



# St. Giles' C of E Primary School

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## **Proposal for Hard Federation of St. Giles' Church of England Primary School, Great Maplestead and Bulmer St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School**

### **Our Vision**

The Governing Boards of St. Giles' Church of England Primary School, Great Maplestead (St. Giles') and Bulmer St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School (Bulmer St. Andrew's) have been looking at ways of working more closely together to make the best educational provision for our children. Over the past few years all schools, especially small rural schools, have been encouraged by the Government to find new ways to work in closer partnership to overcome the difficulties of squeezed finances, recruitment and retention of staff, particularly Headteachers. As a leading school in the area, St. Giles' were approached by Bulmer St. Andrew's to take over the leadership of their school following a period of uncertainty and difficulty in finding a permanent Headteacher. Initial enquiries and visits found that the two schools shared the same vision and ethos and, whilst not imperative to a partnership between two schools, there was an obvious benefit to being neighbouring schools catchment areas.

Following initial consultations with both Governing Boards and the parents of each school, our schools have begun working closely together with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher from St. Giles' becoming Executive Headteacher and Executive Deputy Headteacher across both schools. Our schools have also begun having joint staff meetings, class visits across sites, shared pupil sporting events and staff (teaching and non-teaching) have travelled between sites.

As we continue to work closely together, it becomes even more apparent that both our schools are passionate about steering our future in a way that protects their rural character and serves the local community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We share the same aspiration to preserve and develop our schools distinctive religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and Diocesan level. In order to move forward with this partnership, the Governing Bodies of both St. Giles' and Bulmer St. Andrew's would like to formalise the close working relationship that is being forged between the two schools. We believe that by formalising our close working relationship we will be protecting and securing the future of our schools and ensuring that local children continue to have access to the best education. We look forward to entering into a consultation period, where we can tell you more about our proposals and find out your views.

*"be the best you can be"*

This document sets out our proposal and explains exactly how the federation would work. It forms part of a six week consultation process, during which we are seeking the views of everyone who has an interest in our schools. Should you wish to respond to this proposal, you are invited to email the Clerk of the Governors (see below for contact details). All views will be taken into account by the individual Governing Board of each school at the end of the consultation process, who will then decide whether to proceed with the federation.

### **What is federation?**

A federation is formed when two or more schools work together under a single governing board. Each school remains legally separate; therefore, parents should not see any change in the day to day running of the two schools. Federation is not a merger; it represents a long term commitment to working in partnership. A combined governing board would provide strategic leadership for the federation by drawing on experiences from both schools, utilising governors' expertise and skills for the federation's best interests.

Federation means that each school would:

- Keep its own identity;
- Keep its own name and uniform;
- Have its own separate budget;
- Share resources;
- Have separate Ofsted inspections;
- Continue to work in close partnership for the benefit of all the children;
- Have a shared governing board that sets the strategic vision across both schools and ensures educational and financial accountability;
- Continue to have its own admission arrangements, handled by Learning Services at Essex County Council; and
- Retention of its own high quality staff.

### **What would federation mean for our children?**

- A consistent approach to teaching and learning across both schools;
- Increased capacity to meet the needs of children through the sharing of knowledge and resources;
- The opportunity for combined community activities;
- Increased confidence gained by links/activities with children from the other school; and
- Aligned curriculum.

### **What would federation mean for our staff?**

- Further opportunities for shared staff meetings and combined staff training;
- Extra opportunity for shared ideas and planning;
- Retention/opportunity for greater professional development;
- Ability to work with other school and teachers;

- Promotion opportunities;
- Attractive to new staff; and
- New staff recruited to the federation will have a mobility clause included in their contract allowing them to work across both sites, whereas existing staff may, by mutual consent, be mobile across the schools.

### **What would federation mean for our governors?**

There will be a new single governing board formed to replace our two existing governing boards.

- Benefit from shared experiences and good practice; their experience and commitment will benefit both schools;
- Access/shared costs for on-going training;
- Sharing the responsibility of monitoring;
- Broadening the governor knowledge and experience; and
- Build/widen our horizon.

### **The role of the federated governing board will be:**

- To ensure that the character of both schools is maintained;
- Maintain the schools distinctive religious character and ensure that both parishes are fairly represented;
- To define a shared vision and strategic direction for both schools that places the children at its heart;
- To ensure proper management of financial resources;
- Sustainability of both schools to ensure that the children within our community continue to have access to the best education from their local schools; and
- To hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of each school.

### **Composition of the federated governing board**

The federation will have one governing board composed of representatives from each school community. The proposed federated governing board would be representative of the two school communities. The federated body would be titled 'St. Giles' Church of England Primary School, Great Maplestead and Bulmer St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School'. The Governing board will comprise:

1x Executive Headteacher

1x Staff

1x Parent (Bulmer)

1x Parent (St. Giles)

1x LA

1x Foundation ex officio

1x Foundation PCC

7x Co-Opted (of which 1 co-opted governor must, at all times, be the Executive Deputy Head of the two schools).

This would give the governing board a total of 14 governors. In addition, associate governors may be appointed.