



Thomas Aveling

Trust and
Hard Federation
Consultation
Proposal

Dear Stakeholders

The Thomas Aveling School, along with Warren Wood Primary School have been considering becoming two schools that join together within a shared Trust – this booklet is to explain our ideas and proposals and to ask for your views.

The Thomas Aveling School, would also like to become a member of a Hard Federation with Warren Wood Primary School within this proposed Trust.

Trust schools are a new kind of school – part of the Local Authority System, but supported by a charitable Trust which will appoint some of the governors (trust members are listed in the appendix at the back of this document). A school can become an individual trust school but our intention is to become two schools that work together within a single Trust.

Both schools must each agree individually to become part of the Trust. It is up to the governing body of each school to decide, following consultation with parents, staff and others who would be affected by these proposals, whether or not to become part of a shared Trust.

There are also different ways of organising how the schools could work together. It is important that we know your views and opinions on this so that our final proposals take this into account.

What difference will becoming a Trust make?

- As a Federation of two schools we would be almost totally responsible for our schools and would therefore have much more localised control and influence over our children's education.
- Our potential partners in the Trust have experience of the different sectors of education and also the world of work. This understanding of education and experience will help us to provide a more relevant education for our children, before, during and after school.
- Major decisions could be made by those locally involved, including more opportunities to influence the building and upgrading of schools and other important resources.
- We could also raise achievement by working together to enrich the education of our children by better use of people and resources with a shared accountability for standards.

Who are the proposed Trust Partners?

The organisations who are interested in (or in discussion with us about) being Trust partners are:

- **University of Kent**
- **Barnardo's**
- **NHS Medway**

Should these organisations become Trust members, they would in turn appoint Trustees. A brief description of each of them is given in the appendix.

How will our staff benefit from a Trust?

Our staff are our greatest asset. By becoming a Trust:

- We will be able to provide greater opportunities for increased breadth and depth of experience with improved promotion prospects, continual professional development and a wider sharing of knowledge and expertise.
- Staff will also have the opportunity to become involved in a more innovative and exciting curriculum in a stimulating environment that encourages research and development.

What will students and parents gain from these changes?

We exist to provide the best possible educational opportunities for our children. In a Trust, education would become a single, seamless journey concentrating on the needs of the individual child. By working together we can do more to provide an even better education by:

- Offering children and parents more opportunities.
- Improving motivation and confidence.
- Creating greater challenge and support.
- Effective use of funding allowing more money to be spent on the education of your child with more focused support for families.

Our schools are seen as an integral part of our local community. The Trust would encourage:

- Better opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Increased use of school buildings with better community based facilities.
- Students who are good citizens with better preparation for employment/ongoing education and an awareness of their roles and responsibilities within and beyond their local environment.
- Closer understanding of people's needs, extending support for families.

What different forms of partnership have been considered?

There are a number of different structures we could follow. These are described in appendix 2. These vary from a loose collaboration that is very similar to the way in which we currently operate through to an amalgamation of separate schools into a single school. Each can have advantages or disadvantages dependent on your point of view.

The Thomas Aveling School and Warren Wood Primary School have decided to consult on becoming part of a Hard Federation within the Trust.

Our school is consulting with you on becoming part of a **Hard Federation**.

How will we be affected in the short term?

- Whatever model is chosen the day to day education of the children will be similar to what they are experiencing now but there will be better working between schools.
- Trust partners will be involved.
- Trustees will be appointed.
- Staff will remain in the same establishments.
- Some economies of scale will start to release funding.

Areas that may vary according to type of federation include:

- A New Governing Body will be appointed (Hard Federation).
- Staff continue be employed by the Governing Body and pay and conditions will not change.

What will happen over the long term?

The increased benefits will gradually be achieved, including:

- A more innovative and exciting curriculum.
- Improved achievement and higher standards.
- A smooth, seamless progression through education especially for those students who start at Warren Wood Primary School.
- More effective use of educational funding.

- A reduction in the number of surplus places at Warren Wood Primary School.
- Building of educational facilities appropriate for the learning needs of the children.
- Staff gaining from the benefits of partnership working and learning.
- A culture of innovation and research.
- We will benefit from the involvement and expertise of our Trust Partners.

What happens if only one school wants to form a trust?

It is possible to encompass a variety of models of federation within a single Trust. It is up to the individual Governing Bodies to make their own decision. It is possible though that greater benefits can be achieved by both schools following the same model.

If Warren Wood Primary School decides not to join the Trust we would obviously continue to work closely with them as we do with other schools in the area. This would not prevent The Thomas Aveling School acquiring Trust status.

What does Hard Federation mean?

Hard federation would mean that The Thomas Aveling School and Warren Wood Primary School have a formal (written) agreement to work together to raise standards, promote inclusion, find new ways of approaching teaching and learning and build capacity between the schools in a coherent manner.

There would be one single governing body allowing for streamlined decision making in all areas. The two schools would continue to be allocated separate budgets and each to have its own Ofsted inspection.

Consultation process

Please let us know what you think about the proposal. There are a number of ways in which you can do this. You can:

- 1 Send back our consultation questionnaire in writing to the school office in an envelope marked Trust and Federation consultation.
- 2 Email the school with your views at: office@thomasaveling.co.uk
- 3 Use the eforum at www.thomasaveling.co.uk/trust
- 4 Send in your written comments to the school, marked **'Trust Consultation'**.
- 5 If you are a student, parent, member of staff, or other stakeholder you are invited to a meeting on Monday 9th February 2009 to discuss the proposals with the Headteacher, governors and representatives of our school's partners.

There will be two consultation meetings, one for parents, pupils and other stakeholders and one for staff only:

For parents, students and other stakeholders you are invited to a meeting on the date shown below to discuss the proposals with the Headteacher, governors and representatives of our school's partners.

Parents', Students' and other Stakeholders' Meeting: Monday 9th February, 6pm in the School Hall.

This meeting is for parents, students and any other stakeholders only, and all parents will be sent an invitation.

Staff Meeting:

Monday 9th February, 4pm at Warren Wood Primary School.

This meeting is for staff only, and all staff will be sent an invitation.

You can comment at any time until **12 noon on 16th March 2009**. The governors will review all the comments and will decide whether to go ahead, (and whether to amend the proposals to reflect your suggestions and concerns). There will be another chance to comment on the formal proposals before a final decision is taken.

If you have any queries about anything you have read here and would like further clarification, please contact either school or one of the Governors.

Thank you for your help.

Ms L Last

Chair of Governors, Thomas Aveling School

Appendix 1

Proposed Partners

University of Kent

University of Kent is a well renowned University which has recently been voted by students as one of the top ten Universities to attend in the UK. It has campuses in Canterbury and Medway and a large number of our students choose to take their degree courses there. The Thomas Aveling School already has some strong links with the University and a number of students have already experienced working alongside university under and post graduate students as well as lecturers being in school to provide some enrichment into some of our curriculum areas.

Barnardo's

Barnardo's is a well known and well established charity which believes in children regardless of their circumstances, gender, race, disability or behaviour. Barnardo's vision is to support vulnerable children and to bring out the best in each and every child academically as well as socially.

NHS Medway (previously Medway Primary Care Trust)

NHS Medway, which can also be referred to as Medway Primary Care Trust (PCT), was established on 1 April 2002. It provides a range of NHS healthcare services to a population of approximately 270,000, covering the towns of Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham.

Their aim is to ensure that the people they serve get the right care, in the right place, and at the right time first time. They also aim to help local people make healthy lifestyle choices that will improve their health and well-being.

NHS Medway's vision is to create the following:

- Medway – a great place to live, work and thrive;
- People in control of their own health and well-being;
- Very best quality healthcare when needed;
- Joined-up, patient-centred services;
- More choice and a much stronger voice for patients;
- Innovative, evidence-based commissioning.

Appendix 2

Detailed tables of possible Federation models

Informal Loose Collaboration

This is where an informal committee of Trust members met on a regular basis and looked at the partnership as a whole. It would feed ideas into schools through the Governing Body. The school would keep its own budget and any staffing arrangements (such as cross phase teaching) would need to be agreed through contracts.

Coordination	Informal Committee.
Governance	Governing body for each school.
Statutory	No.
Common Goals	Can share goals and informal agreements.
Budget	Not shared.
Staff	Any arrangements have to be agreed by contract.

