enable all learners to develop their social skills to be in the best possible position to make a positive contribution to the community in which they are living.

This will provide the best possible environment for learners to develop their full cognitive potential.

Underpinning this will be:

- A multi-disciplinary approach
- An exciting and relevant curriculum;
- Personalised learning; and
- An excellent dedicated staff team, who understand the needs of the learners.

The two individual schools will maintain their identity, but work in partnership sharing the best of each. The Federation will share management, and thus build capacity. All this will be supported by:

- The two relatively small schools being able to share expertise (where appropriate)
- Sharing expertise of co-location whilst still maintaining purposeful links with the mainstream partner schools
- Taking advantage of sharing resources between schools, both human (e.g. Educational Psychologist, health professionals) and concrete (e.g. minibus, hydrotherapy pool)
Summary Information

The governing bodies of Beaufort School and Langley School would like to form a federation. Therefore, a consultation on forming this federation is being conducted which may result in a federation between the two schools from April 2012.

A federation is where schools share a governing body
- Pupils won’t change schools;
- Pupils will be based in the same school as they are now;
- The names of the schools will not change;
- There will be no change to admission arrangements.

We believe this is good for learners
- The schools will retain their individuality but work together in creating a joint ethos;
- The schools serve the same designation of learning difficulties i.e. cognition and learning
- The specific needs of each learner can be best met.

We believe this is good for staff
- Staff will be able to share knowledge with people from a different school with similar challenges

We believe this is good for parents
- Parents will know that because we can share resources, their children will be getting even more opportunities for a high quality education

We are not merging the two schools!

You have 6 weeks to send us your comments, just return the page at the back to one of the schools by Friday 24th February 2012.
The current situation

Beaufort School and Langley School are both relatively small primary special schools catering for pupils with cognition and learning difficulties. Between the two schools the full range of cognition and learning difficulties, from PMLD to MLD are catered for. Both schools have also co-located, within the last two years, into new learning environments with mainstream primary schools – Colebourne School and Coppice School. Since September 2010 the two schools have already started to work very well in partnership – supporting the Leadership at Beaufort following the resignation of the head teacher, Debbie Jenkins, joint training, sharing of staff expertise.

What is a Federation?

Under Section 24 of the Education Act 2002, schools and local authorities can propose that between two and five schools can join together to create a federation. The schools then combine their governing bodies into just one governing body for the federations. This allows the federating schools to pool resources. In this case, two schools (Beaufort and Langley) will be federating.

What’s in it for the children?

As both schools cater for pupils with cognition and learning difficulties there will be opportunities to share staff expertise across the schools, which will give access to a much larger pool of knowledge, as well as the chance to share specialist knowledge across the schools. Children will, therefore, have access to more opportunities for good quality learning. There will also be opportunities to use school resources and budgets more efficiently.

What’s in it for the staff?

Most day-to-day management will continue as it is now arranged, but there will be opportunities for staff to get involved across the schools; this will provide exciting career progression for staff, enabling them to extend themselves and to co-operate with colleagues on another school site.
What’s in it for the parents?

The schools will become stronger, because when they co-operate, good practice can be shared easily. Better opportunities for learning mean that children can be helped to overcome barriers to learning because resources can be shared across the two schools. The retention of quality staff would ensure a continued high standard of education for the pupils at both schools.

What changes would occur to the governing bodies under federation?

Following federation there would be a single governing body and a single set of committee meetings, covering both the schools. We expect the federation governing body would have members drawn from both the current governing bodies and schools. We are proposing that the governing body is constituted with 17 governors as set out in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elected parent governors</th>
<th>6 (3 from each school)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher governors</td>
<td>2 (1 from each school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non teacher governors</td>
<td>2 (1 from each school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA governors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community governors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Will the staffing change?

The current Acting Executive Head Beaufort / Head Teacher Langley will be the Executive Head teacher for the federation. The current deputy head teachers at Beaufort and Langley will become Heads of School. Members of the Schools’ Leadership and Management teams will be able to move freely across the schools within the federation, thus making best use of expertise; to the benefit of both establishments. We may also ask some staff to take their specialist knowledge from one school to another, so that we can best share practice. Some staff may move as part of career development.

Staff contracts remain unaltered and federation is not a threat to jobs. In future, staff may be appointed to the federation and be able to work across the schools.
Could children be forced to change schools?

No. The admission arrangements will remain exactly as they are at present. Statements of Special Educational Need, naming school placement will be issued by the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Assessment Service in the same way as they are now.

Will children have to travel between the schools for lessons?

No. The schools may share staff, but lessons for Beaufort children will be on the Beaufort School site and lessons for Langley children will be on Langley School site. There may, however be occasions during the week when a group of pupils visits a different site to use specialist facilities not available on their own, or to engage in particular extra-curricular activities such as a drama production.

What if we want to go back to separate governing bodies?

The federation arrangement will be reviewed in two years’ time by the governing body to see if it has been successful. If at any time the schools wish to break up the federation, there is a standard process that would be set in place.

Do you have any questions?

Parents and carers will have the opportunity to discuss this proposal with members of the governing body of their school. Details of these meetings are at the start of this booklet.
Consultation response form

Proposal for the federation of Beaufort School and Langley School.

Please return this form by Friday 24th February to:

- Beaufort School Office FAO Muriel Castle, Chair of Governors
- Langley School Office FAO Lynda Thomas, Chair of Governors

Your name: ………………………………………………………………….

Interest in Beaufort / Langley School
(please tick the appropriate box below)

- Parent / carer of a child at Beaufort School
- Member of staff at Beaufort School
- Parent / carer of a child at Langley School
- Member of staff at Langley School

Other (please specify) ………………………………………………………

Please comment on the proposal below using additional paper if required – we welcome your views:

Thank you.