

# The Topsham School

A love of learning and commitment to the success of every child at the heart of all we do



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The past several years have been no ordinary time for schools like ours. There have been many challenges to navigate, including many years of budget cuts, the stresses of the Covid pandemic, and a great deal of policy change affecting schools too.

Against this backdrop, many schools have moved in recent years to form partnerships with other schools to provide stronger support for their staff and more opportunities for their pupils, and to help secure financial stability into the future.

Last year, the governors considered which options would best secure The Topsham School's strong provision for its pupils and place in the community for years to come, along with providing opportunities for continued improvement. We did not want our school to be left vulnerable while most others in the area have joined school federations and academy trusts.

After much research and thought, we identified a preferred option: to join with the United Schools Federation. This would bring greater support and new opportunities for development with minimal disruption to the life of those involved in the school, as it would not involve leaving the local education authority or the delocalisation and far-reaching change that might go along with the more dramatic option of joining an academy trust. The Topsham School has also been in a very productive temporary Management Partnership with the United Schools Federation for the last 18 months, and this experience made us confident that making the partnership permanent would benefit The Topsham School, as well as enabling our own staff to share some of their expertise and excellent practice with the Federation.

A consultation on this option took place and closed on 26<sup>th</sup> February. The feedback was positive. On the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> February, the governors of The Topsham School and the governors of the United Schools Federation met separately, and each side decided to proceed with the partnership.

The school will join the United Schools Federation on 15<sup>th</sup> April. There will be no great change visible to you, the staff or your children. We will not be 'academising' or leaving Devon County Council. The plan is for the current school leadership and staff to remain in place. The school has



always participated in local partnerships, and this is simply a more robust form of partnership with other Devon schools who can do much to support each other.

The governors feel very positive about this move and we believe it will enhance the strengths of The Topsham School while pushing us forwards to be an even better place for your children to learn in future years.

The governors can be contacted via the school office and welcome correspondence from any parents who wish to make contact.

Our thanks, as always, to all those who work so hard for the school and its pupils.

Yours Sincerely

Alex Alder and Leanne Smith  
**Co-Chairs of Governors**

