



Leadership for excellence in education and training

Cardiff Catholic Learning Partnership

An outline proposal prepared for:

Corpus Christi HS, St Illtyd's HS, Mary Immaculate HS,
St David's Catholic College and
the Archdiocese of Cardiff

by

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1. Introduction and background

This document is the outcome of a joint commission by the Catholic Archdiocese, three Cardiff 11-16 Catholic High Schools and St David's Catholic Sixth Form College. The aim was to produce an outline proposal for a federation between the three 11-16 High Schools: Corpus Christi, Mary Immaculate and St Illtyd's, working in formal collaboration with St David's Catholic Sixth Form College.

The main elements of the proposal relate to:

- A model of partnership working in which the Catholic sector providers move from close cooperation between the four institutions to federated status for the schools working in formal collaboration with St David's College
- the design of an integrated curriculum for learners across the three schools to be delivered collaboratively with the support of St David's Catholic College, the other Cardiff 14-19 Network faith-based cluster partners and local schools
- a plan for the use of spare accommodation at Mary Immaculate by St David's College to expand pre- and post-16 faith-based learning opportunities in west Cardiff, while relieving pressure on the present college campus

Special features

In addressing these primary aims, the proposal also seeks to take account of a number of national and local policies aimed at increasing participation, raising standards of achievement and improving the quality of provision for learners. These include:

- the development of Learning Partnerships as set out in the WAG's skills strategy: 'Transforming Education and Training in Wales'
- the curriculum requirements set out in the proposed Learning and Skills Measure for Wales
- the development of an enhanced faith-based 'local curriculum' for 14-16 year old learners in Cardiff and neighbouring areas
- effective delivery of the six elements of Learning Pathways 14-16
- increased access to general and applied subject options for the three schools delivered in collaboration with St David's College

- greater breadth and balance of learning opportunities across the five domains accessible to learners from other faith-based schools
- development of the WBQ within the partnership
- enhanced opportunities for pupils with additional learning needs
- additional progression routes post-16, concentrating on local economic priorities and skills needs
- alignment with Cardiff LEA's plans for secondary school reorganisation and the potential of the scheme for a reduction of surplus places in the secondary sector

Feasibility study

The feasibility study produced by TRIBAL in October 2007 described the previous history of collaboration between the partner institutions and set out a wide range of potential benefits for moving to a federal structure. These can be summarised as:

- **Improving the achievement of all learners**
- **Curriculum pathways – broadening opportunities and entitlement for learners 14-19**
- **Improving learning and teaching – sharing models of good practice/coaching and mentoring**
- **Professional development for teachers – developing subject expertise through subject network groups and co-ordinated CPD**
- **Staff deployment – sharing of complementary specialisms**
- **Strategic leadership, management and governance**
- **Cost effectiveness – saving on planning and administrative time**
- **Facilitating community development and links**

Purpose and scope of this document

The proposal to establish a federation is intended to build on the initial feasibility study undertaken by TRIBAL and to address the main recommendations contained in that report about the next level of planning needed to take forward the proposal to establish a federal structure.

There are three intended audiences for this proposal:

1. Governing Bodies, parents and staff of the three schools and the college
2. Cardiff Local Education Authority
3. The Welsh Assembly Government

The paper is intended to provide an indication of the benefits of moving towards formal collaboration and a federated status for the three schools. It aims to provide sufficient detail about the potential advantages of enhanced opportunities for learners and staff, and to give key stakeholders a model of governance which might serve as a basis for consultation. Further detailed planning on a number of aspects will be required prior to the submission of formal applications.

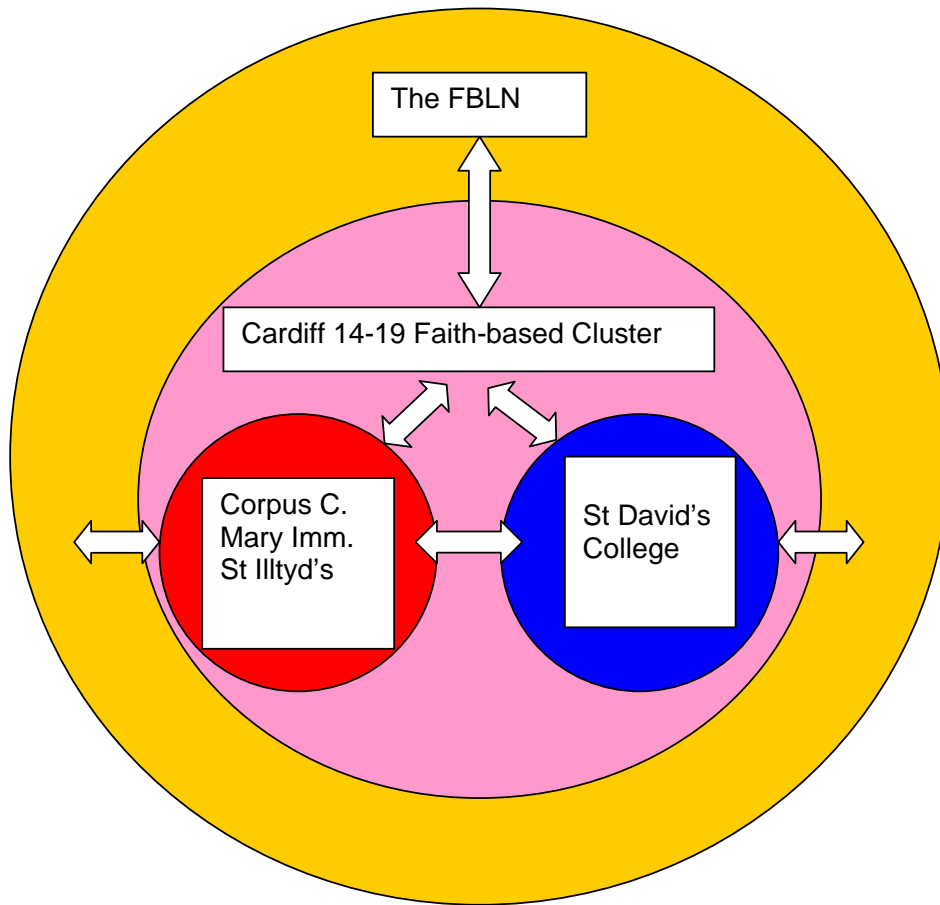
2. The wider context of faith-based education

This paper makes reference to the proposed federation partners, the Cardiff faith-based cluster (which includes the two Church-in Wales secondary comprehensive schools) as well as to the Faith-based Learning Network (FBLN). It is important at the outset to distinguish clearly between these various groupings and their current and future relationships.

