

The background of the page features a stylized, pixelated illustration. On the left, a large green tree with a grey trunk stands on a grassy area. A light blue path winds from the bottom left towards the center. In the middle ground, three blue silhouettes of children are standing on the grass. The overall style is simple and child-friendly.

Consultation on a proposal to establish the Rivers Federation a Federation involving Hauxton Primary School and Meldreth Primary and Preschool

**This document is intended for the students, parents/carers and staff of the
above named schools, their union representatives and the wider community. All
are invited to submit comments no later than 23rd June 2025**

Introduction

Our schools, Hauxton and Meldreth Primary Schools are maintained by Cambridgeshire County Council (the local Children's Services Authority). We have been working together for some time and exploring whether we should now turn this informal partnership into a formal, statutory one known as a Federation. We have concluded that we feel that there would be significant benefit to the staff, children and young people and our communities of doing so. We have decided, therefore, to seek your views on the proposal that our schools enter into a Federation effective from 1st September 2025. The County Council has given its full support to this proposal.

This document has been produced with the purpose of explaining:

- What a Federation is and how it would change things for our schools
- What it would mean for children and their parents/carers, staff and governors
- When decisions will be taken and by whom

Consultation

The consultation period runs from 7 May 2025 and closes at 1:00pm on 23 June 2025. You can let us know your views by completing and returning the short questionnaire at the end of this document, using the [online Smart Survey](#) or by sending an email with your comments to Chair@hauxton.cambs.sch.uk or Chair@meldreth.cambs.sch.uk.

In addition, we will be holding a public meeting on **Tuesday 13 May 2025 at Meldreth Primary School from 6-7pm** and on **Wednesday 14 May 2025 at Hauxton Primary School, from 5-6pm**

The main purpose of these meetings will be for us to explain why we see Federation as the way forward for our schools and how we see this developing for the benefit of the children and families we serve and the wider community.

We are conducting this consultation in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Education and the School Governance (Federation) (England) Regulations 2012. Our aim is to

- Consult widely with all interested parties
- To be clear about our proposals, who may be affected and our timescales
- To ensure our consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible

We also intend to give feedback on the process through posting an analysis of the consultation on our schools' websites and making hard copies available as well.

Any information provided by you in response to this consultation will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by public institutions. This does not necessarily mean that any response you choose to make can be made available on public request because there are exemptions to information provided in confidence and to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies.

WHAT IS A FEDERATION?

A Federation involves two or more maintained schools agreeing to enter into a formal statutory partnership in line with the provisions made by the Government in the 2002 Education Act.

Under a Federation, instead of the existing school governing bodies there would be one governing body with collective responsibility for all the schools in the statutory partnership.

As happens now, the governors would provide challenge and support, ensuring that standards continue to improve in each school, budgets are managed effectively, resources are deployed appropriately and staff are supported and enabled to develop.

We feel it is very important to stress that a Federation is not a merger, it is a partnership. The schools would retain their individual identities, but we would be able to build upon their respective strengths to the benefit of all the young people that our schools serve. Each school would receive its own budget allocation from the Council on the same basis as it does currently, but the Federation Governing Body would be able to consider and make decisions on how best to use the funding received as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Each school would continue to be subject to a separate inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED).

WHY SHOULD OUR SCHOOLS FEDERATE?

We see this as an opportunity to:

- Make the best possible use of our collective skills, knowledge and experience to the benefit of all the children and families we serve.
- Secure and maintain the highest standards of teaching, learning and leadership, leading in time, to both schools retaining their good judgements and continuing to improve
- Undertake joint curriculum development and pastoral support initiatives for the benefit of all children.
- Undertake joint professional development initiatives for staff which will directly support their career progression.
- Improve recruitment and retention of staff and governors.

WHAT WOULD BE THE PROPOSED STAFFING STRUCTURE?

There would be an Executive Head Teacher with responsibility for leading and managing the schools, supported by a senior leadership team, which would operate across the schools as well as sustaining a strong and permanent presence in each.

Existing staff would continue to be employed to work in one or other school in line with their current contracts. Staff could not be 'forced' to change their assigned school. However, opportunities could exist for those staff who wish to work across the Federation to do so but only where this would not diminish the quality of outcomes in the school in which they are contracted to work. In addition, as new appointments are made, these would be on the basis of contracts of employment to work across the Federation.

Delivery of learning would be planned across the schools, with staff working to common policies and structures in respect to pupils' conduct, attendance, access and inclusion (including gifted and talented, special needs, ethnic minority groups).

If we decide to proceed with Federation, the first task the Executive Head Teacher will be asked to undertake is to develop proposals for the new senior leadership structure, which would be the subject of a separate consultation with staff and their union representatives during the autumn term.

WHO WOULD GOVERN THE SCHOOLS?

On the implementation date for the Federation, our existing governing bodies would be replaced by a new Federation Governing Body.

We have begun to discuss the size and allocation of places to the Federation Governing Body which would oversee our schools should we decide to proceed with this proposed change, taking account of the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012. We want to draw on the knowledge and experience of the existing governors and reflect the respective sizes of our schools. With this in mind, consideration is being given to whether we should have a Governing Body of 14 members, made up as follows:

- 2 elected parent representatives
- 1 Executive Head Teacher
- 1 Local Authority appointed governor
- 1 Staff governor elected by the staff of the schools
- 9 Co-opted governors

In addition, we propose to appoint Associate governors. These would be able to contribute additional expertise and knowledge to the Federation Governing Body, but would be non-voting members.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ADMISSIONS?

As our schools will retain their current ethos and identify there is no need to make any changes to the criteria used to determine priority for admission in the case of over-subscription. Parents would continue to be able to express a preference for any of the schools in the Federation as well as for any other school they choose. Where possible those preferences would be met but, if more parents/carers were to apply for a place for their child than there were places available, then places would be offered in accordance with each school's published admission criteria.

HOW WILL THE FEDERATION DEVELOP?

We see Federation as a long-term partnership, one which will grow, develop and strengthen over time.

We are confident, as is the County Council that, the combination of a Federation Governing Body, Executive Head Teacher and strong senior leadership team will enable best practice to be applied consistently across the schools and secure and sustain improvement in all of them. We also believe that it will lead to improved recruitment and retention of high quality staff.

Our ultimate aspiration is for all our schools to be to be judged Outstanding and to retain this rating into the future.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN THE PROCESS?

We would like to hear from you. The closing date for receipt of comments is 23 June 2025. You can complete and return the attached questionnaire, complete our online Smart Survey questionnaire or email us at Chair@hauxton.cambs.sch.uk or Chair@meldreth.cambs.sch.uk.

On Tuesday 1 July our governing bodies will hold a joint meeting with representatives from the County Council to consider the feedback received to this consultation in the form of a report together with the make-up of the proposed Federation Governing Body. Immediately after this, the governing bodies will hold separate meetings at which a simple majority vote will be taken to determine whether or not to proceed with the establishment of a Federation between our schools. Subject to the outcome of those meetings, the Federation Governing Body would take on responsibility for the schools on 1 September 2025.

In advance of this, a time-limited Temporary Federation Governing Body will be established with the sole purpose of ratifying the appointment of the Executive Head Teacher. This will avoid the need to delay the appointment of this key role until the Federation Governing Body can be established and hold its first meeting.

Frequently Asked Questions

How would this proposal affect my child's education?

Hauxton Primary and Meldreth Primary and Preschool are happy, stimulating caring schools and this will not change. The teachers will remain the same and the pupils will continue to learn each day at the school site as they do now. Most will not notice this change at all. This said, pupils already benefit indirectly from the links that our leaders and staff have established and we want these links to be maintained. While we will not force this, opportunities for pupils at one school to collaborate with pupils and staff at the other schools within the federation may arise. This will be in addition to, and not instead of, the connections that already exist across the family of Cambridgeshire schools.

How will the school and children benefit from this process?

We believe that the federation of the schools will give staff at each school access to high quality collaborative professional development, offering the opportunity to share expertise and to reduce costs as a result of our pooled resources. This will contribute to investing in and generating better outcomes for every pupil at the schools.

Why are there only two parent governor in the new federation?

