

# **Section 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Report**

## **The Brian Clarke CE Academy**

**April 2021**

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## 1. Introduction

In mid - 2019, the Secretary of State for Education approved The Brian Clarke CofE Academy to proceed to the pre-opening stage.

The following report has been prepared by Cranmer Education Trust and details the processes and outcomes of the Section 10 Statutory Consultation undertaken in Spring 2021. The Academy is proposed to be located in central Oldham, Greater Manchester.

## 2. The Brian Clarke CofE Academy

Cranmer Education Trust<sup>1</sup> has been progressing plans to open The Brian Clarke CofE Academy since entering the 'pre-opening' phase of the free school process in June 2019. The purpose of the Cranmer Education Trust is encapsulated in its mission statement: *Ambition, Excellence, Community – our mission is to transform the life chances of children and young people through excellent education and outstanding schools and to nurture our pupils to become everything they can be and are meant to be.*

It is intended that the secondary school will welcome its first year 7 students in September 2022.

The Brian Clarke CofE Academy will be an inclusive, co-educational, Church of England secondary school situated in the central Oldham. The secondary school will provide an outstanding education to a student population that is aspirational, multi-cultural, multi-faith and multi-talented – indeed, a community that is a true microcosm of the Borough as a whole.

The new school is being founded to help meet the need for more secondary school places in Oldham and to provide another good school, like The Blue Coat School<sup>2</sup>, to increase parental choice. By providing an additional 240 places per year, which are open to and easily accessible for young people over a wide area through the public transport network of bus and Metro, The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy will provide parents with a new and different choice of a school in a high-achieving trust which has served the town for over 180 years.

Further details about the proposals for The Brian Clarke CofE Academy can be viewed at its dedicated website: [www.brian-clarke.org](http://www.brian-clarke.org).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cranmereducationtrust.com/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.blue-coat.org/>

Image 1 – Proposed Main Image of The Brian Clarke CofE Academy



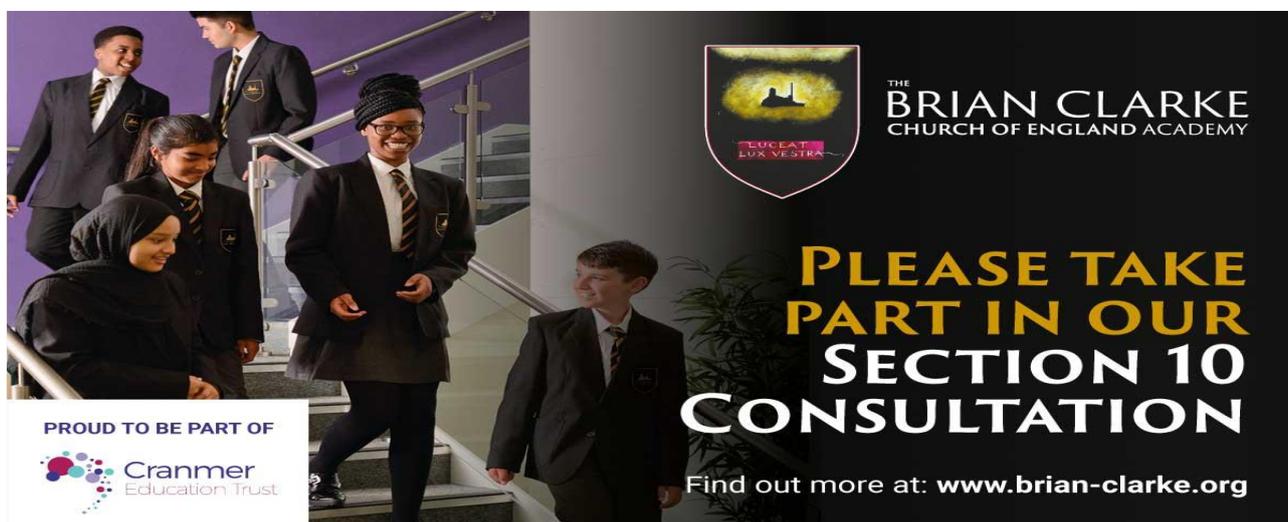
Image 2 – Panoramic view of the proposed school building



### 3. Consultation Methodology

The proposal to establish The Brian Clarke CofE Academy would not have reached this point, in spring 2021, without tangible community support. Cranmer Education Trust is committed to continuing its steps to undertaking meaningful engagement with the Oldham community. Following on from this Statutory Consultation, Cranmer Education Trust will continue to listen to any concerns raised, and to develop responses to them as part of the process of fine tuning the establishment of the Academy.

Within its pre-opening stage Action Plan, Cranmer Education Trust devised and implemented a comprehensive Section 10 Statutory Consultation plan which sought to openly and honestly engage with the Oldham community and its key stakeholders in fulfilment of the statutory obligation to consult under the Academies Act 2010.



The Statutory Consultation plan (for its coverage) identified the following key stakeholders:

- Primary Schools in the target Oldham locality
- Secondary Schools across the target Oldham locality
- 16-19 years education providers, again across the target Oldham locality
- Local organisations that represent and work with children and young people including Oldham-based faith settings (i.e. churches, mosques, Hindu temples and Gurdwaras)
- Senior (education and children & families designate) officers within Oldham Council
- Local community centres and leisure centres, including Oldham Sports Centre
- Elected members from wards within Oldham
- The three Oldham-locality MPs – i.e. Debbie Abrahams the MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth, Jim McMahan the MP for Oldham West and Royton and Angela Raynor the MP for Ashton-under-Lyne
- Local libraries including Oldham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre
- Oldham-based health centres and GP surgeries

All of these stakeholders were notified by email about the Section 10 Statutory Consultation, i.e. the plans to establish the Academy – and were invited to feedback their views, via an on-line questionnaire submission.

Details about the Statutory Consultation were promoted and outlined via the specific Brian Clarke CofE Academy Welcome webpage and a specific Section 10 Consultation page.

During the period of the Statutory Consultation the Section 10 Consultation page received 1099 views, 666 of which were unique views.

The formal consultation period commenced on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and continued until Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021.

In order to observe COVID-19 protocols, electronic copies (via a direct e-mail) were distributed to the stakeholders listed above. The COVID-19 aligned methodology adopted for the Statutory Consultation ensured that these target audiences/stakeholders had those opportunities to see information about the Academy and to respond in a way that suited them – including through a specific on-line consultation questionnaire which could be viewed at: Appendix B, page 16.

The details of the statutory consultation were issued to the local and regional media in late February 2021, including through a press advertisement which can be viewed at Appendix A, page 15 and which was published in the Oldham Times on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 – a publication with an average weekly circulation of 5,147 issues during the period January – December 2019.

Throughout the six-week window the Statutory Consultation was also promoted via the Academy's Facebook page – see: <https://www.facebook.com/BrianClarkeAcad/> and twitter feed: <https://twitter.com/BrianClarkeAcad> .

## 4. Completed Questionnaires and Data Validation

A total of 185 survey responses were received, in electronic form.

All were evidently received before the advertised close of the Statutory Consultation period and thus all 185 were included for analysis in the section below. The evident background of the respondents is presented in the Table below:

What are your circumstances? <sup>3</sup>		
Background	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
A parent/carer of child(ren) due to start secondary school in September 2022	62	33.5%
Parent/carer of child(ren) due to start secondary school at a later period	55	30%
Parent/carer of primary age child(ren)	58	31%
Member of staff at a local school	17	9%
A representative of a community or youth group	20	11%
A local resident	74	40%
A local employee/employer/business owner	14	7.5%
Rather Not Say	11	6%

<sup>3</sup> Respondents were able to denote multiple responses/relevant categories.

## 5. Quantitative Findings from the Statutory Consultation Survey

The following section sets out the on-line responses to the consultation survey form. 185 responses were received in total, over the six-week Consultation window/period.

Appendix B to this report shows the Statutory Consultation questionnaire and within that the questions respondents were invited to respond to.

In the section below, each question is taken in turn and the responses are illustrated using Tables.

**Q1: Do you agree that opening the proposed Brian Clarke CE Academy will provide an extra choice for parents and meet the need to provide additional school places in Oldham?**

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	167	90%
No	12	6.5%
Don't Know	6	3.5%

The Table indicates that 90% of respondents agreed that the proposed secondary school will provide an additional choice for parents and meet a need to provide additional school places in Oldham. The most frequent type of supportive reasoning was (words to the effect): *“because there is a need for new places in the area”*.

Specific feedback on this theme included:

*“I feel The Blue Coat School is so over-subscribed, as so many parents want their child to go to that high achieving school... another school is necessary”*.

*“Oldham has a shortage of schools that are good or outstanding - I feel confident that this new school will meet that criteria and it is only fair that all children should be educated to these standards... and presently Oldham cannot offer that”*.

*“There is lack of spaces in schools in Oldham and for those schools that are good, there is an overwhelming demand. From the communities we work with a new school in Oldham is in great demand”*.

*“At the moment I feel the only school I want my children to attend is a ‘Blue Coat one’... and it would be nice to know that there is a second choice”*.

*“This just gives more options for parents and will obviously create extra school places”*.

*“I don't feel there is enough choice in the area for a good secondary school. So, this is needed”*.

*“We need more decent school options”*.

*“There is a need for another secondary school in Oldham to provide additional places for the expected increase in pupil numbers, which will of course have a positive impact upon parental choice”*.

*“This new school provides the opportunity of children from no-faith families or those who do not regularly attend a place of worship to access excellent educational provision, something not currently available”.*

*“Having recently moved into the area with a child due to go to school in 2022, I feel it is essential. Especially as being Asian and Muslim, I feel our chances to schools like Blue Coats are slim. Even though our children are excellent academically. They have also studied at a Church of England primary school”.*

5.5% respondents did not agree with the establishment of Brian Clarke CofE Academy, with the most frequent reason being their view on the school’s admissions policy:

*“I do not support the school because of the [in my opinion] discriminatory admissions process... this will be limited and artificial in providing real choice for all or Oldham's residents.*

Some references to admissions policy reflect some misconceptions about the policy:

*“If it’s open only to those that attend a CE church, it’s not providing an inclusive choice to all parents”.*

**Q2: The Cranmer Education Trust, which runs The Blue Coat School, will also run The Brian Clarke CE Academy. Are you in favour of a secondary school that is modelled on The Blue Coat School, with the same approach to teaching, learning & care?**

The following responses were received:

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	171	92.5%
No	10	5.5%
Don't Know	4	2%

The Table indicates that 92.5% of respondents were in favour of a secondary school that is modelled on The Blue Coat School in Oldham. The most frequent type of supportive reasoning was (words to the effect): *“The Blue Coat School in Oldham is an excellent CofE School”.*

Specific feedback on this theme included:

*“The Blue Coat School has an excellent reputation that has been maintained throughout the years”.*

*“I feel The Blue Coat School is excellent and another school with the same values and vision would benefit the whole community”.*

*“Excellent values lead provision. History of improving the life chances of the children of Oldham”.*

*“The ‘BCS’ has an excellent reputation, but demand exceeds places available. Hopefully this new school will increase choice of good schools”.*

*“Have heard very good things about The BC school”.*

*“My daughter attended Bluecoat and completed her education last year; my son is currently in year 10. They have both developed educationally and personally to a high level through the excellent education, support and care provided by Bluecoat. Consultation with our groups also showed that they know of the excellent education at Bluecoat so this model it best practice and a new school*

*replicating it would be great. So, from personal experience and community conversations, we would say this model would be highly recommended.*

6% respondents did not agree. Reasons varied; the one most cited was disagreement with the admissions policy of Blue Coat:

*“Because it only provides this to selected pupils largely based on their religion and attendance of faith-based institutions”.*

*“The Blue Coat School, due to its admissions criteria, does not [in my opinion] provide equality of access for children across the borough, especially those children who live within its immediate area. Due to the selection criteria, more affluent parents will ‘play the system’ and ensure they attend church on a regular basis [and] not because they have a particular affinity with the Church of England ethos...”.*

*“Blue Coat School admissions criteria is NOT very friendly. It is disappointing that more than 30% of their pupils are from outside of Oldham”.*

Respondents’ views about Blue Coat Admissions arguably influenced their responses to Q5 about the policy for Brian Clarke, which is very different

**Q3: Do you agree that the curriculum plan for The Brian Clarke CofE Academy, including the extended school day, meets the needs of our young people?**

The following response was received:

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	164	89%
No	7	3.5%
Don't Know	14	7.5%

The majority of qualitative feedback was supportive. –Themes included:

*“It’s well-balanced with the core subjects and other curriculum areas”.*

*“There is a need for young people to be fully occupied in a supervised learning and safe environment”.*

*“The extended day focused on personal growth electives is a positive use of time”.*

*“It’s important to offer a broad curriculum with lots of opportunities for learning”.*

*“Provides a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities to enable all to live life in all its fullness”.*

Some caveats were expressed:

*“A happy set of staff means happy pupils, by and large. I believe the earlier finish for students would be better placed on a day when staff aren’t exhausted from the week”.*

The point is noted. The “early finish” – i.e. the day without co-curricular activities - is planned for Friday to facilitate, as far as possible, mosque attendance. A faith school supports young people in

their faith. Enabling Friday attendance also de-risks the attendance challenge experienced by a number of Oldham secondaries. Staff would be able to attend Friday prayers and return for the CPD and planning work.

*“Lunchtime is too short”.*

Lunchtime will be 40 minutes in Years 1-3, rising to 45 minutes, possibly 50 minutes in Years 4 and 5 to allow pupils time for refuelling, relaxing and recharging.

There was also a request for “new GCSEs to be added to the curriculum such as: Classical Civilisation, Latin, Natural History and Astronomy”.

#### **Q4: Do you support the vision for The Brian Clarke CE Academy**

The following responses were received:

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	170	92%
No	12	6.5%
Don't Know	3	1.5%

92% of respondents supported the proposed vision for the secondary school. Once again, the majority of qualitative feedback was supportive – for example:

*“The vision encourages educating and developing young people”.*

*“We are fully supportive of the invitational and inclusive vision and values”.*

*“The vision puts the individual at the heart of all that the school stands for”.*

*“Children in Oldham will especially benefit from a school that brings together young people of all faiths and none in a multi-cultural, multi-faith and multi-talented school community”.*

The only respondent who said “no” and gave details stated that:

*“I don't agree with faith schools. We live in a secular society”.*

#### **Q5: Do you agree with the Admissions Policy for The Brian Clarke CofE Academy?**

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	138	74.5%
No	41	22%
Don't Know	6	3.5%

The question elicited a range of contrasting responses.

Of the majority who supported the admissions policy, qualitative comments included:

*“Yes. Absolutely. This admissions policy has the potential to be transformative for social integration and should be given an award if it achieves what it sets out to do”.*

*“The policy will ensure that the school is inclusive providing excellent education provision for the whole community”.*

*“Seems a really fair way to run the admissions”.*

*“The admissions policy will ensure the high-quality education that Cranmer Education Trust is famous for, is accessible for more children in Oldham who face inequalities in all other aspects of their lives”.*

*“My children are baptised Roman Catholic. I am pleased there is a view to accept pupils from other faiths and none”.*

*“I agree to the 50% of non-faith proposal”.*

A range of views were expressed by those respondents who disagreed with the proposed policy.

Some respondents disagreed with any kind of faith criteria:

*“I have a fundamental objection to the use of parents’ religion as a factor in determining educational opportunities...I believe that such selection constitutes discrimination on religious, ethnic and socio-economic lines”.*

Others stated that in their view more faith places should be allocated solely to Christians/Anglicans:

*“I think more provision should be given to pupils of Christian denominations. 60 seems low”.*

*“It should remain CofE with a percentage given to nonreligious people”.*

*“All places should be reserved and based on church attendance”.*

*“I believe the use of ‘Church of England’ in the school title is misleading. It leads one to believe CofE is the larger percentage of attending denomination, not the minor”.*

One respondent agreed that:

*“It is unfair for a child to lose a place just because their place of worship doesn’t belong to an organised body, e.g. council of mosques”*

Another stated:

*“I do not agree with the 60 places available for other faith groups other than Christianity...this selection criteria is ambiguous and to misuse and favouritism”.*

On the geographical zones, objections split between those who agreed that there should be more places for children in Zone 1, those who thought there should be an equal allocation of places across all 3 zones, and those who believe the zones do not extend far enough:

*“I agree with the 3 zones having a different amount of places”.*

*“I feel all zones should be of equal amount”.*

*“There should be equal split for children across the 3 zones as they all live in the Oldham borough”.*

*“The radius will exclude some Oldham resident later who lived beyond 3 miles”.*

**Q6: We want The Brian Clarke CofE Academy to be an important part of the community. Are there any services you would like the school to offer?**

- 92% of respondents stated: use of sports facilities

- 71% of respondents stated: use of rooms/hall/performance areas
- 30% of respondents stated: use of catering services

Additional types of services which were mentioned include

*“Art and design facilities”.*

*“The local community needs an Astro pitch for local grassroots clubs to use”.*

*“Prayer facilities, for the children, would be an excellent addition”.*

*“There is a lack of community halls available for hire in the Coppice/Werneth area for community meetings events”.*

*“I believe that if sports facilities are open to the public they will be maintained to a higher standard”.*

**Q7: Should the Secretary of State for Education enter into a Funding Agreement with The Cranmer Education Trust in order to open The Brian Clarke CE Academy?**

The following response metrics was received:

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	130	70%
No	14	8%
Don't Know	41	22%

70% of respondents believed that the State for Education should enter into a Funding Agreement with The Cranmer Education Trust in order to open The Brian Clarke CE Academy. Responses suggest that there were some misconceptions as to what a Funding Agreement entailed, with some respondents suggesting that some level of contributions could be required from parents. There was also a higher percentage of “don’t know” answers, with one respondent commenting that “I don’t know enough about the funding streams of schools to comment adequately.”

Other qualitative comments **either**

supported the proposal because it would extend opportunities and choice and contribute to community cohesion.

*“Oldham is made up of a number of communities divided by social, economic and racial differences. The new school’s admissions policy provides an opportunity to break down barriers”.*

*“Another Cranmer Education Trust education facility in the Borough is a tremendous education opportunity for the young people of our town”.*

**or**

disagreed with faith schools and/or the admissions policy.

**Q8: Do you have any additional comments?**

25 comments were received, 24 via the website and one in a separate email.

5 comments were very supportive:

*“Really excited by this development in Oldham and hugely supportive of it in every way”*

*“I’m hoping this school will enable good and able children like mine to be able to enter into good schools”.*

*“The vision for this school and the detail that has clearly gone into planning all aspects of it is commendable. Good Luck!”.*

*“This will be welcomed by many families in Oldham”.*

A further comment which followed a general endorsement of the school asked about the possibility of a resourced provision.

4 wanted to know more about the site and the facilities.

3 were comments specific to Blue Coat.

1 wanted “a better curriculum” – this respondent had added the list they would like to see in an earlier answer.

The remaining comments reiterated or developed views about admissions.

7 respondents disagreed with faith schools, described as “an anachronism”, or faith-based oversubscription criteria, or both.

1 was of the view that the criteria were not Anglican enough.

2 raised issues about their particular place of worship. 1 was concerned that their wider organisation isn’t recognised as Christian (it is, and the National Society’s comprehensive list is quoted in the policy. However, that list was not fully reflected in the Supplementary Information Form (SIF), so we have amended the SIF to use exactly the same wording as the policy.

The final respondent raised issues about children in Failsworth, part of which is beyond the 3-mile zone, having access to places.

## 6. Acknowledgements

Cranmer Education Trust would like to express their gratitude and appreciation to the prospective parents, students, local residents and representatives of the wider (educational) community who engaged in the Consultation, visited the website and who took the time to complete the consultation questionnaire/survey form.

The submitted responses and contributions were all gratefully received.

## 7. Conclusions and Next Steps

Responses to the statutory consultation show that the majority of the respondents **are in favour** of the proposal to establish a new CE free school in central Oldham. A new secondary school is seen as necessary (90%). The vision of a multicultural, multifaith and multitalented school is welcomed with 92% in favour. There is an eager anticipation of the benefits the resources of the new school can bring to the town centre and people living in the area.

Themes highlighted in the consultation show that support for the school and expectations of what it will offer to young people are very high; the concerns are about which children should be prioritised if the school is oversubscribed. This highlights the need for The Cranmer Education Trust to continue to communicate the vision, and the inclusivity and fairness of a policy which balances faith and non-faith applicants, includes all Christian denominations and all the major world faiths, and offers non-faith places across 3 zones (weighted for population) to achieve a diversity that reflects the borough enabling children from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to build community together in a shared commitment to ambition and excellence.

There is also a need to continue to develop and communicate the identity of the Brian Clarke CE Academy as an institution in its own right, as well as being part of the Cranmer family which also includes Blue Coat. Blue Coat is the inspiration and prototype for the educational, pedagogical and pastoral provision of Brian Clarke, but Brian Clarke will be different, including its admissions policy and oversubscription criteria. This will help to address some of the admissions objections which were commenting on the perception of Blue Coat rather than on the Brian Clarke CE Academy.

Since the consultation was launched the site has been legally signed off and planning permission applied for, so images of the new school are available on both the school's website and the Council website.

The Headteacher has been appointed, and the ICT provider. All of this enables the CET to flesh out and exemplify the distinctiveness of the new school.

We will reply to all respondents who have provided contact information to thank them for their time and trouble and where we can to provide information to answer specific questions or address potential misconceptions.

## Brian Clarke CofE Academy Consultation Appendices

Appendix A – Advertisement highlighting the Statutory Consultation which was published in the Oldham Times:



THE  
**BRIAN CLARKE**  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



**Cranmer**  
Education Trust

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**CONSULTATION FOR THE PROPOSED  
BRIAN CLARKE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY**

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Cranmer Education Trust is consulting on its proposal to open a new 11-16 secondary school, The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy, in Oldham in September 2022.

**CONSULTATION PERIOD:**  
**12 noon Monday 22nd February 2021 –**  
**12 noon Friday 2nd April 2021**

Please complete the online questionnaire at  
[www.brian-clarke.org/about-us/consultation](http://www.brian-clarke.org/about-us/consultation)

For more information about the consultation please visit  
[www.brian-clarke.org/about-us/consultation](http://www.brian-clarke.org/about-us/consultation), email us at  
[consultation@brian-clarke.org](mailto:consultation@brian-clarke.org) or leave a message on 0845 257 1292.

# Appendix B – Statutory Consultation Section 10 Questionnaire

## CONSULTATION FEEDBACK FORM

Your views and feedback are very important.

Please do take the time to complete the questionnaire. You can also email us at [consultation@bria](mailto:consultation@bria) message on 0845 257 1292.

The consultation period ends at 12 noon on Friday 2nd April 2021, so we would appreciate your view date.

1. Do you agree that opening the proposed Brian Clarke CE Academy will provide an extra choice of need to provide additional school places in Oldham? \*

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

Please feel free to let us know your reasons:

2. The Crammer Education Trust, which runs The Blue Coat School, will also run The Brian Clarke CE Academy in favour of a secondary school that is modelled on Blue Coat, with the same approach to teaching, learning and assessment? \*

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

Please feel free to let us know your reasons:

3. Do you agree that the curriculum plan for The Brian Clarke CE Academy, including the extended needs of our young people? \*

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

Please [click here](#) to view an example of a student timetable

Please feel free to let us know your reasons:

4. Do you support the vision for The Brian Clarke CE Academy? \*

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

Please [click here](#) to view our Vision and Values

Please feel free to let us know your reasons:

5. Do you agree with the Admissions Policy for The Brian Clarke CE Academy? \*

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

Please [click here](#) to view our Admissions Policy

Please feel free to let us know your reasons:

6. We want The Brian Clarke CE Academy to be an important part of the community. Are there any services you would like the school to offer? \*

- Use of sports facilities  
 Use of rooms/hall/performance areas  
 Use of catering services

You can pick more than one answer.

Any other services?

7. Should the Secretary of State for Education enter into a Funding Agreement with The Crammer Education Trust in order to open The Brian Clarke CE Academy? (The Funding Agreement is the contract between the government which funds the building of the school and the Trust which will run it). \*

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

Please feel free to let us know your reasons:

8. Do you have any additional comments?

### YOUR DETAILS

Your details (please tick all boxes that apply to you) - I am a: \*

- Parent/carer of child(ren) in secondary school provision in 2022  
 Parent/carer of child(ren) due to start secondary provision at a later period  
 Parent/carer of primary age child(ren) - (Please specify below your child(ren)'s school(s))  
 Member of staff at a local school - (Please say which one below)  
 Representative of a community or youth group - (Please say which one below):  
 Local resident  
 Local employee/employer/business owner  
 I would prefer not to say

Please feel free to let us know your reasons: