

## CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO FEDERATE NURSERY SCHOOLS HETTON LYONS, OXCLOSE AND USWORTH COLLIERY NURSERY SCHOOLS

5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Headteachers and Governing Boards of Hetton Lyons, Oxclose and Usworth Colliery Maintained Nursery Schools have prepared a formal consultation document.

**The proposal they have, is to make our nursery schools stronger and better in the future, by joining the three nursery schools in a Federated school's partnership. The name of the planned Federation will be the HOUse Federation.**

A school federation is defined in the Education Act 2002 as two or more maintained schools operating under a single governing body. The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the structure and arrangements for leaving, joining and dissolving a federation.

For the most part, nothing will change in the three nursery schools on a day-to-day basis, the Federation will involve making one, instead of three, Governing Boards who will have responsibility for the three schools.

- It is not a merger with a primary school, which would cause the nursery school to close.
- It is not a proposal to join a Multi Academy Trust or MAT. Maintained nursery schools cannot join an Academy under current legislation
- A Federated approach is the model which best suits our three schools and will make us stronger together in partnership.

A number of nursery schools in England have formed, or are forming, Federated partnerships and we feel that this would be a strong and positive action to take for our three schools.

- We have planned a formal consultation – which collects the views of all involved with the three nursery schools. This begins on July 12<sup>th</sup> and ends on August 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- We want as many people as possible to respond to the consultation. Your views are very important to us and help us to shape future developments to improve our schools.
- If the majority of people consulted agree to the Federation, there are legal steps to follow next and it is most likely that this will be complete between November 2021 and January 2022.

We have created a summary of the key information, which may help you to decide if you agree or disagree with the proposals. We did this by outlining the information which we think will affect our families most, to help you to make your decisions.



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A full copy of the consultation document can be collected from the school by anyone who wishes to have this. We look forward to reading your responses which will help us to plan our future actions.

Yours sincerely,

**Angela M. Graham Usworth Colliery Nursery School**

**Julie Heron Oxclose Nursery School**

**Ailsa Higgins Hetton Lyons Nursery School**

## Key information for families

### What would a Federation mean for Hetton Lyons, Oxclose Community, and Usworth Colliery Nursery Schools?

#### What are the benefits of a Federation?

The chief benefits for all schools will include:

- Sustainability which will ensure maintained nursery schools remain in the local community.
- Improved opportunities and outcomes for children,
- Improved opportunities for staff,
- Better leadership development and talent management,
- Improved shared governance
- Strengthened capacity to support Early Years education in Sunderland.

What Would Stay the same?	What would change?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each school would keep its own identity and name. It is not a merger of schools.</li> <li>• Children would continue to be taught in their school although some activities may be shared. For example, family services, professional services, out of school provision, provision for children with special educational needs or disabilities.</li> <li>• Each school would continue to receive its own budget and be subject to all current funding protocols, reporting mechanisms and financial regulations.</li> <li>• Each school would be inspected separately by Ofsted.</li> <li>• Admission arrangements would not change.</li> <li>• Existing members of staff would remain employed by Sunderland City Council on the same contract of employment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Federation will be a new legally constituted entity. It will be called The House Federation</li> <li>• The three separate Governing Boards would be dissolved and replaced by a single, newly appointed Governing Board with responsibility for all three schools.</li> <li>• The new Governing Board would be responsible for school budgets and would determine how expenditure could be most effectively used across the Federation.</li> <li>• There would be a single shared senior leadership structure.</li> <li>• Closer working between schools would provide opportunities for career progression and professional opportunities.</li> <li>• Some activities may be shared. For example, family services, professional services, out of school provision, provision for children with special educational needs or disabilities.</li> </ul>



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## What does this mean for parents and their children?

### For Parents

What Would Stay the same?	What would change?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will continue to be invited to participate in their child's school events and activities.</li> <li>Parents will be involved in sharing their views and giving feedback about their child's school.</li> <li>Parent governors will continue to be involved in school development and leadership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing will change</li> <li>Nothing will change.</li> <li>This role will be part of the Federated Governing Board</li> </ul>

### For the Children

What Would Stay the same?	What would change?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your child's school will remain a maintained school managed by the Local Authority Sunderland.</li> <li>All children will continue to go to their own school.</li> <li>Your child's Early Years Funding will continue to go directly to their school.</li> <li>Your child's school will continue to have its own admissions policy.</li> <li>Your child will be taught in their school.</li> <li>Your child will have an allocated Key person from their school to support the learning and development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing will change</li> <li>Nothing would change.</li> <li>Nothing will change</li> <li>Nothing will change</li> <li>There may be opportunities to access enhanced learning experiences across the three schools, sharing resources and expertise.</li> <li>Nothing will change</li> </ul>

## Summary of the Proposal

One of the key roles for all school Governing Boards is to set the strategic direction for the schools for which they have responsibility. The Governing Boards of Hetton Lyons, Oxclose and Usworth Colliery Nursery Schools have agreed that children, staff and the communities of the schools would benefit from a greater and more formal level of collaboration between the three schools.

Each school will continue to work closely with their primary feeder schools to ensure the Federation works for each individual community.



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Federation provides a more sustainable environment for both children and staff to flourish. The structure of a Federation enables the schools to share their resources and expertise, e.g. curriculum development, leadership, teaching expertise and facilities, which would help sustain the performance and excellent outcomes for all children.

Federation provides staff with opportunities for professional development through joint activities and training as well as career progression while remaining as schools in their own right.

The Governing Boards believe that a hard Federation between Hetton Lyons, Oxclose and Usworth schools would also strengthen and enhance the services provided for pre-school age children by enabling staff to share their early years' expertise.

Each school would retain its own identity, would retain its own budget and would be inspected separately by Ofsted. The schools would have a shared senior leadership team and the three existing Boards of Governors will disband on the federation date and a new governing body will be established, with opportunities for representatives from the existing governing bodies to be appointed to the new governing body.



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## RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Proposal for The House Federation (Hetton, Oxclose, Usworth Schools in Early Years)

**Proposal for the Federation of: Hetton Lyons Nursery School, Oxclose Nursery School and Usworth Colliery Nursery School to become the HOuse Federation – The Hetton, Oxclose and Usworth Schools in Early Years Federation.**

**The consultation period starts on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and will run for six weeks until Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021.**

The consultation form enables you to give your views and comment on the proposal.

The proposal, along with a copy of this form will be shared with you as a hard copy and via email.

Forms should be returned to your child's school.

Envelopes should be marked for the attention of the Chair of Governors and be clearly marked 'Federation'.

Alternatively, email the form to your child's school [oxclose.nursery@schools.sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:oxclose.nursery@schools.sunderland.gov.uk) with the subject line 'Federation proposal' or complete the form online via the school website [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeqXT5bvq856aQVffq1vM\\_CeEexDRZF6H4cck9cx3kwV\\_SFfQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeqXT5bvq856aQVffq1vM_CeEexDRZF6H4cck9cx3kwV_SFfQ/viewform) under the title heading 'School'

All returns must be received by 12.00 noon on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021.



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## HOUse Federation Consultation response form

Which of the following best describes your connection with the school (Please tick)?

- ☐ **Parent / carer**
- ☐ **Governor**
- ☐ **Local Councillor**
- ☐ **Staff member**
- ☐ **Local Authority / Together for Children**
- ☐ **Other .....**

**I agree with the proposal to Federate the three nursery schools**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**

If you would like to discuss the proposal, please contact your school.

If you would like a personal response to your comments, please provide your name and email contact details.

Your views are important, please do let us know what you think.

Please give your comments below, continuing overleaf or on a separate sheet if required.

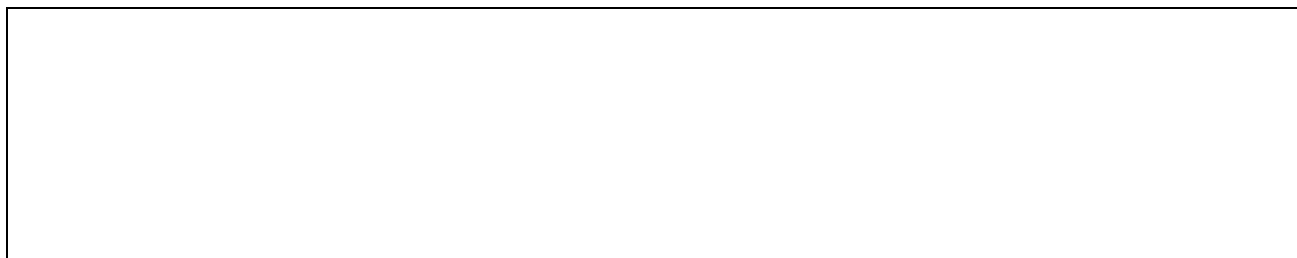
**Comments**



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