

Summary Option Assessment – Option 1 Federation

A Federation involves two or more schools entering into a formal, statutory partnership overseen by a single governing body with collective responsibility for the schools concerned.

There is an expectation that there would be an Executive Head teacher providing leadership and management across the schools in the Federation. In addition, there is likely to be an Assistant Head for each school site. However, it is for the Governing Body and the Executive Head teacher to determine the management and organisation arrangements.

Advantages

- The Governing Body of Stratton Upper School, Biggleswade, Central Bedfordshire has written to confirm that they are willing to pursue a formal Federation with Gamlingay Village College
- There would be no need to recruit a permanent Head teacher for Gamlingay Village College as Stratton Upper School's Head teacher would be expected to become Executive Head teacher with responsibility for leading and managing both Stratton Upper School and Gamlingay Village College
- Changes could be in place for September 2012 but there is also the opportunity for transitional arrangements to be in place earlier
- There are very high levels of parental and community support for this option
- There are long-established links between the schools
- There are established transport links between Gamlingay and Biggleswade
- For many Gamlingay parents/carers and residents, Biggleswade is seen as more natural link than Bassingbourn, St Neots or Cambourne
- Stratton Upper School provides continuity of education for young people aged 13-19 for those who wish to continue their education in a school sixth form

Disadvantages and Risks

- This Option does not recognise the strengths of the First School and could leave it isolated
- Stratton's experience and expertise is to provide education for the 13-19 age range
- Stratton Upper School has no proven track record of turning round a failing school
- The Village College would still be subject to special measures
- The Secretary of State for Education might not consider this option to be delivering the rate and pace of change necessary – he can impose closure
- Central Bedfordshire could choose to review their three-tier organisational arrangements in due course, although there is no information to suggest that this could happen in the near future