



Consultation Report Thornaby C of E Primary School



April 2019

With God's help we work together to enrich learning, enhance life, to build a future of hope for everyone



Contents	Page
Introduction	3
Consultation methodology	5
Overview of the feedback received	6
Conclusion and recommendations	8
List of Appendices	9

1. Introduction

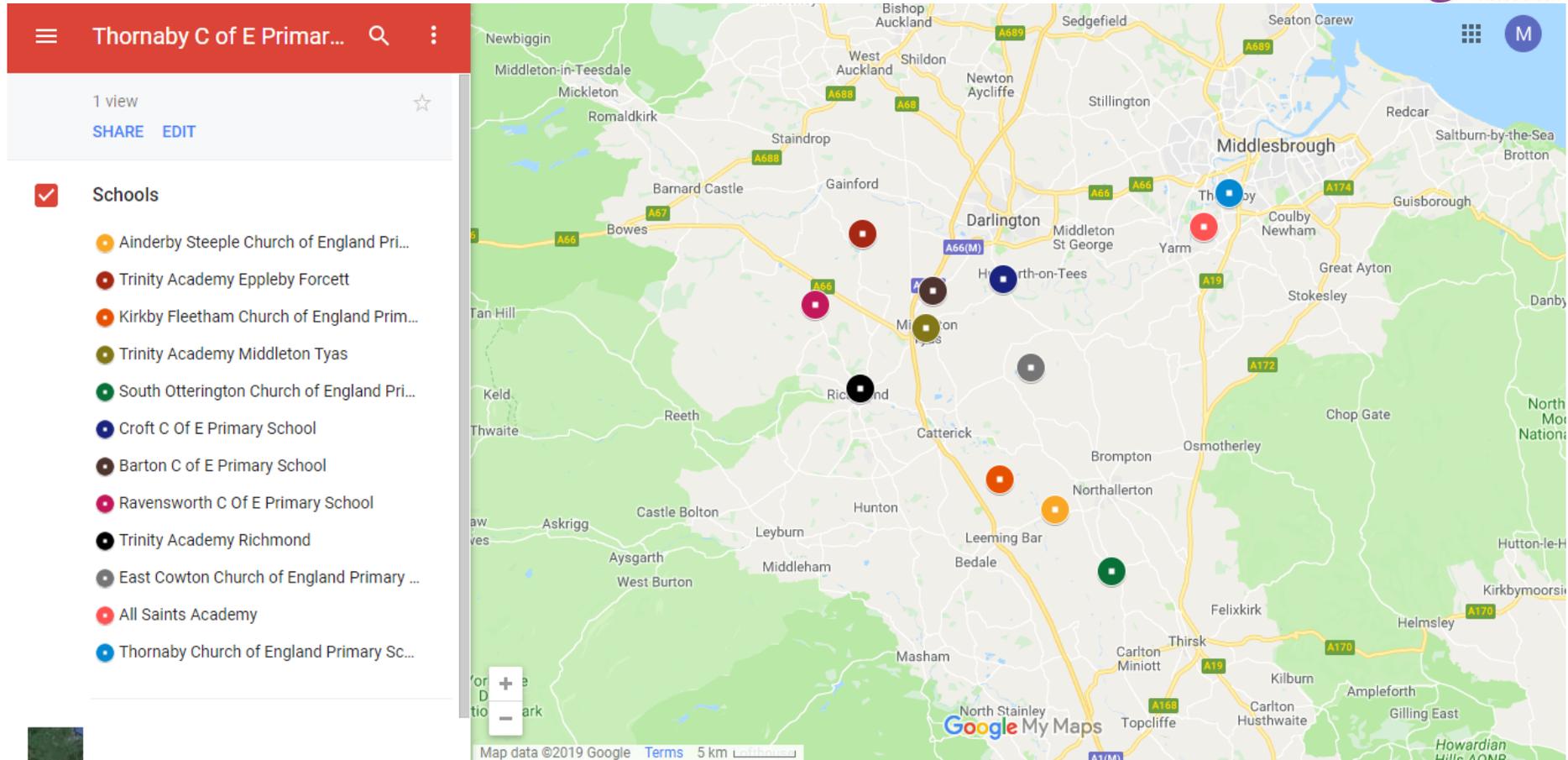
In February 2019 Thornaby Church of England Primary School was issued with an Academy Order by the Secretary of State for Education. The approval meant that the school could move forward in the next stage of planning which proposes that the school will join Dales Academies Trust (Dales) on the 1st July 2019.

This decision made by the governing body followed a period of intense research which had been conducted by the governors and leadership to help inform their final decisions and recommendations which 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 communities that the school serves. It was equally important to the school community that the Church ethos was protected, it is valued highly in the school and this must remain going forward.

One of the first priorities in this phase is stakeholder consultation. Consultation commenced on the 5th March 2019 and concluded on the 1st April 2019 and views have been sought from parents and carers, staff, trade unions, pupils, the community and partners. 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.

1.1 Geographic position of the school(s)

The map on the next pages shows where the school proposing to join Dales Academies Trust is located in the region alongside where the current Dales schools are.



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 Dales had the opportunity to hear about the proposals and to make their views known about the plans.

The objectives of the process were to:

- Provide relevant background information for stakeholders
- Explain the reasons for the proposal
- Set out the stages in the process for the school to become an Academy with Dales 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)
 - Well-publicised

A variety of media were used to consult including:

- Direct letters
- Text messaging
- Publicised meetings involving presentations and questions and answer sessions
- Frequently asked questions and comments slips
- Online survey
- School and Trust websites

2.1 Direct letters

Letters introducing the consultation were sent to the following groups and are included in Appendix 1a & 1b.

- Parents/Carers/Community members
- School staff and Trade Unions

2.2 Online survey

Survey Monkey was used as an online tool to provide everyone with an opportunity to have their say and to gauge everyone's reaction to the proposal to convert to academy status and join Dales. The results of the survey can be found in this report under section 4.2.

2.3 Publicised meetings

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

Date	Time	Event	Venue
13.3.19	2.45pm	Trade Union Meeting	Thornaby C of E Primary School
13.3.19	3.30pm	Staff Consultation Meeting	Thornaby C of E Primary School
20.3.19	2:45pm & 5pm	Parent/Carer/Community Consultation Meeting	Thornaby C of E Primary School

2.4 Staff and Parent/Carer Meetings

At each of the consultation meetings a presentation was given with information about Dales Academies Trust and why the school is proposing to convert to academy status. A copy of the presentations can be found in Appendices 2&3.

2.5 Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and comments slips

At Appendix 4 is the FAQ sheet that was distributed to parents/carers and staff in each of the schools and a copy displayed on the school website.

2.6 School Council meeting

The School Council were consulted and a number of questions were raised. A brief overview can be found in section 3 and a breakdown of the questions can be found in Appendix 9.

3. Overview of the Feedback received

Appendices 5 & 6 contains all the questions, comments and feedback received from the various media used throughout the consultation period. Numbers of participants in meetings and surveys are below.

3.1 Attendance at Consultation Meetings

Date	Event	Venue	Number in attendance
13.3.19	Trade Union & Staff Consultation Meeting	Thornaby C of E Primary School	48
20.3.19	Parent Consultation Meeting	Thornaby C of E Primary School	X3 at 2.45pm X3 at 5pm
28.3.19	Student Council Meeting	Thornaby C of E Primary School	14

3.2 Survey Monkey Online Survey

Survey Monkey was used as an online tool to provide everyone with an opportunity to have their say and to gauge everyone’s reaction to the proposals. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 7.

	Parent/Carer
Have you received enough information regarding the reasons why the school is proposing to become an academy and join Dales Academies Trust	1 Yes
Have you received enough information about Dales Academies Trust	1 Yes
Should we keep the school name the same	1 Yes
Should we keep the school uniform the same	1 Yes
Do you support the proposal for Thornaby C of E Primary School to convert to academy status and join Dales Academies Trust	1 Yes
Do you agree that the Secretary of State should enter into a Funding Agreement for Thornaby C of E Primary School	1 Don’t Know

A summary of all the responses, themes and the messages contained therein, is provided below.

3.3 Themes and Key Messages

Appendices 5 and 6 contains all the questions, comments and feedback received from the various consultation events / media used throughout the consultation period. A summary of all the responses and the messages contained therein, with implications for the school and Dales provided in the remainder of this section.

Stakeholders are most interested in:

3.3.1 What will be the impact on children? What will change?

Stakeholders were assured that change for pupils will be minimal. The same staff, name and uniform will be in place and it will be the educational opportunities which we hope will be enhanced by greater professional development opportunities for staff, financial efficiencies and strong school improvement support.

When we met with the Student Council, children were most interested in understanding the difference in being an Academy and a maintained school and what it mean for them and their peers. A full copy of their questions can be found in Appendix 9.

3.3.2 Staffing - contractual implications, general concerns and opportunities

Staff raised a small number of questions linked to primarily to policy and procedure which were answered at the staff meeting. Individual queries which have arisen have been addressed direct by the leadership and/or the local authority as the employer of the staff.

3.3.3 Admissions

Will there be changes to the schools admissions policy and also would the change to academy status mean there would be a greater opportunity of Thornaby children accessing places All Saints were the two main queries raised. The answer to both points is no, there are no changes proposed and no greater opportunity for Thornaby learners to go to All Saints when they move to secondary school.

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. There is a view that this will be a positive move for the school, but this is not yet shared widely amongst all stakeholder groups and it is important to recognise the ongoing dialogue is going to be extremely important.

Whilst there are queries about the process and why the school has chosen to become an academy and join Dales, there are no major concerns or contra-indications that have been raised through this consultation process.

Response rates from parents and community members at the school was low but this is not unusual. From this can be deduced that:

- Stakeholders are ambivalent about their school becoming an academy and joining a MAT
- Stakeholders are content to leave these decisions to the managers and leaders of the school

Following the completion of the consultation period for the school it is recommended that:

- The school proceeds with the next phase of the joining process
- A further communication is issued to parents / carers providing them with detail on why they have chosen to become an academy (see appendix 8)

5. List of Appendices

Appendix 1a	Invite letter to Parents/Carers/Community
Appendix 1b	Invite letter to staff and Trade Unions
Appendix 2	Staff Presentation
Appendix 3	Parents Presentation
Appendix 4	Frequently Asked Questions for Stakeholders
Appendix 5	Staff and Trade Union feedback
Appendix 6	Feedback from Parents/Carers/Community
Appendix 7	Survey Monkey Online Survey results
Appendix 8	Rationale for joining Dales Academies Trust
Appendix 9	School Council Questions