



T.E.A.M

Together Everyone Achieves More

Whitehall Junior Community School

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05/10/2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please take time to read the consultation letter which is attached to this letter. The governing body would like to join a Family of Schools called a Federation. This is where we work more closely with a number of schools in our area. This allows us to share ideas and work more collaboratively.

The governors have discussed this at length and are in agreement however, we also want you to be happy with this too. If you read the document you will become aware that the day to day running of the school will not change. We will still be known as Whitehall Junior Community School and you will still have all the teachers and support staff working with your children. You will still have all the same resources and you will still be a school which is part of Walsall Council. We feel working closely with more schools will improve all our schools by sharing ideas and implementing new ones.

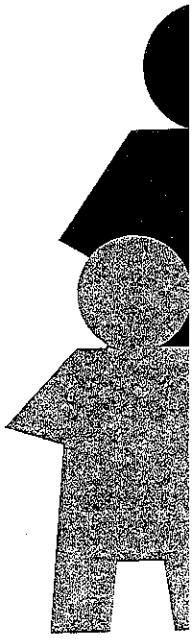
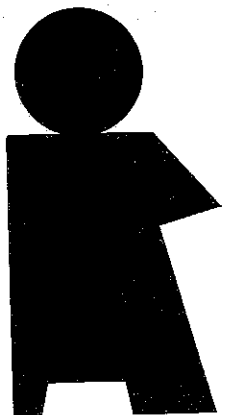
There will be meetings arranged whereby you can ask questions and gain a greater understanding of what a Federation is. I feel it is a good idea and away of moving forwards together with our local schools.

Please take time to read the consultation documents and I hope you will support us in this move which will bring many benefits to you and your children.

Many thanks

Mrs E Attwood – Head teacher

Mrs C Jones – Chair of Governors



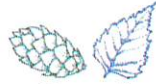




Millfield Primary School



Palfrey Junior School



Leighswood School



Whitehall Junior
Community School

Consultation on Whitehall Junior Community School joining Cadmus Family of Schools through federation

Dear All,

The Governing Board of Cadmus family of schools and the Governing Board of Whitehall Junior Community School have started to look into whether the informal joint working arrangements currently in place should be made formal with Whitehall Junior Community School federating to join Cadmus.

The governors of Whitehall Junior, after careful consideration, feel there are considerable opportunities and benefits to joining Cadmus family of schools. No final decision has been taken however and governors wish to hear from pupils, staff, parents/carers and the wider community before any decision is taken.

We have put together the reasons why the school wants to join Cadmus. There is a feedback form which we would encourage you to complete with your thoughts on the proposal. There will also be staff and parent/ carer events where you can attend to hear more and ask questions.

The consultation period will run from 04.10.21 until midday on 19.11.21. Please share with us your thoughts, ideas or concerns by email to mvlahakis@cadmusschools.co.uk so we can make a fully informed decision.

The consultation document is available via the school website. Additional paper copies can be obtained via the school office.

The closing date for comments is the 19.11.21

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to hearing from you

We would encourage Whitehall Parents to respond by attending an open session on the following date: 19th October either 9.15 am or 2.15 pm

Separate dates have been organised for staff and unions.

Yours sincerely,

Mr R Roberts

Mrs Colleen Jones

Roland Roberts
Chair of Governors
Cadmus Family of Schools

Colleen Jones
Chair of Governors
Whitehall Junior Community School

**Consultation on Whitehall Junior Community School joining Cadmus
Family of Schools through federation
Consultation Summary (September 2021)**

Whitehall Junior Community School and the schools that make up Cadmus Family of Schools are undertaking a 6 week consultation to determine whether Whitehall Juniors joining Cadmus is in the best interests of all the schools involved.

The consultation will seek the feedback of pupils, parents/carers, staff, the local community, Trade Unions, the Secretary of State and the Local Authority. This consultation document explains what a federation is, and the benefits it will bring to all the schools involved. There is also a form to complete where you can put forward your views.

In September 2021 the governors of Cadmus and Whitehall Junior separately agreed to go out to consultation on the proposal for Whitehall Junior Community School to join Cadmus family of schools. This hasn't been an instant decision. School leaders from Cadmus have been working collaboratively with Mrs Attwood and her team for some time sharing best practice and offering advice and guidance.

In addition to receiving the consultation document, drop-in sessions will be organised where questions can be posed and further information gathered about the proposal. We would really appreciate your contribution to the consultation.

Do please complete the form at the back of the consultation pack, and send us your views by the 19th November 2021 on our proposal

What is a Hard Federation?

A Hard Federation is the name given to the way in which two or more schools work more closely together. There are already a number of schools that make up Cadmus (Alumwell Junior School, Butts Primary School, Chuckery Primary School, Leighswood Primary School, Millfield Primary School and Palfrey Junior School).

The experiences of these schools is that they have very much kept their own identity linked to the communities they serve. They still receive their own budget, the same staff will deliver the same teaching and learning on a day to day basis and the school will be led by the same leadership team.

What will change is that Whitehall Junior Community School will be able to access additional support whether that be staff training and development, leadership capacity, the sharing of best practice or access to Cadmus support services such as SEND support or behaviour management support.

Whitehall Junior Community School prides itself on being a welcoming and inclusive school where everybody strives to be the best in everything that they do. Working closely with Cadmus it is clear that the federation and the junior school shares the same values.

National guidance in regard to federations states that federations are “not just about structural change. It is also about a different mind-set where the governors and school leaders share a commitment to improving the outcomes and life chances for all children across the Federation, as opposed to just a single school, through a school-led system of raising standards and driving improvement”. (NCTL The governance of Federations, 2014).

What are the values of Cadmus?

Cadmus schools inspire and create a passion for learning. They take a localised and inclusive approach, involving communities, to take collective responsibility for ensuring that every child and young person in the federation receives an excellent education.

Cadmus values its staff, who model themselves as lifelong learners, hungry to acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding. Governors are chosen to enhance the skills within the Federation and it highly values representation from the local community.

Cadmus aspires to deliver lessons using exciting and innovative techniques, so that pupils are absorbed and motivated by their teaching. Cadmus regularly use outdoor learning experiences to deliver the curriculum.

What will it mean?

In practice it will mean that:

- All schools in the federation will retain their own identity. No school has merged or lost its identity.
- Whitehall Junior Community School will continue to be known as a school in its own right, at the centre of the communities it serves.
- There will be no change in current staffing levels, the way classes are organised or the curriculum offer as a result of working as a Federation. Each school will continue to receive its own budget in full.
- There will be a small financial contribution to the Federation for the running of the Federation as a whole but experience from the other schools in Cadmus has been that they get back far more in kind than the costs incurred.
- The Federation may employ new staff, with a specific Federation role under a Federation contract. That will be explicit at the point the job is advertised.

- There will be no change to the schools admissions criteria. Those children entitled to go to the school before federating will be able to go to the school after it federates.
- All schools will continue to have their own Ofsted inspection.
- The reporting of standards will remain separate for each school.

Why are we making this proposal?

Cadmus family of schools was created by a like-minded group of head teachers, governors and staff who recognised that the challenges facing schools were best dealt with together, sharing expertise, good practice and commitment to do the best for children and young people served by its schools.

At the core of the Cadmus way of working is that we are stronger together but that local decision making is best.

Through informal support and dialogue with staff and governors at Whitehall Junior Community School it has become apparent that Whitehall Juniors shares the same values and passion for improving the education and social and emotional development of children in its schools.

The governors, leadership teams and staff of all the schools have a shared ambition of maintaining a child focussed environment that continues to drive up standards and one which provides supportive space where children and young people are supported to grow in confidence, independence and grow their unique talents and strengths. Cadmus also have a commitment to continually developing and retaining exceptional staff, investing in high quality professional development. Federating will enable all schools to more effectively recruit and retain high quality staff and share and jointly procure staff training across the federation to ensure quality and value for money.

What are the benefits?

The main benefits are:

- A shared commitment to ensuring the very best development and education for pupils regardless of their unique needs.
- Cadmus has extensive experience in supporting primary aged pupils in achieving their potential. It has a growing team of specialists that are experts in constructive behaviour support and SEND support.
- The Federation provides strength in numbers and support at a time when external agencies are reducing support due to budget constraints.
- There will be greater development opportunities for staff, for example, shared training and a broadening of understanding and experience through collaboration with each other.
- The opportunity to attract future experienced Headteachers and senior leaders. Leading a school can be a lonely job and has the pandemic has proven, a highly pressured role. Being part of a family of schools

- provides breadth of support and also career pathways that create the leaders of the future.
- Where possible, maximise the efficient use of resources to the benefit of the curriculum.
 - Less bureaucracy, under a federated structure with one Governing Board but still a local governing committee to provide oversight at a local level.

What will it mean for the children?

On a day to day basis there will be no change in school routine or the provision of education at Whitehall Junior Community School. However there will be opportunities to share staff across both schools, which will give access to a much larger pool of knowledge and the chance to share specialist expertise across the schools which will ultimately benefit the children. They will benefit from having access to more opportunities for good quality learning.

There will be greater opportunity to use school resources and budgets more effectively with regard to the purchasing of goods and services which both directly and indirectly impact on the lives of the pupils.

What will it mean for staff?

Day to day management of both schools will continue as it is now. However there will be opportunities for closer working between staff. This co-operation will create greater development opportunities and career routes within the Federation.

As a federated school Whitehall Junior will remain a maintained (local authority) school with staff remaining on their current terms and conditions. Whilst there may be career opportunities for staff in the future, staff will still be contracted to work at their existing school. Any request to work at another school in the Federation will only be through discussion and agreement with the staff member concerned.

Will staffing change?

No, the staffing arrangements currently in place at Whitehall Junior Community School will remain unchanged. Mrs Attwood will remain the Head teacher leading her school.

It is important to state that there will be no redundancies as a result of moving to a Federation.

What will it mean for parent/ carers?

The schools will continue to operate as usual and parents/carers will continue to receive the same high level of provision and support. It is anticipated that as the schools cooperate more closely and share good practice there will be

greater opportunity for shared learning which in turn will help all pupils. This, together with the retention of quality staff, greater staff development and progression opportunities will ensure a continued high standard of education for the pupils at all schools in the Federation.

The day to day contact arrangements between the schools and parents/carers will not be changed by the Federation, but we will continue to seek ways to improve what we do. If you have queries about your child's education then you will speak to the same staff members after federating as you do now.

Will it mean a change to school uniform for the two schools?

No, Whitehall Junior Community School will retain its individual identity and uniform. Parents and carers won't incur additional costs having to buy new uniform.

What will it mean for the governing board?

Were Whitehall Junior Community School to federate with Cadmus then they would join the Cadmus Governing Board. The Head teacher and Chair of Governors of Whitehall Junior Community School would have automatic rights to sit on the Cadmus Board. The Cadmus Governing Board has overall oversight of the school improvement journey of the Federation and oversight of Cadmus Inclusive (the body that provides support services to Cadmus schools and other schools on a traded not for profit basis).

The existing Governing Board at Whitehall Juniors will become a Local Governing Committee. The terms of reference give a high degree of autonomy and accountability to the Local Governing Committee. They will still lead the recruitment of senior staff and have oversight of the school, its finances and the progress being made by pupils.

Were Whitehall Junior Community School to join Cadmus then the Cadmus Governing Board would include:

- 2 Parent Governors;
- 1 Local Authority Governor;
- Staff Governor;
- 7 Executive Headteachers/ Headteachers/ Heads of School for each school in the federation (including Mrs Attwood)
- 1 Chief Operating Officer
- 15 Co-opted Governors (including 7 Chairs of local governing committees) (including Mrs Jones)

Total number of Governors 27

The governors will share a commitment to improving the outcomes and life chances for all children across the Federation, yet still be able work to improve a single school, where needed.

The Local Governing Committee will be responsible for the following in all the schools that they manage:

- Admissions
- Staffing
- Finance
- Premises
- Curriculum
- Wellbeing and safeguarding
- Reporting on results (for example to Ofsted)
- Being accountable to the DfE for results, finances and management.

Cadmus is passionate about retaining local accountability and decision making.

Is there a cost to being a member of Cadmus?

Schools in the federation pay no more than 3% of their budget to the strategic management and operational running of the Federation.

Any surplus created by the Federation is re-invested back into school across the Federation.

What does it mean for admissions?

Admissions to the school will continue to be under the current arrangements and be unaffected by this proposal. Parents and carers will continue to apply for a place at the school of their choice in the usual manner.

Can a school leave a federation? Can other schools join?

It is possible for schools to withdraw from a federation and governing boards must follow a prescribed process, set out in The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012. Additional schools can join a federation and the prescribed process is also set out in The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012.

The news talks about the government wanting all schools to become academies. What is the difference and should we not be looking at academising?

A school that joins a federation remains a local authority maintained school. A federated school can withdraw from a federation by following a prescribed process.

A school that joins an Academy Trust can't go back to becoming a local authority maintained school. Academy schools are funded directly by the Education Standards Funding Agency (a part of the Department for

Education). A Federation school continues to be funded via the local authority.

Cadmus strongly believes that federation has the same benefits as acadatisation in regard to schools working together to improve schools across the federation and provides a stable support mechanism for the long term.

It is true that there is encouragement for schools to academise. The structure of Cadmus means that it can flexibly adapt to whatever the future holds for the sector.

What happens now?

This document is the start of the consultation period on the proposal to federate. All written comments will be considered by the governors when the consultation period closes on and they will then decide whether to proceed or not. If the decision taken is to proceed, the schools will inform the Local Authority that they wish to federate and Whitehall Junior Community School will join Cadmus Governing Board. Should the agreement be to federate then it is expected that this will commence from 2 January 2022. Staff and parents/ carers will be kept informed at each stage.

How can I get more information?

This consultation document can be accessed Whitehall Junior Community School Website

Your views are important to us so please let us have your comments on the proposal by completing and returning the attached response to the school office

Senior staff and governors will be on hand at upcoming events in school to respond to queries and explain more about what these proposals mean. The dates for these are Tuesday 19th October at 9.15am and 2.15pm at Whitehall Junior.

Proposal for Whitehall Junior Community School to join Cadmus family of schools

Please use this form to add your comments:

Please return your response form to the school office

Your name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

School

.....

Please indicate which group you belong to by circling the appropriate title:

Parent

Staff Member

Other – please specify

Rather not say

.....

Date: