

Frequently Asked Questions: For Parents

Federation of High Street & Millbay Academy

[Version 21/07/2021]

This document has been drafted with the purpose of helping parents fully understand the rationale behind the decision to formalise the partnership between Millbay Academy and High Street Primary Academy.

As you may know, Millbay Academy and High Street Primary Academy have been working closely together since the beginning of the school year. Both schools have benefited greatly from this partnership through sharing strong and effective leadership, teaching expertise in curriculum development and having wider access to resources across both schools. Building upon the success of the partnership, the Reach South trustees have decided to join the schools in a Federation to take effect from September 2021.

The following list of questions and answers act as a starting point from which we wish to engage with parents in order to guide you and your child/ren through this process. As further questions are raised by parents we will update this document on a weekly basis and reissue it. That way, we intend to support all pupils and parents as best we can through this exciting journey and towards ultimately improving the overall educational experience shared by both schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

1. How will the Federation status affect my children if one is based at High Street and another at Millbay Academy?

We are committed to making the process as straightforward as possible and will therefore be publishing after the summer half term a number of plans, detailing our intentions and timetables. These will include, for example, confirmation for the timings of the start and end of school day, plus the safe and supervised transportation of pupils from one site to the other where there may be siblings (via a walking school bus).

2. Will my child/ren be required to wear a different uniform?

There will be no changes. The school that each pupil is registered to will still retain the same designated uniform. They remain to be two separate schools, but working alongside each other.

3. How will you maintain the identities of the two schools and their communities?

We are absolutely committed to ensuring that both our schools remain at the heart of the community, retaining their unique individuality whilst also having the benefits that larger schools enjoy.

4. What will happen in regards to the curriculum followed by each school from September?

As now, both schools will continue to follow the national curriculum. Both schools are already following very similar curriculums, for example all children adhere to the same programme for learning to read, phonics and maths mastery. Any changes and alignments we have incorporated will be for the purpose of enriching and making the overall learning experience better for the children; focusing strongly on inclusivity and putting no pupil at a disadvantage. Further details on the curriculum will be made readily available for parents to access via the schools' individual websites.

5. Will there be changes to key staff contacts for e.g. who would be my contact for SEN and other support?

A staff structure diagram with roles and responsibilities will be issued after summer half term when the leadership have finalised the staff team for September. There will be lots of opportunities for the children and staff to meet well before the Federation begins. We will contact you shortly after the half term break to inform you of who will be responsible for each class from September 2021. A programme of events for children, staff and parents, will be published by half term.

6. Will I have a chance to visit the school that my child is due to be located at?

Yes, this is important to us and we will have a programme of events for children, staff and parents scheduled after the Summer half-term; details of which we will share with you in the coming weeks.

7. Will there still be familiar staff at each site, so that my child does not feel lost when/if they are expected to go to the other school for lessons?

During the summer term there will be greater levels of partnership between the staff of both schools and an increased frequency of their presence at each site. This will provide a greater opportunity for pupils to familiarise themselves with all of the wider staff team serving both schools as part of the Federation. Staff will also be making sure that they are introducing themselves to all pupils, to assist with any transition arrangements.

8. Will there be additional opportunities for Millbay pupils have access to the attractive outside facilities offered at High Street Primary?

Yes. There will be greater opportunity for all primary pupils from both locations to enjoy a greatly improved outdoor provision for sport and other outdoor pursuits as part of the Federation of the two schools.

9. Will there be additional opportunities for High Street pupils, such as access to the excellent drama and theatre facilities at Millbay?

Yes. Pupils at High Street, alongside their newfound Millbay friends, will now be able to perform in plays and enjoy theatrical experiences from within the outstanding facilities at Millbay Academy. They will also benefit from access to specialist teachers and teaching spaces, such as those dedicated to: science, food technology, art, and design technology; to list a few.

10. Will my child still have access to the level of support they need?

Yes, children's needs will be assessed on an individual basis and it remains our priority to meet the needs of children.

11. Will there be the opportunity to benefit from wrap around care as part of the new arrangements?

We recognise the importance of this offer, so we intend to engage with parents very soon to ask for your feedback on what services you would like to see in place and have access to.

12. As part of the change process, will each school be expected to make changes to their policies?

All the policies relating to the day-to-day running of both schools, for example the Attitudes to Learning Policy will be updated accordingly and aligned in readiness for September 2021. These will be made available for parents to access via the schools' individual websites.

13. Have the proposed building works scheduled to take place at Millbay Academy influenced the decision to move the children to High Street Primary?

Yes, it is anticipated that the construction programme will be phased in such a way so as to ensure children remain in the current building as much as possible. By making strategic usage of both sites, we will be able to maintain levels of continuity and care, and ensure that the

learning of the children is not adversely disrupted by the school's involvement in a major building project.

14. Will there be any changes to the lunch time arrangements my child is used to at their school?

Lunch arrangements will remain the same regardless of where your child is located. Lunches will continue to be cooked at both sites, meaning pupils will have access to a hot meal or are welcome to bring their own packed lunch.

15. How will the school communicate with me?

There will be a number of communication mediums adopted; several of which you may already be familiar with:

- Thursday communication from the schools
- School Newsletter
- Contact Books
- School email addresses
- Websites

16. Will my child/ren have access to any Lunchtime or After-school Clubs?

Yes, all children will benefit from these provisions and we will be looking to expand the offer. We will also be seeking further feedback from parents as to what they might wish to see put in place.

17. What investment is now being put into the schools?

High Street is currently being prepared to receive Millbay pupils in September. We are investing significant funds into the building and site as part of an ongoing programme of improvements. We also anticipate making additional investment directly into classroom environments and the site prior to the new term commencing in September.

