



## Carrington Schools Federation Proposal

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### ***Why Federate now?***

Federation means that the two schools will be in a better position to respond effectively and efficiently to both local and national changes, such as housing growth and increasing financial pressures on schools.

A formal link between the adjacent Infant and Junior Schools would provide greater opportunities to:

- Work together efficiently and sustainably to further raise standards, improve services and increase opportunities for pupils, staff, parents, and governors.
- Share resources, expertise, and facilities therefore increasing access to them for all.
- Enhance a collaborative leadership team across the two schools.
- Provide strong governance and a shared strategic vision for all children across their entire primary school experience. From early years through to KS2 through a single Governing Board.
- Develop closer ties and collaboration between staff to support all pupils throughout their primary school journey.
- Improve career opportunities for staff and agility where appropriate.
- Provide opportunities to negotiate better rates, with external providers for example through a single Governing Board with oversight of both budgets.
- Explore sustainability across both schools.

***What changes would occur to the leadership of the schools under Federation?*** Each school would have its own Headteacher reporting to the Chair of Governors of the Federation Governing Board. There will be no change to the teaching staff or SLT.

#### ***Will the school names be changed?***

No. A Federation is not the same as an amalgamation/merger (where the schools involved become one). Each school would retain its individual identity and character and their current titles for independent use. They would also develop a complementary, shared identity and ethos based on high achievement and educational excellence. The Federation would adopt the title “Carrington Schools”. This title would be used in all common literature, publicity material and media.



***What is the Vision for the Federation?***

Our vision is to strengthen the strategic and operational working relationships between both schools to enhance the provision for all children from early years to year 6.

Carrington Schools will deliver a high quality, innovative, creative and consistent curriculum which meets the needs of all our children from Early Years to the end of Key Stage 2. We will create a happy, caring and supportive environment where rich learning experiences are provided which encourage a love of learning, ensuring that every pupil achieves their potential throughout the primary school phase. The Headteachers and Governing Board would review and define the vision, as the Federation develops.

***Will children have to move between the schools for lessons?***

No. The schools may occasionally share staff, though pupils would be based in their current schools. However, there would be increased potential for children to benefit from specialist resources in both schools and so pupils may occasionally move from site to site for specific events e.g. using specialist sports / teaching / kitchen / outdoor facilities.

***What are the arrangements for admissions and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities?***

Education, Health and Care Plans would be issued by the Council in the same way as they are now to support any SEND admissions and children within the school. The Federation would enable the schools to provide greater continuity of support throughout the primary education phase for any children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

***How are staff being kept informed about the Federation proposal?***

Staff members have been informed about the proposal in staff meetings and are being invited and encouraged to comment on and input to the proposal to shape the future of their schools. The Governing Boards of both schools welcome all staff feedback, queries and inputs into the vision for the schools, and on how to develop viable and effective leadership and staffing structures to deliver excellent teaching and learning within the proposed Federation.

***What impact could federating have on the teaching and support staff?***

Staff roles would not change as a direct result of federating and no jobs are at risk. The new Governing Board after Federation would continue to require high standards from staff and would support the leadership teams to deliver these by means of support, training and development, with diligent assessment of performance. It is the essence of education that people can learn and grow, and this is as true for the staff as for the pupils. For members of staff, the opportunity to get involved across both schools may provide enhanced career progression and prospects, enabling them to extend themselves and to cooperate with colleagues in another adjacent setting.



***Would there be a change in terms of employment for staff?***

No. The staff would remain at their sites and would continue to be employed by and work in their current school. Specialist staff may work at a specific site or may be asked to take their specialist knowledge from one school to another, to share best practice. Some staff may request to move between sites as part of their career development. The Federation would enable this to happen more easily. New staff members may have contracts which allow them to work across both schools within the Federation.

***How would this impact future staff recruitment and retention?***

The Governing Board intends that the schools would become known for attracting and developing high achieving staff, some of whom, with the increased opportunities to work across Key Stages 1 and 2, might well move on to more senior roles within education. This makes it possible for staff to accrue a broader experience of education across the whole primary range.

