



**George Eliot**  
Primary School

**Robinsfield Infant School**

**Federation Consultation  
March 2018**

**Robinsfield Infant School  
and  
George Eliot Primary School**

## Introduction and background

The Governing Bodies of Robinsfield Infant School and George Eliot Primary School, which are currently separate stand-alone, state-maintained schools, are proposing to join together in a federation. This leaflet explains what this will mean for parent/carers, pupils, staff and interested parties and provides an opportunity for everyone to comment.

Robinsfield is a two-form entry infant school with a separate nursery class. In total there are 200 children between 3 and 7 years old at the school. The school is located in St John's Wood. Robinsfield has recently been inspected by OFSTED and was categorised as "Good" overall with a categorisation of "Outstanding" in pupil's personal development, behaviour and welfare.

George Eliot is a two-form entry primary school with a nursery. In total there are 427 children on roll between 3 and 11 years old. The school is located in St John's Wood. The school was categorised as "Outstanding" by OFSTED in 2012, but this preceded a period of instability within the senior leadership team. Recent changes have ensured that George Eliot Primary is improving rapidly in all aspects, which is in turn impacting upon pupil progress.

Both schools have large and inclusive communities who are passionate about ensuring the best for the children who attend. Both schools have been awarded the "Gold" Healthy Schools Status by the Mayor of London's office which means children are actively engaged in living healthy lifestyles.

Our two schools already have a track record of successful collaboration. Naomi Leaver has been Headteacher of Robinsfield Infant School since January 2009 and since April 2016 has been Interim and then Executive Headteacher of George Eliot.

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 the two schools entered into a formal collaboration whereby Naomi became Executive Headteacher of both schools with separate Governing Bodies at each. This arrangement comes to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 and cannot legally be extended. Following the successful collaboration, the two Governing Bodies in conjunction with the Local Authority have proposed that the two schools formally federate. We have decided to take this step because we believe it is in the interest of both schools and the communities we serve, if we work more closely together.

Accordingly in this document we are jointly publishing our proposal to join together in a federation and we would like your views before the decision is made whether or not to go ahead.



## What is a federation?

A federation is where two schools remain separate in law but are managed together by a single Governing Body and unified leadership team which in this case will consist of an Executive Headteacher over both schools and Heads of School in both schools. The proposed model therefore maintains Robinsfield and George Eliot as separate schools, but with the management of the two schools brought together under the supervision of a single Governing Body. The arrangement would build on the strengths of the two schools.

The immediate day-to-day experience for parents and children would change very little. Schools in federations continue to be individual schools with their own character. The names of the schools, school uniform arrangements and identities of Robinsfield and George Eliot would continue as before. Each school would retain its own budget.

The admissions policies of both schools would remain unchanged by this proposal and under the auspices of Westminster City Council. For Robinsfield families, a federation will have no effect on parental choice for a new school at junior transfer level.

Naomi Leaver would remain the Executive Headteacher of both schools, reporting to the single federated Governing Body. The Head of School at Robinsfield, Lorraine Wood and Head of School at George Eliot, Lee Duffy, would continue in their current roles.

For September 2018, the staffing of the two schools would remain largely unchanged, though federation would enable some staff to work flexibly across both schools, in accordance with their terms and conditions of employment. Schools in a federation are inspected separately and will be given an individual OFSTED report.

The consultation timeline is set out at the back of this document. The process will take six months in total, with the new joint Governing Body's first meeting in September 2018.



## Structure of the federation

The proposed structure for the federated Governing Body is outlined below. It is in line with the 2012 School Governance Regulations, and will be responsible for governance and management of the two schools. If a decision to federate is taken, the existing Governing Bodies will jointly appoint a Chair of the new Governing Body.

The Governors elected, together with the Chair and the Executive Headteacher, will then appoint the nominated Local Authority Governor and co-opt the remaining members of the Governing Body. Governors will be co-opted by majority decision on the basis of the knowledge, skills and commitment they are able to bring.

The term of office of all Governors will be four years.

If the federation proposed is agreed by the separate existing Governing Bodies of Robinsfield and George Eliot, they would both be dissolved on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 and a new joint Governing Body would be created on the same day to govern both schools.

Category of Governor	Proposed number of Governors	Notes of federation legal requirements
Parent	2 (one from Robinsfield and one from George Eliot)	The Governing Body must include at least one Parent Governor elected by and from each school.
Headteacher	1 (Executive Headteacher of Robinsfield and George Eliot)	The Executive Headteacher of the federated schools must be a member of the Governing Body.
Staff	1	Nominations are invited from both schools and if there is more than one nomination an election must be held. The total number of Staff Governors, elected or Co-opted, including the Headteacher, must not exceed one-third of the total number of Governors.
Local Authority (Westminster City Council)	1	Nominated by the Local Authority and appointed by the Governing Body.
Co-opted	6	There is no limit on the number of Co-opted Governors and they can include both parents and members of staff. Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body.

## Reasons for federating

We believe that coming together in a federation under a shared Governing Body would improve outcomes for children by:

1. Motivating and retaining good leadership that will significantly raise standards and progress for all of our children.
2. Having a direct impact on the ability to provide children with outstanding teaching by attracting, and retaining the best teachers through the provision of more opportunities for career development.
3. Enriching the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of children across the two schools through shared cultural, sporting and educational activities.
4. Increasing financial benefits and efficiencies across the two schools.
5. Providing resilience in the face of the politicization of education whilst at the same time protecting the identities and individual characters in each school.

Federation would build upon a track record of successful collaboration between Robinsfield and George Eliot. Under the Executive Headteacher's leadership, together with the Heads of School, clear policies and procedures have been adopted and implemented to ensure quality first teaching is happening across all subject areas which has resulted in improvements in pupil progress at George Eliot. Improved attitude to learning and the implementation of quality first teaching are showing that nearly all pupils are achieving their expected progress targets and it has enabled quality assurance of standards between the schools, as well as sharing best practice in many activities that support pupil well-being. Across both schools, mentoring by key members of staff has supported practice and this has meant that staff have a wider professional network to use in order to develop and hone their skill set further. Additionally, some members of staff who are now employed at George Eliot completed their training at Robinsfield prior to moving to George Eliot. This shows how potentially working in a federation supports recruitment and retention for staff, as it can provide the opportunity for career progression and to work in different settings.



## Summary and recommendation

We believe that by entering into a federation we can continue to build on the gains of the past two years, for the benefit of all pupils at both schools and their communities.

The shared governance structure of a federation will allow our schools to work together efficiently and sustainably to continue to raise standards, improve services and increase opportunities for pupils and staff.

The Governing Bodies of Robinsfield and George Eliot are embarking on a public consultation in order to canvass the opinions of parent/carers, staff, professional colleagues and the wider community. We want to know whether others agree that this partnership could work for the benefit of everyone. We look forward to hearing your views and hope you will feel encouraged to respond.

The Governing Bodies of Robinsfield and George Eliot have independently considered both the potential benefits and drawbacks of federating alongside the alternative of remaining as we are.

To ensure that we consider the view of parent/carers, staff and the wider communities our schools serve, the Governing Bodies have resolved to launch this federation proposal and to consult on the proposal from 28<sup>th</sup> March to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018. A public meeting will be held for both school communities on:

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 6:00pm**  
**Barrow Hill Junior School**  
**Bridgeman Street, London NW8 7AL**

The Governing Bodies of both schools unanimously consider that formally joining forces under one Governing Body with one leadership team and one Executive Headteacher will strengthen the ability of both schools to deliver outstanding services to the community we serve.

If, after consideration of the consultation response, the federation proposal is agreed by the Governing Bodies of both schools, the existing Governing Bodies would be dissolved and a new joint Governing Body created for both schools, with the new arrangements in place for 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018.

We welcome your views and feedback and would ask you to respond by completing the federation feedback form at the back of this document and returning this by handing it into either school office or by or completing the online survey:

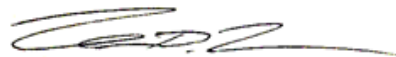
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/rfgefederation>



**Chair of Governors**  
**Robinsfield Infant School**



**Head of School**  
**Robinsfield Infant School**



**Chair of Governors**  
**George Eliot Primary School**



**Head of School**  
**George Eliot Primary School**



**Executive Headteacher**  
**Robinsfield Infant & George Eliot Primary Schools**

## Timetable

In outline, the timetable is as follows:

<b>28th March 2018</b>	Publication of consultation document and start of 6-week consultation period ending on 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2018
<b>25<sup>th</sup> April 2018</b>	Open consultation meeting
<b>14<sup>th</sup> May 2018</b>	End of consultation period
<b>18<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b>	Governing Bodies of Robinsfield and George Eliot meet separately to consider response to consultation and decide whether to proceed with federation. A decision to federate would require approval by a majority of each Governing Body
<b>18<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b>	If the decision is made to go ahead a joint meeting of Robinsfield and George Eliot Governing Bodies is held to appoint members of the new Governing Body
<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2018</b>	New federation would take effect under new joint Governing Body
<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2018</b>	First meeting of new joint Governing Body



## FEDERATION FEEDBACK FORM

There will be opportunities to discuss the proposal at the public meeting for both schools for all parent/carers and interested parties. This will take place at **6:00pm on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018** at **Barrow Hill Junior School, Bridgeman Street, London NW8 7AL**. Details will be communicated to parent/carers by the school. Staff will be invited to their own meetings at each of the schools. The decision will be made by both Governing Bodies.

You can make your views known by completing the federation feedback form overleaf and returning it to either of the school offices below or by completing the online survey as follows:

### SCHOOL OFFICES:

**Robinsfield Infant School**  
Ordnance Hill, St John's Wood, London NW8 6PX

**George Eliot Primary School**  
Marlborough Hill, St John's Wood, London NW8 0NH



### ONLINE SURVEY:

The online survey can be accessed through the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/rfgefederation>

### MISPLACED FEDERATION FORMS:

The consultation document and response slip can also be downloaded at:

<http://www.robinsfieldinfant.co.uk>  
<http://www.georgeeliot.school.co.uk>

**PLEASE MAKE SURE WE RECEIVE YOUR RESPONSE BY MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018**



**1. Your postcode address:**

**2. I am a:**

- Parent/Carer
- Teacher/Staff Member
- Governor
- Other (please specify):

**3. Associated with:**

- Robinsfield Infant School
- George Eliot Primary School

**4. Do you agree with the proposed federation of Robinsfield Infant School and George Eliot Primary School?**

- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Neutral
- Tend to disagree
- Disagree

Please state your reasons:

**5. Do you agree with the proposed structure of the new single Governing Body?**

- Agree
- Tend to agree
- Neutral
- Tend to disagree
- Disagree

Please state your reasons:

