

# Consultation Report   Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School

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July 2025

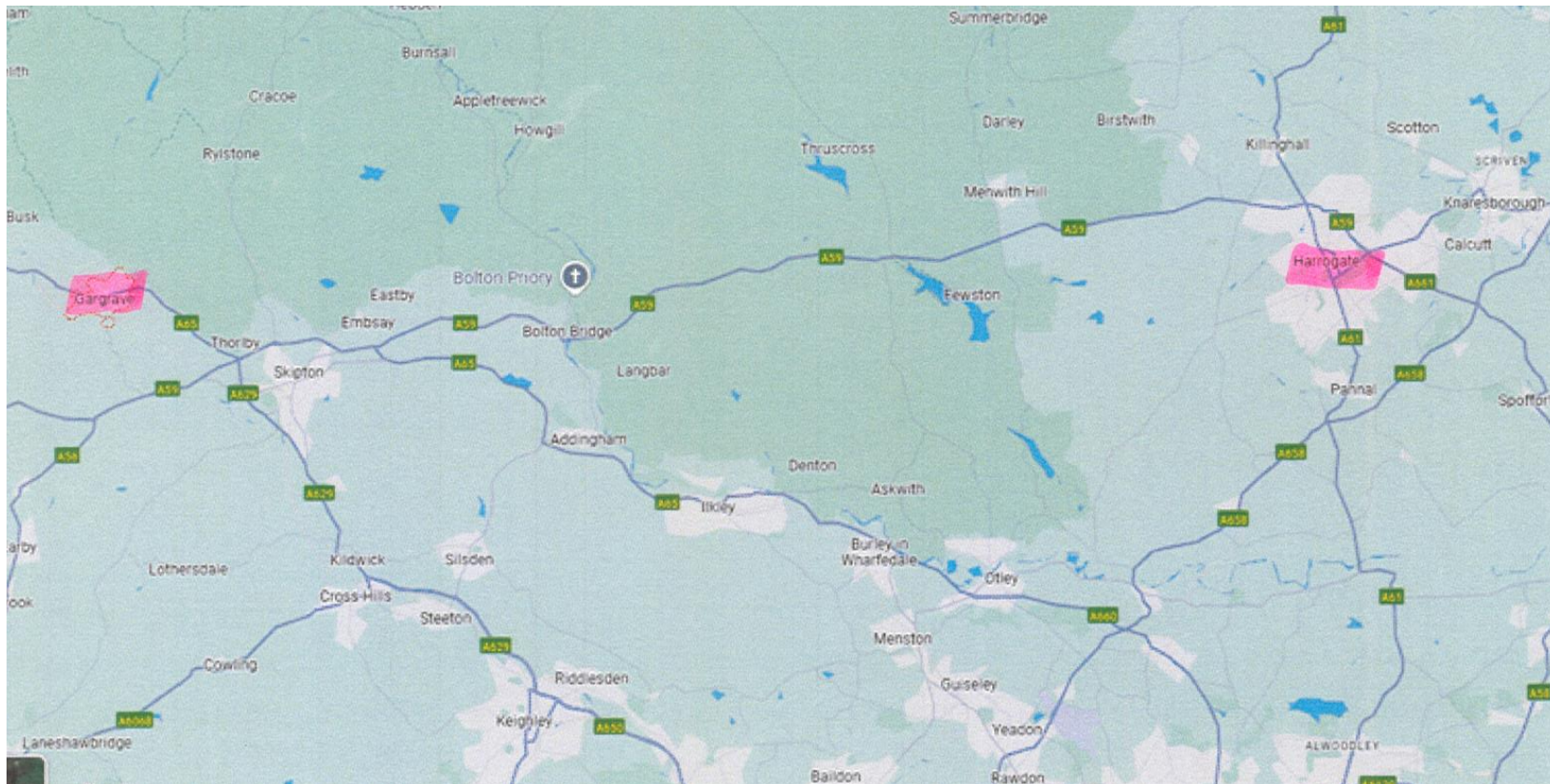
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## 1. Introduction

Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust was founded in March 2015 with the aim of bringing together a family of schools that share common values, interests and purpose. Based in and around Harrogate and Craven our multi academy trust is outward looking, built on the strength gained from every school in the Trust being a valued and significant part of the organisation. Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School's application for academy status will be reviewed by a DfE Advisory Board in the Summer 2025, with a proposed conversion date in Autumn 2025.

