

The Consultation regarding the proposal for Compton and Up Marden CE Primary School to join
Downland Village Schools Federation (DVSF)

The Diocese of Chichester has long been an advocate of schools working in federations. As a result of working with a growing number of federations across both West and East Sussex, we have come to understand how positive an impact these strong partnerships can have on children, staff and school communities. We have been engaged with the challenges facing small and rural schools for several years and in 2019 West Sussex Council consulted on closing Compton and Up Marden, given some of the matters around the school's future viability.

Working closely in partnership with the Diocese and governors, the Local Authority made a clear commitment not to close the school providing active and immediate steps were taken to secure the future of the school through formal, federated partnership with another school(s).

The governors at Compton and Up Marden, the Diocese and Local Authority have worked together to explore the range of options open to the school to work in sustainable partnership. It was essential to us all that the unique character of the Church of England school was retained for its community, both now and into the future.

Having seen at first hand the positive impact on both Rake and Rogate Church of England schools coming together in a federation in 2020 under the leadership of an Executive leadership model, this federation of 2 schools has been regarded as a strong potential partner for Compton and Up Marden.

We know that in any process of change difficult decisions often have to be faced and taken. However, despite the challenges, the exciting potential that this federation offers the 3 schools, allows for each school to retain their own unique ethos and individual character. Furthermore the positive benefits to all the pupils, both those currently in the schools and those yet to come, means that children remain at the centre of any decision making for all the schools involved.

For these reasons the Diocese believes that the federation of DVSF and Compton and Up Marden offers a significant opportunity for Compton and Up Marden to contribute as an equal member of the federation and to thrive and flourish into the future.

For the reasons stated above the Diocese strongly supports the move to consult on formal federation between DVSF and Compton and Up Marden.