

The benefits of federation :

Consistency of teaching and learning methodology, especially cross-phase.

Reduced transitional dips in pupil performance.

Streamlining of policies and structures.

Sharing of good practice, preparation materials and resources.

Enhanced opportunities for pupil activities.

Enhanced opportunities for staff professional development.

Increased opportunity for middle management development.

Schools have options to choose a senior leadership structure to suit their circumstances leading to easier recruitment of staff and headteachers particularly if there have been difficulties.

Opportunities for school leadership beyond a single school.

Opportunities to maximise resources and professional expertise and achieve financial efficiencies from economies of scale.

Promotes the broader welfare of students by offering potential for bringing together pastoral, health, careers, youth and other services to meet their all-round needs.

Support for schools in difficulty. Schools with strengths can contribute to the learning of others.

Supports school improvement by enabling schools to draw on the resources of other schools to tackle problems, share expertise, raise expectations and address the needs of particular groups of pupils.

Possible easier recruitment of governors with fewer governor vacancies.

Small schools in particular can additionally benefit by: Developing networks for personal support. Sharing expertise and resources. Organising professional development. Arranging joint pupil activities.

Keys to a successful federation

Building of trust between LAs, governors and school communities which is fundamental to the success of federations and must be fostered at every level of management.

Commitment of time and resources from all schools involved.

Shared vision and a common purpose of what needs to be done and how for improving attainment and achievement at all level.

Shared identity between schools e.g. geographical proximity and having common aims on curricular and non-curricular activities

Clear leadership and management structures.

Sufficient time for all parties to be at ease with the proposed changes.

All to feel like equal partners.

Sense of ownership of process by the schools.

Good communication with parents and staff over the changes brought by federation.

Disadvantages of federation

Increased workload for governors during inception and first year.

Potential loss of experienced governors.

Initial mistrust amongst governors, parents and staff – time needed for federation to bed down.

Single headteacher not sharing time fairly amongst schools.