Soft Federation

A Committee of Trust members recommend issues to the Governing Body, and have a representative on each school's governing Body. There would be a common 'protocol' through the partnership of schools such as common school policies, common admission procedures, common behaviour programmes etc. Although budgets would be individual to the schools, the Committee would make recommendations to each Governing Body concerning spending. As with (1), all staffing arrangements would be contracted.

Coordination	Strategic Management Committee (SMC) without delegated powers.
Governance	Governing body for each school but SMC.
Statutory	No.
Common Goals	Common 'protocol'. Joint recommendations.
Budget	Not shared. Joint recommendations.
Staff	Any arrangements have to be agreed by contract.

Soft Governance Federation

A Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) would have delegated powers over all schools, but schools would still keep their separate Governing Bodies (including a Trust member). The Committee would make joint decisions in some areas e.g. buying in of outside providers. Again, schools would be in charge of their own budgets, but the Committee would have some budgetary powers delegated to it.

Coordination	Committee with delegated powers.
Governance	Governing body for each school but Joint Strategic Committee (JSC) with delegated powers.
Statutory	Yes. 2002 Education Act.
Common Goals	Common goals through protocol. JSC can make joint decisions in some areas.
Budget	Not common but JSC has budgetary powers delegated to it.
Staff	Common management positions and appointments but contract for shared posts.
Leadership	Range of arrangements.

Recommended Model

Hard Governance Federation

This would have one single Governing Body for all schools, which makes decisions for both schools. It would still be possible to retain some influence and control within each individual school through a committee or group of representatives. Each school would have at least one member on the Governing Body. Schools again would have their own budgets, but the Committee can make prompt monetary decisions on behalf of all schools. The single Governing Body reserves the right to consult on a restructure of staff across the two schools.

Coordination and Governance	Single Governing Body.
Statutory	Yes. 2002 Education Act.
Common Goals	Common goals through protocol. JSC can make joint decisions in some areas. Governing body makes decisions for all schools.
Budget	Not common but JSC but governing body can make prompt budgetary decisions for the group of schools.
Staff	Common management and appointments.
Leadership	Range of arrangements.

Amalgamation

This would be an amalgamation of all the schools into one named school, Governing Body, one budget, a single agreed management structure etc. All staff would be contracted to that one school.

Coordination and Governance	Single Governing Body.
Statutory	Yes.
Common Goals	Governing body makes decisions for the single school.
Budget	Single Budget for the whole school.
Staff	Common management and appointments.
Leadership	Range of arrangements.

Hard Federation Proposals

The Governors of the following schools have resolved to consult on forming a Hard Federation:

The Thomas Aveling School

Arethusa Road
Rochester
Kent
ME1 2UW

Warren Wood Community Primary School

Arethusa Road
Rochester
Kent
ME1 2UR

- Staffing arrangements in the schools will remain as at present, with teachers and support staff pay and conditions protected.
- The proposed date of Federation will be 1st September 2009.
- The admission authority for the schools will be the newly formed Trust.
- Representation may be made to the current governing body of each school by 16 March 2009.

People and organisations being consulted about the Trust

The parents and staff and students of the schools involved:

The Thomas Aveling School
Warren Wood Community Primary School

Local representatives of Trade Unions representing staff at each school

Headteachers of other local schools in the South Rochester area

The Leader of Medway Council and local Councillors

The Member of Parliament

Kloisters Kindergarten

Learning and Skills Council

Connexions

Youth Service

Please contact your school if you think anyone else should be involved in the consultation.

All stakeholders are asked to note that the consultation period for the Trust and Hard Federation proposals is from 2nd February to 16th March 2009.

The enclosed questionnaire and all responses should be made in writing and returned to the Thomas Aveling school office by 12.00 midday on 16th March, 2009.

A Learning Partnership

The Thomas Aveling School

Arethusa Road, Rochester

Kent, ME1 2UW

Tel: 01634 844809/813121

Fax: 01634 818385

E-mail: info@thomasaveling.co.uk

www.thomasaveling.co.uk

Warren Wood Community Primary School

Arethusa Road, Rochester

Kent, ME1 2UR

Tel: 01634 337227

Fax: 01634 832335

E-mail: office@warrenwood.medway.sch.uk

www.warrenwood.medway.sch.uk