



Consultation on the Proposal to form a Federation between Castle Lower School and Newnham Middle School

This consultation document is an **invitation** from the governing bodies of Castle Lower School and Newnham Middle School to all stakeholders (e.g. pupils, parents of current and future pupils at the schools, teachers, members of the community) to respond to the proposal in order to help them come to a decision on the way forward. The consultation period is from 8th June 2015 to 17th July 2015 and we welcome your feedback during this period.

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Newnham Castle Hazeldene Federation

How it will work

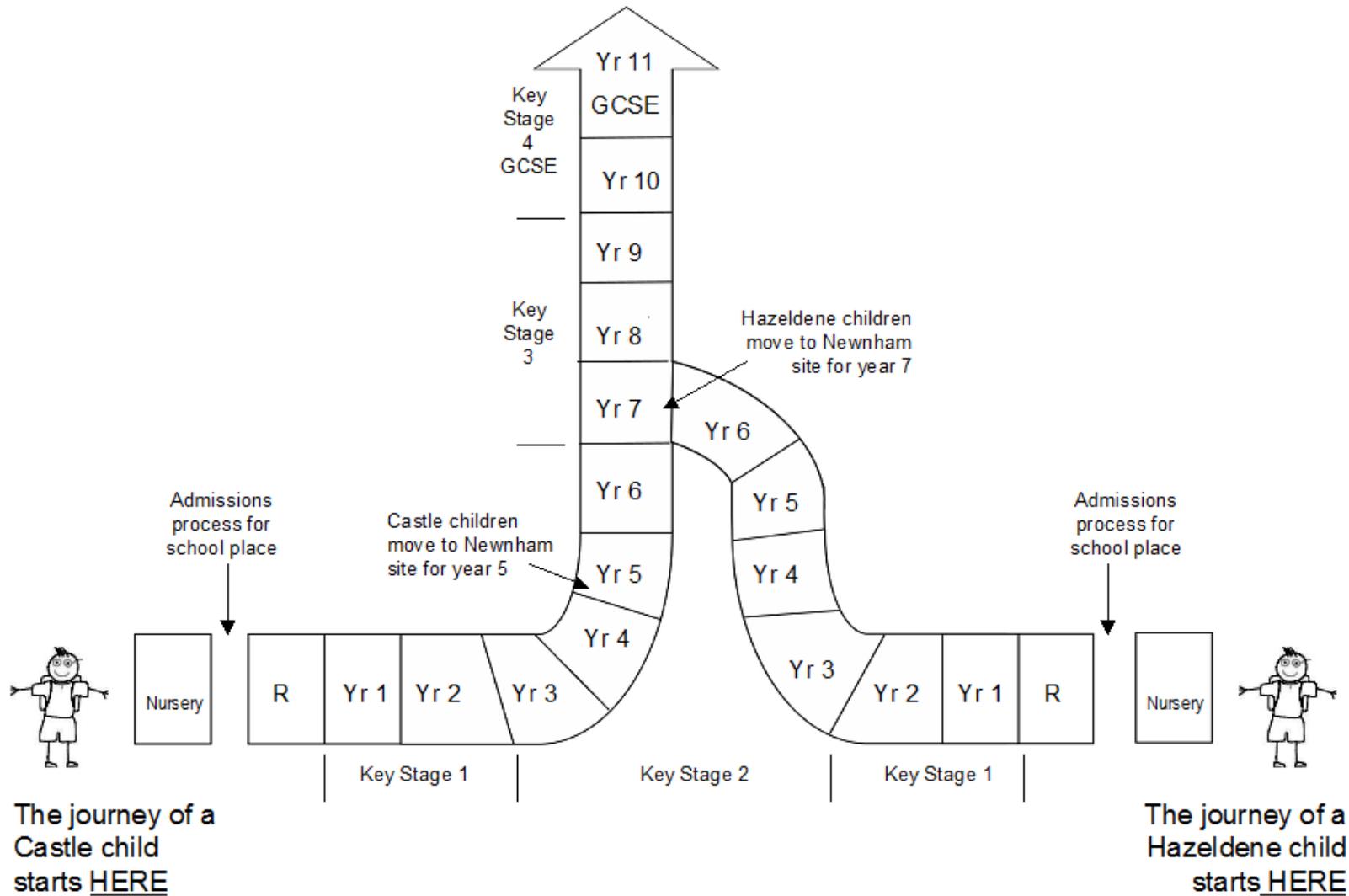
	Nursery	Primary Education						Secondary Education				Post 16	
Castle & Newnham		Castle site until the end of year 4				Newnham site from year 5 until completion of GCSEs in year 11				Students can carefully choose from a wide range of 6 th forms & other post 16 options available locally			
Hazeldene & Newnham		Hazeldene site until the end of year 6						Newnham site from year 7 until completion of GCSEs in year 11					
Years	N	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Key Stages	N	R	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2			Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4		

