

Consultation on the Federation of Gayhurst, Grasmere, Kingsmead and Mandeville Schools

Consultation period

10th February 2025 – 31st March 2025

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Proposal to Consult on the Federation of Grasmere Primary school with Gayhurst, Kingsmead and Mandeville Primary schools

Consultation period: 10th February – 31st March 2025

1. Introduction & Summary

The Governing Bodies of Gayhurst, Kingsmead, Mandeville (collectively the LEAP Federation) and Grasmere Primary Schools are seeking the views of parents, carers and staff on a proposal for establishing a new federation between the four schools from September 2025.

Under the Education Act 2002, schools and local authorities can propose that schools join together to create a federation. A federation is formed when two or more schools agree to work together formally through a single Governing Board.

This document shares the details, history and reasoning behind this consultation, starting with an overview and the important dates and details for your involvement - which we encourage - and then expands on more of the details and background.

The Governing Bodies believe that there are significant benefits to establishing this new federation:

First and foremost for children, as the four schools will be able to leverage shared resources, expertise and experience to deliver the best for our children through an exciting curriculum and the high quality of teaching and learning made possible through shared expertise.

For parents, who will have confidence in the stability of leadership, financial support and strategic positioning within the Hackney Schools landscape.

For staff, who will be able to gain from broader, shared professional and career development opportunities and collaboration, allowing the schools to attract, develop and retain the best teachers, leaders and support staff.

For governors and school leaders, who will be able to continue working together and benefit from the shared expertise and joint ambition for all children to succeed, offering leadership stability and capacity across the four schools and providing economies and financial savings, enabling more to be achieved within constrained budgets.

Governors are committed to each school retaining its own identity and ethos as part of their local communities and having an appropriate voice in the federation. This document explains what federation means, how it is different from the current one year partnership between LEAP and Grasmere, and how you can make your views known.

Governors of all four schools wish to consult and gain the opinion of all stakeholders. The consultation will take place **between 10th February and 31st March** and the following times have been set aside for parents and carers to meet with School and Governing Body representatives to discuss the federation proposal. Please drop in at any time during the time slots below.

2. Consultation Meetings & How to Respond

Venue	Audience	Date	Time
Grasmere Primary school Albion Road N16 9DP	Parents	Friday 7th March	9.15am
Grasmere Primary school Albion Road N16 9DP	Parents	Wednesday 12th March	4:00pm (childcare available)
Grasmere Primary School Albion Road N16 9DP	Parents	Wednesday 26th March	6.00pm (childcare available)
Kingsmead Primary School Kingsmead Way, E9 5PP	Parents	Thursday 13th March	3:45pm (childcare available)
Mandeville Primary School Oswald Street, E5 0BT	Parents	Wednesday 5th March	4:00pm (childcare available)
Gayhurst Primary School Gayhurst Road, E8 3EN	Parents	Tuesday 4th March	6.00pm (childcare available)

Governors welcome your views on the proposal for the new federation of the four schools. You can respond in the following ways:

- Respond online here: [Response Form](#) or Scan the QR Code



- If you are unable to respond online, there will be a number of hard copies available at each school's office. Once completed, return your form to one of the schools (there will be a sealed box in each school's reception area)
- E-mail any comments or queries on the process to Damien.Parrott@Hackney.gov.uk

This consultation document and the process for providing feedback are also available online. Please visit [Hackney Education consultations page](#)

As well as the above options, staff also have the option of consultations via staff meetings at their respective schools. Consultation meetings with unions will be arranged on request. Information can be provided in other languages or in large print upon request.

3. What Happens Next?

The consultation period commences on Monday 10th February and closes at 4pm on Friday 31st March. An independent body appointed by the Hackney Education will then summarise responses for consideration by both Governing Boards.

The Governing Boards of Grasmere School and the LEAP Federation will separately consider the views gathered from the consultation to inform their decision making process. If the Governing Boards decide to go ahead with the proposal, the intention will be for Mandeville, Grasmere, Kingsmead and Gayhurst Schools to form a federation on **1st September 2025**.

