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Mrs LK Ankers, M Ed.
Head teacher

22nd May 2017

Dear Parents,

Consultation on the federation Ysgol y Waun and Gwernymynydd C.P School

This letter invites you to comment on a proposal to form a federation between Ysgol y Waun and Gwernymynydd C.P School. It forms part of a consultation process on this proposal which has been initiated by the two schools' governing bodies. There will be opportunities for you to discuss it in person at school with school staff, officers of the local authority and governors. The schools' governing bodies will consider your responses very carefully in deciding whether or not to go ahead with forming a federation.

Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions you have to make. Whilst a good education for your child is vitally important, we also recognise and want our children to be happy, safe and secure as well as being provided with a wealth of opportunities to extend them academically, socially and emotionally.

The future of education in Wales has undergone many changes in recent years and there are more changes on the horizon. One significant change is the announcement by Kirsty Williams, Education Secretary, of a new initiative aimed at preserving the future of small rural schools like ours. She has said this about these changes, that they:

... set out a presumption against closing rural schools and new incentives for rural schools to link up and work together for the benefit of both teachers and pupils. I want to see rural schools working more formally together and across the country, forming federations.....

An opportunity for us to really secure the future success of both our schools has arisen. Following Mrs Williams, Head teacher of Gwernymynydd C.P School, being successfully appointed to the headship of another school, the exciting prospect has arisen of federating our two schools in the way described by the Education Secretary. Federating schools has been very successful in England and other parts of Wales and there seems no reason why it should not be equally successful for our schools. The two schools are similar and currently have a large portfolio of successful school to school collaborative work. This ranges from staff training, sharing good practice, joint planning projects, purchasing resources, shared school visits and moderation of pupil standards. We are already seeing the significant benefits of working together to strengthen both schools in terms of standards and provision.



At Ysgol y Waun and Gwernymynydd C.P School we embrace change, identifying the positive impact it will have on our children. We also look beyond to ensure that any changes are sustainable and inclusive for all children in our care and into the future. We recognise that one size does not fit all and adapt our practice to strive for excellence.

Recent successes at Ysgol y Waun include maintaining 'Green' in school categorisation reflecting our leadership and standards to be strong and self improving. Gwernymynydd C.P school are also 'Green' and both schools currently work within a cluster of strong schools, challenging and supporting each other effectively. Within the last twelve months both schools have achieved a 'Good' rating in their Estyn inspections, recognising the current standards and prospects for improvement as having many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement. Much of this is down to the hard work and determination of the staff in both schools to make our individual small schools a success.

At Ysgol y Waun we are a unique school who prides itself on our close community links and our family feel. We are very fortunate to work closely in partnership with our parents and are grateful for the support you give us as well as your children. We are very proud of our school and I know many of you feel strongly that it is the heart of our community and should remain so long into the future. We pride ourselves in being innovative and offering a broad, balanced and full education for all. However, we realise that we must look beyond our individual school for opportunities to further enhance the education we provide.

With this letter you will find a booklet which explains all you need to know about forming a federation between schools. You will see that each school will retain its own identity and its own name. The main difference is there will be one head teacher managing the two schools and one governing body supporting and advising the head teacher. The federation model proposes a single Executive head teacher of the federation from 1 February 2018, and it is proposed as the existing head teacher I will lead the federation.

We feel that federating with another successful local school is a wise option to safeguard our school for the future. However, I must stress that no final decision has been taken on this matter. Your views are vitally important and we will pay great attention to them. So please do let us know what you think about this proposal by completing the form enclosed and/or attending the meeting on Tuesday 13th June 2017 from 3.30pm.

Yours sincerely

L Ankers
Head teacher

