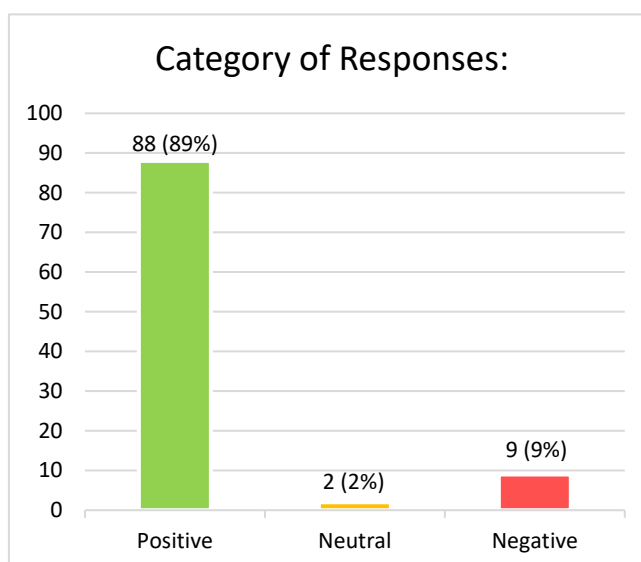




Published response to consultation regarding the academies within Northern Ambition Academies Trust joining Castleford Academy Trust.

Overall Responses:	99
Respondents associated with Castleford Academy Trust	62
Respondents associated with Northern Ambition Academies Trust	36
Other	1 (Local Authority)

Response Rate	No.
Castleford Academy Trust Staff and Governors	44
NAAT Staff and Governors	33
Castleford Academy Trust Parents and Carers	18
NAAT Parents and Carer	3
Other	1 (Local Authority)



The feedback from the consultation has been positively received by stakeholders both in the consultation survey and during face-to-face consultation meetings. This includes support for the proposal from the local authority.

88 of the 99 responses have been positive, 2 of the 97 responses have been neutral, and 9 of the 97 responses have been negative. Across staff and those responsible for the governance of both Northern Ambition Academies Trust and Castleford Academy Trust, 76 of 77 respondents were positive about the proposal, with the remaining 1 responding neutrally. The nine negative responses were all submitted by parents and carers of pupils who attend academies within Castleford Academy Trust.

Executive Summary of Local Authority Feedback:

“This is a positive step forward, continuity and a localised focus is key to the continued improvement of the Northern Ambition schools. Castleford Academy are strong MAT with a clear vision and purpose, there is a natural alignment of both locality and vision. The LA has offered a supportive view to the DfE and is a positive advocate for this development”.



Executive Summary of Staff and Governors Feedback:

Key themes amongst staff and governors across Castleford Academy Trust:

Staff and governors understand the value that Castleford Academy Trust can offer Northern Ambition Academies Trust's academies.

Staff and governors feel that the proposal will greatly benefit the local area.

Staff and governors understand the need for trust growth.

Key themes amongst staff and governors across Northern Ambition Academies Trust:

Staff and governors understand that the proposal presents an excellent opportunity, and welcome this positive change.

Staff and governors are onboard with the vision of Castleford Academy Trust, and feel excited about the future of their academies

Staff and governors can identify the positive benefits of the proposal, most notably shared resources, leadership support and the impact on the community.

Three staff members sought clarity on if they can continue to use their current exam boards and curriculum plans.

Executive Summary of Parent and Carer Feedback:

Key themes amongst parent and carers across Castleford Academy Trust:

Parents and carers understand how supportive academies within Castleford Academy Trust are, and understand the value this could bring to other schools.

Parents and carers understand the need for trust growth.

Parents and carers are concerned that increasing the size of the Trust will weaken the strengths found in existing trust academies, diluting the offer.

Parents and carers are concerned about the additional workload the proposal will bring to academy staff, redirecting focus.

Key themes amongst parent and carers across Northern Ambition Academies Trust:

Parents and carers feel that the change would be positive, noting a hope for an improvement in Ofsted grade for Airedale Academy.

Decision

Following the consultation process, and wider consideration of stakeholder's responses both Trust boards have agreed to continue with the Academy Transfer process subject to the next steps in the process such as due diligence and DFE approval.

After considering the responses, both trusts have provided a response to address any queries below:



Q: Castleford Academy Trust already has a number of schools, why should they increase in size and would this dilute the current offer?

No, all of our Trust and academy models, systems, policies, and strategies for school improvement are created to ensure that there is sufficient capacity, not to dilute the offer, to provide high standards of education provision, and to continue to ensure every child reaches their potential in all of our schools.

It is important to grow the Trust because Castleford Academy Trust's aim is to advance education for public benefit, in line with our vision of 'Working together to achieve excellence for all', we believe that a greater partnership of schools will allow us to maximise standards of provision and impact on pupil outcomes more widely.

Furthermore, this is supported by the Department for Education's vision that academies that are geographically close together form clusters of academies (within academy trusts) so that they can work together to maximise outcomes for pupils. Our ambition is to meet their aim that by 2030, all schools will be part of a strong academy trust of at least 10 schools, or 7500 pupils to ensure greater efficiency, capacity and sharing of best practice.

Q: Will the academy transfers create additional workload for staff, redirecting their focus from providing a high-quality education?

No, as part of academy transfers, the trust leadership team has the majority of responsibility to support and implement the change, therefore allowing the headteacher and academy leadership teams to broadly continue to focus on providing high-quality education for the pupils that attend their academy.

Over time, working in Trusts of 10 schools can often save the workload of leaders so that they can focus on their core offer of providing the best education through streamlined systems, greater collaboration and by partnering with neighbouring academies for the benefit of pupils.

Q: How will the change benefit Crofton Academy, given the school is located outside of the Castleford cluster of schools?

All schools within the trust, regardless of their location, benefit from working in larger clusters of schools, where expertise and capacity can be shared between schools for the benefit of pupils. As more schools potentially join Castleford Academy Trust, Crofton Academy will continue to experience the same benefits they have gained since joining the Trust in 2020.

Q: Will Airedale Academy be able to continue to implement current schemes of work, such as existing curriculum plans?

Castleford Academy Trust only seeks to amend and align curriculum planning and schemes of work where there is a benefit in doing so to improve standards of education, and to share workload and capacity. Engaging with our academies regularly, we only agree with a trust wide common approach to elements of our provision, which the leaders at each academy assess will bring the greatest benefits of being in a Trust through sharing and consistency, E.g., assessment calendars, moderation, etc. We continue to recognise and welcome the additional expertise and capacity from other joining schools and trusts to further develop our approach.



Q: Will Castleford Academy Trust look to change the exam boards currently used at Airedale Academy?

Castleford Academy Trust only seeks to align exam boards where there is a benefit in doing so to share workload and capacity.

Q: Will the staff at NAAT transfer over to Castleford Academy Trust?

The ambition will be that all staff will transfer their employment through TUPE from NAAT to Castleford Academy Trust subject to any measures identified from the due diligence process.