After considering everyone's views, if the Governing Board of one or all of the schools decides not to pursue the federation, then the schools will continue to operate as they do now and Grasmere School will need to consider other options for the future leadership and management of the school.

4. A Brief History

Kingsmead, led by Louise Nichols as Headteacher since 2004 (now Executive Headteacher of LEAP since 2012) and which gained OFSTED Outstanding judgements in both 2011 and 2012, joined with Gayhurst in partnership, then subsequently creating a hard federation. In 2015, Mandeville joined the federation and the three schools were then led under one Governing Body and became known as the LEAP (Learning, Education, Arts, Partnership) Federation.

In 2023, Gayhurst was graded Outstanding by OFSTED, as were both Mandeville and Kingsmead in 2024, Kingsmead having maintained its previous Outstanding grade. Whilst OFSTED is only one way to evaluate schools, this reflects how schools can benefit from being part of a federation and is echoed by feedback from leadership, staff, parents & carers alike. All three schools continue to offer Outstanding provision for all children which results in high levels of achievement with a strong focus on the Arts.

In July 2024, when the existing headteacher left, Grasmere governors needed to fill the leadership gap both quickly, and in a way which provided stability and strength for the future. A one year partnership was chosen to be the most effective route. All Hackney Schools and federations were invited to offer competitive solutions, and the offers were assessed including presentations & interviews. The LEAP Federation was chosen as the strongest and best-matched of the competent and attractive offers received. The partnership between Grasmere School and the LEAP Federation commenced formally on 1st September 2024 and is due to end on 31st August 2025.

5. Where are We Now?

We are now half way through the partnership year and therefore now have some experience by which to assess how well it is working, as well as having sufficient time to develop the shape of future collaboration in time for the next academic year.

We have seen benefits across a range of areas including:

Teaching & Learning

- The Grasmere teaching and support staff team have welcomed the opportunities to collaborate with the federation team. The curriculum offer is being shared with all staff.
- Pupils at Grasmere are enjoying a growing number of enrichment activities set up through this collaboration. Further opportunities will be organised during the school year.

Finance and Business Support

- The Grasmere School Business manager is working closely with the Executive Headteacher to review where more financial efficiencies can be made. This has resulted in some cost savings and more effective use of resources.
- The premises team from LEAP provide additional site services to Grasmere School supporting the upkeep and security of the school site
- The Executive Chef from the LEAP School of Food is working closely with the Grasmere catering team to advise on menus and training.
- The Grasmere newsletter now includes additional dedicated pages detailing news from across LEAP schools to share regular updates to all parents and carers about what's happening across the federation, showcasing what together a larger group can achieve.

Leadership & Support

- The Executive Headteacher, and two Headteachers from the LEAP Federation provide the current strategic leadership of the school supported by a team of leaders from Grasmere and the federation. This has supported the school to improve and develop since September.
- Subject leaders from LEAP have worked with the Grasmere teaching team to further develop the school curriculum at Grasmere School.
- The Grasmere Governing Board has welcomed two governors from LEAP acting as observers to the meetings. The open dialogue between all governors at meetings has supported decision making and the sharing of key information.

We have also reviewed the wider Hackney and National educational landscape, observing:

Tighter budgetary constraints are being noted in many schools in Hackney and how schools working in federations are more able to plan efficiently and make better use of resources.

Reduced support available from Local Authorities has resulted in more schools looking to work in partnerships and federations to share resources and good practice.

Falling pupil rolls seen in Hackney, and beyond are of concern to many schools. Working together with other Hackney schools is being used by some schools as a strategy to secure the longer term future of schools. 27 local authority primaries are already working in federations.

Based on these observations, both Governing Bodies strongly believe that the federation model is right for all four schools and will enable further benefits described later in this document.

6. What Would this Federation Look Like?

The existing Grasmere and LEAP Governing Boards will be dissolved, and a new Governing Board of 15 members will be drawn up (please see Appendix 1). The board will guide the federation, ensuring a clear vision, strong ethos, and strategic direction. They will hold the Executive Headteacher and school leadership

teams accountable for the educational and financial performance of all four schools, ensuring resources are used effectively to meet the goals of each school.

The federation will be led by one Executive Headteacher, but with each school keeping its own Headteacher, leadership team, and unique identity (please see Appendix 2). A central team will handle much of the “back office” work, like business management, HR, and finance. In other areas we can provide internal solutions such as specialist teaching, school counsellors, mentors and specialist support for children with additional needs ensuring children and parents see no change to the daily running of their school when the federation begins on 1st September.

This shared approach reduces costs and improves services (please see Appendix 3). For example, a gymnastics teacher works across all four schools, providing continuity and flexibility while enjoying full-time employment. This setup benefits staff and ensures children continue to receive high-quality education and enrichment.

7. What Benefits Do We Expect?

Benefits for Children

- All children are well supported by high quality provision in all schools due to the agreed approaches to the teaching of the school curriculum in all schools
- A wider range of enrichment activities including specialist dance, music, drama, sports and Forest School sessions
- Continued high ambition for all children and support where necessary to achieve these aspirations
- The opportunity to meet, interact and learn with children from other schools
- Enhanced social, sporting, and academic opportunities delivered through a planned programme of curriculum events through the extended day
- Opportunities for all children to learn about healthy eating and cooking through the work of the School of Food

Benefits for Parents

- Admissions arrangements in each school will remain the same - Hackney Education oversees this process for all maintained schools
- More frequent reporting on children’s progress and more opportunities to visit the school and meet with class teachers in person to discuss progress
- Schools will continue to be inspected as single establishments and will publish individual test results so that all parents have a clear understanding of the strengths of each individual school
- The schools will retain their own characteristics while maintaining a strong shared vision across the federation
- The robust systems to ensure the best opportunities and outcomes for children will be sustained
- The school communities can learn from each other and share good practice about how to develop parental engagement

Benefits for the School Communities

- Each school will retain its individual identity while learning from each other, working together and innovating joint approaches
- The names of the schools will stay the same
- Working together will help to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, support the drive for further efficient and effective use of resources and better value for money, and enable more time and resource to be dedicated to the core business of teaching and learning
- The schools within the federation will continue to work with neighbouring schools

- Schools will continue to benefit from working with the Hackney Teaching Schools Alliance of 15 state maintained Hackney schools

Benefits for staff

- Enhanced professional development opportunities through partnership working for the full range of staff in each school through a well thought-through programme of staff development
- Improved professional development within the federation and as part of the Hackney Teaching Schools Alliance
- Excellent induction and support for Early Career Teachers at the start of their teaching career with opportunities to gain experience in a forward-looking group of four schools
- Greater opportunity to develop leadership skills at all levels through opportunities to work in all four schools
- Career pathways within the federation, leading to the retention of high quality staff and reduced staff turnover
- Highly skilled and passionate leaders of subjects leading curriculum development and training across all four schools

8. Messages from Leadership and Governance

Message from the Chair of Governors at Grasmere School

Ian Quest

When our last Headteacher resigned to move to her dream job, it created a gap we needed to fill quickly. After requesting and receiving offers of support from schools across Hackney, we were very happy to accept the strong offer from LEAP, which provided much more than just filling the leadership gap and demonstrated values aligned to those we hold dear at Grasmere.

The one year partnership we agreed also allowed us to explore the benefits associated with being part of a wider group of schools (a federation), with its broader experience base, shared resources and mutual support. We also noted these become more valuable when meeting the challenging situations many schools are facing today. Pupil numbers (in London particularly) have dropped, local authorities are facing financial challenges and being a small stand alone school is increasingly difficult. School leaders must cover everything from construction projects to property maintenance to finance to SEND support and safeguarding and of course the full breadth of teaching itself.

Developing close links to other schools and groups of schools offers a way to share expertise and resources and apply them in more effective and efficient ways to deliver an even better education and experience to our children. It also creates a bigger group with more leverage, both when buying services and when negotiating support. Furthermore, doing this with the LEAP schools both fits well with our values and significantly expands what we can offer.

As such, on behalf of the Governing Body, I want to share that whilst this partnership began through necessity, we believe it to be highly desirable to deepen it further and are excited about the possibilities that joining a federation of schools offers to our children, our staff and the wider community.

Message from the Headteachers at Grasmere School

Karen Pedro and Marc Thompson

Since beginning our work at Grasmere in September, we have been inspired by the overwhelmingly positive reception from staff, children, and parents. The ethos of the school - a nurturing environment at the heart of its community - strongly aligns with how we work. This foundation has enabled us to build on the school's strengths and foster meaningful change.

From the outset, we committed to working collaboratively with staff, children, and parents to identify and

address the areas for improvement that matter most to them. Staff shared their aspirations for a creative curriculum that would enable them to deliver exceptional lessons, underpinned by consistently high expectations for all children. In response, we have provided comprehensive training and support, further embedding a culture of ambition and a strong work ethic across the school.

Raising Standards Through Collaboration and Best Practice

One-form entry schools often face challenges in accessing opportunities for teachers to share expertise and best practices. Through the collaborative framework of the LEAP Federation, we have addressed this by connecting Grasmere's teachers with a wider team of professionals. This network fosters innovation, encourages shared learning, and strengthens teaching practices. Grasmere's teachers now benefit from a supportive professional community, ensuring they are well-equipped to deliver high-quality education for all children.

Visible Progress and a Culture of Pride

The positive impact of this approach is evident in the daily life of the school. Expectations have risen, and children are embracing a renewed sense of pride in their learning and their school. The school's culture has shifted towards a deeper understanding of what it means to be part of the Grasmere community, with high aspirations and a focus on achievement becoming central to everyday experiences.

Strong Relationships with Parents

We recognise the importance of strong, open relationships with parents and have prioritised this from the beginning. By ensuring staff are available to engage with parents at the start and end of the school day, we have created a welcoming environment that fosters trust and dialogue. In-person Parents' Evenings have provided families with the opportunity to connect directly with their child's learning journey, while our weekly newsletter keeps parents informed and engaged, helping to strengthen the partnership between school and home.

Our Vision for Permanent Change

Our vision for Grasmere is clear: to raise standards so that outcomes for all children consistently align with those of other LEAP schools. By combining a robust and dynamic curriculum with outstanding teaching, we are building a school where every child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Collaboration and staff development remain at the heart of our approach, driving improvements not only at Grasmere but across the LEAP Federation. This collective effort ensures that all children, regardless of background, receive the exceptional educational opportunities they deserve.

Permanent alignment with LEAP will secure the sustainability of these improvements, embedding a culture of high expectations, continuous learning, and community engagement. Together, we can ensure that Grasmere becomes a school synonymous with excellence, where every child is empowered to achieve their full potential.

Message from the Chair of Governors of the LEAP Federation

Gillian Brady

The LEAP Governing Board fully supports the current partnership with Grasmere School. The impact of the progress from this close working relationship between Grasmere and LEAP is shared at regular meetings.

Each LEAP school is successful in its own right due to the shared high aspirations for each child in all school communities. The Executive Headteacher has developed a highly effective team of headteachers and

leaders who collaborate together, share good practice and offer high quality training and coaching to all staff. As a result, staff retention continues to be high. The federation is well-placed to support other schools in Hackney. Currently working with Grasmere School as part of a brokered one year partnership, leaders from across the federation are working with the Grasmere team to support the school.

Kingsmead, Gayhurst and Mandeville are all outstanding schools - outcomes seen over time for all schools are above local and national averages. The continued work to improve the school curriculum has resulted in a rich, diverse and well-planned curriculum offer which supports all children. Staff are well trained to deliver the curriculum with confidence as well as adapt teaching and learning as needed to meet the needs of all children. The Grasmere team have welcomed the shared opportunities to develop the school curriculum.

Each school works with their school community of parents and carers to celebrate the life of the school as well as providing support and advice as needed.

A team of Pastoral Support Staff work with children, and families, to sustain high levels of attendance above the national average. The schools continue to build strong relationships with external agencies and services to support children and families. Teachers and leaders at all levels have access to training, coaching and support as part of the professional development programme. A well-trained team of subject leaders work across the three schools to develop the curriculum and provide training for all staff.

The School of Food continues to support children within the federation as well as other Hackney schools to learn about healthy eating and cooking as part of its curriculum programme.

Message from the Executive Headteacher of LEAP

Louise Nichols

In LEAP schools we value the arts very highly and spent time over the last five years developing a bespoke curriculum for Hackney children taking into account where they live and the diversity and creativity of their local borough. It has always been important to work together in the interest of the communities we serve and now it is even more crucial. Our goal is to give children a well-rounded education that celebrates their individuality and nurtures their love for learning.

Outcomes academically for LEAP children are always some of the highest in the borough and we believe this gives our children the best tools to go on and succeed and enjoy learning in secondary and higher education. We believe that happy, supported teachers create the best learning environments. That's why we prioritise staff wellbeing and manage workloads carefully. As a result, we have some of the best teacher retention rates in Hackney, which means your child benefits from dedicated, experienced teachers from nursery to Year 6.

LEAP schools are proud of their excellent academic outcomes, consistently among the highest in the borough. These strong foundations help children thrive as they move on to secondary school and beyond. Grasmere's focus on music, art, and enrichment fits perfectly with our ethos. The warm welcome from Grasmere staff, parents, and governors has shown us how well our values align. Together, we're committed to placing children at the heart of everything we do—ensuring they grow, succeed, and enjoy their education.

9. Quotes from Staff, Children and Parents who have Experienced Federation

Sarah (Nursery Lead, Grasmere): *“Joining LEAP already feels like a positive step, and I’m confident it will continue to be one moving forward. Professionally, it has been an enormous benefit for me. After 24 years in education, I finally feel like I’m where I’m meant to be, or where I can truly thrive in my career.”*

I appreciate that we're a one-form entry school, but being part of LEAP allows us to connect with teachers from other schools who work in similar year groups. This collaboration is invaluable—it means we can share ideas and support each other, so planning doesn't feel so isolating. For instance, when it comes to Nursery, it's challenging to discuss specific needs with a Year 6 teacher. Having other Nursery teachers across the federation to collaborate with on things like displays or curriculum planning makes a huge difference.

LEAP has also had a noticeable impact on the children. For example, the rapid development of sport has been a major win. Now the children and staff feel more connected to something positive, they're achieving more, have more opportunities to look forward to, and, as a result, their sense of belonging has significantly improved."

Jess (Y6 Teacher, Grasmere): *"Obviously we're a small school and that's quite isolating. I think the cross school federation meeting that we had on Wednesday was really helpful. It made me realise how much of the time in school when we were isolated and ploughing through work and not knowing if we were on track. I had a feeling of relief when speaking to teachers across the federation. The impact was profound.*

We benefit from sharing resources and planning as well as the richer experiences children get on trips that have been organised by someone else so less workload for teachers. The leadership team's experience is great, particularly their knowledge of systems and structures, that have now been implemented across the school. The structure of the reading lessons now ensures that all children can access the curriculum

I get the sense that everyone is working really hard together to develop the culture of the school in a way that benefits everyone."

Ally (Y6 Teacher Gayhurst): *"During my time at Gayhurst, I feel that being part of the LEAP Federation has brought many benefits to myself personally and in my career. Some of the noticeable positives of being part of the federation for me, include; the professional dialogue that exists in the phases across the schools, supported through twilights, moderations and other shared staff meetings, which allow me to draw on the expertise and experience of others teaching in my year group outside of my school setting. The collegiate atmosphere and supportive network has undoubtedly added to my continued professional development as a class teacher. In addition to this, the system of subject leadership across the federation has allowed me to develop in my career and take on new challenges as the DT subject lead. I have been supported to complete training and develop my interests in curriculum design.*

The existence of the Federation Subject Leads additionally reduces teacher workload as we are provided with a proven outstanding foundation subject curriculum to teach from, as well as ongoing CPD in these areas to support this. I feel fortunate that I have been able to develop myself as a teacher at LEAP and with the many opportunities that I have been given".

Louis (Year 6 Pupil Gayhurst): *"I loved our LEAP school council trip to the Houses of Parliament because we went with Mandeville. It was fun hearing all about how they run their school council, we got to take some of their ideas!*

Freddy (LEAP Specialist PE Teacher): *"Being part of the LEAP Federation has positively impacted the quality of teaching in PE. We can share best practice, bringing everyone to a high standard across the federation"*

Jemima & Tamia (Kingsmead Yr 6 PE ambassadors): *"We've taken part in lots of cross federation tournaments: Netball, Table Tennis, Dodgeball & Football. It's been great to interact with the other LEAP students and feel competitive and friendly in the tournaments! They've been really fun!"*

Lizzie (Parent Governor at Gayhurst): *"Being part of the LEAP Federation brings many benefits to all our children and staff, some obvious and some more behind the scenes. Each school keeps its own identity within the local community but works collaboratively within the federation, sharing expertise, resources and best practices. This means our children have access to more specialist teachers for instance and also a well considered, deep and enriching curriculum. Behind the scenes a shared finance team supports budgeting and ensures we have better efficiencies and economies of scale. I think the fact that all three LEAP Federation schools have recently been rated Ofsted Outstanding is testament to the participation and support within the federation."*

Danny (Y4 Teacher Mandeville): *"Having trained with LEAP almost a decade ago and progressed to become a subject lead, I have witnessed firsthand that one of the federation's greatest assets is its spirit of collaboration. By pooling ideas, resources, and effort, we create amazing learning experiences for our children. Coming together regularly to share good practices and identify areas for improvement ensures that all our teachers and staff feel supported."*

Jon (LEAP School Counsellor): *"I have worked across the three LEAP schools for 3 years now. I am passionate about school-based counselling for children and the benefits it provides- easily accessible and non-stigmatised support for children which works holistically with the other pastoral services in the school."*

The LEAP schools support a wide demographic of children and families, which means the needs of children are different in each school; but working across the three schools means I can offer appropriate support where it is needed and share skills and communicate effectively how to move forward and improve the service and prioritise the time that I have available.

Florence (Kingsmead Parent since 2012 – with 4 children all who have attended the school): *"When I first heard Kingsmead was going into partnership with other schools, I was a bit anxious about the school losing its uniqueness. But it's been quite the opposite because Kingsmead has retained its uniqueness and my children have benefited from various activities like cooking, holidays activities etc from schools in the LEAP Federation."*

Jhanne (Kingsmead parent since 2014 – with 2 children who have attended the school): *"I am a parent with a child currently at Kingsmead, and a child that was also at the school when the last consultation took place when Mandeville joined the LEAP Federation. I can say that the process didn't impact negatively at all on the day to day running of the school. In my opinion, there have been many benefits to the schools joining together in a partnership with increased opportunities for my children to have access to exciting trips and opportunities and skilled specialist staff. And I am happy that the partnership enables schools to make financial savings. We have also seen the curriculum improve under the partnership of the LEAP Federation, which is great."*

10. Frequently Asked Questions

How would this proposal affect my child's education?

Mandeville, Kingsmead, Grasmere and Gayhurst Schools are happy, stimulating, caring and strongly individual places and this will not change. The teachers will remain the same and the pupils will continue to

learn each day at the school site as they do now. We anticipate there to be greater opportunities for children at one school to collaborate with pupils and staff at other schools within the federation as well as continuing to connect across the family of Hackney schools, and within our local communities.

How will the school and children benefit from this process?

We believe that the partnership of schools will provide staff at each school with access to high quality collaborative professional development, it offers the opportunity to share expertise and resources and to reduce costs through centralised services. This will contribute to investing in and generating better outcomes for every child at the school.

Will the admissions process change and could children be forced to change schools?

No. The admission arrangements will remain exactly as they are at present. Parents will apply on behalf of their children to the school of their choice.

Will children have to travel between the schools for lessons?

No. The schools may share some specialist staff, but lessons for children will take place on their own school sites. On occasion, children will visit other schools to share specialist resources or take part in joint events.

Would what children wear to school change?

There are no plans to change the dress code for any of the schools

Will the arrangements be fair to all schools?

Yes. Any arrangements made as part of the formalised partnership will be equitable to all schools and all schools stakeholders will have an equal voice. All roles in school or on the Governing Body will be offered equally to all relevant stakeholders.

Will the staffing change?

There will be no staffing changes as part of joining the federation. The current Hackney terms and conditions for staff will not change and staff will continue to be employed by the local authority as they are now. Continuing Professional Development will use a wider network of opportunities for teachers to experience, some staff training will be offsite. The schools will continue to apply the Hackney pay policy which is negotiated every year with the collective unions representing school staff. The schools may apply one set of core policies in relation to some statutory areas such as Safeguarding across the federation.

What changes would occur to the Governing Boards once the schools join the Federation?

Following the federation process, there would be a single Governing Board covering all schools. There will still be parent governors elected by the parents, a staff governor elected by the staff and co-opted governors recruited by the Governing Board itself as is usual practice. Please see Appendix 1 for more information.

What about cooperating with other schools?

The schools within the proposed federation would remain committed members of the Hackney family of schools and it is our intent to continue to work together with the other schools beyond the federation including those who are members of the Hackney Teaching Schools Alliance. LEAP leaders already have influence on many local panels, groups and school improvement teams across the borough.

The Executive Headteacher was previously designated a National Leader for Education and continues to work with other school leaders locally, nationally and internationally to ensure best collaboration, research and development opportunities are used.

Are the schools merging to avoid becoming an academy?

No, we remain local authority schools continuing to work with and for the communities of Hackney under local authority guidance.

What happens if one or other Governing Boards decide not to go ahead with the Federation?

Existing LEAP Federation schools would remain in their current partnership and the Governing Board of Grasmere would need to consider other options for new school leaders. LEAP staff would return to their original schools.

What happens if we want to de-federate later on?

If the federation is agreed, the Governing Body will review the arrangement in five years' time to see if the partnership has been successful. If at any time a school wished to leave the partnership, there is a standard process that can be followed.

Who will have a say on this proposal?

We are consulting with the parents and staff at all four schools. We will also be consulting with all local nurseries and schools, with Hackney Councillors and MPs, with chairs of governors of all Hackney Schools, the wider Hackney community, as well as trade unions associated with each school. We will publish the consultation on the Hackney Education website.

This consultation will close on 31st March 2025

We thank you for participating in this consultation and for sharing your views.

11. Appendices

1. Proposed Governance Structure for the Federation

Proposed LEAP Governing Body Structure as of September 2025

If Grasmere and LEAP Governing Bodies decide to federate, then both boards will be dissolved and a new Governing Body will be formed.

The new Governing Board will be made up of 15 Governors, including:

- The Executive Head Teacher (ex officio)
- Two parent governors (elected by parents/carers from all four schools)
- One staff governor (elected by staff from all four schools)
- One local authority governor (nominated by the LA and appointed by the Governing Board)
- Ten co-opted governors (appointed by the Governing Board). Co-opted governors are appointed for particular skills, knowledge, understanding or expertise in areas that they bring to the Governing Board, such as in education, finance, fundraising, human resources or marketing.

Both LEAP and Grasmere Governing Bodies recognise the importance of considering the specific structure and character of each member school and as such will ensure all four schools are appropriately represented in the Governing Body. LEAP has achieved this throughout with a mix of governors and school leadership from all school communities and a similar approach is proposed for the new federation. Whilst rules on governance set down by the Department for Education dictate being restricted to two elected parent governor roles, parents with the required skills and expertise are also eligible to be considered for co-opted governor roles, as is already the case in both LEAP and Grasmere Governing Bodies.

Associate Governors

In addition, governors will appoint associate governors to support and advise the Board and its committees. Associate governors do not have voting rights.

Governors Terms of Office

Apart from the Executive Head Teacher, who remains as a governor while in post, all governors serve for a term of four years.

Governor Committees

The new Governing Body will decide on how many committees it needs to work effectively, but most Governing Bodies will have at least two, one concerned with finance and resources, the other focused on the school curriculum, inclusion and standards.

This proposed governing structure would be reviewed annually following the federation, to ensure it is working optimally and providing sufficient connection to each school.

2. School Leadership under the Proposed Federation

The Executive Headteacher works across the federation, with each LEAP school then benefitting from its own dedicated leadership team. This typically consists of:

- Headteacher or Head of school
- Deputy Head(s)
- Associate Deputy Head(s) (Shared)
- Assistant Head(s)
- Dedicated SENDCO

The leadership structure above may vary between schools based on their size and needs. Leaders often hold multiple roles, such as a Special Needs Co-ordinator also serving as the Safeguarding Lead, to ensure all responsibilities are effectively managed.

3. Details & Examples of the Financial Benefits

The partnership and potential future federation offers several ways of achieving more within a constrained budget, making savings in some areas and delivering more with little or no extra cost in others.

Benefits of shared resources: Teaching & Learning

- With a larger group, it is easier to cover training and absence without agency fees and with strong existing staff.
- We can support having more specialist teaching staff by sharing across a wide group of schools. This means that staff who are often employed part time can be given full time contracts across schools, and can help the development of greater teacher expertise in specialist areas. For example, a Gymnastics teacher could spend two days at Gayhurst and one day each at Grasmere, Mandeville and Kingsmead. A range of opportunities such as dance, djembe drumming, steel pans, guitar, ukulele, singing, art, forest school could be shared in this way.

Benefits of shared resources: Support

- Site management and maintenance can be shared across the group, enabling savings. For example, two premises managers overseeing four sites with three site keepers supporting them. This also means there is additional support capacity from staff who know each site when necessary. This is also beneficial if there is a big piece of work that needs doing. For example, recently at Mandeville, 30 new piano keyboards were donated but were extremely heavy so the premises team worked together to complete the task.
- This can also enable more experience and seniority in key roles, improving delivery. Our cross-school staff such as Executive Headteacher, Associate Deputy Heads and subject leaders work across the schools managing specific areas of school life that are best managed as a whole rather than individually, for example, arrangements for wraparound care.

Benefits through greater leverage

- By purchasing services across four schools, there is greater leverage to get 'best value' from suppliers, e.g. Agency staff costs at Grasmere have therefore been reduced.
- By using common systems and approaches, costs of software, training & maintaining processes can be significantly reduced and effectiveness increased

Benefits of wider and deeper experience in leadership

- The breadth and depth of experience in the leadership team enables confident decisions to be made more quickly and helps identify and secure opportunities and support from the wider educational environment. Experienced headteachers are few and far between and the knowledge of systems, contacts and confidence in dealing with Local Authorities and the Department of Education is difficult to acquire. The headteachers of each school have an Executive Headteacher to lean on who can develop and support their knowledge and act as a gatekeeper to avoid headteachers and schools being swamped by unnecessary bureaucracy. The headteachers work as a team supporting each other to ensure that schools do not miss opportunities that can benefit children.

- Through the Executive Headteacher, the leadership is also represented on key Local Authority groups as well having worked as a National Leader of Education, helping to influence policy and also ensure that their schools are in a strong position for the future.

4. Useful Links and Further Information

More information about the four schools can be found at:

www.gayhurst.hackney.sch.uk

www.kingsmead.hackney.sch.uk

www.mandeville.hackney.sch.uk

www.grasmere.hackney.sch.uk

and on the LEAP website:

www.leapfederation.org