



August 2025

Report to Executive Director of Children's Services for a final decision on a proposal to change the catchment areas of Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School from September 2025.

The Proposal

In light of the decision by Unity Education Trust to amalgamate Great Dunham Primary School (Litcham Road, Great Dunham, King's Lynn, PE32 1LQ) with Beeston Primary School (Dereham Road, Beeston, King's Lynn, PE32 2NQ) in June 2025- effective from September 2025, it is necessary to revise the catchment areas to ensure they align with the changed educational infrastructure in the wider area. Therefore, Norfolk County Council propose that:

- The catchment area for Great Dunham Primary School (Discontinued) is added to the area for Beeston Primary School.

The local authority's usual approach is to run catchment consultations alongside any proposed school amalgamations (discontinuance), to give communities clarity and minimise disruption. This also ensures that the needs of all learners are taken into account, including those in early years provision and those with SEND. In this case, as the amalgamation was Trust-led, the local authority is responding accordingly. We recognise that this has been a significant change for the community and understand the concerns raised during the process.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to coordinate school admissions. This involves publishing an annual coordinated admissions scheme and managing applications. While individual schools and academy trusts are responsible for setting their own admission arrangements, including catchment areas. The local authority acts as a central point of oversight to ensure the overall system is fair, transparent, and aligned with place planning responsibilities.

As the local authority holds responsibility for coordinating the process, it has led the consultation and will use the outcomes to inform recommendations to the Trust. It will then be for the Trust to consider and take forward these recommendations through their own decision-making processes and subsequent arrangements.

One vacated, the site of Great Dunham Primary School is proposed to become the new venue for Compass West, which has previously been located at the former Pott Row School. The proposed relocation would provide pupils with access to significantly improved facilities, including purpose-designed spaces for care, play, and forest school activities, as well as a dedicated playing field. Unlike the existing Compass Base premises at Pott Row, which are privately leased on a short-term basis, the Great Dunham site is owned by Norfolk County Council. Although the new site is

approximately 15 miles from the current location, it is more centrally positioned within Norfolk and benefits from convenient access via the A47, a major transport route through the county.

The Consultation Process

The consultation ran from 13 June 2025 to 24 July 2025 for six weeks.

A copy of the consultation document is available in Appendix A. The documents were shared by email, school websites and available as hard copies. An online consultation was also carried out and a face-to-face drop-in event was held.

Consultation documents were sent to the parents and pupils at both schools via the Trust, as well as governors and staff.

- Great Dunham: 38 parents and 1 ASC member
- Beeston: 46 parents and 3 ASC members
- 27 staff across both schools.

A full list is available in Appendix B of wider stakeholders which includes other local schools, Trade Unions who represent staff at the schools, Local Members of Parliament, Local County Councillors, District Councillors and Parish Councillors.

Respondents were invited to share their views in the following ways:

- Completing an online survey hosted on Citizenspace
- Completing the form attached to the consultation document and handing it into the school office
- Emailing schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- Writing to School Organisation Team, FREEPOST IH 2076, Lower Ground Floor, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL. (stamp not required)
- Attending a consultation event; A face-to-face drop-in session was held on Wednesday 2 July from 9:00am to 10:00am at Great Dunham Village Hall, Litcham Road, Great Dunham, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE32 2LJ. There were no attendees.

Summary Analysis

The full analysis is available in Appendix C along with the comments received.

Overall, there were 5 responses to the consultation. The response rate is low.

- 4 people strongly agreed or agreed (80%)
- 1 person neither agreed or disagreed (20%)
- 0 people strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposal (0%).

The following matters were highlighted by respondents:

Responses in favour:

- Supporters suggest that the merger and expanded catchment area will benefit all children in the affected regions by providing better educational opportunities.
- Responses highlight the practicality of merging two neighbouring schools, especially since they are already part of an existing federation. They see the combination of catchment areas as a logical step that will help ensure continuity for parents and students.

Neutral responses:

- Comments note that the merger will naturally result in the combination of catchment areas.

Responses against:

- Concern was expressed that the merger will negatively affect the prospects of their village, suggesting potential loss of local identity or resources. Despite these concerns, there is acknowledgment for the need to support the process if it proceeds.

Conclusion

Local authorities have a statutory duty to coordinate school admissions. Although local authorities cannot require academies or foundation schools to adopt specific catchment areas, they are encouraged to engage with admission authorities and can make evidence-based recommendations where changes would improve access and better reflect demographic changes.

The local authority uses its role as strategic place planner to identify and highlight issues with current catchment arrangements, supporting its recommendations with pupil forecasts, allocation patterns, and changes to the education landscape such as amalgamation.

Norfolk County Council would not usually make suggestions to change catchment areas outside of the annual timescales. However, in this case, admission authorities can suggest changes if there has been a significant change in the circumstances and they think the alterations are needed.

Changing the catchment area following an amalgamation ensures admissions reflect the new school landscape and supports fair access for local families. By expanding the catchment area for Beeston Primary School, the school will be served by a larger area, supporting the longer-term viability of the school in a geographical area with a reducing pupil population.

As both Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School both feed into Litcham School High School, there will be no impact on secondary school catchments.

If the proposed changes to catchment areas go ahead, this may affect which school is considered a child's nearest or catchment school.

The overall response rate to the consultation was low, which can be viewed as an indication of broad agreement with the proposal. However, it is acknowledged that the proposal was not without objections. Having carefully considered all responses, it is felt that proceeding with the proposal is the most appropriate course of action, as it reflects the changing school landscape. Leaving the current arrangements in place would not be in the best interests of children, families, or the wider community.

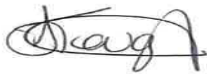
Recommendation

Following the amalgamation of Great Dunham Primary School (discontinued) and Beeston Primary School, it has been necessary for the local authority to review and consider adjustments to the catchment areas and admissions arrangements to better reflect the new school landscape. These changes aim to ensure that local children continue to have fair and consistent access to school places in light of the revised provision.

The Executive Director of Children's Services recommends to Unity Education Trust that from 1 September 2025 for academic year 2025-2026, the catchment changes for Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School come into effect. This is due to align the catchment with the changed educational infrastructure following the process of amalgamation and discontinuance of Great Dunham Primary School.

Change of the catchment areas of Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School from 1 September 2025.

I agree to recommend the change to the catchments area of Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School to Unity Education Trust from 1 September 2025 for academic year 2025-2026.



Signed

(Executive Director of Children's Services)

Dated 12/08/25

Consultation on Proposed Changes to School Admissions

Catchment area changes from September 2025 for Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School following approval of amalgamation.

We're inviting feedback from those who may be affected by this proposal.

The consultation is open from **13 June 2025 until 5pm 24 July 2025**.

Schools Involved:

- Great Dunham Primary School, Litcham Road, Great Dunham, King's Lynn, PE32 1LQ
Unity Education Trust
- Beeston Primary School, Dereham Road, Beeston, King's Lynn, PE32 2NQ
Unity Education Trust

All the schools in this proposed change are academies part of Unity Education Trust (UET), which means the Trust is the Admissions Authorities for their own schools; however, Norfolk County Council works collaboratively with academy trusts to coordinate the admissions of pupils including how the catchment areas are arranged.

Proposed Change:

In light of the recent decision by UET to amalgamate Great Dunham Primary School with Beeston Primary School, it is necessary to revise the catchment areas to ensure they align with the changed educational infrastructure in the wider area.

