

Consultation Report Sharow Church of England Primary School

June 2025



Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Geographic position of the Trust and school(s) | 3 |
| Consultation Methodology | 4 |
| Overview of the Feedback received..... | 5 |
| Attendance at Consultation Meetings | 5 |
| Online Survey | 5 |
| Themes and Key Messages | 5 |
| Conclusion and Recommendations | 6 |
| List of Appendices | 6 |

Introduction

Sharow Church of England Primary School have made an application to the Secretary of State for Academy status and this will be reviewed by the Department for Education at a future Advisory Board meeting.

The school are proposing to become an Academy and join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust (YCST) in the Autumn Term of 2025.

This decision followed a period of research which had been conducted by the school's governing body to help inform their final decisions and recommendations which in turn has subsequently informed this consultation. Consideration was given to what was in the best interests of learners now and in the future as well as what the implications of the options would be for staff, parents and the community that the school serves.

One of the first priorities in this phase is stakeholder consultation. Consultation commenced on 23rd May 2025 and concluded on 2nd July 2025 and views have been sought from parents and carers, staff, trade unions and the community. Further within the report we have shared a breakdown of meetings that happened, communications which were issued and a copy of all feedback received as part of the process.

Geographic position of the Trust and school(s)

As part of the Trust's ongoing commitment to sustainable and purposeful growth, the establishment of a new cluster in our area represents a strategic opportunity to extend the Trust's impact and values into a new geographical context. This initiative aligns with the Trust's overarching aim to increase the number and diversity of schools within its family—encompassing both community and Church of England schools, across primary and secondary phases.

The formation of a new cluster will enable the Trust to:

- **Enhance collaboration** among schools with shared values and contextual similarities, fostering a culture of mutual support and continuous improvement;
- **Deliver high-quality school improvement** that is responsive to local needs and informed by the Trust's proven frameworks and expertise;
- **Broaden opportunities** for staff development, leadership progression, and student enrichment through a wider professional and educational network;
- **Strengthen community engagement** by embedding schools more deeply within their local contexts while benefiting from the strategic oversight and resources of the Trust.

This cluster will serve as a foundation for long-term educational excellence and innovation, ensuring that the Trust's ethos and standards are effectively embedded and sustained across a wider region.

Consultation Methodology

The overall aim of the consultation process was to ensure that everyone who has a stake in the decision of the school to become an Academy and join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust had the opportunity to hear about the plans and to share their views.

The objectives of the process were to:

- Provide relevant background information for stakeholders;
- Explain the reasons for the proposed transition to academy status;
- Set out the stages in the process for the school to become an academy with Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust and the associated timelines;
- Answer questions raised.

The principles laid down by the project team for the consultation were that it should be:

- An open and transparent process;
- Accessible to all stakeholders in terms of:
 - The times of the events;
 - The language used (jargon-free wherever possible and acronyms fully explained);
 - Being well-publicised.

A variety of media were used to consult including:

- Direct letters to ;
 - Parents/Carers/Community members;
 - School Staff;
 - Trade Unions;
 - LA
 - Diocese
 - Partner Agencies
- Publicised meetings involving presentations and questions and answer sessions;
- Online survey;
- School website

The following timetable of events was communicated to stakeholders and carried out during the consultation period:

| Date | Time | Event | Venue |
|---------|-------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 19.5.25 | 18.00 | Parent and community meeting | Sharow School |
| 21.5.25 | 17.30 | Staff meeting | Sharow School |

At each of the consultation meetings a presentation was shared with information about Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust and why Sharow School is proposing to convert to an academy. A sample copy of the presentation can be found in Appendix 2. The presentation has also shared online via the school website.

At Appendix 3 is the FAQs document that was distributed to parents/carers, unions, governors and staff in the school and a copy was also displayed on the school website.

Overview of the Feedback received

Attendance at Consultation Meetings

| Date | Event | Venue | Number in attendance |
|---------|------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 19.5.25 | Parent and community meeting | Sharow School | 6 |
| 21.5.25 | Staff meeting | Sharow School | 15 |

Online Survey

We received two completed surveys online. Full detailed feedback is provided as Appendix 4.

Themes and Key Messages

Stakeholders are most interested in:

Staff and Unions

- Pension Continuity (UNISON):**
Staff are seeking reassurance that their pension arrangements—particularly automatic enrolment—will remain unchanged if their employer changes due to the conversion.
- Impact on External Services (NYC Catering):**
Questions have been raised about whether the conversion will affect third-party or local authority-provided services, such as catering.
- Employment Terms and Mobility:**
Staff are unclear about what “no change to contracts” truly means in practice. Specific concerns include:
 - Whether existing terms and conditions will be preserved in full.
 - Whether staff could be required to work at different locations within the trust.

Parents, Carers and Community

- Curriculum & Pupil Experience**
 - Who controls curriculum choices (e.g. phonics)?
 - Will academic enrichment for high-achieving students be supported?
 - Will current events, traditions, and pastoral care continue?
 - Will behaviour policies become stricter?

2. Governance & Autonomy

- How much decision-making power will the school retain?
- Who sets key policies—school or trust?

3. Community & Identity

- Will local engagement (e.g. sports events) continue?
- Will catchment areas or admissions be affected?

4. Staffing & Operations

- Impact on staff pay, pensions, and retention.
- How many layers of leadership exist?

5. Facilities & Assets

- Ownership status of school buildings (leasehold or freehold).

6. Accountability & Strategy

- How are outcomes monitored?
- What is the trust's development strategy and immediate priorities?
- Why convert instead of staying with the Local Authority?

Notes from the Parents, Carers and Community meeting can be found in Appendix 5

Notes from Staff meeting can be found in Appendix 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

On compiling all the feedback and reviewing the data received, the conclusion that can be drawn is that there are no apparent legitimate reasons why the school should not apply to become an academy and join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust. Stakeholders who raised concerns had their questions answered and were satisfied with the responses. Ultimately stakeholders were provided with the assurances that this is the right decision for the school, its pupils, staff and community.

The Trust have demonstrated their commitment to working with Sharow CE Primary School and North Yorkshire Council and look forward to moving forward together to make a positive difference to the children they would be responsible for.

List of Appendices

| | |
|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | sample letter |
| Appendix 2 | consultation meeting presentation |
| Appendix 3 | FAQs |
| Appendix 4 | Online Survey feedback |
| Appendix 5 | Parents, Carers and Community meeting notes |
| Appendix 6 | Staff consultation meeting notes |