### 1. Geographic position of the Trust and school(s)



## 2. 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 Academy 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 Academy 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 (see Appendix 1 for sample letter to parents):

- Direct letters to ;
  - Parents/Carers/Community members;
  - School Staff;
  - Trade Unions;
  - LA
  - Diocese
  - Parish Council
  - MPs and Councillors
  - Partner Agencies

- Publicised meetings involving presentations and questions and answer sessions;
- Frequently asked questions and comments slips;
- Online survey;
- School website

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

Date	Time	Event	Venue
17.6.25	3.30pm	Presentation/questions on conversion for staff	Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School
17.6.25	5.30pm	Presentation/questions on conversion for parents/stakeholders	Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School
19.6.25	N/A	Invitation to unions to come into school to speak to members	Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School

At each of the consultation meetings a presentation was shared with information about Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust and why Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School is proposing to convert to an academy. A sample copy of the presentation can be found in Appendix 2 The presentation was 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.

### 3. Overview of the Feedback received

#### 3.1 Attendance at Consultation Meetings

Date	Event	Venue	Number in attendance
17.6.25	Presentation/questions on conversion for staff	Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School	12
17.6.25	Presentation/questions on conversion for parents/stakeholders	Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School	2

#### 3.2 Google Online Survey

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

#### 3.3 Themes and Key Messages

Stakeholders are most interested in:

- Will the school keep its own identity?
- Will the uniform remain the same?
- Will staffs' pay and conditions remain the same?
- What support will the school receive from YCST?
- Will the budget remain the same?

#### **4. 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 become an academy according to the timescales outlined. 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 Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School and North Yorkshire LA and look forward to moving forward together to make a positive difference to the children they would be responsible for.

## **5. List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Sample letter to Stakeholders

Appendix 2 – Community Consultation Slides

Appendix 3 – Academy Conversion - Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix 4 – Detailed Feedback of Online Survey



## APPENDIX 1 – Sample Letter to Stakeholders



### Gargrave CE (VC) Primary School

9<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Dear Parents,

#### CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL OF GARGRAVE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL TO JOIN A MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND FOR THE SCHOOL TO CONVERT TO ACADEMY STATUS

For some time, the Governing Body of Gargrave CE Primary School has been considering carefully the school's future in a fast-changing and increasingly challenging educational landscape. Governors have spent time researching and undertaking due diligence and now believe that the best plan moving forward is for Gargrave CE Primary School to become an academy and join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust.

Our application for academy status will be reviewed by a DfE Advisory Board and we see no reason why it will not be approved. As part of the process, we have a duty to consult with key stakeholders and the information enclosed within this letter is the beginning of that process.

We will be hosting meetings and preparing documents which will help you to understand our proposals, what it means for the school and the staff and children, answer any questions you may have and most importantly enables you to share your thoughts and ideas.

#### What is the proposal?

Our school would like to join an existing Multi Academy Trust – Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust. This is a small Multi Academy Trust based Harrogate, Ripon and Craven areas consisting of nine other

Good and Outstanding schools. The existing academies in the trust to date are:

- All Saints C of E Primary School
- Hampsthwaite C of E Primary School
- North Ripton C of E Primary School
- Richard Taylor C of E Primary School
- Skipton Parish C of E Primary School
- St. Aidan's C of E High School
- St. Peter's C of E Primary School
- Oatlands Infant School
- Pannal Primary School.

To find out more about Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust you can log on to their website [Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust](http://yorkshirecauseway.schools-trust.co.uk) or join us at our meeting highlighted below.

#### Why have Governors decided to join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust?

Gargrave CE Primary School conducted research and met with other multi academy trust partners in the area. Following this work and meetings, Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust was the preferred partner. The values of the MAT are closely aligned with Gargrave CE Primary School in particular their ethos around the inclusion of all pupils and enabling us to retain our individual school identity. Working with the Trust and its schools is something that Governors feel would continue to strengthen

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the school providing new and further opportunities to pupils and staff to build a partnership for the future with schools who share our ethos, vision and values.

#### Consultation

Governors are now entering the consultation phase and would like to consult with parents, carers, staff, pupils and the wider community on the proposal for Gargrave CE Primary School to convert to academy status and join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust.

The consultation period will run from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June to Midday 30<sup>th</sup> June. Following consultation, the Governing Body will consider a report on the findings of the consultation at a meeting in July 2025 and this will be made available online to all stakeholders via our school website.

#### We invite parents to attend a consultation meeting on

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025, at 5.30pm, Gargrave CE Primary School

The meeting will be an opportunity to ask questions about academy status and how this will affect the school. Representatives from Governors, school leadership and Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust will be available to talk to you and you will also be able to register your comments, queries and any thoughts on opportunities or concerns.

We have also prepared and enclosed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document to help answer some of the questions we anticipate you may have.

You can have your say in the following ways:

- By completing our online survey on our school website (<http://gargrave.n-yorks.sch.uk/academy-consultation/>)
- By asking questions at any of our meetings
- By emailing [admin@gargrave.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gargrave.n-yorks.sch.uk)

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours sincerely

Gargrave CE Primary School Governors

Enclosed:

- Academy consultation FAQs

I/we will be attending the information session on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June at 5.30pm

Child's name ..... Class .....

Parent/carer .....

## APPENDIX 2 – Community Consultation Slides



### **Community Consultation**

TUESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2025

Sarah Peel, Headteacher  
Claire Davey, Chair of Governors

### **The Proposal**



**Gargrave CE School**  
to convert to academy status to join  
**Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust**

## Why governors have explored academy conversion



- Believe that it will give us both support and challenge to make the school the best possible for all our pupils
- Explored a number of trusts before making a decision
- Working together with the Trust on the academy conversion process
- Taken time and careful consideration
- Experience of working with Yorkshire Causeway

## What is a multi academy trust?



- Company limited by guarantee with charitable status
- Purpose is to provide high quality education through effective support and assurance.
- Accountable for the educational performance and outcomes of all member schools
- Trust holds the assets (land and buildings)
- Trust is the employer

## Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust



Currently comprised of nine schools — seven Church of England schools and two community schools;

educating over 3,800 students across both primary (including nursery) and secondary phases;

supported by over 650 members of staff and 100 governance colleagues.

- All Saints C of E Primary School
- Hampsthwaite C of E Primary School
- North Rigton C of E Primary School
- Richard Taylor C of E Primary School
- Skipton Parish C of E Primary School
- St. Aidan's C of E High School
- St. Peter's C of E Primary School
- Oatlands Infant School
- Pannal Primary School

## Our underpinning- 'Ambition, learning and enrichment for all.'



For surely, I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, **to give you a future with hope** Jeremiah 29:11

## What the Trust offers

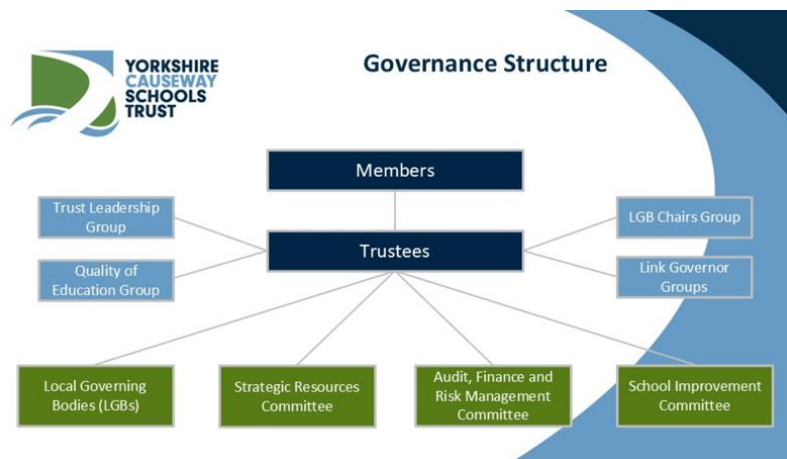


- Staff work as part of an organisation that the school has identified as sharing the same overall vision, values and ambitions for children.
- More tailored support and professional development opportunities for staff, including the opportunity to work with others undertaking similar roles within the organisation.
- Benefit from school improvement activities and assurances which are focused on having ambition for our students.
- Access to a range of centralized services and efficiencies with the purpose of improving effectiveness and/or reducing activities which take away from frontline teaching and learning. These include school improvement, HR, estates, safeguarding, finance and marketing.

## What does it mean to be an academy school in Yorkshire Causeway?



- Government funded school supported and managed by the trust instead of the local authority
- Inspected by Ofsted and SIAMS as currently
- Gargrave CE School will retain its name, character and focus on the local community
- Leadership, staff and local governing body continue
- Continue as a Church of England school
- Curriculum continues to be focussed on the needs of the children
- Children with special needs continue to be supported in conjunction with the LA as currently
- Working together with other schools, to the benefit of staff and children
- Centralised support to maximise the focus in school on learning and support for children
- Retain own annual budget



## Conversion Process



***Start to finish 4-6 months***

## Next Steps



- Formal consultation finishing on 30<sup>th</sup> June
- TUPE process for staff
- Further communication with staff and parents
- Legal process
- Onboarding activities

## Have Your Say



- School website
- Online survey
- Paper survey on request from school
- Email
- Feedback today



## Questions?

## Implications for Staff



- All staff entitled to transfer under same employment terms and conditions; Transfer of Undertakings(Protection of Employment) (TUPE)
- Process assumes that terms and conditions will remain exactly the same
- TUPE consultation - the LA as the existing employer and will lead the TUPE consultation and process
- Yorkshire Causeway is registered with the LGPS and Teachers' Pension Scheme



## Staff Support



- TUPE briefing for staff
- Formal TUPE consultation and liaison with trade unions
- Formal stakeholder consultation

## What will happen to staff when they transfer?



- When TUPE applies it means that the contract of employment automatically transfers to the Trust
- The Trust take on the employment of staff with their accrued rights, obligations and liabilities - required to employ staff on their existing terms and conditions of employment (unless they declare measures prior to the transfer)
- A TUPE transfer will not break service or continuous employment
- Pensions continue as they are now

## APPENDIX 3 – Frequently Asked Questions

### **Academy Conversions Frequently Asked Questions Gargrave CE Primary School**

The information in this fact sheet is intended to help answer some of the questions which may arise as the school considers academy status and has been produced in conjunction with the Trust. This information cannot in any way replace the informal conversations and formal consultation that takes place during the conversion process.

#### **What is an academy?**

An academy is a school that is directly funded by central government and independent of direct control by local authority. Academies are inspected by Ofsted under the same framework as maintained schools and for Church of England Schools via the SIAMs framework.

#### **What is a Multi-Academy Trust?**

A multi-academy trust (MAT) is a charitable company limited by guarantee which is formed to oversee a group of schools. The purpose of a school trust is, through its schools, to provide high quality education through effective support and assurance mechanisms. The Trust is the employer of staff and holds the land and buildings of each school.

#### **Who are Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust?**

Yorkshire Causeway is a multi-academy trust formed in 2015 which currently comprises 3,800 children, 600 staff and 100 governance colleagues working across 9 schools:

- All Saints CE Primary School, Kirkby Overblow
- Hampsthwaite CE Primary School
- North Rigton CE Primary School
- Oatlands Infant School
- Pannal Primary School
- Richard Taylor CE Primary School
- St Aidan's CE High School
- St Peter's CE Primary School, Harrogate

- Skipton Parish CE Primary School

### **How does governance work?**

Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust is a partner trust with the Diocese of Leeds, which means that the Church of England is represented on the Trust Board and all levels of governance.

The Board of Trustees are accountable for the work of the Trust and the schools although many responsibilities are devolved to the CEO, headteachers and governors as set out in a Scheme of Delegation. In Yorkshire Causeway, each school has its own governing body who continue to support the Headteacher and are part of the monitoring and support mechanism that ensures that the school is performing well. In addition to the Headteacher, each governing body has representation from the Diocese (for church schools), parent/carers and staff.

### **How long does academy conversion take and how will the process affect the day-to-day running of the school?**

This will usually take 4-6 months. The day to day running will not be affected as planning and meetings to enable the conversion to take place are mainly out of the school day.

### **What is the role of the MAT Chief Executive Officer (CEO)?**

The CEO is the strategic lead for the whole Trust and holds the role of Accounting Officer. In Yorkshire Causeway the CEO and central team work closely with Trust schools to provide support and assurance in areas such as educational improvement, HR, estates, safeguarding and finance.

### **The priority for our school is the education of pupils. How will you ensure that joining an academy trust does not distract us from this?**

Part of the work of the school and the Trust, is to carry out 'due diligence' exercises to ensure effective preparation for the school's transition to the Trust. Yorkshire Causeway has been working in partnership with us for some time supporting the ongoing improvement of our school and together we will continue to focus on the teaching and learning and progress of children.

### **What are the reasons schools consider converting to academy status?**

- To work as part of an organisation that the school has identified as sharing the same overall vision, values and ambitions for children.
- To provide more tailored support and professional development opportunities for staff, including the opportunity to work with others undertaking similar roles within the organisation.
- To benefit from school improvement activities and assurances which are focused on having ambition for our students.
- To draw on a range of centralized services and efficiencies with the purpose of improving effectiveness and/or reducing activities which take away from front-line teaching and learning.

### **What parents and carers need to know**

- The school is not proposing to change its character and will continue to look, feel and be the same as it is now
- The School Leadership Team will continue to run the school daily as they do now, and parents will continue to have representation on the Governing Body
- The name of the school will not change, and the school will not change its admissions policy
- Children with special needs will continue to receive additional support in the way they do now
- Our local schools will continue to work closely together for each other as well as our children, and will be provided with support to help them become even better
- The multi-academy trust arrangements will share some central services across the schools which will help us be more efficient and make sure that funding is focused on teaching, learning and support for children
- The trust will work very closely and co-operatively with local partners, including other schools, community groups and organisations, and the local authority.

#### **Is an academy like a business?**

No. A business makes profit for its shareholders. An academy trust is a charitable organisation which cannot make profit. It produces a public Annual Report and Statement of Accounts setting out financial and academic performance.

#### **Who makes the decision to become an academy?**

School leadership and the governing body collaborates in respect of considering academisation, but ultimately it is the governing body which takes the decision to apply to the Department for Education to become an academy. Church schools must also seek the permission of the Diocese.

#### **Are academies bound by the same rules and regulations as other schools?**

Academy schools are required to follow the law and guidance on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions.

#### **Will the academy follow the National Curriculum?**

The Trust works with its schools to agree the curriculum. Generally, academy schools have more freedom to try different things in the curriculum and make sure that what is taught is relevant to our pupils and their specific needs. It must be broad and balanced.

#### **Does becoming an academy change the relationship with local schools and the community?**

No. Academy funding agreements state that they must ensure that the school remains a key part of the local community. As part of a trust, the school will also have a wider education community to engage with.

#### **As an academy, will it still work with the local authority?**

Academy schools are independent of the local authority. However, ongoing work with them as well as other local schools and local partners such as the Diocese will remain important to us.

**What about funding?**

The Department for Education meets the running costs for an academy. Academy funding is calculated on a like-for-like basis with local authority schools and therefore we will have a similar budget to what we have now. With greater freedom to procure services from other providers and to realise cost efficiencies across the network, the school will be able to make more efficient use of resources to support school improvement. Like other schools, an academy cannot run at a loss or agree a deficit budget.

**How will the school be accountable financially?**

An academy school is governed by the rules and regulations for charitable trusts and company law. There will be robust systems with an annual audit conducted by an external independent auditor and wider internal scrutiny activities throughout the year.

**What functions would remain the statutory responsibility of the LA?**

- Home to school transport
- Education psychology, SEND statementing and assessment
- Monitoring of SEND provision
- Prosecution of parents for non-attendance
- Assigned SEND resources for pupils/students with rare conditions needing individually tailored provision
- Provision of specialist facilities for a student who is no longer registered at a school

**Who will be responsible and pay for assessments of pupils/students with additional needs?**

The LA retains the same statutory responsibility for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in academies as they do for a maintained school. The school will continue to work closely with the LA and the Trust to ensure that our SEND pupils are well provided for and to ensure that the LA meets their statutory commitments with regard to pupils.

**Who will own the school building and land?**

In most instances, including ours the Diocese and local authority own the buildings and land which is then made available through legal agreements for the school to continue to operate as usual once it joins the Trust. If there is a freehold this transfers to the academy trust.

**Will the staff stay the same?**

When the school becomes an academy staff transfer to the academy trust under the same employment terms and conditions under the protection of TUPE legislation.

**Will you consult with staff, community and parents?**

Yes, we are consulting with all key stakeholder groups in order to gather feedback and suggestions, as well as addressing any questions or concerns.

**Will the school's admissions arrangements be required to change?**

No - academies are required to follow the law and guidance on admissions, SEND and exclusions as if they were maintained schools. It is the aim of the Trust to ensure that our academies provide high quality, inclusive education for all local children.

**Will the school need to change its name?**

No, there are no plans for this to happen.

**Can the academy continue to work with the local authority and other schools?**

Yes. The Trust and school can buy services from the local authority and will be encouraged to work with other schools to the benefit of staff and children.

**Will there be a new uniform?**

No, there are no plans to change the uniform

**What date would the Academy open?**

There are many variables to a school joining an academy trust, many of which are already underway. It is hoped that the school will open as an academy during the autumn term 2025.

#### APPENDIX 4 – Detailed Feedback of Online Survey

Email	Please tick the box which best describes the type of stakeholder you are?	Have you received enough information regarding the reasons why the school is considering becoming an academy and joining Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust?	Have you received enough information about Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust?	Do you support the proposal for Gargrave CE Primary School to become an academy and join Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust, and for the Secretary of State to enter into a funding agreement * with Y...	Did you (or will you) be attending our scheduled consultation meeting?	Any further comments or questions?	If you would like to receive a copy of the final report and findings and/or would like a response to any question asked whilst completing this survey please let us have your: Title/First Name/Sur...
anonymous	School staff member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
anonymous	School staff member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
anonymous	School governor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No thanks	Yes
anonymous	School governor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Nothing to add	Yes
anonymous	Community member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Greater support for school improvement & governance is a good thing.	Yes
anonymous	School staff member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
anonymous	Parent / Carer of a pupil currently at Gargrave CE Primary School	Yes	Yes	Yes	No		
anonymous	Parent / Carer of a pupil currently at Gargrave CE Primary School	Yes	Yes	Yes	No		