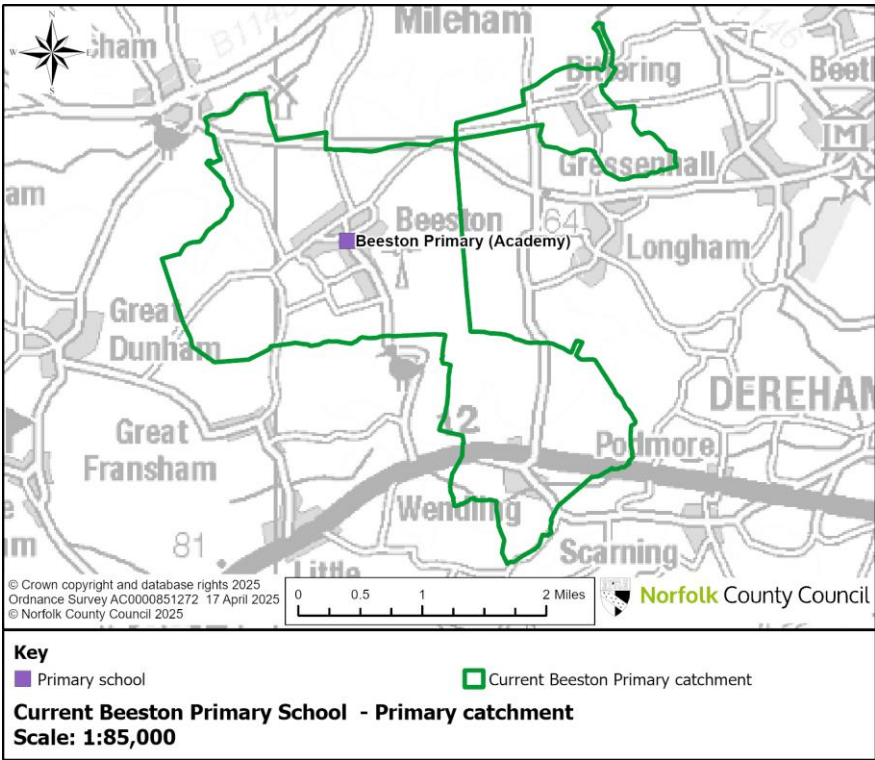
- Norfolk County Council wants to change the catchment areas from which students are admitted to Beeston Primary School starting in September 2025.
- The proposal plans to merge the catchment areas of Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School following the process of amalgamation.

Reason for Change:

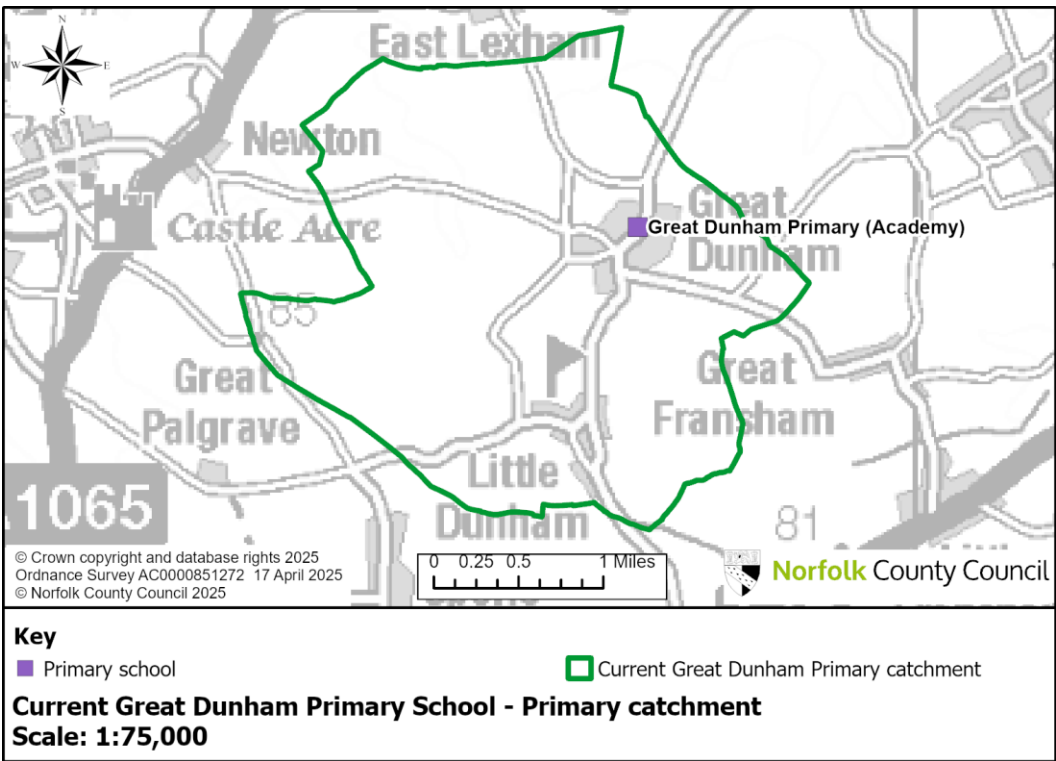
We don't usually make changes to catchment areas at this time of year. However, in this case, we're considering this change is in response to the amalgamation of Great Dunham Primary School with Beeston Primary School by Unity Education Trust.

Maps:

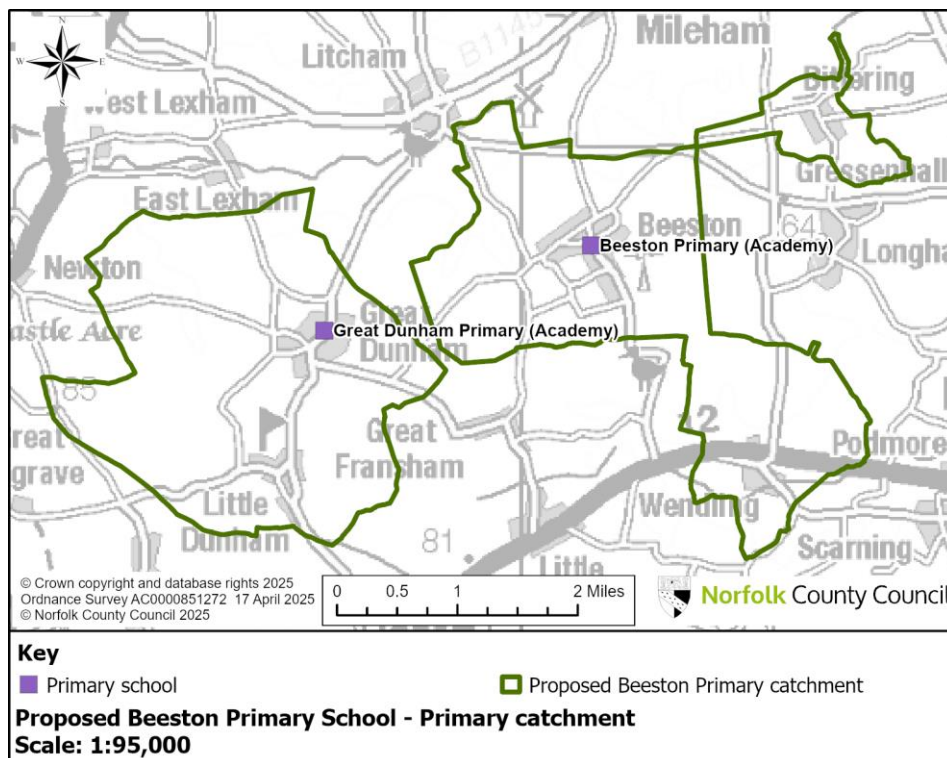
Current Beeston Primary School Catchment Area



Current Great Dunham Primary School Catchment Area



Proposed new catchments for Beeston Primary School from September 2025



Details of the Change:

- The catchment area for Great Dunham Primary School will be added to the area for Beeston Primary School.
- The changes will not affect pupils already attending any of the schools.
- The changes will not affect the option of pupils and families to make parental preference for a preferred school outside of the catchment area.
- Home to school transport will be provided in alignment with [Norfolk County Council's Home to School transport policy](#)

Impact on Secondary Schools:

- As both Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School both feed into Litcham School High School, there will be no impact on secondary school catchments.

What is a catchment area?

A catchment area is a specific geographical zone that gives children living in the area priority to get into a certain school. Norfolk County Council sets up these areas so parents can expect a better chance for their children to get a place at the school. Even though catchment areas help decide who gets in priority for placements, families can still apply to any school, no matter where they live. Not all schools give a priority to children living within the catchment area it serves.

How might this change affect home to school transport?

Depending on where you live, children may be eligible for free home to school transport. Your child will be entitled to free school transport, if they:

- Are of compulsory school age (five to 16 years old) on 1 September or
- Will be five before 1 September 2025 when applying for school year 2024-25 or
- Will be five before 1 September 2026 when applying for school year 2025-26 and
- Attend the nearest catchment or the nearest appropriate school with a place as designated by Children's Services and
- Live more than two miles, measured by the nearest walking route to school, when under the age of eight
- Live more than three miles walking distance from school, when aged eight or over

If the proposed changes to catchment areas go ahead, this may affect which school is considered a child's nearest or catchment school.

Not sure what this means for you or your child? Please speak to us about your personal circumstances, call our Admissions team on **01603 638036** or **01603 638528**.

You can find see the full home to school transport policy here: [Transport for 5 to 16-year-olds - Norfolk County Council](#)

Getting more help:

If you have questions about your child's circumstances, please talk to our Admissions team on **01603 638036** or **01603 638528** who will be able to help.

How to Share Your Views:

- You will have received this consultation as you are a stakeholder and may be affected directly or indirectly by the change. We would like to seek your views on the proposal.
- The consultation will run from **13 June 2025 until 5pm 24 July 2025**.
- There are several ways you can share your views:

Tell us your views by;



- Completing the online survey via QR code or <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/greatdunhamandbeeston>
- Talking to us; There will be drop-in session held on Wednesday 2 July from 9:00am to 10:00am at Great Dunham Village Hall, Litcham Road, Great Dunham, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE32 2LJ
- Emailing us at schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- Completing the attached form and handing it into the school office
- Write to School Organisation Team, FREEPOST IH 2076, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL. You do not need a stamp.

Next Steps:

- After the consultation ends, Norfolk County Council will review the results and present the findings to the Executive Director of Children's Services who will make a decision whether or not to recommend changing the catchment area of Great Dunham and Beeston Primary School to Unity Education Trust.

Consultation on Proposed Changes to School Admissions:

Catchment area changes from September 2025 for Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School

Following the amalgamation of Great Dunham Primary School with Beeston Primary School effective September 2025

What you think of the proposals? Please provide responses below

How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to change the catchment areas of Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School from September 2025?

Please tick one box

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Neither agree or disagree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

☐

Don't know

Please give your main reasons for your answers.

Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make to help us with this decision and in planning for the future provision of the children?

Please write in the box below.

We would like to hear from many different people as your views help us to decide whether or not we make these changes.

We will process your personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations, which means that we will not give your personal data to any third parties.

Your comments will be anonymous - your name or anything that could identify you will not be included in any report. However, we cannot guarantee that this information will be withheld if it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Please tell us who you are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil | <input type="checkbox"/> School governor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent / Guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> Local resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Parent Teacher Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Local business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sports group |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Local community group |

Other (please specify): _____

Which school are you linked to? _____

What is your postcode? _____

The earliest this change could take place would be September 2025.

You can tell us your views by returning your completed form to the school office.

Appendix B

Great Dunham and Beeston Stakeholders

Litcham School	head@litchamschool.org.uk ;	Stuart Wilson
Synergy MAT	CEO@Synergymat.co.uk ;	Louise Lee
DNEAT	oliver.burwood@днеат.org ;	Oliver Burwood
Hope Federation	office@rudham.днеат.org ;	Belinda Allen
Great Massingham and Harpley Federation	head@greatmassingham.norfolk.sch.uk ;	Kirsten Stibbon
St Marys Community Primary School	head@st-marysbeetley.norfolk.sch.uk ;	Tanya Treavett
Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris	mark.kiddle-morris.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk ;	
Sara Tough	sara.tough@norfolk.gov.uk ;	
Breckland District Council	chief.executive@breckland.gov.uk '	Maxine O'Mahoney
Great Dunham Parish Council	greatdunhampc@gmail.com ;	Sue Davis
Councillor Nigel Wilkin	nigel.wilkin@breckland.gov.uk ;	
George Freeman MP	george.freeman.mp@parliament.uk ;	
Beeston with Bittering Parish Council	beestonwithbitteringpc@gmail.com ;	
Unity Education Trust	ceo@unityeducationtrust.uk ; kwinter@unityeducationtrust.uk ;	
EARLY YEARS		
Litcham Day Nursery	litchamchildcare@gmail.com ;	
Sporle Pre School	office@sporle.norfolk.sch.uk ;	
Necton Pre School	office@necton.norfolk.sch.uk ;	
Teenie Icenis day nursery	teenieicenis@hotmail.co.uk ;	
Heartwood Primary and Nursery	head@heartwood.norfolk.sch.uk ;	
Scarning preschool	graeme.skinner@me.com ;	
Beetley preschool	office@beetley-preschool.org ;	
Little Owls day nursery	justinewatts@hotmail.co.uk ;	
Dereham Infant and nursery	office@dereham.norfolk.sch.uk ;	
UNION/other key CONTACTS		
Scott Lyons National Education Union Norfolk Joint Secretary	scott.lyons@neu.org.uk ;	

Vicky Warnes NEU joint Secretary	Vicky.warnes@neu.org.uk ;
Diocesan Director of Education	paul.dunning@dioceseofnorwich.org ;
Diocese of Ely	adrian.ball@demat.org.uk ;
Diocese of East Anglia – Andy Stone	andy.stone@rcdea.org.uk ; ssc@rcdea.org.uk ;
Educate Norfolk – Jim Adams (Secondary)	jadams@cc-trust.co.uk ;
Educate Norfolk – Sarah Shirras (Primary)	head@st-williams.norfolk.sch.uk ;
Nigel Beiley, Unison	nigel.beiley@unisonnorfolkcounty.co.uk ;
Mrs C Gibson, NAHT	info@naht.org.uk ;
NASUWT, Tim Lambillion-Jameson	timlambillion@gmail.com ;
Bob Groome NEU (ATL section)	Bob.Groome@neu.org.uk ;
Voice Community Trade Union	mrdavies@community-tu.org ;
Ivan Mercer, GMB	info@gmb.org.uk ;
Richard Moore ASCL	richard.moore@ascl.org.uk ;
Carol Barber, Suffolk CC (sch org)	schools@suffolk.gov.uk ;

Appendix C

Responses to consultation

Great Dunham and Beeston catchment consultation

<https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/greatdunhamandbeeston>

This report was created on Thursday 31 July 2025 at 08:18

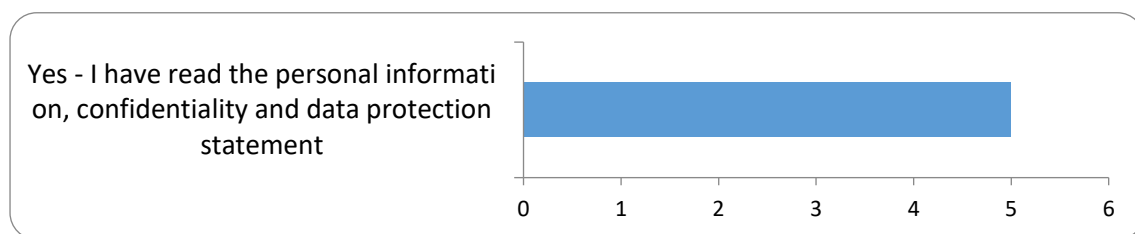
The activity ran from 13/06/2025 to 24/07/2025

Responses to this survey: **5**

1: Please tick to confirm that you have read the Personal information, confidentiality and data protection statement above.

Data protection agreement

There were 5 responses to this part of the question.



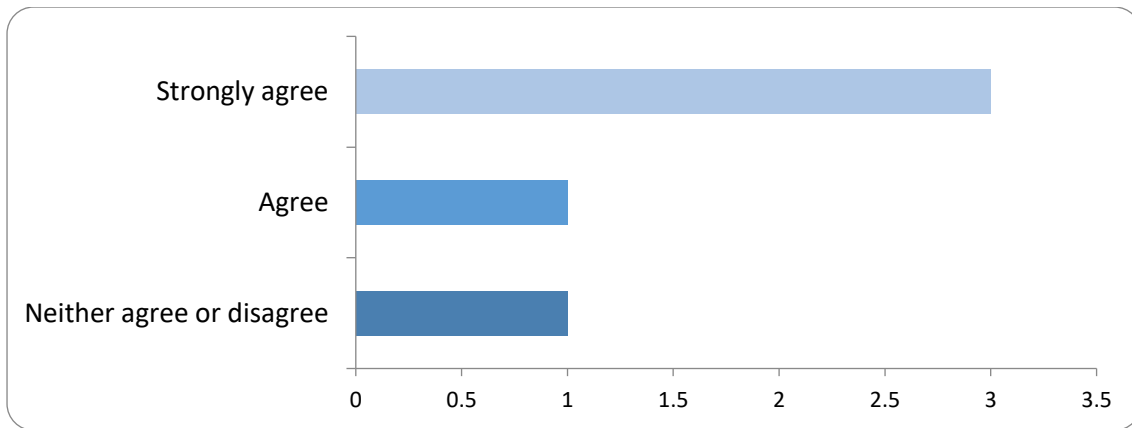
Option	Total	Percent
Yes - I have read the personal information, confidentiality and data protection statement	5	100.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

2: How far do you agree or disagree with our proposals to change the catchment areas of Great Dunham Primary School and Beeston Primary School from September 2025?