1. **The three Cardiff Catholic High Schools** (Corpus Christi, St Illtyd's and Mary Immaculate) are referred to as the proposed 'federation schools'. These schools also have a close relationship with St Richard Gwyn 11-16 Catholic Comprehensive School, which is located in the Vale of Glamorgan. This relationship is based partly on its close proximity to west Cardiff and also the fact that the majority of pupils from the school also progress to St David's College
2. **The Cardiff Faith-based Cluster**, which includes the three Catholic High Schools and St David's College plus St Teilo's and Bishop of Llandaff Church-in Wales High Schools, is one of the six local partnerships developed by the Cardiff 14-19 Network as part of its structure for the delivery of learning opportunities.
3. **The Faith-based Learning Network (FBLN)**, which was established in February 2003, is a much larger group with members located across Wales. It has continued to grow and the total number of learning providers has recently expanded from 13 to 15. The role of the College has been important in facilitating the delivery of an increasing range of options and pathways and in supporting the development of a VLN.

The relationship between these three structures is indicated below:

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As Christian education institutions, the member institutions of the FBLN aim to support each other in witnessing to faith in Christ in every aspect of work. Their specific objectives are to:

- maximise choice and learning opportunities for young people 14-19 within the Network
- plan collaboratively, for the benefit of learners, sharing resources and expertise where helpful and practicable
- strive for the highest possible quality of education for learners (14-19) who choose to study at Christian faith-based institutions

- provide the highest possible standards of advice and guidance for learners to enable them to plan their education flexibly and in a context appropriate to their faith
- contribute positively to the fulfilment of the Welsh National Education Agenda

The three schools working collaboratively will achieve significant benefits, not merely for the learners in the three federation schools, but by contributing to enhanced learning opportunities for pupils in the Cardiff faith-based cluster and beyond.

The Feasibility study raised the possibility that a Catholic Federation might somehow disadvantage the two Church-in-Wales schools in the Cardiff cluster. The prospective federation partners are confident that the provision of an increasingly integrated curriculum across the three Catholic High Schools will in fact both strengthen and enhance the range of options available to pupils from all five schools and to other learners outside the cluster.

It is envisaged that greater numbers of pupils from the Catholic sector may wish to take up opportunities provided by the Anglican partners, thereby increasing group sizes and the viability of new vocational options at Key Stage 4. The geographical dispersal of the cluster schools, with obvious groupings in the north/east (Corpus Christi, St Teilo's and St Illtyd's) and west (Mary Immaculate, Bishop of Llandaff and, potentially, St Richard Gwyn), makes the continuation of local partnerships both necessary and desirable.

At the same time, the partners are eager to remain an integral part of the wider strategic network of 14-19 provision across the local authority. This proposal does not envisage the Catholic sector, or the faith-based cluster, operating in isolation from other providers. The Catholic partnership is keen to identify curriculum areas where it would be of mutual benefit to collaborate with neighbouring schools in the west, north and east of the city. This would reduce travelling times and make best use of staff expertise and specialist resources.

There have been useful links in the past between the Catholic High Schools and their non-faith-based neighbours. For example, Mary Immaculate and Michaelston Community College have collaborated successfully in provision for modern languages. Where there are plans to extend and refurbish specialist accommodation, the intention would also be to make these available to schools outside the faith-based cluster.

A similar set of aims underpins relationships between further education institutions. St David's College is not resourced to offer the full range of vocational pathways. Following recommendations in the Webb review, it makes sense for three local colleges, St David's, Glan Hafren and Barry, to continue to

work closely together to eliminate unnecessary duplication, develop centres of excellence in complementary specialisms and ensure access to the highest quality of provision for learners in the greater Cardiff area.

3. Demographic context

Projected numbers of pupils on school rolls

Following a reduction in the number of pupils attending Mary Immaculate HS, projected numbers of pupils across the three schools, based on the numbers currently attending the partner primary schools, show a stable secondary population of around 2,400. The size of the Key Stage 4 cohorts is set to rise gradually over the next few years.

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Corpus	1034	1035	1028	1044
Mary I	545	555	570	580
St Illtyd's	729	760	755	750
TOTALS	2308	2350	2353	2374

According to the WAG formula, the combined capacity of the three schools is 2725. Since the projected total of the three schools for the foreseeable future is approximately 2400, this represents a combined usage of just under 90%.

Projected size of Year 10/ Year 11 cohorts

	2008/9		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Y10	Y11	Y10	Y11	Y10	Y11	Y10	Y11
Corpus C	222	213	191	222	221	191	191	221
Mary I	100	105	115	100	112	115	111	112
St Illtyd's	155	123	152	155	149	152	150	149
TOTALS	477	441	458	477	482	458	452	482
TOTAL KS 4	918		935		940		934	

Supply of secondary places in the three Catholic High Schools

It has been the view of the Local Authority for some time that, given the overall number of pupils, the Catholic community in Cardiff could be best served by having two rather than three 11-16 Catholic secondary schools. This view is based largely on four propositions, namely that:

- reducing to two Catholic schools would remove a significant number of surplus places

- having two schools of approximately 1200 pupils would safeguard and enhance curriculum opportunities for pupils in the individual schools at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
- removing one uneconomic school would result in significant cost savings to the Authority that could be used to benefit pupils
- removing one Catholic school would assist with the overall re-configuration of schools across the city in line with demographic needs.

The Archdiocese and partner schools understand all of the above issues and this proposal seeks to address each of them through an alternative approach. It seeks to achieve a cost effective solution to these concerns while safeguarding the mission of the Archdiocese to maintain its close and longstanding links with the Catholic community in the east, north and west of the city.