***What is the role of the Governing Board?***

The role of the Governing Board is very clear – it must seek excellence in outcomes for pupils, a commitment to the development of the staff and the community that the schools serve. The specific skills required to carry out the role of governing the schools would include financial skills, organisational development experience (this includes human resources, training and professional development, quality and standards of provision), an understanding of special educational needs, business, buildings and health and safety, together with time spent in the schools and their own development as a governor.

The core functions of the Governing Board are as set out by the DfE and include, but are not limited to ensuring:

1. that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined.
2. that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school.
3. the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

The Governing Board also has legislative responsibility and strategic oversight for the school's safeguarding arrangements.

If Federation goes ahead, a single Governing Board will be formed to replace the two existing Governing Boards, drawing upon the expertise and experience of the existing Governing Board members. This new single group of governors would be able to benefit from shared experiences and good practice. Their experience and commitment will benefit both schools.



***How will the new Governing Board be structured?***

The new Governing Board would comprise:

- 1 local authority governor
- 2 parent governors
- 1 elected staff governor
- 2 headteachers
- 8 co-opted governors
- In addition, associate governors may be appointed

A senior member of staff from the Infant and Junior Schools will be invited to attend meetings as an Associate governor if they are not elected as the staff governor or serving as a co-opted governor. All Governors would be appointed for four years, with the Chair and Vice-Chair positions elected annually from within their ranks.

If the Federation goes ahead, elections will be held for the parent governor and staff governor positions during the Summer Term of 2024. The inaugural meeting of the new Governing Board will take place in September 2024. Governors will be allocated individual roles and responsibilities at this time.

***How will the Federation be financed?***

The rules defining Federation state that each component school must continue to maintain a separate budget and financial control system. Each school would continue to receive its annual grant from the Local Authority and would pay for its own costs. Procurement would be reviewed regularly to maximise purchasing power, and when services are procured for the benefit of both schools, a fair method of allocation would be used.

***Is this a step toward the schools becoming an Academy/Multi-Academy Trust?*** No. The change to a Multi-Academy Trust is not under consideration at this time.

***What happens following the closing date for comments?***

The schools will follow the regulatory guidance on federating, in addition to best practice guidance regarding the formation and joining of groups of Schools. Following review and consideration of all responses to the consultation, the Governing Boards will meet to agree a final recommendation. Subject to agreement to proceed, the Working Party will agree key priorities including short- and longer-term transition plans. Elections for Parent Governors and Staff Governors would occur in the Autumn term of 2024. The implementation date for the Federation would be September 2024, when the two existing Governing Boards would be disbanded and the single Governing Board structure initiated.



***Who decides whether or not the Federation goes ahead?***

Once the consultation process is complete, a report setting out the findings will be presented to a joint meeting of the Governing Boards for the two schools. Each Governing Board will then meet on its own to decide whether or not it supports the proposal. Both Governing Boards must agree to the proposal before it can be accepted.

***What happens if we decide not to federate?***

In the event that the proposal is not supported by both Governing Boards, the schools will continue as separate entities.

***What if either school wants to end the Federation?***

There is a standard process that would be followed, with a final decision being made by the Federation's Governing Board. This would lead to the disestablishment of the Federation and the Local Authority would establish a new temporary Governing Board for each school.

***Would the admissions procedures change?***

No, parents need to be aware that they will still need to apply for a Junior School and Infant School place separately.

***Why is there only one staff governor in the structure of the Board?***

The regulations for Federation produced by the DfE stipulate that only one elected staff governor is allowable across the Federation. However, other staff members could be co-opted or be associates on the board.

***How do you make your views known?***

You can discuss this proposal with members of the Governing Boards' Working Party at the either of the following planned meetings for all parents:

May 8<sup>th</sup> Face to face at 09.15 in Little Gems, Carrington Infant School

May 9<sup>th</sup> Online at 4.30 via Microsoft Teams. Please contact either e mail below for the link if you wish to join this meeting.

You can also contact the Governing Boards' Working Party by e-mail to either of the following addresses:

[chair@carringtoninf.co.uk](mailto:chair@carringtoninf.co.uk)

[JWright@carringtonjs.co.uk](mailto:JWright@carringtonjs.co.uk)

Please return your completed consultation response form by 4th June 2024 to one of the schools. The form should be in a sealed envelope, addressed to the Chair of Governors, handed in to either school Reception, or sent by e-mail to one of the addresses above.