

# Consultation on Proposal to Federate

**Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School**  
**Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School**  
**Llansantffraid Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School**

February 2017

Llanfechain • Llangedwyn • Llansantffraid



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As all three schools affected by this proposal are English-medium schools, this document is only currently available in English.

If you require a copy of the document in Welsh, or a copy of the document in a different format, please contact one of the three schools involved in this proposal. Alternatively, you can contact Powys County Council's School Transformation Team by phoning (01597) 826265 or e-mailing [school.consultation@powys.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultation@powys.gov.uk).

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the Spring of 2016 the governing bodies of Llansantffraid Church in Wales Voluntary Aided (VA) Primary School, Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School and Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School started to explore the potential to create a formal federation of the three schools and a working group was established. It consisted of representatives of the three governing bodies with support from Powys County Council and the Diocese of St Asaph.

In January 2017, the three individual governing bodies, supported by Powys County Council and the Diocese of St Asaph, met and considered an initial report produced by the working group. All three governing bodies agreed to formally consult with stakeholders on the following proposal:

***That Llansantffraid Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School, Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School and Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School commence the process of federation from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 under the Federation of Maintained Schools and Miscellaneous Amendments (Wales) Regulations 2014.***

At the moment the working name for the federation is the Tair Afon (Three Rivers) Federation. As part of the consultation we are interested in your views about the choice of name.

This document, which has been agreed by the three individual governing bodies, has been produced to provide information to stakeholders about what federation is and what it would mean for the schools involved.

Your questions, comments and observations on the proposal and the information provided in this document are invited. Information about how to respond is provided at the end of this document. All responses must be received by 27 March 2017.

In addition to this document we have enclosed a Frequently Asked Questions leaflet. If you have any queries please approach any of the school governors.

We have arranged three informal drop in sessions so that you can talk to members of the Federation Working Party.

Parents and carers from all schools are cordially invited to any of the sessions. They will take place as follows

**Llansantffraid School** – Wednesday 15 February 2017 3.15pm to 4.15pm

**Llanfechain School** – Monday 27 February 2017 3.30 to 4.30pm

**Llangedwyn School** – Wednesday 1 March 3.00pm to 4.00pm

## 2. BACKGROUND

Since March 2015 Llansantffraid Church in Wales VA Primary School, Llangedwyn Church in Wales Primary School and Llanfechain Church in Wales School have shared a headteacher on an interim basis. Prior to this, Llansantffraid Church in Wales VA Primary School and Llanfechain Church in Wales School had shared a headteacher for 4 years. Under the current arrangement, the Acting Executive Headteacher manages all three schools, however each school has retained its own governing body.

In January 2015, the governing bodies of Llansantffraid and Llanfechain established a working party to consider a formal Federation of the two schools. In the spring of 2016, this was widened to include Llangedwyn and the three governing bodies began to explore the potential to create a formal Federation. Further information about Federation is provided in section 3.

A working party, made up of governors from all three schools, has met on a number of occasions during 2016 and early 2017, and has carried out in depth research into the benefits of Federation and the process of establishing a Federation. As part of this activity, the working party has met with the Executive Headteacher of a three school federation in the Borough of Wrexham, as well as officers from Powys County Council who are responsible for School Transformation, and the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning from the St Asaph Diocese. The Diocese is able to provide support in terms of charity status and the nomination of Foundation Governors.

Powys County Council have made it clear that they **do not** view federation as a cost saving exercise. They are able to manage the consultation process and advise on all aspects of the federation process.

In November 2016, the Welsh Government Education Secretary announced that significant changes would be made to the School Organisation Code, which would include a significant emphasis on supporting the federation of schools.

## **THE AFFECTED SCHOOLS**

Information about the three schools involved in this proposal is provided below:

### **Llanfechain Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Llanfechain School is a small rural school near to the Welsh English border with 40 pupils on roll in the school year 2015/16. It contains a moderate percentage of children with SEN, a total of 20% of those attending, and 2.5% of them have a statement. 7% of pupils are FSM. The school has an executive head teacher who also leads 2 other schools and a teacher in charge who has day to day responsibility for the school. The school has 2 classes, Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2.

### **Llangedwyn Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Llangedwyn School is a small rural school near to the Welsh English border with 31 pupils on roll in the school year 2015/16. It contains a high percentage of children with SEN, a total of 32.2 % of those attending, and 17.9% of them have a statement. 12% of pupils are FSM. The school has an executive head teacher who also leads 2 other schools and a teacher in charge who has day to day responsibility for the school. The school has 2 classes, Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2.

