



Consultation for Federation of Riverview CofE Primary
and Nursery School, Day Nursery VA and St Giles Infant
School VA

Federation Report April 2025

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Introduction

This report presents the proposal to federate and Riverview C-of-E Primary, Nursery, Day Nursery School and St Giles' C-of-E Infant School under a single governing body. It is drafted in response to an action raised at a meeting of a joint committee of both schools, held on 12th February 2025.

Federation involves formal collaboration between two or more local authority maintained schools, each retaining their individual identity but working together under one governing body.

This proposal has been developed in accordance with the legal framework outlined in the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012.

Background

In response to increasing concern about the sustainability of our two small schools, both Riverview and St Giles' have been exploring options for collaboration to address shared challenges and to enhance school outcomes. Both schools sought to join an academy and began a journey with ELT, a journey that has since come to a calculated end. Despite that pause, both schools continue to face common challenges, including leadership succession, budget constraints, and capacity building for long-term sustainability. In response, our governing bodies have begun discussions on federation, enabling us to maintain autonomy while leveraging shared resources and governance.

Name & Vision for the Federation

The key objective of the proposed federation is to improve educational outcomes for all students by creating a structure that fosters collaboration and strategic alignment between our schools. The federation will enable our schools to:

- Share best practices in teaching and leadership.
- Improve financial management through pooled resources.
- Strengthen recruitment and retention by offering staff wider development opportunities.
- Ensure a consistent approach to school improvement.

The proposed name for the federation is " *Hope Federation*" with a **vision**

As smaller schools, at the heart of our communities, we offer holistic, faith environments, where every child is valued and can thrive and grow in every way. Inspired by Hebrews 10:24, we unite to build strength, grasp new opportunities and share resources and expertise, so enabling all to flourish.

Our strap line is *Flourishing Through Unity*

Governance Structure

Upon federation, the existing governing bodies of both schools will be dissolved, and a new federated governing body will be constituted. The constitution of this governing body is being considered by representatives of both Governing Boards and will likely consist of twelve members as follows:

- Two parent governors (across both schools)
- One staff governors (across both schools)
- One local authority governor
- Seven Diocesan and PCC foundation governors
- The Executive Headteacher

The new governing body will not be a simple amalgamation of the two existing bodies, but a streamlined group focused on the strategic oversight of both schools. New elections will be held to appoint governors based on skills and experience. A transitional period will be considered as accountability leads into the Federation (Autumn & Spring 2025) and as the new governing body take up post (Summer 2025) 1st April 2026.

Leadership and Management

An executive headteacher has already been appointed to oversee both schools, with a leadership structure that includes senior leaders at each institution. This structure will ensure that while the schools collaborate closely, they retain their own leadership at the local level.

Both Governing boards have supplied members to a joint committee to oversee federation diligence, planning and proposals. A checklist of activities is in action. Counsel has been sought from other local schools that have successfully navigated the federation process.

Financial Considerations

It is anticipated that both schools will combine their individual delegated budgets which will be allocated by the local authority. Clear audit trails will be maintained to ensure transparency in financial decisions. The school business manager and bursar are already engaged in identifying opportunities to collaborate and make efficiency savings.

Benefits of Federation

The anticipated benefits of federating include:

- **Improved Academic Outcomes:** Through shared leadership, collaborative professional development, and coordinated curriculum strategies, the federation aims to raise standards across both schools.
- **Enhanced Leadership Capacity:** The executive headteacher model will provide stability and continuity in leadership, addressing future vacancies and succession planning.
- **Financial Resilience:** Pooling resources and achieving economies of scale will help both schools manage budget pressures effectively.
- **Staff Recruitment and Retention:** Offering broader opportunities for career development will make both schools more attractive to high-quality teaching staff.

Consultation Process

The process of federating includes a statutory consultation phase, which will last for at least six weeks. This consultation will involve all key stakeholders, including parents, staff, the local authority,

and relevant diocesan bodies. A joint working group from both schools has formed and will manage the consultation, ensure transparency, and address concerns raised during this period. The working party will also establish the vision for the federation, deciding how to involve the diocese and site trustees and Parochial Church Councils. We recognise the PCC must approve the proposed instrument of government later in the process.

Questions or responses should be sent to federationconsultation@riverview.surrey.sch.uk

Timeline

1. Preliminary Consent: Governing bodies of both schools have agreed to explore the proposal to federate.
2. Formal Consultation: The formal consultation process will be initiated, with key stakeholders invited to provide feedback within the statutory six week period.
3. Decision: After considering the consultation feedback, both governing bodies will meet to decide whether to proceed with federation.

Diocese of Guildford

As both schools involved in the federation are faith-based, the diocese has a key role in maintaining our religious character, ethos, and governance structure. Our plans to federate shall ensure:

- The federation aligns with the religious and educational vision of the diocese.
- Governance arrangements protect the faith-based identity of the schools.
- Any potential impacts on admissions, staffing, and leadership are considered.

Surrey County Council

(represented by SaFE (Schools Alliance for Excellence))

The local authority oversees education provision in the area. Our Federation plans shall ensure SaFE are able to discharge their responsibilities to:

- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Consider the impact on local school places and admissions.
- Monitor school improvement strategies and financial sustainability.
- Provide necessary support or intervention if required.

Conclusion

This report outlines the rationale for the proposed federation, demonstrating how it will enhance educational outcomes and ensure long-term sustainability while preserving the distinct identity and values of each school. We argue the federation of Riverview and St Giles' will establish a stronger, more sustainable educational framework, enabling both schools to deliver high quality education and secure their long-term futures. This strategic partnership offers a clear pathway to financial stability, leadership development, and improved educational opportunities for all pupils.

We welcome the support and guidance of both the Diocese and the Local Authority as we move forward and remain committed to working collaboratively to ensure the best possible future for our school communities.

Daniel Beck

Vice Chair of Governors, St Giles' CofE (aided) Infant school.