



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 3RD SEPTEMBER 2024

**SUBJECT: FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS – CWMABER INFANTS
SCHOOL AND CWMABER JUNIOR SCHOOL**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consult with Members in respect of the proposed federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School, with effect from the start of term January 2025.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report identifies the Schools and Governing Bodies who wished to proceed to formal consultation in partnership with the Local Authority.
- 2.2 Approval to proceed to consultation stage was received from Cabinet on the 5th June 2024.
- 2.3 The consultation process is proceeding in line with the requirements of Welsh Government's Federation of Maintained School in Wales Regulations 2014.
- 2.4 The purpose of the report is to consult with Scrutiny Members on the proposed Federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School in their formal capacity as statutory consultees.
- 2.5 The consultation period for the proposal commenced on the 2nd September 2024 and ends midnight on the 1st October 2024.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to:

- a) Note the information contained in the report and the attached consultation pack.
- b) To obtain Members views as part of the consultation process for the proposal which will be noted as part of the minutes of this meeting and included in the Consultation Summary Report which will be presented to Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Members are consulted with regards to the outlined proposal.
- 4.2 To assist the Council in discharging its duty in consulting stakeholders in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government's Federation of Maintained School in Wales Regulations 2014.
- 4.3 To work in partnership and support the schools identified in 1.1 in undertaking a consultation exercise on federation which if approved will formalise the successful collaboration that has been in place for a number of years.

5. THE REPORT

Background

- 5.1 The term "Federation" describes a formal and legal agreement by which a number of schools share Governance arrangements.
- 5.2 The Welsh Government's Federation policy objective is to promote collaboration between all parts of the education system to improve outcomes. School federation is a more formal way of extending collaboration and promoting closer working relationships and is the principal initiative for achieving formal partnership working amongst schools to improve performance and narrow the attainment gap for deprived pupils.
- 5.3 Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School have been informally "collaborating" since September 2020 and share the same Head Teacher.
- 5.4 Each Governing Body have requested the Local Authority consider the proposal and agree to proceed in partnership with the individual schools to formal consultation.
- 5.5 As part of the requirements of the Welsh Government's Federation of Maintained School in Wales Regulations 2014 a consultation must be undertaken with Members and wider Stakeholders as outlined in the attached documentation.
- 5.6 Approval to proceed to consultation stage was received from Cabinet on the 5th June 2024.

- 5.7 The consultation period for the proposal commenced on the 2nd September 2024 and will close midnight on the 1st October 2024.
- 5.8 Following consultation, all the comments received during the consultation period will be compiled into a Consultation Summary Report.
- 5.9 The Consultation Summary Report will be taken to Cabinet who will then decide as to whether to proceed, make changes or not to proceed with the proposal.
- 5.10 Should Cabinet decide to proceed, the Federation of both schools will then be implemented with effect from January 2025.
- 5.11 **Conclusion**
- 5.11.1 Members are asked to note the information contained in this report and the supporting consultation pack documentation with a view to providing views on the proposal in their capacity as a 'consultee'
- 5.11.2 Members views will be included in the Consultation Summary Report which will be taken to Cabinet who will then decide on how the proposal will progress as outlined in 5.9 and 5.10.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report. The process outlined by Welsh Government is being adhered to ensure transparency, balanced and open decision making.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 As the proposal seeks to Federate the two school governing bodies only, and they have been in an established collaboration since September 2020, there is no requirement under the statutory process to undertake a wider Integrated Impact Assessment in this instance.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Federation process does not bring any savings to the Local Authority but may ease financial pressures within schools by sharing resources which can be deployed across the federation.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Due to collaboration arrangements already being in place, in both schools, for a number of years there are no personnel implications anticipated directly resulting from this proposal.
- 9.2 Governing Bodies have the responsibility for the management of staffing within schools.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013
Federation of Maintained School in Wales Regulations 2014

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Consultees:

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Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
Councillor Donna Cushing, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy / Place Shaping Programme Director
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
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Appendices:

Link to Consultation Document– [Cwmaber Infants School / Cwmaber Junior School](#)