



Committee and Date

Children and Young
People's Services
Scrutiny Panel

16 September 2009

10.00 a.m.

Item/Paper

4

MODELS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATION (Including Federations)

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Summary

The report of the Independent Policy Commission into primary school organisation for Shropshire recommended that "Shropshire Council should take a leadership role in actively promoting the development of federations and other collaborative approaches to school organisation". This report provides information on the current research about models of school leadership which includes the concept, principles, practicalities and cost implications of federating schools in order to provide Members of Scrutiny Committee with information as requested by Council on 28 July 2008.

Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the various models set out in the paper and Appendices and provide a view about the further development of options for discussion.

Report

Background

1. The most recent publication from the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) shows that there are many different forms of school leadership and organisation being adopted in response to specific local contexts. (See Appendix A for more details).
2. These models, and therefore school organisational structures, are being developed in response to a number of issues which include:
 - "the drive to raise standards
 - the need to ensure sustainability of leadership of schools ...
 - securing effective governance of schools ...

- support and sustainability of small rural community primary schools
 - better delivery of the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda and the promotion of community cohesion
 - pressure on heads – need for support and improved work/life balance
 - schools unable to attract heads ...
 - falling pupil rolls
 - to fight the threat of school closure” (NCSL Introduction to Models of Leadership, September 2009).
3. The types of models set out by the NCSL include:
- Single School
 - Partnerships
 - Collaborations (Soft Federations)
 - Federations (Hard Federations)
 - Mixed Hard Federations and Collaborations
 - Trusts and Academies
 - Local Authority Initiatives
4. A report prepared by the University of Manchester for NCSL (See Appendix B) which undertook research to map and “explore emerging practice and to highlight possible future directions in leadership, management and governance of schools that may support the further development of the education system” (NCSL, 2008) concluded that there is not enough evidence to support the notion that there is only one effective model of school organisation and leadership. The reports states that “there are a range of interesting developments taking place ... Many of these seem to have the potential to increase capacity of schools to innovate ...” However the reports suggests that the various examples are very “closely tied into local contexts in which they have developed. Consequently, it is unlikely that there are ‘solutions’ ... that will transfer easily across boundaries ... they represent starting points for the design of specific structures that will meet specific, local needs, not models to be replicated” (NCSL, 2008). The reports also concludes there can be “... little, if any, substantive impact of emerging models of leadership on student outcomes or students’ experiences of school”.
5. The recent White Paper (Building a 21st century schools system, 2009) states that schools will be required to collaborate and that where they wish to pool funds and resources to achieve better value they will be able to.

Issues for Consideration

6. Pupil numbers in Shropshire are continuing to fall (38,226 at January 2009) and unless there is significant rise in the numbers of known children within

Shropshire it will be many years before the numbers return to the level in 2000 of over 40,000.

7. The fall in pupil numbers creates a continuing pressure on the amount of funding available to be delegated to the current network of schools through the DSG and the funding available for the delivery of pupil related services e.g. Early Years, Special Education Needs and School Meals.
8. Changes in the models of school leadership as set out above will not in themselves create savings.
9. However, the various models of school leadership set out above when applied in a local context may contribute to the enhancement of educational provision and quality of education.

Federations

10. Members of the Task and Finish Group asked for further information on Federations and that is set out in Appendix C.

Issues for Discussion

11. The IPC suggested that the Council should develop a new vision for Shropshire schools.
12. In Shropshire we have high performing schools, only one primary school currently judged by Ofsted to be unsatisfactory and one primary school with a notice to improve. Our current record is that schools come out of Ofsted categories within a very short space of time e.g. Radbrook was judged unsatisfactory in October 2005 and was judged to be performing well enough not to be in category in November 2006. Another school Greenfields went from unsatisfactory in November 2005 to good in 2006 to outstanding in November 2008. Performance at KS2 is always above national average and that of our statistical neighbours. Our main challenges are recruiting headteachers in our small schools and sustaining and improving the quality of provision.
13. The development of a vision does not in itself provide the solutions to organisational structures or financial pressures but may provide the opportunity to consider more flexible arrangements for school organisation which meet the current context.
14. There are examples in Shropshire where it might be appropriate to explore with the headteachers and governors different models of school leadership. This should be something that is considered at the time of discussions regarding the recruitment of a new headteacher or where there are issues with performance with the local authority providing a brokerage role on behalf of a governing body with other governing bodies, if needed. The arrangements should however be subject to a contract and review mechanism to ensure that the expected outcomes are being delivered and the arrangements continue to meet the needs of the local context.
15. Examples might include:

- a school where the pupil numbers have been falling and has consistently struggled to recruit a headteacher. Here the governors may use the LA to broker provision of an experienced head from another school for one day per week;
- two schools might wish to explore a hard federations to generate some internal efficiencies through the appointment of one headteacher;
- a group of schools may wish to establish a partnership to share curriculum expertise in order to raise standards.

Further examples and options are set out in the attached paper at Appendix A.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Independent Policy Commission on Primary School Organisation in Shropshire report, published July 15 2009

The DCSF website provides further information.
(www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/federations)

Cambridgeshire County Council/National College for School Leadership (NCSL) development and research project – “How can a Local Authority best raise awareness and support exploration of the opportunities for alternative models of leadership and organisation with school leaders and governors” (2008)

NCSL report – “A study of Hard Federations of Small Primary Schools” (January 2007) (www.ncsl.org.uk/publications-index)

Further case studies are available at the Innovation Unit website www.innovation-unit.co.uk/education-experience/project-archive/system-wide/federations-in-practice

Guidance on the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2007

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

No assessment undertaken at this point

Risk Management Appraisal

There are no associated risks

Community / Consultations Appraisal None to date

Cabinet Member:

Cllr Cecilia Motley

Cllr Aggie Caesar-Homden

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix A NCSL Paper : Introduction to Models of Leadership September 2009

Appendix B NCSL research report prepared by the University of Manchester – “Emerging Patterns of School Leadership – current practice and future directions” (2008) (www.ncsl.org.uk/publications-index)

Appendix C – Describing Federations

APPENDIX C

DESCRIBING FEDERATIONS (Ref: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/federations)

Introduction

1. The term “federation” has a wide currency and is often used loosely to describe many different types of collaborative groups, partnerships and clusters, even through to mergers and the creation of new schools. There are currently two statutory forms of federations known as “hard governance”, where one or more schools share a single governing body under section 24 of the Education Act 2002 and “soft governance” where schools choose to have statutory collaborative governance arrangements under section 26 of the Education Act 2002. Increasingly, the term federation is being used exclusively for ‘hard federations’ with collaborations used for others. (See Annex 1).
2. The schools in these federation arrangements remain individual schools. The governing body of the federated schools each receive a delegated budget which is based on the local authority’s funding formula.

The Federation Regulations have modified the school funding provisions to allow the governing body of the federation to spend an individual school's delegated budget on any purposes of that federated school and also any purposes of any other federated school within the federation (Regulation 36). Schools must still account for each delegated budget separately though.

3. Each school is still subject to a separate Ofsted inspection and the performance for each school published separately.
4. Characteristics of “hard governance” federation include:
 - a) a single governing body shared by all schools;
 - b) all schools sharing common goals through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and protocol; having single governing body allows for efficient, streamlined decision making in all areas;
 - c) no common budget, but having a single governing body allows for prompt budgetary decisions on behalf of the group of schools;
 - d) potential for common management and appointments which would be agreed in a simple, effective manner. Typically there may be a single headteacher across group of schools.
5. Characteristics of “soft governance” federation include:
 - a) Each school has its own governing body, but the federation has joint governance / strategic committee with delegated powers;

- b) All schools share common goals through Service Level Agreement (SLA) and protocol; joint committees can make joint decisions in some areas, but not all.
 - c) No common budget, but if the joint strategic committee has budgetary powers delegated to it, they can make prompt budgetary decisions for the group of schools;
 - d) potential for common management positions and appointments, but need to have a protocol / contract to underpin commitment to shared posts.
6. The decision to federate is taken by the governing body not the local authority. The only exception is certain instances where a local authority can intervene, for example where a school is in special measures or a warning notice has been served (and not complied with or appealed). In this case it is possible for a local authority to require a governing body to establish a federation with a strong partner, but this power does not extend to the 'strong' school governing body.

Benefits as described by the DCSF

7. By working together, through federations and other partnerships schools can:
- a) raise their standards, for example, by shared training, encouraging their staff to support each other and developing integrated curriculum and pastoral policies;
 - b) offer pupils a wider range of opportunities, for example, by holding joint activities or sharing facilities or teachers that might be difficult to sustain;
 - c) develop a range of extended services and activities for pupils and the wider community;
 - d) improve their leadership and management, for example, through shared headship or School Business;
 - e) maximise the sharing of resources, taking advantage of economies of scale;
 - f) in particular for small rural schools open up opportunities to share management and governing body responsibilities and curriculum expertise.

Conditions for success as set out by the DCSF

8. The likely conditions for a successful federation are:
- a) A sense of shared identity between schools - for example, through geographical proximity, or a sense of being an inclusive community or church ethos.
 - b) A sense of common purpose - the groups of schools involved in collaboration should have a shared sense of what needs to be done and

how it is to be done, and a joint vision for improving the attainment, achievement and progression of young people.

- c) Leadership - a collaborative partnership needs a strong cohesive leadership, and federations should be interested in developing and sustaining leadership across all levels of the schools.
- d) A strong management infrastructure - federations must demonstrate that they have the capacity to deliver.
- e) A trusting relationship - having trust between schools is fundamental to effective collaboration and should be built into every level of management. Schools need to share a sense of openness and a willingness to operate in a joined-up and united way.
- f) A system of review - federations will need to be monitored and evaluated to show that they are being effective.
- g) Commitment - schools must be prepared to commit both time and resources to ensure that the federation is effective and sustainable. They will also need a commitment to raising standards and achievement in all of the schools in the federation and to continually improving progression for young people.
- h) Communication - excellent communication mechanisms are required when introducing change, particularly where lots of schools are involved.
- i) Sustainability - there must be a clear sustainability strategy in place to enable a collaboration to cope. For example, if the leadership on one of the schools changes; if additional schools wish to join in; if existing schools wish to leave. If committing contracts or expenditure for any length of time, financial sustainability is vital.

Common Concerns around Federation

- 8. Common concerns identified in areas where federations have been established were:
 - a) Funding issues, such as the maintenance of more than one building, the cost of additional administrative staff and occasional transport costs associated with the teams of staff coming together. The financial implications of running two or three schools while, in effect, being funded for one school could be a particular an issue where the heads had not agreed formula funding with the local authority before federating as the local authority cannot provide additional funding to support federation.
 - b) Duplication of resources eg IT servers.
 - c) Travelling between schools could be an issue both for heads having to cover more than one site and for parents collecting siblings from different sites.

- d) Community perceptions about losing the headteacher and perceived loss of identity of a school.
- e) How new leadership roles will work.
- f) How governors and staff will operate their responsibilities and accountabilities for a greater number of children across schools.

Financial Implications

- 9. There is no central DCSF funding available to support the establishment of a federation.
- 10. Local Authorities (LA) are not able to allocate, through their local funding formula, a lesser budget allocation to a federated school than that which would have been allocated to the school if it had not been federated. Each school within a federation has to have its own separate budget, funded equivalently and equitably with all other schools within the LA. As a consequence, the creation of a federation gives no scope for a LA to reduce its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations to schools through the local funding formula. Each school retains its own separate budget allocation, which would include the individual school's lump sums and staffing protection arrangements.
- 11. Financial benefits for schools. The example given in Annex 2 outlines the potential marginal additional expenditure costs resulting from a group of 4 schools federating. This is based on the costs of four schools in Shropshire. Any offsetting savings arising at the school end, in terms of economies of scale, would not reduce the LA's allocation of DSG to the schools. In general, a federation would require:-
 - a) A non teaching headteacher, with an enhanced salary level;
 - b) Overall teaching commitments would remain the same across all schools, including any teaching and equivalent planning, preparation and assessment time of previous headteachers;
 - c) A teacher/assistant head in day to day charge of each school, with appropriate additional responsibility allowances;
 - d) Additional headteacher travel costs;
 - e) Premises related costs would remain the same;
 - f) There may be opportunities to rationalise bursarial, administrative, curriculum and training provision across the federation;
 - g) There may be one-off redundancy/early retirement costs upon setting up a federation.

Other Practical Issues (Drawn from case studies)

- 12. Practical concerns to be taken into account by schools considering federation include:
 - a) it is vital that all members of staff are kept informed of developments throughout the transition. Appropriate time needs to be allocated in order for staff to familiarise themselves with the arrangements,

particularly if they elect to work at alternative sites. Existing staff are not obliged to travel to other school sites within the federation if they do not wish to do so, though new employees would have such a requirement written into their contract;

- b) schools needing to carefully consider all travelling issues, not just staff travelling expenses between sites, but safe and secure transport for pupils which would necessitate additional insurance cover;
- c) where one headteacher leads all of the schools in a federation, he/she should be as accessible as in a non-federated school. However, governors may wish to appoint a 'base manager' or a teacher in charge on each site to deal with issues that arise that require immediate attention. This may however be seen as "second best" by the community;
- d) schools needing to continue to consider fully the available accommodation in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. In essence, schools need to decide the best allocation of resources across the federation;
- e) when federating, it is appropriate for all the schools to reconsider their core principles and objectives and ensure these are shared by all member schools. Some schools decide to 're-brand' with new logos and uniform.


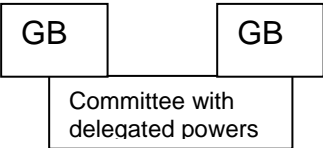
Experiences from existing Federations

13. Federations have been established in several counties, including one in Shropshire of seven secondary schools, one special school and two colleges serving the Shrewsbury/Pontesbury area (the Shrewsbury Partnership for Education and Training, SPET). Others include Sheffield, Somerset, Norfolk, Northumberland, Darlington. The IPC visited the West Exmoor Federation (Lynton, Parracombe and Kentisbury Primary Schools) in Devon, one of Shropshire's statistical neighbours. (Annex 3 provides a Case Study published by NCSL).
14. The notes from this visit are attached at Annex 4, however the main points listed by the IPC regarding federation were:
 - a) Devon County Council is actively promoting the move to federation of schools but is clear that the decision to consider federation and then to decide to federate is a matter for local decision – by the governing bodies of the individual schools following a consultation process with their community and key partners.
 - b) Devon County Council is aiming to establish 25 federations across the county but recognises that federation is not a universal solution for all schools and one size does not fit all.
 - c) A toolkit has been developed for those considering federation and the County Council can provide financial support (£5-£10,000) for the process.

- d) Learning Community pilots have received funding for business managers, to explore new approaches, raise income etc.
- e) The diocese is an active partner in the federation process.
- f) Federation does not save money but does provide opportunities for achieving economies of scale, avoiding duplication and cost effectiveness (eg through shared purchasing).
- g) It can also provide opportunities for sharing resources and pooling expertise, enhancing the quality of learning and teaching across a community, increasing/improving governing body capacity, and improving the attractiveness of head teacher posts (in a difficult recruitment market).
- h) It can also provide greater opportunity for pupils in small schools to mix with a larger group – providing the benefits of both small and large schools.
- i) More fundamental change is a possibility, such as teaching KS1 in one federation school and KS2 in another.
- j) There are bureaucratic problems. Each school is still funded separately and has its own Ofsted inspection. Local authority systems are currently geared to individual schools and do not recognise more collaborative arrangements, new job titles etc.

14. The Government department web site (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/federations) provides further information and a copy of their document setting out the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is provided at Annex 5.

Annex 1 – Federation Continuum

	Hard Governance Federation	Soft Governance Federation
	STATUTORY	
Diagram		
Governing Body?	Single governing body shared by all schools	Each school has its own governing body , but the federation has joint governance/strategic committee <u>with</u> delegated power
Statutory?	Yes. Hard governance federations are established using Federations Regulations made under Section 24 Education Act 2002	Yes. Soft governance federations established using Collaboration Regulations made under Section 26 Education Act 2002
Common goals?	All schools share common goals through Service Level Agreement (SLA) and protocol; having single governing body allows for efficient, streamlined decision making in all areas	All schools share common goals through SLA and protocol; joint committee can make joint decisions in some areas, but not all
Common Budget?	No, but having a single governing body allows for prompt budgetary decisions on behalf of the group of schools	No, but if the joint strategic committee has budgetary powers delegated to it, they can make prompt budgetary decisions for the group of schools
Shared Staff?	Potential for common management and appointments which would be agreed in a simple, effective manner. Sometimes have to have single headteacher across group of schools.	Potential for common management positions and appointments, but need to have protocol/contract to underpin commitment to shared posts.

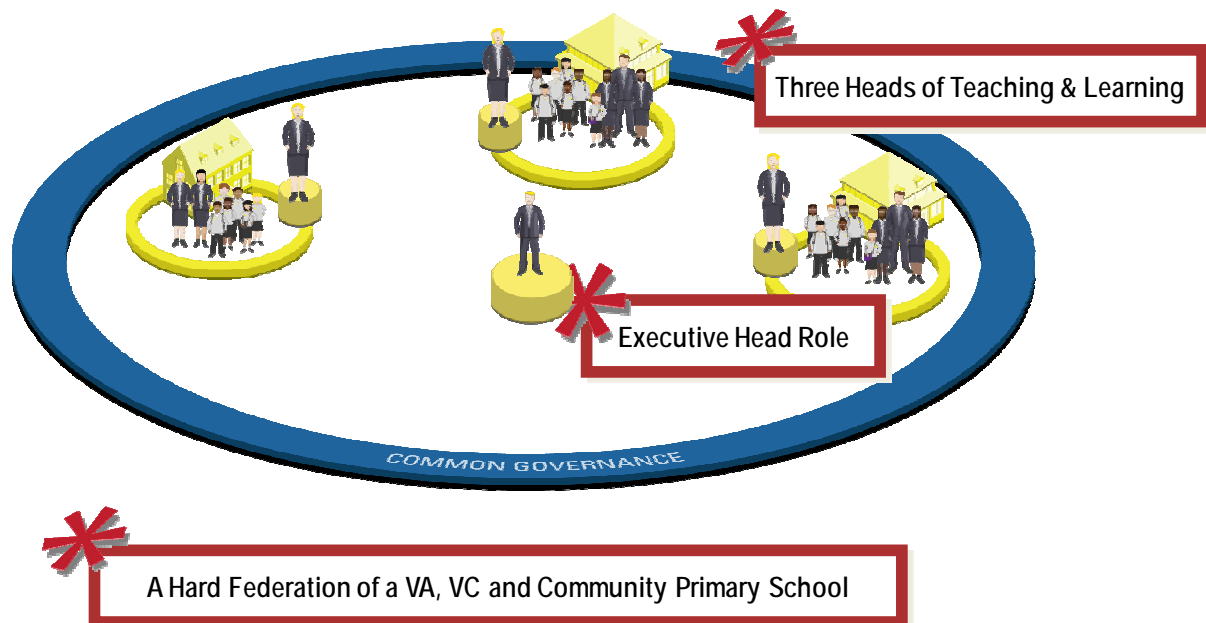
Annex 2 - Example of the financial implications of 4 schools federating

	£	Additional Costs £	Savings £
Budget share allocations			
School 1	Funded Hd+1.1	171,380	
School 2	Funded Hd+1.5	176,000	
School 3	Funded Hd+1.1	151,210	
School 4	Funded Hd+1.5	<u>165,350</u>	
		<u>663,940</u>	
Reduction to headteachers' salary costs			
School 1	53,640		
School 2	56,384		
School 3	<u>52,328</u>		162,352
Additional teaching salary costs to cover previous headteachers' teaching time (assumed at U2)			
School 1	36,927 (0.9 Fte)		
School 2	20,515 (0.5 Fte)		
School 3	36,927 (0.9 Fte)		
School 4	<u>20,515 (0.5 Fte)</u>	114,884	
Additional PPA time			
PPA time (10%)		11,488	
Increase to new headteacher's salary (assuming paid on increased NOR)			
		8,410	
Increase for "Teacher in charge of site" (assumed Leadership Pt 5)			
School 1	6,826		
School 2	6,826		
School 3	6,826		
School 4	<u>6,826</u>	27,304	
Transport between sites (Head teacher/Teachers)			
		5,000	
Totals		<u>167,086</u>	<u>162,352</u>
Additional net cost over 4 schools		<u>4,734</u>	

Annex 3 – Case studies of existing Federations (West Exmoor)



Models of Leadership Case Study



West Exmoor Federation

The West Exmoor Federation is a hard federation of three primary schools, created to ensure the educational viability of small, rural schools in order to fully address the ECM agenda.

1) Summary

The West Exmoor Federation is a hard federation of three primary schools, created to ensure the educational viability of small, rural schools in order to fully address the ECM agenda.

2) What types of Models of Leadership are you working with or developing?

The West Exmoor Federation has a distributive model of leadership. There is an Executive Headteacher, who is supported by three Heads of Teaching and Learning (one of who is also the Deputy Headteacher of the Federation). The Heads of Teaching and Learning take full responsibility for the day-to-day running of their base schools, with the Executive Headteacher focusing upon the strategic leadership of the federation.

3) Why did you choose this model over others? What issues does it address/key driver?

The model evolved from a rigorous review of the staffing structures within the three schools prior to federation. The Governing Body and existing Leadership of the schools were committed to ensuring the educational viability of their schools and felt that a distributed model of leadership would generate greater capacity to further improve the schools and facilitate outstanding learning organisations. It was also felt that such a structure would enable the federation to address the succession planning agenda by developing its own leaders of the future.

Key points:

- History of co-operation
- Pending Headteacher retirements
- Fear of closure - falling role/limited educational viability
- Desire to maintain high quality primary education within each community
- In control of their own destiny
- New models of leadership being promoted by NCSL
- Enthusiasm - "Together we love learning"
- Knew it would be best for the children

4) Advice to others

The evolution of the West Exmoor Federation has been challenging, primarily because they have had no blueprint to follow. The success of the federation has been due to the willingness of all the stakeholders to think innovatively and, at times, to take risks, in order to provide the children of our communities with the very best educational opportunities. The Governing Body and Leadership Team have consistently worked together closely in order to develop a clear vision and strategic direction for the federation. It has not, however, been plain sailing and at times uncomfortable decisions have had to be made. This was particularly so during the period leading up to, and during, consultation. As a result of the different styles of leadership of the Headteachers in post at the time, the three communities experienced varying levels of openness. Resistance to federation was found to be less, the more open the dialogue, even though the information shared with the parents was essentially the same. The challenge now for the federation is to ensure that we continue to be innovative in our approach in order to become an outstanding 'school' of the 21st Century.

5) Who are the key people involved in your model?

<http://www.westexmoorfederation.org.uk/>

Jayne Peacock - Executive Headteacher of the West Exmoor Federation

Clare Cooke - Deputy Headteacher of the West Exmoor Federation/Head of Teaching & Learning at Kentisbury

Vicky Cawley - Head of Teaching & Learning at Lynton

Jody Davie - Head of Teaching & Learning at Parracombe

Wendy Heyward - Finance Administrator of the West Exmoor Federation based at Kentisbury Primary School

All members of the Governing Body

6) Where are all the schools involved?

Lynton CE (VA) Primary School (86 on roll)

Parracombe CE (VC) Primary School (34 on roll)

Kentisbury Primary School (25 on roll)

7) Impact

The impact of the federation has been acknowledged by Ofsted inspections at Lynton and Parracombe and an HMI Survey Visit. The inspection to evaluate the impact of new models of leadership on school improvement in January 2009 said that "The impact of the model of leadership on achievement and standards, on the quality of teaching and learning, on the quality of the curriculum, on the quality of leadership and management throughout the school and on inclusion is good." They also said that "The federation has the potential to be outstanding. It has saved two schools and provided them with a sustainable future." The full report is available on the Ofsted website.

Impact on Leadership Capacity

The Heads of Teaching of Learning have positively impacted upon the capacity of leadership across the schools. They take responsibility for the day-to-day running of their base school, enabling the Executive Headteacher to focus upon more strategic aspects of school leadership. This was not possible prior to federation when there were three headteachers attempting to be strategic whilst managing their school at the same time as teaching up to .7 of the school week. Distribution of subject leadership across the federation has also increased the capacity of subject leaders to have a direct impact upon their subject. Those now leading subjects are doing so because they have specialist knowledge and, for core subjects, leaders work in pairs to further increase their capacity. This is greatly improved to the model prior to federation when as few as three teachers were attempting to lead subject areas.

Impact on Student Outcomes

The federation has enabled all members of staff to focus intently upon outcomes for children in the broadest sense. The driving force behind federation was the strong belief that it was the correct thing for the children and this is certainly being evidenced. Standards of achievement have improved as a result of the rigorous assessment and tracking of pupil progress, together with the monitoring of standards of teaching and learning to ensure that the needs of all learners are being met. Opportunities to engage in extended school activities have also improved, with a wide range of activities being offered to the children across the federation. Prior to federation many activities were prohibitive because of the cost, eg, residential visits and artists in residence, but economies of scale now make them more achievable. The opportunities for children to interact with a wider base of peers has also had a positive impact upon outcomes, especially for those children in Year 6 who no longer feel as daunted about transition to secondary school as they are moving on as part of a larger group.

Key points on impact

:

- Increased extra-curricular & curriculum enrichment opportunities
- Children's friendship groups extended
- Increased opportunities for children to work with children of their own age
- Secondary transfer less daunting for Y6 children
- Distributed leadership, including subject leadership
- Shared pedagogy
- Shared SEN teacher
- Shared minibuses
- Ethos of mutual respect and support
- Community cohesion
- Educational viability of each school is secured
- Succession planning

8) Date completed

March 2009

Case Study Contact details and metadata

Name	Jayne Peacock						
Role	Headteacher						
School	Lynton CE (VA) Primary School						
School address	c/o Lynton CE Primary School, Market Street, Lynton, North Devon, EX35 6AF						
*Collaborative name (where appropriate)	West Exmoor Federation						
Contact phone number	(S) 01598 753309 (M) 07971 011890						
Email address	jaynepeacock@lynton-primary.devon.sch.uk						
Local authority	Devon						
Region Metadata:	East of England	East Midlands	London	North-east			
	North-west	South-east	South-west	West Midlands			
				York & Humber			
Standard Metadata: for web search purposes							
Hard federation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Soft federation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academy	<input type="checkbox"/>	All-through	<input type="checkbox"/>
Executive head	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Job share	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hard with soft fed mix	<input type="checkbox"/>
Co-leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urban	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mixed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 to 19	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Annex 4

Independent Policy Commission Visit to Devon County Council

1. Commissioners visited Devon on 24 and 25 February 2009, visiting the West Exmoor Federation (Lynton, Parracombe and Kentisbury Primary Schools) and meeting with the portfolio holder for Children and Young People's Services, the Chief Executive and senior managers in the Children and Young People's directorate (see appendix for details).

Key Information

Context

2. Devon is one of Shropshire's statistical neighbours, covering a comparably large rural area (albeit with a coastline), with a sparsely spread population of just over 180,000 (2007 figure) and some significant pockets of deprivation. The population has increased by 31% since 1981 and is projected to continue rising to 2021. However, the number of young people has fallen slightly.
3. Devon has 315 primary schools, of which 131 are faith schools, predominantly Church of England. The level of DSG received by Devon County Council is only slightly more per pupil than that received by Shropshire – Devon ranks one place above Shropshire at 142nd out of 149 (2008/09).

Policy and approach

4. Devon County Council is committed to sustaining a network of service provision in rural areas, so that they remain economically and socially viable and are not just dormitories. The quality of life for rural areas is an important consideration. This commitment extends to supporting rural schools and other services such as post offices. High levels of funding for rural schools are seen as a way of offsetting the lower provision of and limited access to other council services in rural areas.
5. There is a presumption against school closure and only 2 schools have closed (or are in the process of closing) over the past 12 years. However, there is recognition that this is not necessarily in the best interests of children's education and performance/capacity issues in some schools need to be addressed.
6. The County Council is also committed to the promotion of school federations and the development of learning communities.
7. The County Council currently subsidises DSG by some £4m (2008/09), which is subsidising increased staff costs arising from job evaluation and special needs schools.

Federations

8. Devon County Council is actively promoting the move to federation of schools but is clear that the decision to consider federation and then to decide to federate is a matter for local decision – by the governing bodies of the individual schools following a consultation process with their community and key partners.
9. The County Council is aiming to establish 25 federations across the county but recognises that federation is not a universal solution for all schools and one size does not fit all.
10. A tool kit has been developed for those considering federation and the County Council can provide financial support (£5-10,000) for the process.
11. Data sets are provided for learning communities to encourage greater understanding of communities, resources, sustainability and viability issues.
12. Learning Community pilots have received funding for business managers, to explore new approaches, raise income etc.
13. There are already a number of federations in existence, including the 3 primary federation of West Exmoor (which includes both a VA and a VC Church of England school) and the all age federation at Dartmouth. The diocese is an active partner in the federation process.
14. Federation does not save money but does provide opportunities for achieving economies of scale, avoiding duplication and cost effectiveness (eg through shared purchasing).
15. It can also provide opportunities for sharing resources and pooling expertise, enhancing the quality of learning and teaching across a community, increasing/improving governing body capacity, and improving the attractiveness of head teacher posts (in a difficult recruitment market).
16. It can also provide greater opportunity for pupils in small schools to mix with a larger group – providing the benefits of both small and large schools.
17. More fundamental change is a possibility, such as teaching KS1 in one federation school and KS2 in another.
18. However, there are bureaucratic problems. Each school is still funded separately and has its own Ofsted inspection. Local authority systems are currently geared to individual schools and do not recognise more collaborative arrangements, new job titles etc.

Finance

19. The funding formula for schools was last revised in 2007, having originally been introduced in 2003.
20. Devon CC is on the top 10% of authorities delegating funding to schools.

21. Schools funding in 2008/09 totalled £324m of which £156.4m went to primary schools.
22. The DSG includes £9m of sparsity funding, which more than covers the funding to small rural schools. So larger schools are not subsidising the smaller schools.
23. The average funding per primary school pupil is £2,500 - £4,500. However, small schools are funded at 53 pupils, no matter how low the actual number of pupils. So a school of only 25 pupils, funded for 53, will actually be receiving nearer £10,000 per pupil.
24. The formula also provides protection for schools with greater pupil numbers. If there are 88 pupils or 61 pupils in a 90 pupil capacity school, the school still receives funding for 90 pupils.
25. The lowest funded schools currently get targeted funding as well if there is sufficient head room and consideration is being given to providing deprivation funding to specific schools – 70% of schools in deprived areas have performance problems.
26. The Devon Education Forum will consider and determine any future changes to the funding formula and other funding arrangements for schools.

Supporting Documents

West Exmoor Federation

- Welcome (powerpoint presentation)
- Staffing structure
- Executive Head's report to Governing Body, Autumn Term 2008
- Diocese of Exeter Instrument of Government: Federated Governing Bodies
- Ofsted report (January 2009)

Small Schools in Devonshire – A Report for the Chief Education Officer, October 1996

Education for the 21st Century – Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Services, Executive Committees, January 2007

The Primary Capital Programme and Individual School Review Process – letter from Director for Schools and Learning, 16 December 2008

Individual School Review Alert – report template

Summary of follow up report on pupils from Chawleigh Primary School who transferred to Chumleigh Primary School as a result of closure in July 2007 – February 2009 (confidential, not for publication)

Funding Formula for the Primary and Secondary Sector – revised following consultation 2007

Primary and Secondary Schools 2008/09 – details by school of pupil numbers, school budget share before protection, needs led protection, minimum funding guarantee, school budget share, average funding per pupil

Primary and Secondary Schools 2008/09 – as above with schools ranked by pupil numbers

Publications

Exploring federation – A Toolkit for Schools (2007)

Federation protocol (2007)

Trust Schools (2007) - leaflet

Management Partnerships (2007) - leaflet

Achievement through Collaboration – conference 2007

Tomorrow's Leaders Today – conference 2008

Strategy for Change – Primary Capital Programme June 2008

A Learning Community (2008) (dataset)

Procedures for inviting proposals for a new school (January 2009)

Appendix: Details of Visit

Attendees: Neil Kinghan, Margaret Clark (25 Feb) and Penny Spencer

Commissioners visited the West Exmoor Federation (Lynton, Kentisbury and Parracombe Primary Schools) on 24 February, meeting with:

Jayne Peacock, Executive Head of the Federation

Clare Cooke, Deputy Head of the Federation (Kentisbury)

Vicky Crawley, Head of Teaching and Learning (Lynton)

Jodie Davie, Head of Teaching and Learning (Parracombe)

And on 25 February meeting with Councillor John Smith, Lead Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services, Phil Norrey, Chief Executive, and the following senior staff:

Judith Johnson, Director for Learning and Schools

Vic Ebdon, Head of Strategic Planning

Sue Clarke, Strategic Lead for Achievement through Collaboration

Chris Dyer, Strategic Commissioner Capital Programme

Christine McNeil, School Organisation Policy Manager

Debbie Clapshaw, Manager – Governor Support/Change Manager – Strategic Planning

Julie Struchberry Ullah, Federation Consultant

John Barnard, Head of Resource Strategies

Annex 5 – FAQs from the DCSF Standards website

FAQs

What is a federation?

A governance structure whereby one or more schools share a single governing body under section 24 of the Education Act 2002.

Alternatively, schools might chose to have statutory collaborative governance arrangements involving a joint committee(s) to the governing bodies of one or more schools under section 26 of the Education Act 2002, sometimes called a 'soft' federation.

Regardless of the model, all schools retain their separate identity and continue to receive individual budget shares.

Why should schools federate?

Working together through formal shared governance structures enables schools to raise standards and maintain local provision by sharing resources, staff, expertise, and facilities.

The variety of models offered by federation make it adaptable to suit individual contexts, and local needs and objectives.

A shared governing body provides an effective and accountable mechanism for schools to pool resources and staff, release strategic capacity in the senior management team, and gain economies of scale and efficiencies.

Sharing specialist staff and pooling curriculum expertise and materials can enable schools to deliver an enriched pupil offer.

What are the benefits of federation?

Through federation and other partnership arrangements schools can:

- extend the breadth and quality of provision; respond better to pupils' wider needs;
- widen the impact of our strongest school leaders, teachers and governors;
- widen opportunities for collaborative professional development; and
- deliver greater value for money.

The ability of federate under a single governing body could also be of particular benefit to small schools or schools in more isolated rural areas, opening up opportunities to share management and governing body responsibility and curriculum expertise.

Is there evidence that partnerships improve standards?

There are numerous examples of schools thriving under formal partnerships and research has highlighted a range of benefits for schools and staff. These include an enhanced curriculum, more opportunities for pupils and greater personalisation which can lead to school improvement, new training opportunities for staff and economic advantages.

Will schools in a federation be inspected jointly or separately?

Currently, schools are subject to separate inspection reports, and will complete separate Self Evaluation Forms. However, the White Paper published on 30 June has committed Ofsted to exploring the development of co-ordinated joint inspections for federations, joint sixth forms, and where there is an executive head over two schools and how the self-evaluation form can be developed to reflect federation.

What kind of schools or colleges can federate?

Under The School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2007, only maintained schools are able to federate under a single governing body. However, the Collaboration Regulations issued in May 2007 permit maintained schools to establish a 'joint strategic committee' with FE institutions.

Can HE institutions be part of, or work with federations?

They cannot be part of a federation, though they can work with schools in other forms of partnership. They could also become involved with a Trust School and support schools in that way. Further information can be found at <http://www.trustandfoundationschools.org.uk/>

Could there be a federation between two faith schools of different faiths?

In principle, yes, the regulations allow for different categories of schools to federate, there are also examples of faith schools federating with community schools.

Can schools be trust schools and in a federation?

Schools wishing to work together can do so through a shared trust, a federation or both. A trust could support all schools in a federation, or a trust could support collaboration between groups of schools without the need for a federation - this might be necessary if the schools were too far apart for a single governing.

Why might small schools federate?

Federation can help rural small primary schools to remain sustainable on separate sites. The shared governing body provides an effective and accountable mechanism for schools to pool resources and staff, release strategic capacity in the senior management team, and gain economies of scale and efficiencies that enable them to remain viable.

Sharing specialist staff and pooling curriculum expertise and materials can enable small schools to deliver an enriched primary curriculum - e.g. sharing specialist language teacher.

Do federations receive just one delegated budget?

All the schools in the federation remain individual schools. Therefore the governing body of the federation receives the delegated budget for each of the individual schools.

The Federation Regulations modify the school funding provisions of the SSFA and allow the governing body of the federation to spend an individual school's delegated budget on any purposes of that federated school and also any purposes of any other federated school within the federation (regulation 36). Schools must still account for each delegated budget separately though.

The White Paper published on 30 June made a commitment to allow additional funding flexibilities for schools working in federations - to pool budgets and resources.

Is there any DCSF funding available to support the establishment of a federation?

There is no central funding available. Where local authorities wish a successful school to assist an under-performing school through federation, the LA may offer some support, but this is for local discussion.

Can the Local Authority insist that schools federate?

The decision to federate is taken by the governing body not the local authority. See the following link for the relevant regulations:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/uksi_20070960_en_2 except in some instances where a local authority can intervene.

For example - where a school is in special measures or a warning notice has been served (and not complied with or appealed); it is possible for a local authority to use its powers of intervention under s63 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to require a governing body to establish a federation with a strong partner. But this power does not extend to the strong school governing body.

Do Governing Bodies need to notify the Department of their intention to federate?

The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009 requires Governing Bodies to notify the SoS (via our own federations mailbox (federations.mailbox@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk) of the publication of their proposals to federate and the outcome of their decision.

Who employs staff within a federation?

The position regarding staffing is that each school within the federation is still a separate school. This means that the question of who employs staff depends on the category of the particular school.

If the federation is a mix of different categories of schools then the employer of staff may be different for the different schools within the federation. For instance if the federation is made up of one community or VC school and one foundation or VA

school then the employer of staff in the federated community school will be the LA.

The employer of staff at the federated foundation or VA school will be the governing body of the federation (and staff will transfer from the employment of the governing body of the foundation/ VA school to the employment of the governing body of the federation on the federation date - see regulation 12.

What is an executive head? What are the models of leadership we can use?

Executive heads provide strategic leadership across two or more schools whilst also being the substantive head of each of the schools in the partnership, supported by a Head of School/Deputy Head/Assistant Head in each individual school in the partnership.

Alternatively there might be a mixed model where the executive head is the substantive head teacher of one or more of the schools and one or more other schools in the partnership might also have their own substantive head teacher.

How should executive heads be remunerated?

The DCSF, on the recommendation of the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), is updating the Teachers' Pay and Condition document to reflect interim pay arrangements for heads who take responsibility for more than one school.