To consider briefly each of the four issues identified above:

- only one of the three schools has a significant number of surplus places and the proposal is for the spare accommodation in Mary Immaculate HS to be used in partnership with St David's College to establish specialist facilities in a number of applied/vocational areas. This will provide new learning pathways for pupils aged 14-16 and some full-time provision for post-16 learners. The rental agreement proposed will substantially reduce surplus places and contribute towards heating, lighting, maintenance and other costs, resulting in savings for the LEA.
- the proposed federation would enable schools to combine groups and for staff to be deployed flexibly across the three schools, thereby maximising the use of specialist expertise to protect the breadth of the curriculum. This will enhance opportunity and choice at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and ensure high quality learning experiences for pupils.
- cost effectiveness is recognised as an issue and the migration of the three schools towards the establishment of a federation will significantly increase the efficiency of current provision and enable the partnership to achieve the breadth of curriculum opportunities required by forthcoming legislation. The three schools are all housed in new buildings which represent a significant investment with no obvious alternative use for the accommodation. Whichever of the three schools might be closed, the revenue savings to the LEA would be offset by the need for substantial new extensions to the two remaining schools in order to absorb the extra number of pupils. Over time, the federation will also create some savings in staffing, administration and running costs. The increasing use of the

VLE will also be cost effective in helping to increase collaboration while minimising the need for travelling.

- the curriculum proposals in the plan are intended to complement those already embedded in the Authority's 14-19 Network cluster plans. The proposed expansion of facilities for vocational pathways will not only benefit learners within the Faith-based cluster, but will also enhance and complement provision for pupils in other local schools neighbouring the Catholic High Schools.

In addition to these considerations, the Catholic partnership stresses the fact that, in addition to one school in the north of the city which has no spare capacity, the schools in the far east and west of the city serve two of the most disadvantaged communities in Cardiff. It is an important part of the mission of the Archdiocese that pupils from both east and west Cardiff should have a guaranteed progression route to the kind of high quality tertiary education provided by St David's College.

All three schools have strong relationships with their respective parishes and benefit from good support from the local Catholic communities. This stems from the long-established links between the communities and the schools and a sense of tradition and ownership which often goes back several generations.

The three schools are already in the process of working closely with the College and other nearby schools in the Faith-based cluster to broaden choices at Key Stage 4 as a means of increasing progression to education, training and employment post-16. This is a process closely in line with the aspirations and policies of WAG, as well as the priorities of the local authority.

The continuing existence of the three Catholic schools is seen as pivotal to these developments and to the ability of the Archdiocese and schools to fulfil their commitment to providing Catholic faith-based education that is geographically accessible to all sectors of the Catholic community.

4. Governance

The partners propose a three-stage journey whereby the schools and the college strengthen their existing partnership through a series of overlapping developments:

1. Establishing formal arrangements for collaboration with one or more joint committees as set out in the relevant WAG regulations
2. The three schools applying for federated status under draft proposals due to come into force in spring 2009
3. The three schools and the college gaining recognition as a 'Learning Partnership' as defined in the WAG's strategy document: 'Delivering Skills That Work for Wales'

Some of the specific advantages of these arrangements for the Catholic sector will include:

- consolidating and extending the current range of curriculum pathways and subject options in line with WAG expectations and future requirements
- the ability to plan and commission third party provision (for example, for new curriculum provision not available in college)
- raising standards by increasing the rate of participation and progression to post-16 education and training courses
- creating a unified staff with team working, staff development and the sharing of good practice across provider institutions
- strengthening the common ethos and mission that exists across the provider institutions
- providing a context for wider learning of pupils and students through out-of-school hours activity, community development and voluntary work

The alternative option to federation would be to create a single Catholic school based on three campuses. This would involve the LA and responsible authorities for all three schools in going through the formal processes of school closure and the application for the opening of a new school. This might result in some budgetary saving for the local authority. However, the disruption involved and the negative impact on the schools and their communities would make this option unacceptable.

1. Formal Collaboration

The three schools and the college will work to establish arrangements for formal collaboration. The definition of formal collaboration, together with the approved conditions and arrangements are set out in:

- **The Collaboration Between Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2008**
- **'Delivering Skills that Work for Wales: Draft Regulations for Collaborative Arrangements between Further Education Institutions... and Schools**

The schools regulations came into force in March 2008 and the procedures are thus an option for partners at the current time. They represent a possible first step in the direction of more formal, collaborative working. In essence, 'collaboration arrangements' can exist where two or more governing bodies agree that any of their functions may be discharged jointly.

The proposed regulations for collaboration between FE colleges and schools are similar in that they allow for participating institutions to delegate responsibility for an aspect of provision to a joint committee. The rationale for joint committees set out in the proposals is that:

The joint committees will be able to take decisions within the remit delegated to them by their parent governing bodies without the need to consult those individual governing bodies. Joint committees will be able to focus on specific matters delegated to them, and to develop expertise about them. This will speed up decision making and encourage better focus on matters of mutual interest to several bodies and will thus help achieve higher level of collaboration between providers.

Many of the regulations are concerned with setting out the criteria for joint committees, their membership and operation. The key criteria that need to be met include:

- an agreed constitution and membership
- clear terms of reference for each joint committee
- annual appointment of an impartial chair
- agreed quorum for meetings
- voting arrangements
- annual review by the collaborating governing bodies
- formal clerking with meetings convened, agendas drawn up and minutes of agreed actions distributed
- the majority of members to be governors

2. Federation

The three catholic High Schools will apply for federated status. The proposed arrangements for school federation are set out in the consultation document:

Draft Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2009

The proposed regulations governing school federations are subject to consultation. If adopted, they should come into force in spring 2009. According to the proposed regulations, a joint federation is defined simply as two or more schools having a single governing body, whilst retaining their individual character and identity.

The consultation document suggests that 'Schools already working together collaboratively may wish to consider formalising their arrangements into a federation.' The draft regulations summarise the potential advantages of federation as follows:

Through working together, schools can share good practice, develop new approaches and promote activities which would be difficult to sustain individually. This could involve curriculum delivery, shared leadership, and joint action to tackle inclusion issues or provision of community services. Federation of governing bodies could also facilitate cross-phase working to the benefit of pupils transferring between phases and the development of a single integrated curriculum and pastoral policies.

In the case of the Catholic High Schools, the adoption of federated arrangements will not affect in any way their Voluntary Aided status. Indeed, it is very likely that the shared religious character of the schools will serve to strengthen their shared sense of identity underpinned by a common mission and purpose.

Although the regulations do not allow for full federation between schools and FE institutions, a key advantage of adopting federated status will be that the collaboration arrangements for joint committees outlined above will be based on agreements between two governing bodies (the high school federation and the college) rather than four governing bodies.

The proposed regulations define those functions and aspects of provision which would be undertaken centrally by the new governing body and those that will remain separate.

Functions of the single governing body (GB) include:

- GB constituted under a single instrument of government
- would manage the delegated budgets and could consider 'pooling' each school's delegated budget into one budget
- flexible deployment and development of staff and resources for the benefit of pupils
- responsibility for staffing issues, appointments, suspension, discipline, dismissal and capability matters
- scope for unified policy making process and implementation

- produce a single annual report for parents (including each school's individual achievements)
- hold a combined annual parents' meeting
- the schools inspected by Estyn as a single entity

Functions/aspects retained by individual schools include:

- schools retain their individual reference number, name and ethos
- remain separate legal entities
- school's retain their own headteacher
- own admissions arrangements and registered pupils, as agreed by the federated GB
- delegated local authority budget

Leadership and management of the federation

The draft regulations set out the criteria for governing body representation, including the provision for additional 'sponsor governors' and associate pupil governors, the latter without voting rights. It is advised that there be suitable arrangements in place for the management of federations. This might be achieved in a variety of ways. There would be a need for:

- an appointed officer to oversee the federation
- administrative support
- support group meetings across all levels of management
- an appropriate committee structure to discharge the full range of GB responsibilities, plus those additional aspects arising from the federated arrangements

It was agreed by those consulted in the preparation of this plan that the need for administrative leadership could best be met by the existing headteachers rotating the 'chief executive' role, including:

- responsibility for servicing the single governing body
- chairing one or more key sub-committees
- negotiating with the local authority, WAG and key partners
- undertaking representational duties
- dealing with legal matters relating to the federation and other relevant correspondence

The additional responsibilities involved in managing the federation would be offset to a considerable degree by the opportunity afforded to combine existing management functions such as curriculum planning, staffing and INSET, quality assurance, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The introduction of the federation would provide excellent scope for middle and senior managers across the three schools to broaden and extend their leadership roles.

The experience of pilot federations in England suggests that, in the early stages of federation, while there are clear benefits in terms of overall strategic development, efficiency and co-ordination of activity, there is limited potential for saving on senior leadership posts. With or without an overall executive head, each campus will need a site manager who would retain many of the same responsibilities as the current headteachers. However, the pilots also show that, over time, there are potential savings for federations arising from:

- incremental benefits derived from joint purchasing of goods and services
- centralisation of administrative functions
- rationalisation of staffing

3. Catholic Learning Partnership

The three schools and the college will apply for recognition as a Catholic Learning Partnership. The proposed arrangements for Learning Partnerships are set out in the WAG consultation document:

Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales (September 2008)

The key argument in the document is that greater and more formal collaboration between providers is essential in order to widen options for 14-19 learners to meet the proposed entitlement, to reduce duplication and achieve excellence for learners. The case for transformation is based on the need to remove inefficiencies from the system in the way that resources are used currently and to strengthen the strategic management and coherence of current provision. At the heart of the policy is the need to raise standards of attainment and the level of qualifications achieved to meet the needs of employment.

Learning partnerships, including schools, colleges and work-based learning providers, should be established in each geographical area of Wales to facilitate joint planning and delivery of learning opportunities. The key characteristic of these 'learning partnerships', and the difference of these from current collaborative arrangements, will be:

a long term commitment to the joint management of provision or new shared governance arrangements that will need to be put into place.

The document suggests a range of criteria which should inform the development of learning partnerships. These relate to:

- the strategic fit between the partnership and the local learning network
- improvements for learners
- improvements for employers and the local economy
- cost effectiveness, long term sustainability and financial benefits

- acceptability and impact of the proposal
- provision of high quality learning
- enhancement of Welsh language and bilingual provision
- improvements in equality and diversity
- management and governance arrangements
- sources of funding

A range of models is suggested for possible future learning partnerships, including one which closely mirrors the proposed voluntary collaboration arrangements for joint governance under the proposed regulations outlined above in step 1.

The proposed 'Catholic Learning Partnership' is particularly well placed to meet many of these criteria and the partners will prepare a strategic outline proposal to be submitted to WAG for consideration by the deadline of 15 January 2009.

5. Existing partnership and collaboration

The partner schools and St David's College have a solid basis of collaboration on which to build. Existing relationships exhibit many of key critical success factors identified by government in Wales and England:

- shared identity and common purpose
- trust
- commitment
- common systems for evaluation and review
- leadership

Collaborative delivery and flexible deployment of staff

In terms of shared staffing, the Catholic High Schools and St David's College already have some experience of the flexible deployment of teachers across institutions. This will serve as a useful basis for further development and expansion under the propose school/college partnership arrangements.

Recently, these arrangements have included:

Subject	Hours taught	Teacher's home institution	Delivered at
English GCSE	2	St David's	Corpus Christi
English AS	2	Corpus Christi	St David's
Theatre Studies AS	2	Corpus Christi	St David's
BTEC Performing Arts	2	Corpus Christi	St David's

These exchanges do not include those vocational subjects taught directly by college staff or others brokered by the college and taught by other providers within the FBLN cluster arrangements.

The college has also provided a successful programme of enrichment courses for 14-16 year-old students from the Faith-based cluster. These are aimed particularly at providing additional challenges for the most gifted and talented students. The subjects included are offered at both AS Level and GCSE:

GCSE (Level 2)	AS (Level 3)
Latin	Critical Thinking
Psychology	Statistics
	Law

The 2-hour lessons are held in twilight sessions from 4.00pm – 6.00pm. It is planned to use this model for collaborative delivery which can be extended to

other subjects in due course as part of an extended option menu delivered through a common timetable. Given the similarity in the way that the three Catholic High Schools plan their day, the model could also easily be developed to incorporate the single afternoon lesson for the three schools.

Other joint arrangements operate between faith-based partners post-16, for example, with opportunities for collaboration between the College and St Teilo's Church-in-Wales HS in which some 30 students are able to access a range of AS/A subjects, including: geography, sociology, law, media studies, philosophy and film studies.

The partners are fortunate in that travelling times between the schools and the college are reasonable (see ANNEX D). Current timetabling within the faith-based cluster is based on a single, whole day for pupils to follow vocational subjects in Year 10 and another day in Year 11. In order to move forward on the expansion of a common curriculum, from 2009 the schools will increase the degree of common timetabling to include at least two further half-days to accommodate additional general and new vocational subjects.

Future developments will build upon the flexible delivery models currently used by the Faith-based cluster. These are based mainly on the location of physical resources and include:

- delivery of skills-based courses at the College's main campus (Hair & Beauty Therapy)
- delivery at both the College, as the 'hub' for Level 3 courses, and one or more spokes (including school campuses) for Foundation Level 1 and 2 courses
- collaborative delivery based at school sites serving the needs of pairs or groups of schools within the cluster

In line with Cardiff's policy for Network funding, individual partners pay a share of the delivery costs for new courses from their core budgets. In addition to funding received via the Network, the College and partners have self-funded some additional elements of provision, for example, the addition of beauty therapy to the existing hairdressing course.

Development and use of ICT

The College and its partners in the FBLN have made significant progress in the development of a virtual learning environment (VLE). Total enrolments for collaborative activity across Wales now exceed some 3000 potential learners. Plans are in place for extending the use of Moodle via a collaborative agreement

with the 14-19 Network and a member of staff appointed to the college is providing training and guidance for partners.

A wide range of library and information services is already available on the VLE, including, for example, guidance on pastoral/ tutorial matters and literacy programmes. Collaboration with Welsh medium providers is planned to ensure that Moodle is also available in Welsh. As part of this proposal, progressive use of the VLE is planned to complement the shared delivery of courses

Staff collaboration and training

Through the above activities and a range of other INSET, the prospective federation partners have regularly collaborated in staff training and development. As a next stage in developing a formal partnership, it is now proposed to establish a network of subject area teams from across the three schools and the college.

The subject teams will form a natural structure for future staff development activities to develop professional competence, update subject expertise and improve the achievement of learners. Another element of the plan will be to establish joint CPD programmes for middle managers and senior staff.

In addition, the staff networks will have a key role to play in planning the progressive integration and extension of the curriculum. Practical tasks to be undertaken at an early stage will be to:

- create an accurate profile of existing provision and take-up in each subject across the three schools
- evaluate cost effectiveness of current group sizes
- review future demand for subject courses, the number of teaching groups required and optimum location of provision across the federation
- explore and assess the examination/ syllabus options available in each subject and make recommendations for future provision
- explore models for the delivery of Key Stage 4 courses and, where relevant, individual units, making best use of the staff expertise within the subject team
- explore models of delivery for the revised National Curriculum subject orders for Key Stage 3, the non-statutory Skills Framework for 3 to 19 year olds and the Personal and Social Education Framework for 7 to 19 year olds, making best use of staff expertise and their current experience implementing the orders and frameworks

- provide a commentary on resource and timetabling implications, including the advantages/ disadvantages of moving (a) staff and (b) learners between sites

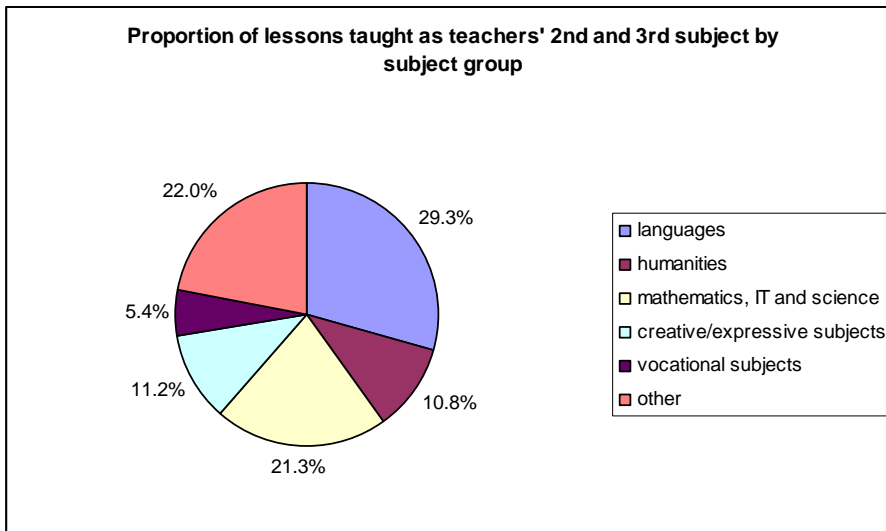
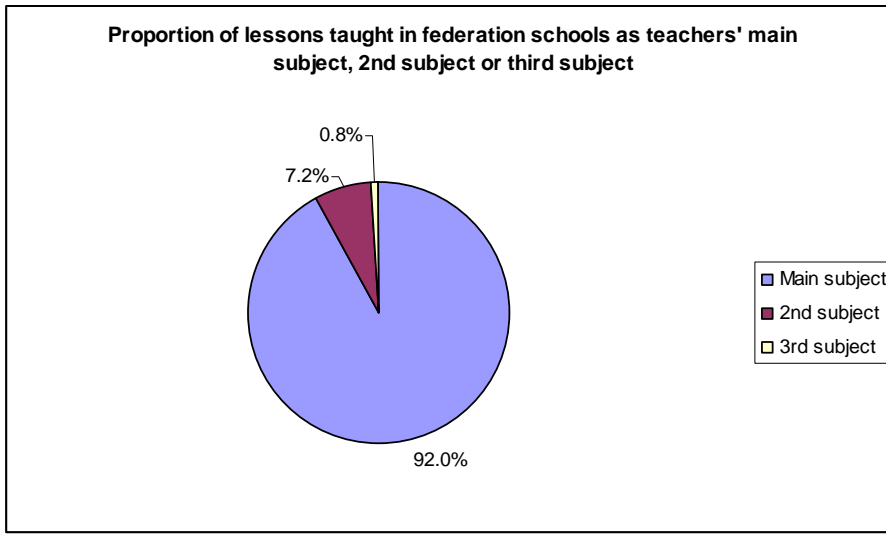
The overall aim will be to broaden and enrich available learning opportunities for pupils and, specifically, to meet the requirements for a local menu of options (14-16 and post-16) embodied in the proposed Learning and Skills Measure being introduced by the Welsh Assembly Government.

In all of the above developments, the federation schools will maintain their close links with the faith-based cluster and other neighbouring schools. Over the next three years, the intention is that further applied routes will be introduced involving all five of the schools in the faith-based cluster (see Annex A). There will also be a progressive integration of curriculum areas where there are currently small groups, for example, in modern languages and music.

6. Enhanced learning opportunities

The benefits of collaboration for learning opportunities in Key Stage 3 are partly related to the potential expansion of the pool of specialist teachers and the enhanced ability of the schools to ensure that all classes are taught by specialist teachers.

The charts below show the proportion of lessons currently taught by teachers in their main, second and third subjects.



One of the schools has recently embarked on an integrated approach to curriculum delivery in Year 7 as a means of implementing the skills-based approach intended to underpin the revised National Curriculum. For the purposes of the above analysis, these lessons were included as main specialisms, irrespective of the subjects taught. The experience of this school in designing and teaching an integrated, skills-based curriculum, as a bridge between primary and secondary school practice, will be invaluable if the other schools decide to develop a similar approach.

The deployment of teachers to the integrated curriculum model will increase flexibility, enable teachers to offer greater diversity of specialisms within their main subject areas and make it easier to combine less economic groups in Key Stage 4.

Key Stage 4

The Table of Year 10 provision for September 2008 in Annex A shows that:

- at present, there are only four optional GCSE subjects (Art, D&T, history and Spanish), out of the 20 provided overall, that are available to pupils in all three of the schools
- In addition, a limited number of pupils from the cluster schools can choose from the three BTEC courses (in Hairdressing, Construction and Catering) offered in partnership with St David's College
- There are a number of important subjects that none of the schools working in isolation is able to provide (applied science, separate sciences, dance, German, Italian, Polish or other languages, retail and customer service, public services, motor vehicle studies).
- At present, only one of the three schools is able to provide French, food technology, HSC, performing Arts, travel and tourism

An integrated curriculum will significantly increase equality of opportunity and meet in full the requirements of the proposed Learning and Skills Measure for Wales. As part of the planned three-year migration to full curriculum integration, most subjects with below the average group sizes will be provided collaboratively, starting with arts subjects, MFL and Welsh. The move to collaborative delivery will facilitate an overall reduction in the number of groups for existing provision, thereby releasing staffing capacity to increase the range of both general and applied courses.

Impact of proposed changes on existing provision and staffing

It is anticipated that increasing the curriculum offer will have an impact on the viability of groups in existing subjects and, consequently, on staffing needs. The curriculum model allows for some displacement of pupils from existing groups as numbers are spread across a wider range of options.

This will be offset by:

- increasing numbers of pupils transferring from general to applied options
- enabling pupils from across the sector to access general and applied subject courses
- reducing the overall number of teaching groups in existing subjects
- attracting increasing numbers of pupils from the faith-based cluster opting for applied subjects
- opening up general and applied subjects to other schools in the locality outside the cluster

It is also recognised that shifting the balance of the optional curriculum towards applied subjects will have an impact in reducing the level of need for staff with more traditional subject specialisms.

This will be offset by:

- deploying staff flexibly across the federation
- maximising the use of staff specialisms in Key Stage 3
- negotiating further opportunities for staff to contribute to the teaching of Level 3 and other post-16 courses within St David's College
- normal reductions in the federation's staffing capacity in general subjects through retirement
- where appropriate, re-training general subject staff to teach in new and applied areas

In order to assess the proposed federation's staffing profile, the partnership has reviewed overall capacity and the level of individual staff specialisms in each subject area across the three schools. The outcomes of this exercise are summarised in Annex C.

Post-16 curriculum

The role of St David's College is integral to the learning partnership proposal. For a number of years, the college has worked with its partner schools in the cluster to increase access to vocational provision pre-16. At the same time, the College has been expanding its own curriculum to offer progression routes to a more diverse range of post-16 vocational qualifications.

The current pressure on space at the main campus limits what can be offered to Key Stage 4 pupils, as well as restricting the scope for developing additional post-16 pathways. The additional routes proposed have the potential to attract new learners, especially at Levels 1 and 2, who might be attracted to remain in full-time education provided locally with the option of progressing to more advanced studies at the main St David's site.

Efficiency in the use of staff

Deploying staff across the three schools has the potential for saving costs by reducing the number of uneconomic groups, especially in Key Stage 4 options. The curriculum plan for 2008-09 (ANNEX A) shows that in Year 10, 74 option groups are taught optional subjects (excluding the Faith-based cluster subjects). There is currently an average of 16.8 pupils per group. Given a teaching time of 2.5 hours per week for each option, the teaching hours currently required to deliver these options is therefore $74 \times 2.5 \times 39 \text{ weeks} = 7215 \text{ hours}$.

By deploying staff across the three schools, it will be possible to maintain the breadth of options available but reduce the number of groups offered. By increasing group sizes to a reasonable average of 24 (slightly more for classroom-based subjects and less for workshop and laboratory-based options), the staffing hours could be reduced to 5070, a saving of 2145 hours for Year 10 and a similar number of hours for Year 11.

Given an average teaching load of about 20 hours per week, an individual teacher can deliver a maximum of 780 hours classroom teaching. With costs in the region of £50 per hour, the annual total potential savings across the three schools on this element alone would be in the region of £215,000.

As mentioned above, by progressively deploying staff across the three schools in both Key Stages 3 and 4, it will be possible to increase further the proportion of lessons taught by staff in their main subject specialisms.

Expansion of accommodation and resources

The three Catholic High Schools are all fortunate in that they are accommodated in new and attractive buildings. The College's estates strategy includes three

specific proposals to develop further specialist accommodation and facilities in new applied curriculum areas based at each of the schools. These are for:

- i-media at Mary Immaculate
- performing arts at Corpus Christi
- sports studies at St Illtyd's

The intention in each case is to widen access for a range of learners to high quality provision located in state of the art accommodation, staffed by specialist teachers. In order to ensure maximum use of the new facilities, provision will be targeted at a wide range of prospective users:

- 14-16 year old learners from the faith-based cluster
- learners from local schools in other partnerships
- post-16 college students doing one-year introductory courses at Levels 1 and 2
- after school and evening use by adult and community learning groups
- use by specialist vocational providers
- use by professional sports and arts organisations

i-Media centre (Mary Immaculate HS)

The college is currently investing over £20,000 in establishing an i-Media centre in spare accommodation in Mary Immaculate High School. This is the first phase of a larger development which will further equip another two rooms for media-related activities and establish resources for additional vocational, including provision for retail.

The accommodation is largely self-contained and has a separate entrance. The College is negotiating terms for leasing this wing of the school and eventually further areas at a realistic rent, thereby significantly reducing that proportion of school accommodation judged to be surplus to requirements.

The choice of subject areas has taken careful account of local and regional skills needs, employment opportunities. It has also considered the need to provide a balance of vocational pathways across the five learning domains.

The first cohort of Year 10 learners, drawn from the faith-based cluster schools has begun their studies for the double option BTEC First Certificate award at the main college campus, pending the completion of refurbishment work and the installation of new ICT and other equipment at Mary Immaculate.

Performing arts centre (Corpus Christi HS)

Plans for a new, free-standing arts block on the Corpus Christi campus have been drawn up. This would provide four specialist teaching areas, including well equipped studios for dance and drama, partitioned flexibly and with retractable seating so as to provide a single space suitable for performances.

The cost of the current proposals is approximately £2.2 million, half of which would form the basis of a bid from St David's College for support from the WAG's FE strategic Investment Fund. The proposed source of the remaining 50% would be from the 14-19 Network capital bids fund.

Ownership of the building would most likely reside with the LEA who own the land, with guaranteed entitlement for the college to use the facilities for a proportion of the week. It would be sensible for the school to be responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of the centre. Lacking any dedicated performance area in the existing school, it would be appropriate for pupils to have the opportunity to make use of the facilities when not in use for 14-16 cluster courses or college learners. The school would also be responsible for promoting the facilities and organising evening and community use.

Sports studies (St Illtyd's HS)

A similar plan has been drawn up to build a sports and fitness centre to be located on the campus of St Illtyd's High School. Outline costs are approximately £1 million and it is anticipated that the sources of funding and arrangements for ownership and management will be broadly similar to those for the Corpus Christi art centre outlined above. The plan is for a free-standing block so that access to the facilities would be separate from the entrance to the school, thus facilitating use by a range of outside groups.

Taken together, these three schemes represent an ambitious programme of development which will not only enrich curriculum opportunities for faith-based cluster partners, but will enhance the ability of the local authority to provide the range of options required for 14-16 and post-16 learners.

7. Wider policy context

This federation proposal is rooted firmly within the strategic framework of the Cardiff 14-19 Network and the curriculum developments outlined are intended to promote the achievement of national, regional and local targets as articulated in the Cardiff Network's ANDP and supporting documentation. These identify five key priorities:

- **Partnership development** through curriculum and timetable integration, expansion of the options menu, the development of QA frameworks and high quality provision and providers
- Progressive **capital development** programme
- The establishment and implementation of the **Learner Support Framework** that then ensures that learners are on individually planned pathways matched to their needs
- **Stakeholder engagement** through publicity, activities with learners and parents, listening and responding to the learner voice and holding the annual conference
- The development of **e-strategies in learning environments** involving, for example, Moodle, careers Wales On-line project, e-portfolio and the skills passport

(Source: Cardiff 14-19 Network Summary of Strategic Priorities)

Development of local curricula to meet regional and local needs

There is a high degree of correlation between the curriculum areas highlighted for development by the federation schools (and Cardiff faith-based cluster) and the skills needs identified for Cardiff and the south-east region (see ANNEX B). In particular, the proposed curriculum plan gives high priority to:

- Construction and built environment
- Creative industries (including film, TV and multi-media)
- Early years, health and social care
- Retail and customer care
- Hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism

- Bio-sciences
- Business, banking and financial services
- Public services

The Federation schools are convinced that, working together with St David's college and their partners in the faith-based cluster, they can make a significant contribution to the development of a local curriculum. Indeed, only by moving to a fully-integrated curriculum will it be possible to fully meet the targets for general and applied subject options being proposed for the Learning and Skills Measure to be introduced in 2009.

In agreeing this outline plan, the partners are agreed that they would wish to continue the development of new options in such a way that it avoids duplication or clashes with the pathways being offered by the other clusters and supports the holistic development of learning opportunities for 14-19-year old learners across Cardiff.

The federation schools' close partnership with St David's college is obviously a major strength of the proposal. It brings advantages in terms of access to facilities and staffing expertise for 14-16. It can also help to ensure that appropriate progression routes are available for post-16 learners to progress to higher level qualifications.

On the other hand, the College and partners understand that there may be limits to what can be provided solely by St David's College. Members of the project steering group are also well aware of the developing agenda for tertiary development arising from the Webb review of Further Education in Wales. Learners from the faith-based sector already benefit from provision available via Coleg Glan Hafren (in motor vehicle engineering) and Barry College (construction courses). Strengthening the partnerships between FE providers across the Cardiff metropolitan area can only be to the advantage of all learners.

8. Next steps

The proposals outlined in this document, either for the establishment of one or more joint committees or to gain federated status for the schools or to establish a Catholic Learning Partnership, should be the subject of consultation with the relevant governing bodies. Given approval and support of governing bodies and the Archdiocese for any proposals along these lines, the next steps should be to:

1. Consult at the earliest date with City and County of Cardiff Council as the LEA to consider the wider implications of the proposals for collaboration and eventual federation and to secure their support for the application process.
2. Establish a Federation Steering Group (FSG) with governor and headteacher representation from the partner schools, plus members from the Diocese, LEA and St David's College, to action the application processes for collaboration, federation and Learning Partnerships
3. Carry out a formal consultation to gain the views of parents and stakeholders prior to the submission of any formal application to WAG
4. Determine the most appropriate structure for the governance and management of the federation, the number and nature of key development groups, their specific remit, responsibilities and milestones for achievement of each stage of the project
5. Consult closely with the Cardiff 14-19 Network co-ordinator to identify wider strategic issues and ensure that the vocational and other specialisms being developed by the faith-based cluster are complementary to those being offered by other local schools
6. Create and task joint subject groups from the partner schools, working with college subject representatives, to produce curriculum area reviews and recommendations for collaborative provision to be introduced progressively from September 2009
7. Increase the degree of common timetabling by at least two half-day sessions by September 2009 to allow collaborative delivery of further general and applied subjects
8. Remit a senior curriculum leadership group (Deputy Headteachers/ college Asst. Principal) to develop an overall curriculum migration plan taking account of the joint staffing profile and location of specialist facilities

9. ANNEX A: Year 10 curriculum plan

September 2008: Year 10 numbers

Optional subjects	Corpus Christi		Mary Immaculate		St Illtyd's		Total groups/learners		Av. Group size
Art	3	47	2	32	3	56	8	133	16
Catering			1	15			1	15	15
Bus	1	22			2	19	3	40	20
Child Dev.	1	24	1	20			2	42	21
Drama	1	28			1	8	2	32	16
D&T (rm)	2	28	2	32	2	47	6	111	18
French	3	55					3	52	17
Food	1	13			1	16	1	16	16
Geography	3	57			1	12	4	68	17
Graphics			1	20	1	22	2	42	21
History	5	116	1	12	2	34	8	158	20
Humanities (HI/GG)			1	20			1	20	20
IT	3	53			2	38	5	92	18
Media Studies			1	22	1	24	2	46	23
Music	1	17			1	13	2	31	15
PE (girls)	2	36	1	18					
PE (boys)	2	31	1	18			6	104	17
SC (dble option)			1	24	3	54	4	78	19
Spanish	1	19	1	12	1	10	3	41	14
Textiles	1	14			1	15	2	27	13
Welsh					1	22	1	22	22
Sub-total							66	1170	17.7
Applied* double option subjects: Cardiff Faith-based cluster									
Construction		11				12	2	36	
Hairdressing		9		4		4	1		17
Hair & Beauty				5			1	8	8
Hosp. & Catering									
Perf. Arts							1	13	13
Automobile						8	1	8	8
i-Media				14			1	14	14
CACHE									
Other Applied subjects: School-based									
Art					1	19	1	19	19
Child Dev.					1	14	1	14	14
HSC			1	22			1	22	22
Performing Arts	1	11					1	11	11
Sports Studies	1	9	1	4	2	27	4	41	10
Travel & Tourism	1	7					1	6	6
Sub-total							15	181	12
GRAND TOTAL							81	1351	16.9

ANNEX B: three-year extension plan

(Faith-based cluster locations)

	08/09	09/10	10/11
Corpus Christi	(Performing Arts)	Performing Arts Modern languages Music/ Drama	Performing Arts Modern languages Music/ Drama Applied science
Mary Immaculate	i-Media	i-Media Retail	i- Media Retail Public Services
St Illtyd's	(Sports Studies)	Sports Studies Business	Sports studies Business
St Teilo's	Catering	Catering Child care Welsh	Catering Child care
Bishop of Llandaff		Applied Art	Applied Art Engineering
St David's	Hairdressing Construction Automobile	Hairdressing Construction Automobile	Hairdressing Construction Automobile
Military Preparation	Military Preparation	Military Preparation	Military Preparation
Extended Opportunities programme	Extended Opportunities programme	Extended Opportunities programme	Extended Opportunities programme

ANNEX C: School timetables

	Corpus	Mary I	St Illtyd's
Registration & Assembly	08.55 – 09.10	09.00 – 09.10	08.30 – 08.50
Lesson 1	09.10 – 10.10	09.10 – 10.10	08.50 – 9.50
Lesson 2	10.10 – 11.10	10.10 – 11.10	09.50 – 10.50
BREAK	11.10 – 11.30	11.10 – 11.35	10.50 – 11.10
Lesson 3	11.30 – 12.30	11.35 – 12.35	11.10 – 12.10
Lesson 4	12.30 – 14.30	12.35 – 13.35	12.10 – 13.10
LUNCH	13.30 – 14.15	13.35 – 14.10	13.10 – 13.50
Registration	14.15 – 14.25	14.10 – 14.15	
Lesson 5	14.25 – 15.25	14.15 – 15.15	13.50 – 14.50

ANNEX D: Travelling distances and times

	Corpus Christi	Mary Immaculate	St. David's	St. Illtyd's
Corpus Christi		9.31 miles 20 minutes	2.57 miles 9 minutes	4.46 miles 14 minutes
Mary Immaculate	9.31 miles 20 minutes		8.00 miles 20 minutes	8.94 miles 20 minutes
St. David's	2.57 miles 9 minutes	8.00 miles 20 minutes		3.18 miles 11 minutes
St. Illtyd's	4.46 miles 14 minutes	8.94 miles 20 minutes	3.18 miles 11 minutes	

ANNEX E: Consultees

List of those consulted during the formulation of this plan:

David Stone, Headteacher, Corpus Christi HS
Phil Gilpin, Headteacher, Mary Immaculate HS
Simon Canham , Deputy Headteacher, Mary Immaculate Catholic HS
Liz York, Headteacher, St Illtyd's Catholic HS
Angela Haines, Deputy Headteacher, St Illtyd's Catholic HS
Mary Egan, Deputy Headteacher, Bishop of Llandaff Church-in-Wales HS
Beth West, 14-19 Curriculum Co-ordinator, St Teilo's Church-in Wales HS
Mary Campbell, Principal, Michaelston Community College
Mike Clinch, Headteacher St Richard Gwyn, Vale of Glamorgan
Mark Leighfield, Principal, St David's Catholic Sixth Form College
Daveth Frost, Acting Principal St David's Catholic Sixth form College
Lisa Cormack, Assistant Principal St David's Catholic Sixth Form College
Andy Johns, St David's Catholic Sixth Form College
Canon Peter Collins, Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff
Ann Robertson, Director of Education, Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff
Chris Jones, Chief Schools Officer, City and County of Cardiff Council
Geraint Rees, Senior Adviser, City and County of Cardiff Council
John Fabes, 14-19 Network Co-ordinator, City and County of Cardiff Council
Catherine Pickett, WAG department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS)