

Re: Consultation on the closure of South Shields School

To whom it may concern

The NASUWT oppose the proposed plan to close South Shields School for the following reasons.

The school has shown vast improvements in results over the last year. It has, in fact, improved results in core subjects by 22%. We believe that the timing of the announcement of the consultation has meant that the school is not being given the chance to build on these results further.

In addition, Ofsted published the results of a monitoring visit in May of 2018, which reported at length the improvements being made by the school. It is our belief that, given time and support, the school would continue to improve in this manner.

STC provided us with a report which showed pupil forecasts until 2015 across the borough. This shows a steady increase in pupil numbers. We are concerned that other school within the borough will become overcrowded, which would, in turn, have a detrimental effect on the quality of provision for pupils.

As a result of this, we are also concerned that this will have a detrimental effect on the workload of teachers within other schools who are willing to admit pupils from South Shields School. We have, in fact, already had calls from members of staff at other secondary schools in the borough who are already being affected by this. Can we ask what support is being put in place for these schools?

Support has been shown for the schools from many different aspects of the local community. This was seen in a series of protests held on 1st November across the North East. Parents, pupils, staff and members of the local community joined together to publicly show the strength of feeling of the proposed closure.

Additionally, the economic impact the closure of the school will have on South Tyneside is tangible. Many jobs are at risk; and many of the staff at the school live in the borough. This is causing many staff in the school to be feeling stressed and worried about their financial futures.

Given extra time, and support from the employer, the school may be able to secure sponsorship. There is also the possibility that a further visit from Ofsted, with a different outcome, could 'lift' the Directed Academy Order, giving the school and the authority the opportunity to work together to build on the excellent progress that the school has made recently.

The NASUWT requests that the consultation period be 'paused', and ultimately stopped, in order to give the school the chance it deserves to survive by remaining open.

