



Fletching Partnership - Summary

Reasons for embarking on it:

- The Government are changing the way in which schools are supported. There is a move away from Local Authority support, (which has proven to be disappointingly unsuccessful in certain circumstances) towards school-to-school support whether that be in the form of MATs (Multi Academy Trusts), Federations, Partnerships, Alliances or some other form. The aim is for schools to work together to share good practice, expertise, facilities, buying power etc in order to improve outcomes for children, whilst avoiding the bureaucracy inherent in the Local Authority.
- For a school like ours this means the opportunity to maintain our friendly size and ethos whilst benefitting from the positives you gain from collaboration; banding together to increase capacity – examples vary from being able to offer clubs that our size wouldn't warrant, sharing the load of certain aspects of running a school such as subject leadership, taking some pressure off teachers, allowing staff them the valuable opportunity to see how things are done in other schools, giving senior teachers opportunities to develop rather than having to move to a bigger school to find the same challenge.
- Government funding to schools is also changing which will make our current budget structure untenable in a few years time – this is another part of the motivation for pursuing collaboration opportunities
- Following Mrs West completing her training to be an Executive Head Teacher last year and the stable nature of our schools' leadership the Governors were approached about a temporary secondment for her to become the EHT of Fletching as well as our school. This was a great opportunity for us to 'experiment' with partnering without any long term commitment

Learning and benefits that we gained from the experience

- Our teachers experienced moderating work together with their year group counterparts, (an opportunity that doesn't exist within a half form entry school on its own) allowing them to extend their professional dialogue and learn from each others perspectives



- Teachers shared topic and lesson planning – reducing duplication of work and sharing ideas
- Joint staff meetings allowed teachers to share practices and ideas across the schools giving a different insight into common issues
- Staff training on Reading was completed together – this offered financial efficiency as the cost could be shared
- The KS1 and EYFS children's sunflower growing project allowed them the opportunity to work with a wider group of children, communicating and learning together
- Fletching had an Ofsted Inspector as their Head of School– Mrs West was able to gain an enormous insight into Ofsted's current focus that she can put into practice back at Laughton. This would not normally be available
- Shared buying power - we clubbed together with Fletching and bought 3 for 2 on items such as stationary packages and EYFS resources
- The beginnings of some pressure reduction was felt where work was able to be shared across the schools

Reasons for not continuing this particular partnership:

- It became clear that Fletching is geographically too far away to make the journey between schools workable for staff. This also limited the children's events and activities that could easily be combined.
- We are not certain that forming a partnership between just two schools will provide the best solution and we looking into wider options
- Fletching, (with Mrs West's help) have appointed a Head Teacher from September 2016

What next?

There are many possible formats our partnership could take. The Governors are continuing to discuss with other local schools to explore the future options available to us whilst actively pursuing different ways of collaborating at a low level in order to learn and gain short term efficiencies. We will keep you informed. We are very keen to hear from parents your thoughts, please speak to us at the Parent Forums, the next of which will be in Term 1 with dates given in the first newsletter.