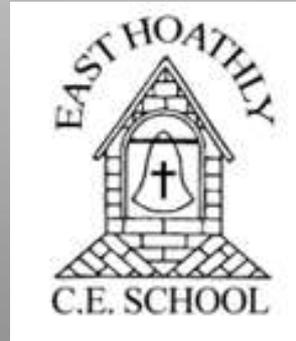


Pioneer Federation



Proposal to Federate



Pioneer Federation

Chair of Governors: Alan Brundle



Stonegate CE Primary School

Chair of Governors: Kevin Millington



Framfield CE Primary School

Chair of Governors: Karen Bye

What is Federation?

- One Governing Body for the 8 schools
- All schools retain their identity and are separate schools
- Still separate Ofsted & SIAMS inspections and separate admissions
- One Executive Headteacher across all schools
- Federation is not a merger or a conversion to an academy; it represents a stable, long term commitment to working in partnership to the benefit of children in the schools.



Why Federation?

- All boards of Governors have put forward a proposal to federate
- Maintain local identity but benefit from being part of a federated structure
- Governors will provide leadership for the 8 schools to improve pupils' experience and outcomes, whilst retaining a local presence
- Working together has provided benefits to the 8 schools in a number of ways:
 - ✓ **Securing strong leadership and professional development for leadership teams**
 - ✓ **Professional development for staff**
 - ✓ **Collaborative working- curriculum, planning and shared resources**
 - ✓ **Retention and development of higher standards and pupil achievement**
 - ✓ **Shared curriculum projects**



School Organisation in Pioneer

- The Federation will be divided into 3 clusters, linked by locality to each other. 'Ashdown Cluster', 'Weald Cluster' and 'Downs Cluster'. There will be 2 or 3 schools within each cluster.
- **Ashdown-** St Mary's, Groombridge & Nutley
- **Weald-** Framfield and East Hoathly
- **Downs-** Park Mead, Chiddingly and Stonegate
- Each Cluster will have distinct subject leadership teams for the curriculum.
- Each Cluster will have a separate Headteacher or Head of School.
- Each Cluster will have Cluster Lead Headteacher.

Leadership Structure

- Executive Headteacher
- Cluster Lead Headteachers
- Headteacher/Head of School in each school
 - Senior Teacher in each school
 - Phase Leaders across the Federation
 - Pioneer Curriculum Leads
 - Subject Leaders across each Clusters



Federation Governing Body

- The proposed new federated governing body would consist of 19 members. They will meet 3 times a year as a FGB. There will be a Chair for the Federation.
 - 2 Parent Governors
 - 1 Staff Governor
 - 1 Local Authority governor
 - 10 Foundation Governors (*includes 5 Ex officios being clergy*)
 - 1 Ex officio being Executive Headteacher
 - 4 Co-opted Governors
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- Each Cluster ('Ashdown', 'Weald' and 'Downs') would have a governing committee. This would comprise of 6 governors on each with a Chair for the Cluster. The Cluster Committees will meet termly.





COG



Why Pioneer?

- Pioneer is an established Federation dedicated exclusively to small schools since 2012, who understand the benefits and pressures of small school mixed aged classes/teaching.
- All Pioneer schools retain their uniqueness (small village primary schools) whilst being part of federation of schools working collaboratively to support each other.
- They have consistently strong Ofsted/SIAMS inspections for all schools since joining Pioneer & a proven strong mixed aged curriculum.
- There are clear opportunities for a central approach to curricular development and expertise.
- There is a strong Church School culture/ethos for all our Church Schools- *Outstanding/Grade 1* SIAMS inspection outcomes for all Pioneer Federation church schools.
- Pioneer provides financial stability & resilience and economies of scale in procurement.
- There are clear career paths for all staff ensuring retention and embedding of culture, as well as best structure for effective teacher recruitment, training and development across the federation.

What are the benefits?

Collaboration of small schools working together.

**Curriculum
Design**

**Curriculum
Planning &
Implementation**

**Pupil Links
& enhanced
Provision**

**Staff
expertise &
retention**

What are the benefits for pupils?

- Pupils will have opportunities to work together through team opportunities and regular pupil conferencing -broadening their social experiences
- Curriculum Enrichment- future shared trips, attending school celebrations & sporting events
- Moderation across schools to ensure that high standards are maintained
- Staff partnership links have led to improved teaching and learning standards & enrichment of education & curriculum
- Sharing staff expertise/talents which aids recruitment and retention, begatting a more stable staffing situation
- Premises developments
- Joint staff training to ensure that all staff are well trained and up to date
- Shared curriculum, resources & planning



Kingfishers (Yr1/2) Drusilla's



Puffins (Yr3/4)
Hever Castle

Collaborative Curriculum Design

2024-26 Inspections - 7 Inspections in last 2 Years

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'The Pioneer curriculum offers pupils a rich and varied diet.' – *East Hoathly Ofsted 2018*

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'The Pioneer curriculum is a strength and is fit for the future.' – *Chiddingly Ofsted 2019*

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'Leaders have designed an interesting, varied and ambitious Pioneer curriculum for all pupils.' – *St Mary's Ofsted March 2020*

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'The school's ambitious curriculum is well-designed and logically sequenced. Pupils build on their prior learning well. As a result, their skills and knowledge become increasingly sophisticated.' – *East Hoathly Ofsted June 2024*

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'The school and the **federation** it is part of have worked skilfully together to design an ambitious curriculum. It is clearly sequenced and planned so that new concepts build on prior learning. The school has identified the important knowledge and subject content that they want all pupils to learn and remember. This helps teachers know what to teach and to explain curriculum content clearly.' – *Park Mead Ofsted October 2024*

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'The school's curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all pupils. It is ambitious and clearly identifies what teachers need to teach within each subject. Adaptations for pupils with SEND are effective. **This means that every pupil can learn the curriculum and achieve well.** Staff have a strong subject knowledge and are confident to teach the curriculum. This has been supported by the work and training across the **federation.**' – *Chiddingly Ofsted November 2024*

'The collaborative work of the governors and leaders from the federation is highly effective. Together, they provide support, guidance and challenge to school leaders.' **Park Mead Ofsted 2024**

Collaborative Curriculum Design

Nutley SIAMS- 'October 2025' - *The newly adopted federation curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet pupils' individual needs and help them reach their full potential.*

'The Federation's vision aligns well with the school. Their key values of ambition, optimism and resilience support the school's high expectations for learning, behaviour and emotional wellbeing.'

Nutley Ofsted 'January 2026'-

'The school and the federation it is part of have worked skilfully together to design an ambitious curriculum.'

Leaders support and training for staff is a strength. *Leaders ensure that staff access a coherent, evidence-informed programme that builds their curriculum and teaching expertise over time. As a result, teachers are increasingly successful in their work.*

Leaders have **designed a collaborative curriculum** with clear end points and precisely defined knowledge and skills that staff will teach. This reflects leaders' careful thinking about how to support mixed-age classes in key stages 1 and 2. Leaders' design of the curriculum encourages pupils to build their knowledge and skills steadily over time. Ambition is high for all pupils.

Recent leadership changes have accelerated the improvement of the school's work. School leaders, **governors and federation leaders** work with diligence, ambition and moral purpose to secure the best outcomes for all pupils at Nutley.

Inclusion is a strength at Pioneer

All Pioneer Schools have a **specific named qualified SENCo**, to support school wide SEND provision and provide expertise when needed.

We also have a **Lead Pioneer SENCo** (Sian Leahy) who supports the inclusion culture across all Pioneer schools and is contactable whenever needed. Sian is on the Pioneer Leadership Team.

Ofsted 2026- Nutley- *'Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective.' Leaders foster a caring and inclusive culture that is matched by well-targeted support for pupils across the school. Leaders ensure that all pupils access the full curriculum through well-considered strategies that increasingly help them to overcome barriers to their learning.'* **Collaborative working** by leaders across the federation of schools strengthens provision at Nutley further, particularly for pupils with SEND, who benefit from shared expertise and consistent approaches.'

Ofsted 2025- St Mary's- *'Teachers are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers identify the needs of pupils well. They provide helpful guidance for pupils with SEND. The school has developed clear guidelines on how teaching could be adjusted to meet pupils' different needs.'*

Ofsted 2025- Chiddingly- *'Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in school life. Adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum and to the environment effectively support all learners.'* Adaptations for pupils with SEND are effective. This means that every pupil can learn the curriculum and achieve well.'

Ofsted 2025 – Park Mead- *'The school has high expectations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff provide the right support for these pupils. This helps pupils with SEND embed their knowledge alongside their classmates.'*

Ofsted 2024- East Hoathly- *'Leaders have prioritised identifying pupils' needs accurately. Staff know pupils well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They use their understanding of pupils' needs to plan a range of effective adaptations and support.'*

What are the benefits for staff?



- Opportunities for joint staff training and planning
- Reduced workload
- Sharing expertise and good practice
- More effective use of resources
- Opportunities for staff to work in different schools
- Stronger staff recruitment and retention - CPD and career development

What are the other benefits?

- Curriculum enhancement and opportunities eg forest school, sports events.
- Shared pupil council and empowerment of pupils, widening their experiences.
- Staff collaboration, support and career opportunities, retaining good staff.
- Stronger governance whilst retaining local input.
- Stronger financial position through shared resources.
- Securing the long term future of the school in a climate of falling roles.



When and how?

- Consultation period ends on **23rd March 2026 at 3.30pm.**
- All governing bodies will then meet formally to consider responses and reach a decision on whether to federate.
- Decision released **Friday 27th March 2026.**
- If agreed the Federation will start formally on **1st September 2026.**
- Parent and staff governor elections will take place in **May 2026.**
- First 'shadow' Federation Governing body meeting **July 2026.**



How do I express my views?

- Opportunity today to express your views
- Written comments can be posted in the consultation box by the school office or be emailed to your Clerk of Governors:

Stonegate School: stonegateclerk@stonegate.e-sussex.sch.uk

Pioneer Federation clerk@pioneerfederation.co.uk

Framfield School: clerk@framfieldcep.e-sussex.sch.uk

Questions?