At Millbay we are working closely with the Department for Education and a specialist team of designers, to develop proposals for a multi-million pound capital investment into the school building. The proposals include 10 new classrooms, additional intervention spaces, library, IT, science and technology spaces and a new entrance suite. A planning application is anticipated to be made shortly with a view to confirming the earliest possible construction programme, to ensure the school can benefit from these new and enhanced facilities as soon as possible.

18. Can I choose which site my child is educated at?

From the start of September, children will receive their education at the following school site:

Year Group	Location
Reception	High Street
Year 1	High Street
Year 2	High Street
Year 3	High Street
Year 4	Millbay
Year 5	Millbay
Year 6	Millbay

19. How can I voice my concerns and/or ask further questions?

We are excited about our plans and intentions to enhance and improve the experience for children and we welcome your thoughts and observations. Any queries and/or concerns can be directed to federation@reachsouth.org where responses will be reflected within an updated version of the FAQs. This document will be added to and reissued on a weekly basis, so that all parents can benefit from the insight and queries coming through from other parents.

20. I would like to discuss my concerns regarding your plans. Will you be holding any parent meetings regarding the move to Federation?

We will shortly be publishing a schedule of meetings for parents, both virtual and onsite at the schools when it is safe to do so. This will give parents the opportunity to raise whole range of issues and concerns and for the Trust to provide answers.

21. Will there still be a pre-school available?

Yes, there will be a nursery provision provided for the benefit of both schools. This will be based at High Street and will cater for both part-time and full-time requirements.

22. When will face to face meetings with parents be taking place?

We will be offering parents the opportunity to meet with us at High Street Primary Academy on Wednesday 26th May and at Millbay Academy on Thursday 27th May. On these dates we will be:

- Presenting you with further details on the exciting plans we have for pupils attending from September 2021
- Taking you on a virtual guided tour of the school, so anyone unfamiliar with the school can be reassured of the facilities and opportunities that will now be made available to the children through this federation of two schools.
- Providing you with a forum in which to air your concerns and have these answered in a face to face environment.

23. Both my children currently attend breakfast club at High street which starts at 8am so that I can go to work. Will this still be possible?

Yes, our wrap-around care will still be made available to parents and will now also be opened up for the benefit of Millbay parents too. We will be getting in contact with you during week commencing 17th May to ask for your feedback and interest in utilising this provision, so that we can best cater for the needs of parents at both schools.

24. I am concerned with how I am meant to get both children to school on time. Could you please tell me how I am meant to pick one child up at High Street for 3.15pm and then my other child at Millbay for 3.20pm?

We will be consulting with parents about the timings of each school in the coming weeks to ensure these meet the needs of parents with children at both schools. As now, we will continue to offer a walking bus to and from each school. (*Please also see FAQ 1*)

25. I have a child in Year 7 at Millbay and my youngest is due to start reception in September. I have heard rumours that children age 4 years and younger will be going to High Street Primary. Can you tell me if this is the case?

Yes, Reception will be based at High Street from September 2021. This will provide access to a wider range of resources for pupils and allow for better use of facilities, such as the high quality outdoor learning environment at High Street.

26. My daughter is in preschool. Is there an after school provision as part of the wrap around care at High Street? If so, what time does it finish please?

For details relating to the wrap-around care being set up for pupils attending both school sites from September 2021, please see the answer to FAQ 23. Following feedback from the wrap-around care survey (to be issued week commencing 17th May), we will then determine the most suitable timings and convey these to parents, along with other key information about the services on offer.

27. Can you please confirm the longer term plans of this merger?

The partnership being formed between High Street and Millbay is a Federation and not a Merger. We will however be providing details on any future proposals at the parent engagement meetings scheduled at the end of May 2021. [Please see FAQ 22]

28. Will the proposed changes eventually roll out to the remaining primary years?

All the primary years will be part of the Federation, so the changes will affect all primary pupils attending both Millbay Academy and High Street Primary Academy. Please see FAQ 18 for details of the location that each primary year group will be based from September 2021.

29. What is a Federation and what does it mean for my child/ren?

A Federation is a formal agreement between two or more schools to work together on a permanent basis. The partnership of the two schools is led and managed under the direction of a single governing body, including representatives of both schools. Each of the schools in the federation receives their own budget, separate Ofsted Reports and separately published results.

The driving purpose behind the Federation is educational and therefore in the best interests of the current and future children and young people attending the schools. A Federation will mean that the schools will operate as one organisation and benefit from:

- Greater consistency with shared responsibility for curriculum and teaching and learning across a wider group of staff, a wider range of resources for pupils, and with consistent approaches to handwriting, reading, maths and promoting good behaviour;
- Children being grouped with their peers in appropriate age classes;
- Reducing the number of major transitions that High Street pupils face, for example by creating a seamless transition from key-stage 2 to key-stage 3. This will help reduce the risk of lost learning at the start of key-stage 3 for High Street pupils;
- Ensuring that the youngest pupils from Millbay benefit from the high quality outdoor learning environment at High Street;
- All pupils will benefit from access to state-of-the-art resources. Millbay's transformation is one of the largest regeneration projects in the south of England and is creating a vibrant new waterfront quarter for Plymouth;
- Greater opportunity to build relationships between a wider group of pupils, parents and staff;
- Continued access for pupils and their families to extended services and facilities;
- Parents/carers will not have to apply for a place for their child for key-stage 3 (Year 7) once their child is on roll in the early years.

30. What uniform will next year's nursery intake be required to wear?

Any children attending the nursery provision being provided at High Street Primary (for both Millbay and High Street eligible children) will **not** be expected to wear any uniform.

No further questions have been received by the Federation at this time.