

**Governing Body Consultation on the proposals**  
**To Federate Children's House Nursery and Old Palace Primary School**  
**Old Palace Primary School Consultation Document**

7<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**The Proposals**

As part of the ongoing work between our schools, the Governing Bodies from our schools have been talking together about building a strong, sustainable future for our children's education. The governors of Old Palace School wish to consider a proposal to federate Children's House and Old Palace Schools.



**Why are we proposing the change?**

Old Palace School do not currently have Nursery or 2 year old provision. Governors from both schools believe that by working more closely together across Nursery and Primary provision we will have more opportunities to get the best value for money from sharing our resources and planning, be better able to use staff expertise effectively to support children's learning; and reduce expenditure so that we can secure a rich long-term future for quality education in the local area.

The governors from the two schools have both discussed the future and agree that now is the right time to consider formalising our partnership, by creating a single governing body for Children's House and Old Palace Schools so that we can plan strategically together to continue to provide the best possible 2-11 education for our children.

**What would happen to our Headteachers?**

Both schools have outstanding early years provision. If one of the Headteachers were to leave before federation is agreed, the Governing Bodies agree that the headteacher post for that school would not, in effect, be vacant and therefore would not be subject to advertising or selection requirements and they would consider the remaining Headteacher should become Executive Headteacher for both schools. If there is a decision to federate our schools, we would have just one Headteacher, from September 2025.

*Please return any consultation comments to the school by no later than 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024 15.00pm*

Both of our Headteachers have provided excellent service and both are highly valued. However, the governors recognize that the current financial position means that retaining two Headteachers would not be affordable in the future.

If the schools federate, this would mean that the Old Palace School Headteacher would become Executive Headteacher for both schools, with a single governing body which would oversee the running of both schools. The Headteacher at Children’s House School is in full support of this proposal.

### **What are the benefits of federating our schools?**

We will secure integrated 2-11 education planning for our community, with excellent nursery and reception provision and enhanced transition for 5 year olds. Children will benefit from the potential of a wider range of resources and enhanced staff development if our two schools work together.

We would be better able to provide continued access for pupils and the families to extended services and facilities.

More development opportunities for the staff, such as shared training, and the chance to work more closely across the curriculum and gain experience and understanding in different environments.

Greater financial stability would make certain we continue to improve and offer world class education.

The quality of early years provision will be enhanced for our local community.



### **What will it mean for the children?**

The whole purpose of seeking federation is to create an environment that will have a positive impact on the quality of education that children receive. The children will not experience any new changes and we hope that closer working will support the transition to reception. Those families who wish to transfer to other local schools, such as Marner, will still be able to do so and their transition will be supported as it is now. This change will not weaken our links with Marner School.

In the immediate future we would work towards sustaining and developing excellence across Old Palace and Children’s House Schools. In future, we may consider using staff and other resources across the schools, but this would be a gradual process.

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### **What will it mean for the staff?**

Very little will change on a day-to-day basis. Staff conditions of service will not be affected. All staff employed at Children's House or Old Palace Schools will continue to work at their schools. The two schools may be able to offer secondments to staff for particular roles and will also consider developing some roles across the two schools. Staff contracts will remain with current schools.

The only planned staff change is that there would be one Headteacher across both our schools.

There are always changes to staffing overtime and should other changes be proposed in future, due to financial constraints, these will be fully consulted on with staff, in the usual manner and in keeping with the agreed Tower Hamlets and Unions HR Guidance.

### **Would there be any changes to the schools?**

There would be no immediate changes to the functions of the schools as a result of becoming a federation, but there will be developments over time, just as there would be in any school.

### **How will governors decide whether to implement the change?**

Governors will consider all the responses to this consultation.

There has been a staff briefing on September 2nd

The school consultation will start on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October  
The consultation will close on November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3pm

Both Headteachers will be available, to answer face to face questions, throughout the consultation. They will keep a record of questions asked.

There will be meetings, for :

Children's House parents on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 9am and 3pm

**Old Palace parents on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October at 9.30am & 3pm**

Children's House staff on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 3.30pm

**Old Palace staff on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 3.45pm**

There will be an open "Zoom" meeting , for parents, staff and any stakeholders from either school or the local community on **November 7<sup>th</sup> 2024 at 6pm** to feedback to the independent consultant supporting the consultation. The links for these meetings will be sent to staff, parents and stakeholders separately.

This document is available on both schools' websites at:

<https://www.childrenshouse.towerhamlets.sch.uk>

<https://oldpalaceprimary.co.uk>

The responses will be analysed and a summary report will be available. Our independent consultant will lead this work.

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Governors will consider the responses at a joint special meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November.

Old Palace Governors will decide

Whether to form a new federation between Children's House and Old Palace Schools.

The governors' decision on whether or not to implement their proposal will be notified to staff, parents and the Local Authority at the end of that week.

Minutes of the meeting and the consultation response report will be available to parents before the end of Autumn Term.

### **How would the new Governing Body be set up?**

It is proposed that Old Palace and Children's House Federation Governing Body would be the single Governing Body for the provisions from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.

The current governing bodies would cease to exist from August 31<sup>st</sup> 2025. The new Federation GB will begin its role from midnight on August 31<sup>st</sup> 2025.

The federation governing body would consider co-opting additional governors with early years experience and expertise, and will have a specific, named Early Years Governor Role.

The Local Authority will approve the new instrument of governance if both schools' governing bodies agree to progress the federation. The Federation Governing Body will comply with DFE requirements to include at least one parent governor, 1 Headteacher, 1 Local Authority Representative, 1 staff governor, co-opted governors. The Federation Governing Body will have at least 7 members, at least 2 of whom will have early years expertise. Staff governors will make up no more than a third of the governing body.

### **How will Admissions be affected?**

Our two schools working together in this way will not affect the admissions processes for either school.

Families will still need to apply for Nursery places and for Reception places, as now. All children at Children's House can apply for reception places at any school.

### **Why are we consulting you?**

We want to consult you to gather your views because you are part of our schools' communities. The governing body of the schools cannot simply decide to make changes to schools without first seeking the views of parents and others. There is a legal process which must be followed before changes can be made, and it is important that the governing body hear your views before deciding whether to proceed.

There is a box in the reception area of each of our schools for you to use if you have any specific queries.

All parents, and other stakeholders, are invited to respond to this consultation by completing the attached form and returning it to either school office, in person or via email.

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## **What happens next?**

The consultation period starts on date and ends on date – the last page of this document can be used to register your response, it should be returned to your school office when you have completed it. Following the consultation process, the full governing bodies from each school will review your feedback and use it to decide whether to carry the proposal to federate forward in a special meeting before Half Term.

You can also feed into the consultation by talking with your Headteachers and/or attending the face to face and zoom meetings that have been set up or emailing your school.

Parents, and other stakeholders, will be notified in writing of the decision regarding the ending of the current Federation and the establishment of the new Old Palace and Children's House Federation by December 2024.

## **How can I get more information on the proposal?**

You can look on either school website (see page 4 for weblinks). If you have specific queries about the federation these can be raised at the planned meetings, or be posted in the "Federation Queries" boxes at each school office, or emailed to either school

admin@childrenshouse.towerhamlets.sch.uk   admin@oldpalace.towerhamlets.sch.uk

The governing bodies from both schools will publish the feedback from the consultation on the schools' websites before the end of the Autumn Term

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## Consultation Response Form – Old Palace School

We welcome your views on our proposals.

Please fill in this response form and return it **no later than 3pm on 22nd November 2024.**

The form can be or emailed to [admin@oldpalace.towerhamlets.sch.uk](mailto:admin@oldpalace.towerhamlets.sch.uk) or handed into the school office

### Proposal to federate Children’s House Nursery School with Old Palace Primary School

Our proposal is to federate Children’s House and Old Palace Schools to preserve and protect quality early years education for the local community, creating a single governing body for the two schools.

Do you like or dislike this idea?

Like		Dislike	
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Comments	
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Thank you for taking the time to consider our proposals

### **Chair of Old Palace Primary School Governing Body**

Are you a governor at Old Palace Primary School		Are you a member of staff at Old Palace School	
Do you have children attending Old Palace School		Other - Are you a local stakeholder (please specify your role)	

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

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