



Department
for Education

Regional Schools Commissioner's Office
for Lancashire and West Yorkshire
Piccadilly Gate
Manchester
M1 2WD

Natasha Greenough and Martyn Jones
The Members and Trustees/Directors of The Mast Academy Trust
The Mast Academy Trust
Scissett
Huddersfield
HD8 9JX

23 January 2020

Dear Natasha Greenough and Martyn Jones,

Minded to Terminate Letter to the Members and Trustees/Directors of The Mast Academy Trust in respect of Kirkburton Middle School

In accordance with section 2A of the Academies Act 2010ⁱ any funding agreement of an academy may be terminated by the Secretary of State where special measures are required to be taken by the academy or the academy requires significant improvement and the Chief Inspector of Ofsted has given notice of that under section 13(3) (a) of the Education Act 2005.

I received an Ofsted notification dated 27 November confirming that Kirkburton Middle School was judged to be inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Specifically the Ofsted notification highlighted the school to be inadequate in behaviour and attitudes and leadership and management. Additionally Ofsted raised concerns that the arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Following confirmation of the Ofsted judgement, [REDACTED] Deputy Director for the Regional Schools Commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire met with you on 28 November 2019.

In the meeting you discussed the steps you have taken so far to address the issues at Kirkburton Middle School, and the trust's capacity to make the improvements required to improve the school. I have now discussed this with [REDACTED] and agreed with her recommendation to formalise our concerns and issue a Minded to Terminate letter.

Although you provided assurance at the meeting that plans are in place to address the issues at Kirkburton Middle School, I remain concerned about the trust's ability and capacity to deliver those plans while supporting the three other schools in the trust.

As the Regional Schools Commissioner acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, I need to be satisfied that this academy can achieve rapid and sustained improvement, if I am not satisfied this can be achieved I will consider issuing a Termination Warning Notice.

I would be grateful for the following evidence:

- steps taken to address the issues identified in the report and the impact of these changes
- evidence of the capacity and oversight of the trust to bring about improvements
- evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of governance
- a satisfactory section 8 report from Ofsted

I would like to proceed in the following way:

- a meeting with the trust in the next half term to discuss progress
- arranging for an SRMA to visit the Trust
- a review of progress on a half termly basis

Please respond to me within fifteen working days of the date of this letter, copied to [REDACTED].

I am copying this letter to the National Schools Commissioner and the Director for Children's Services for Kirklees. In addition, this letter will be published in due course on gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Vicky Beer CBE
Regional Schools Commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire
(CC National.SCHOOLCOMMISSIONER@education.gov.uk,

ⁱ Inserted by section 14 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016