Parental Choice

Remember you have parental choice. At any stage of your child's education you can choose to change their journey and move to another school.

Other students may request to join the federation at any time by applying for an In-Year Admission. If there are places we will make them available.

Students can carefully choose from a wide range of 6th forms & other post 16 options available locally



Introduction:

The governing bodies of Castle Lower School and Newnham Middle School have been working together to enhance the educational provision in order to provide a sustainable and stable educational route for children in our local community. The context for this is Bedford Borough Council's ["Strengthening partnerships..."](#) document, available on the borough website.

The governing bodies of both schools have formed the view that a federation represents a strong and exciting opportunity to further develop and deliver outstanding education for our children. The federation of Castle and Newnham (the subject of this consultation) will be the first part of a plan to develop and extend provision so that the federation can provide for children from reception through to GCSEs (ages 4 to 16).

In addition, the plan involves widening the federation to include Hazeldene Lower School with whom we will form a "soft" federation. That part of the plan is not the focus of this formal consultation but further details about it can be found in our FAQs on the schools' websites.

Our Vision:

Our vision is for an outstanding, local, all-through school that:

1. Builds on the strengths, shared ethos and values of the three schools.
2. Delivers consistent and coordinated teaching and learning approaches and practices from ages 4 to 16.
3. Operates on a stable and sustainable base. The local school system in recent years - through the continuation of both two-tier (primary, secondary) and three-tier (lower, middle, upper) schools, and the proliferation of new school types (academies, free schools) - has created a lot of uncertainty and instability. Federating enables the federated schools to take greater control over the educational environment and provide a truly stable school offer to children in the local community.
4. Provides continuity of education from reception through to Year 11, for all pupils by minimising the transitions between schools that characterise the current three and two tier system, and that can be unhelpful to pupil progress.
5. Provides staff with greater opportunity to share best practice in the development of top-quality teaching.
6. Offers opportunities for resource sharing to enrich all years of the school, for example sports facilities and equipment, music, teaching expertise and materials.

This document sets out our proposal and how we think this federation would work. It explains what a federation is, what the federation would mean for pupils, parents, staff and the local community, and it sets out the ways that you can engage with us during this consultation process.

At the end of the consultation period, the governing bodies of Castle and Newnham will make a final decision on whether to federate, taking into account everyone's views and comments.

What is a federation?

A federation is formed when two or more schools agree to work together on a formal basis through a single governing body to run the school. Federations are not a new idea, and there are many federations across the country. There is clear evidence of benefits from federations, including increasing standards and outcomes across federated schools and better use of resources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/leadership-of-more-than-one-school>

The Castle/Newnham federation will be one school on two sites building on the strengths that both exhibit and delivering the best possible outcomes for all our pupils.

This would mean:

- A single, shared vision and ethos;
- The school operating across the existing sites but under the leadership of one headteacher;
- A single governing body responsible for governance and staffing in both schools; and
- Shared leadership across the two sites.

What would federation mean for children?

- A consistent approach to teaching and learning for all pupils as the children move between the two schools;
- Increased capacity to meet the needs of children through sharing of knowledge and resources;
- A consistent approach to expectations of behaviour, both in and out of the classroom;
- Improved transition between school phases;
- More opportunities to share and manage expertise and facilities effectively thereby enriching the children's learning experience;
- The opportunity for combined community activities, for example, fetes, sports days, Christmas activities etc;
- Enhanced friendships and less splitting of friendship groups; and
- A broader range of extra-curricular activities and clubs.

What would federation mean for the parents?

- Reassurance that your child can benefit from the advantages of a continuous educational experience from ages 4 to 16 that is unique in the local system but which has been successfully adopted elsewhere;
- A common approach to teaching and learning across the federation;
- The development of long-lasting relationships with teachers and school leaders; and
- Knowing that you can still choose to apply for a school place elsewhere if you decide that is best for your child.

What would federation mean for staff?

- Increased opportunities for continuing professional development and career advancement;
- A common approach to teaching and learning and a single system of target setting, assessing, monitoring and moderating, and tracking pupil progress;
- Enhanced opportunities for identifying and applying best practice across the federation; and
- Staff would continue to be employed on the same conditions of service.

What would federation mean for our local community?

- One school, under one leadership, will draw wider and improved community links, which would be strengthened by joint community partnerships and events; and
- Opportunities for the local community to become more involved in the work of the federation would be enhanced, both during and after school.

What would change for the governing bodies of each school?

From the proposed federation date of 1st January 2016, the existing governing bodies of Castle Lower School and Newnham Middle School would cease to exist.

A new federated governing body of 12 governors would be created consisting of:

- 2 parent governors (one each elected from Castle and Newnham parents, (maximum number allowed per regulations));
- 1 staff governor (maximum number allowed per regulations);
- 5 co-opted governors (of which 4 are parents, 2 each elected from Castle and Newnham parents, and 1 is staff from the other school to the staff governor appointment);
- 1 headteacher;
- 1 local authority governor; and
- 2 partnership governors (required by regulations due to the specific status of Castle and Newnham schools)

The members of the governing body will be appointed with due regard to their skills (per current regulations), and the needs identified by skills' audits undertaken. All eligible members of the school and local community will be invited to apply.

What would change for the leadership of the schools?

The senior leadership structure across the whole federation is designed to ensure strong strategic leadership with secure day-to-day leadership on each site and between the sites.

The headteacher would have overall strategic leadership, the heads of school would focus on day-to-day leadership and management of the respective sites.

Each assistant headteacher (AHT) would have clear areas of whole-school strategic leadership as well as responsibility for the learning and progress of pupils in their phase.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) and School Business Manager would lead in their areas across the whole federation, each supported by an assistant.

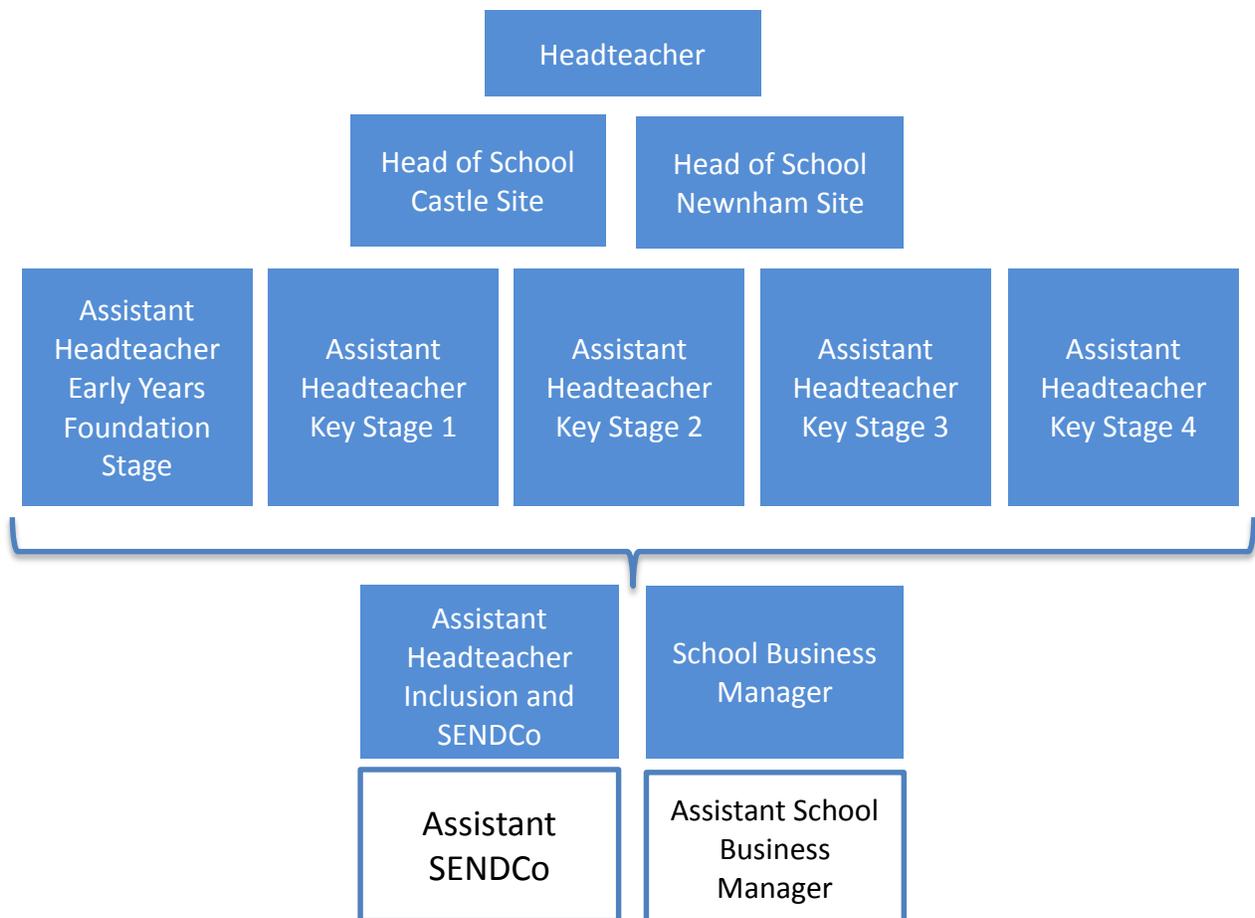


Figure 1: Senior leadership team structure

What will the admission arrangements be?

The federation governing body will be the admission authority and will determine the school's admission policy and arrangements. It will be responsible for taking decisions on applications for admission.

What opportunities are there to discuss the proposal and ask questions?

How to comment on the proposal

We are interested in receiving views on this proposal, which can be done either in person or in writing by Friday 17th July 2015.

Consultation events:

29th June – 3rd July: Drop in sessions at Castle and Hazeldene at drop-off and pick-up times.
Monday 6th July: Consultation evening at Newnham Middle School,
17:30 – 18:30 Tours of Newnham Middle School by appointment
19:00 Consultation meeting, with Q&A session

Or:

Arrange an appointment with headteachers or governors.

If you are unable to attend a consultation event please contact the school offices who will be able to arrange a time for you to meet with a headteacher or governor if you should have any questions.

Written replies:

Please send written responses (letters, emails or comment form at the end of this document) to one of the school offices, details below. Please note there is one email address for responses to all the schools for ease of collation.

When sending your comments please let us know your name, address and whether or not you are the parent of a pupil at Newnham, Castle or Hazeldene.

Castle Lower School
Goldington Road
Bedford
MK40 3EP
Phone no: 01234 300800
Email: newnhamcastle@gmail.com

Hazeldene Lower School
Stancliffe Road
Bedford
MK41 9AT
Phone no: 01234 300100
Email: newnhamcastle@gmail.com

Newnham Middle School
Polhill Avenue
Bedford
MK41 9DT
Phone no: 01234 303403
Email: newnhamcastle@gmail.com

Consultation Timings in summary:

1 st June – 17 th July:	Consultation period
29 th June – 3 rd July:	Drop in sessions at the schools at drop off and pick up
Monday 6 th July:	Consultation evening at Newnham Middle School
17 th July – 7 th September:	Analysis and recommendation from consultation

What happens after the consultation?

Following the closure of the consultation on Friday 17th July the joint Castle/Newnham working committee will evaluate the responses and make a recommendation to the two existing governing bodies in the Autumn term.

Comment form:

Consultation on the proposal to form a federation between Castle Lower School and Newnham Middle School

Name	
Address	
Email Address	
Contact number	
Do you have children at Castle Lower School?	
Do you have children at Newnham Middle School?	
Do you have children at Hazeldene Lower School?	
Comments:	

Please return to the office at one of the schools.