



EXTENDING THE ST JOHN'S & ST PAUL'S FEDERATION TO INCLUDE CHRIST CHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

CONSULTATION INFORMATION

Dear parent/carers,

The governors of Christ Church Primary school and the Federation of St John (in Bethnal Green) and St Pauls (in Shadwell) and the schools' leaders have been thinking long and hard about joining together as a hard Federation with one governing body. **Why?**

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

There are many current and potential future challenges in English education and in Tower Hamlets. These include likely falling roles with resultant declining school budgets. The danger is that small schools will disappear and parents/carers will have no choice but to send their children to larger schools.. In Tower Hamlets one-form entry schools are particularly vulnerable. 60% of children at present attend larger academies.

These challenges demand a proactive response and present opportunities. There are many benefits to schools working together in true partnership within a Federation.

WHY A 3-LEGGED STOOL? We believe that as a 3-school Federation we can provide an even better education for children and a more attractive career for adults in the schools (with more opportunities across the Federation): We are a good fit in terms of values. All are one-form entry Church of England, voluntary aided schools in inner city London. All 3 schools have strong theologically rooted Christian visions that relate clearly to the ethos of each. We also, importantly, have a good geographical fit within walking distance of each other

- We can benefit more from existing good relationships with some strong foundations built by Darren Rubin (Executive Headteacher of St John and St Paul Federation) and staff from St Johns and St Pauls working with Christ Church staff and children over almost a year.
- The schools are a similar size and are all one-form entry so a Federation can be an equal partnership providing mutual support and sharing and celebration of good practices.
- The Federation will respect and celebrate the long history and culture of each school as well as harnessing the benefits of working together

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS?

- **For Children**

- There are benefits from even better practice in learning and teaching.
- Federations of equal partners enable individual school cultures to thrive and not encourage hard standardisation, whilst developing consistent shared best practice where it is felt desirable e.g. work scrutinies and monitoring of pupils' work.
- Shared events across schools e.g. sports, public speaking, rewilding project will enable them to develop their social skills
- They will continue to enjoy all the benefits of small schools with strong relationships

- **For Parent/carers**

- More security and certainty of three great schools within an ever-improving Federation
- Joint parent/carers events
- Schools can retain their culture and identity.
- Parents/carers will continue to work with the same school leaders

- **For Staff**

- More professional development opportunities leading to even better learning and teaching.
- More career progression opportunities for teachers, teacher assistants, leaders, support staff and other adults.
- More attractive for recruitment of the best staff.
- Better retention of staff if there are progression opportunities.
- Flexibility of deployment across the schools with a Federation Contract for all new staff e.g. to support struggling parts of schools in the Federation, disseminate best practice.
- Support with workload of teachers with Federation coordinators advising and a shared drive for good practice.

- **For the Schools**

- Greater security moving forward.
- Some economies of scale e.g. cross Federation roles, purchase of supplies and services.
- School budgets will be managed separately and there are opportunities for creative cross-funding that can help individual school budgets.
- More capacity to create and nurture sponsorships e.g. from the City.
- More chances to use specialist expertise in the Federation e.g. marketing.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- We can all articulate and broadcast the many benefits of small schools and their strong relationships with a focus on identity, belonging and community.
- We can make even more of the great locations close to one of the richest square miles in the world presenting more opportunities for collaboration
- Together we can build exceptional early years provision in each school to increase future numbers
- We can develop international links across the Federation to benefit pupils and staff

ARE THERE RISKS AND CHALLENGES

Yes - but we would feel more able to work together to rise to the challenges that we all face.

- Ultimately all schools in the country are said, by the government, to be viable if they have enough money to pay the bills. At present this depends on numbers of pupils. We will have an agreed strategy to do our very best to ensure all three schools' futures in an exciting Federation of 3 already successful schools
- Fusing two Governing Bodies into one will take time and require skills and patience.
- We very much want to take YOU - staff and parents/carers with us.

WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT?

Apart from one Governing body (see below) and the points highlighted above, children and parents/carers will not notice much difference. Your school is still your school and in charge of school places

The **leadership structure** in the new Federation is very strong with

Darren Rubin (Executive Headteacher of the Federation) with oversight of:

- **St Paul's** (Head of school) and (Assistant Head)
- **St John's** with (Deputy Head) and (Assistant Head)
- **Christ Church** with (Head of School) and (Assistant Head)

If you wish to discuss a matter about your child, you still do this through your child's school.

You may well have lots of questions so below is the timetable and key information about what next.

1: The named governing bodies hereby confirm agreement to the proposal to federate:

Christ Church C of E Primary School (Spitalfields), St John C of E Primary School (Bethnal Green) and St Pauls C of E Primary school (Whitechapel) existing Federation

2: Address and deadline for responses to the consultation:

Consultation to start on **Thursday 17th SEPTEMBER 2026** with deadline on **Sunday 25th OCTOBER 2026**

Submit responses via drop-in sessions TBA and designated email to:
Chair of Governors (Dr Robin Precey) at St John's & St Paul's CE Primary Schools
And Chair of Governors (Simon Walsh) at Christ Church CE Primary School

3: Contact email address for queries:	Consultation@christchurch.towerhamlets.sch.uk Consultation@st-johns.towerhamlets.sch.uk Consultation@st-pauls.towerhamlets.sch.uk
4: Deadline for responding to consultation:	SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2026
5: Federation name:	Federation of Christ Church C of E Primary School (Spitalfields), St John C of E Primary School (Bethnal Green) and St Pauls C of E Primary school (Whitechapel)
6: Date of proposed federation:	JANUARY 1st 2027

GOVERNORS

The new governing body would need to:

- Be clear that its responsibility is to all three schools and not just one
- At the same time seen to be representative of all three schools
- To be small enough to be manageable but large enough for people to feel represented
- Have a balance of skills needed to challenge and support
- Have time to attend meetings, school and federation events, interview and to conduct study visits (1 pa per governor)

**The Federation of Christ Church, St John's and St Paul's CE Primary
Schools**

Category of governor		
Parent governors	2	To be elected from the 3 schools
Head teacher governor	1	Executive Headteacher
Staff governor	1	To be elected from the 3 schools
Local Authority governor	1	
Foundation governors	8	LDBS (3 posts)
		Deanery Synod (2)
		St John's PCC (1)
		St George PCC (1)
		Christ Church PCC (1)
		St John's Locally Ordained Minister (LOM) Ex Officio (1)
		St George's LOM Ex Officio (1) Ex officio
		Christ Church LOM Ex Officio
Associate member		The Governing Body will be able to appoint associate non-voting members to enable fairer representation and enhance their collective skills and experience for the benefit of the Federation.

TOTAL NUMBER OF GOVERNORS 13

The existing Governing bodies will cease to exist **on 31st December 2026** and the newly elected one will start **on 1st January 2027**.
Elections for the new Federation Governing Body would be in November after the consultation period has finished.

Signed:

S. Walsh

Simon Walsh (Chair of Governors at Christ Church)

And



Dr Robin Precey (Chair of Governors at St John's and St Paul's Federation)

Date 17/9/2026