Please select only one item

agree disagree

There were 5 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	3	60.00%
Agree	1	20.00%
Neither agree or disagree	1	20.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Don't know	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

3: Why do you say this?

Please write in the box below:

tell us why

There were 5 responses to this part of the question.

4: Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make to help us with this decision and in planning for the future provision of the children. Please write in the box below.

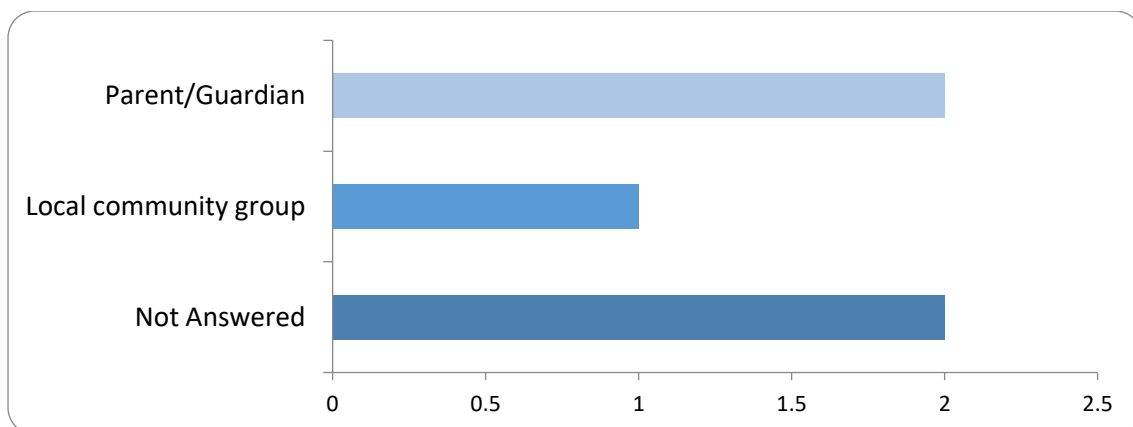
Please write in below:

There were 4 responses to this part of the question.

5: Please tell us who you are, (tick all that apply):

who are you

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Pupil	0	0.00%
Parent/Guardian	2	40.00%
Member of the Parent Teacher Association	0	0.00%
Member of Staff	0	0.00%
School Governor	0	0.00%
Local business	0	0.00%
Local resident	0	0.00%
Local sports group	0	0.00%
Local community group	1	20.00%
Not Answered	2	40.00%

Other, please specify

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

6: What is your postcode?

postcode

There were 5 responses to this part of the question.

Comments received to the consultation via CitizenSpace:

	Why do you say this? Please write in the box below: - tell us why	Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make to help us with this decision and in planning for the future provision of the children
Strongly agree	The standards at Great Dunham School have been below standard for more than five years and merger with Beeston School and the increased catchment area will benefit all of the children in the Little Dunham and Great Dunham regions.	NA
Strongly agree	It seems obvious that by combining the two schools, the catchment areas also combine.	I notice that the two catchment areas don't meet on the map - perhaps a further amendment is required to join the catchment areas together.
Neither agree or disagree	Merging will damage the prospects of our village but as it's happening we must help where we can.	Provide safe transport for Great and Little Dunham children to Beeston.
Agree	As this is an existing federation it will help continuity and parents. As neighbouring villages this makes sense too.	
Strongly agree	It seems logical that with combining the two schools, the catchment areas are also combined.	We are very concerned that the parking situation will be bad at the time that the new children start in September, as space is already restricted. We would like you to be proactive with a plan of how this will be mitigated, rather than reactive.