### **Llansantffraid Church in Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Llansantffraid Church in Wales (VA) Primary School is a medium sized school near to the Welsh English border in the heart of a large village. There are currently 106 pupils on roll as well as a pre-school provision for 16 children each day. The school has a moderate percentage of children with SEN, which is similar to the LA. Currently, 8% of pupils are registered as SEN. There are currently no pupils with a statement in the school. The school has a fluctuating demographic with FSM percentages and currently 8% of pupils are FSM. The school has an executive head teacher who also leads 2 other schools and a deputy head (acting) who has day to day responsibility for the school. The school currently has five classes, consisting of YN/YR, YR/Y1, Y2, Y3/Y4 and Y5/Y6.

### **3. WHAT IS 'FEDERATION'?**

The term 'federation' describes a formal and legal agreement by which the schools involved work together in formal partnership under a single governing body.

Schools in a federation remain separate; they retain their names, uniforms and their identity. They are individually inspected by Estyn, and individual data is collected by the Local Authority and Welsh Government. In rural communities across Wales, Federation is seen as an opportunity to strengthen the sustainability of schools, and to ensure that schools are retained in their local communities. Federation also enables smaller groups of pupils and staff to network and share good practice, ideas and resources.

### **4. THE FEDERATION PROCESS**

A proposal to establish a federation can either be taken forward by the local authority or by the governing bodies of the schools involved in the federation. This proposal is being taken forward by the governing bodies of the three schools that are involved.

There is a defined process which needs to be followed in order to establish a federation. This process is outlined in the Welsh Government Circular 011/2014, 'Federation process of maintained schools in Wales: Guidance for governing bodies and local authorities', which was issued in May 2014.

The process is summarised in Appendix B

The full guidance document can be found on-line at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/fundingschools/school-governance/federation-of-maintained-schools/?lang=en>.

### **WHAT IF THE SCHOOLS WANT TO GO BACK TO SEPARATE GOVERNING BODIES?**

The Welsh Government document 'Federation process of maintained schools in Wales' also outlines the process to be followed if a school wanted to leave a federation, or to dissolve a federation.

If any individual school wanted to leave the federation, this would have to be agreed by the federated governing body, following a written request from the school or schools wishing to leave the federation.

The federated governing body can also decide to break up a federation if it is considered that the Federation is not working for pupils, parents, staff or governors.

## **5. BENEFITS AND RISKS OF FEDERATION**

### **BENEFITS**

There are a number of drivers for change, including the substantial body of evidence regarding the benefits of federation. In particular the three schools involved recognise the critical importance of effective leadership in improving outcomes for children.

It is increasingly clear that ambitious teachers are not attracted to headships that require them to spend a large part of their time in the classroom.

In September 2016 there were 16 schools in Powys that were being led by an Acting Headteacher. There is a clear direction of travel towards shared headteachers, and there are clear benefits in making these arrangements clear and contractual, rather than on a 'goodwill' basis between schools.

Securing the best leadership team for a school is one of the most critical roles for a governing body. Therefore, the main driver for this federation is the strategic intention to put measures in place to ensure that the schools within the federation are able to attract and retain the best possible leadership team now and in the future.

Amongst the drivers for this federation are:

- Sharing good practice across all schools in the federation.
- Consistency of teaching and learning methodology.
- Streamlining of policies and structures.
- Enhanced opportunities for pupil activities.
- Enhanced opportunities for staff development.
- Improved social opportunities for pupils.
- Reduced bureaucracy.
- A larger community from which to source skilled governors, particularly those meeting the criteria of being a Foundation Governor.

### **RISKS AND ISSUES**

Whilst federation would lead to a number of benefits, it is acknowledged that there would also be risks and issues.

The following risks and issues have been identified:

- Whilst the proposal to create a permanent non-teaching headteacher is likely to prove more attractive than a teaching headship, the demands in managing three schools would be considerable.
- Parental concerns that the new senior leadership team does not provide enough headteacher time for each individual school.
- Ensuring that the single governing body is able to take a continuous broad look across all three schools, particularly if there are significant issues requiring attention at one particular school (i.e. a poor inspection outcome).

- Failure to recruit sufficient skilled governors with an interest in the new remit of the new governing body.
- Identified benefits and advantages from federation are not realised in full.
- Inadequate communication leading to uncertainty and lack of buy in by stakeholders.

The governor working party is of the view that all risks and issues can be mitigated, but that this will require effort and resources.

## **6. THE IMPACT OF FEDERATION**

### **HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT PUPILS AND PARENTS?**

On a day-to-day basis, there would be no noticeable change. Each school would retain its ethos, identity and uniform, and children at all three schools would continue to learn in their present classes. Each school would retain its PTA / Friends groups.

It is intended that federation would enable the schools involved to build on our recent success and see continued improvements in school performance. It is anticipated that pupils would have greater opportunities to develop, both educationally and socially. In particular, it is expected that federation would lead to greater opportunities for team sports across all of the schools in the federation.

Pupils and parents would benefit from the following:

- The sharing of practice and quality learning experiences
- The continued provision of a local school, reflecting the particular needs of the local community.
- Interaction with larger peer groups (where needed).
- Shared teaching expertise across the schools.
- A collaborative approach to new initiatives
- Increased and wider opportunities for friendship, physical and cultural activities
- A co-ordinated approach to school based events and use of buildings and site assets



## HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT THE GOVERNING BODY?

Following federation, the current three governing bodies would be abolished and replaced by a single governing body. Based on the current guidance (Federation Process of Maintained Schools in Wales, May 2014) regulations, the new governing body would have no fewer than 15 and no more than 27 governors.

It should be noted that the guidance places restrictions on the numbers and types of governors.

In any federation including a Voluntary Aided School there must be a majority of Foundation Governors who are nominated on behalf of the Diocese of St Asaph by the PCCs of the appropriate parishes.

We propose a governing body of 23 members as detailed in the table below:

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
<b>Parent:</b> One parent governor elected or appointed by each of the schools in the federation	3
<b>Teacher:</b> To be elected by the staff in the federation	2
<b>Staff:</b> To be elected by the non-teaching staff in the federation	1
<b>Local Authority:</b> To be nominated by county councillors	1
<b>Community:</b> To be appointed by the governing body	2
<b>Additional Community:</b> Nominations sought from community councils	1
<b>Headteacher:</b> The head or acting head of the federation if one is appointed	1
<b>Foundation</b>	12

The Welsh Government is currently consulting on new regulations for the composition of governing bodies. These may come into effect in September 2017, with full implementation by September 2018. It is likely that any new regulations that come into effect will require changes to the composition of the governing body.

## HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT LEADERSHIP AND STAFFING?

Federation would lead to a significant change to the headteacher and senior management arrangements at the three schools. No changes would be made to the current contracts of teaching and non-teaching staff prior to the federation.

Any new staff starting after the date of federation would be employed directly by the federation, and appropriate flexibility clauses would be built into their contracts of employment.

The working party have proposed a leadership and staffing structure for the Federation which is shown below.

**Proposed Staffing Structure Llansantffraid, Llanfechain and Llangedwyn (September 2017)**

	Executive Headteacher		
	Llangedwyn (2 classes)	Llansantffraid (4 classes)	Llanfechain (2 classes)
Leadership	Assistant Head teacher	Executive Deputy Headteacher  TLR Position	Assistant Headteacher
Teachers & HLTA	KS2 Teacher (AHT)  Foundation Phase Teacher (0.5)  HLTA (0.5)	R/Y1 Teacher  Y1/Y2 Teacher  Y3/Y4 Teacher  Y5/Y6 Teacher  HLTA	KS2 Teacher (AHT)  Foundation Phase Teacher (0.8)  HLTA (0.5)
Support Staff	Support staff as funded through LMS/Additional ALN and Foundation Phase funding	Support staff as funded through LMS/Additional ALN and Foundation Phase funding	Support staff as funded through LMS/Additional ALN and Foundation Phase funding
Administration Staff	Executive Administrator		
		Admin Assistant	
Other staff	Midday and cleaning staff as existing staff structure	Midday and cleaning staff as existing staff structure	Midday and cleaning staff as existing staff structure

## **HOW WOULD FEDERATION AFFECT SCHOOL ADMISSIONS?**

Llansantffraid Church in Wales School is a Voluntary Aided school. As a Voluntary Aided school, the governing body is responsible for their own admissions. Applications for places at this school are submitted to the school, and places are allocated in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy.

Llangedwyn Church in Wales School and Llanfechain Church in Wales School are Voluntary Controlled schools. Applications for places at these two schools are submitted to the council, and places are allocated in accordance with the council's Admissions Policy.

Should a federation be established, the admissions arrangements for the three schools would continue as they are currently.

These admissions policies are available on request from each school.

## 6. HOW CAN YOU LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK?

### PROCESS FOR SEEKING THE VIEWS OF STAKEHOLDERS

This federation proposal has been agreed by all three Governing bodies, taking account advice from the Local Authority and the diocese.

The Welsh Government document 'Federation process of maintained schools in Wales' (May 2014) sets out the process to be followed in order to seek the views of stakeholders when establishing a federation.

In line with this guidance, the proposal will be sent to the following:

- The local authority
- The headteacher of every school included in the proposal
- The school council for each school
- All staff paid to work in the schools
- The parents of registered pupils at each school
- All trade unions
- The diocese
- The foundation governors and any trustees for schools with a foundation
- Any other relevant persons the governing body considers should see the proposal.

A simplified version will be shared with both school councils.

### CONSULTATION PERIOD

In line with Welsh Government guidance, the consultation period must be at least 6 weeks.

**The consultation period will begin on Monday 13 February 2017 and end on Monday 27 March 2017, at 3.15pm.**

***Any responses received after 3.15pm on Monday 27 March will not count.***

After the consultation period, a joint meeting of the full governing bodies will be held to consider the responses received to the consultation, and to decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

### HOW TO RESPOND

**Please note that in order that the governing bodies can properly consider your views, all responses must be in writing.**

A written response form is attached to this document in Appendix A.

Alternatively you can respond in writing to let us know your views on the proposal.

Powys County Council's School Transformation Team are collating the consultation responses on behalf of the governing bodies.

Responses should be sent to the following address or placed in the box marked 'Federation Consultation' placed in each of the schools. There will be an opportunity to complete these forms at the drop in sessions mentioned at the start of the document

School Transformation Team  
Powys County Council  
County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 5LG

You can also send your response via e-mail to [school.consultation@powys.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultation@powys.gov.uk).

**All responses must be received by 3.15pm on 27 March 2017.**









## **Appendix B**

### **Summary of the Federation Process**

#### **Step One – Exploration**

- Expressions of interest from schools
- Agree drivers and purpose for Federation
- Schools seek information and guidance from the local authority and hold early discussions
- Inform staff of process and any implications. Keep Unions informed
- Set up a Governor Working Group with representatives from all schools to lead the process
- Determine a date for the operative start of federation
- Consider talking to or visiting other schools that have federated

#### **Step Two – Preparation**

- Governors agree to prepare a report to consult with stakeholders
- Governors decide on a governance structure – membership and constitution of the federated governing body
- Agree a name for the federation
- Explore the management and staffing structure
- Investigate any financial and HR Issues
- Explore issues relating to the specific Voluntary Aided nature of Llansantffraid, including the position of the trustees and any issues regarding assets (The Diocese Director of Education and Learning has offered to support this aspect of the work)

#### **Step Three – The Report and Consultation**

- Seek help from the LA to prepare the report for consultation which must be at least 6 weeks. (Powys County Council have offered to manage the consultation process on our behalf)
- Draft reports to be considered by governing bodies at their next meeting
- The report must be an Agenda item for which at least five days notice has been given
- Each governing body must decide it wishes to continue
- The report should:
  - Include full details of the proposal including the size/composition of the single governing body, management and staffing arrangements, admissions, authorities
  - Explain reasons for federation, benefits and how potential challenges will be met
  - Include the date from when the federation takes place – must be at least 125 days from the date proposals are published
  - Consultation with stakeholders – Local Authority, parents, staff of all schools, staff unions, diocese

#### **Step 4 – Defining**

In consultation with the Local Authority

- Start to consider and define leadership roles across the federation
- Start to prepare job descriptions and contracts for any new posts and roles
- Include proposed staffing structure in consultation report

#### **Step 5 – Post Consultation**

- Joint meeting of governors to consider responses – plan this meeting at the start of the consultation process to allow for full attendance asap
- Provide summary report of responses for each governing body to consider

#### **Step 6 – Implementation**

- Individual governing bodies meet to make the final decision on whether they wish to proceed – simultaneous meetings in separate rooms
- Inform stakeholders of decision
- Liaise with LA and Diocese
- Senior leadership roles and responsibilities formalised
- Charitable status, asset transfer etc.
- Governor working group established to provide strategic planning and roll out
- Agreement with governor support in LA to provide continuity

#### **Step 7 - Evolution**

- Single governing body meets to elect Chair and Vice Chair
- Governors agree committee structures and meeting calendar
- New staff roles operating
- School Improvement Plan targets resources and expertise at raising standards across federation
- Calendars and professional processes aligned

#### **Step 8 – Embedding**

- Resources and staffing used flexibly to raise standards
- Headteacher build overview of federation effectiveness through monitoring
- Governors review federation to have systems in place to ensure good knowledge of individual schools

#### **Step 9 – Strategic Development**

- Key LA officers are able to offer well informed support
- Overview of federation arrangements and impact on standards and school improvement capacity
- Wider opportunities for professional development
- Model practices, processes, policies and documentation in place