Government regulations place a limit on the number of parent governors in federations. Parent governors bring a particular perspective but, like all governors, should act in the interests of all schools in their federation. They are not meant to act as representatives of a particular constituency or school.

Many of the co-opted governors within the schools are also parents. The restriction on parent governors hasn't stopped them from joining the governing board. It is highly likely that this will also be the case within the proposed federation. We are fortunate to have active and skilful parents at each of the schools and it makes sense that we would want to involve them in governance.

Will children have to travel between the schools for lessons?

No. The schools may share staff, but lessons for pupils will take place on their own school sites. On occasion, pupils will visit other schools to share specialist resources or take part in joint events as they already do with local schools.

Will the admissions process change and could children be forced to change schools?

No. The admission arrangements will remain exactly as they are at present. Parents will apply on behalf of their children to the school of their choice.

What happens if we want to de-federate later on?

If the proposal to federate is accepted, the governing board will review the arrangement in five years' time. One or more of the schools may leave the federation at any time if the governing board agree this and there is a standard process for this.

Who will have a say on this proposal?

We have published the consultation on each of the schools' websites and are seeking views from all pupils, parents and staff.

Are the schools merging to become academies?

No. We believe that a federation of maintained schools is the best way for the schools to work together to provide the best outcomes for our pupils.

Will the arrangements be fair to all schools?

Yes. Any arrangements made as part of the federation will be completely fair to all schools. There may be some funding for innovation, which the schools can share. Obviously, the more pupils who will benefit from a project, the bigger the projects that we can consider for example sports and artists.

Will the staffing change?

The terms and conditions for staff will not change, nor will staff policies or procedures. In some cases, staff may move between the schools to pursue their own career development and also to implement specialist knowledge in other schools. This will be made easier as we apply the same policies across the federation.

How can I find out more and let you know what I think?

The events detailed below, designed as drop-in meetings, will provide parents, carers and the wider community with an opportunity to speak to the governors and the executive headteacher of the partnership about the proposal to form a federation between the schools. If you are unable to attend one of these scheduled dates, please get in touch with the office of one of the schools and we will do our best to arrange for someone to speak to you.

Where will I find the schools?

Hauxton Primary School, Jopling Way, Hauxton CB22 5HY - www.hauxton.cambs.sch.uk

Meldreth Primary and Preschool, High Street, Meldreth SG8 6LA - www.meldreth.cambs.sch.uk

This consultation document is also available online on the schools' websites along with the link to an online survey. Feedback from the survey will be collated so governors of each of the schools can consider every response submitted.

If you need support with accessing this consultation in another language, please contact your school office who will be able to provide you with assistance.

This stage of the consultation will close at 1:00pm on 23 June 2025

If you are responding on a personal basis you do not need to give your name and address unless you wish to do so. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation it would be helpful if you could provide details of that organisation and the capacity in which you represent them.

Please tell us if you want your response to remain confidential but please do note that making such a request does not automatically exclude a right of public access.

At the end of this document you will find a list of the people with whom we are sharing our proposals and consulting.

CONSULTEES

- Parents/carers of children at Hauxton and Meldreth Primary Schools
- Parents/carers of pre-school age children living in the catchment areas of the schools
- Staff at Hauxton and Meldreth Primary Schools and their union representatives
- Local County Councillor(s)
- Local MP(s)
- Local Parish Councils

FEDERATION PROPOSAL INVOLVING MELDRETH AND HAUXTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

PAPER CONSULTATION RESPONSE SHEET
IF POSSIBLE PLEASE respond to our online survey.

Please place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate if you are a:

Member of staff	[name school]
Governor	[name school]
Parent of a Child at	[name school]
Parent of a Younger Child (YR, Y1 Y2)	
Parent of an Older Child (Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6)	
Pupil	[name school]
Professional Association / Trade Union	
Partner Organisation or Education Provider*	*please provide details
Other*	*please provide details

Proposal that Hauxton and Meldreth Primary Schools should Federate with effect
from 1st September 2025

- ☐ I agree with the proposed change
- ☐ I do not have a strong view on the proposed change
- ☐ I do not agree with the proposed change

If you would like to make an additional comment, please use the box below:

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