



Department
for Education

Regional Schools Commissioner for Lancashire & West Yorkshire

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The Board of Directors
Northern Education Trust
Cobalt Business Exchange
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11 March 2016

Dear Sirs

Pre-Warning Notice Letter to the Directors of the Northern Education Trust (“the Company”) in relation to North Shore, The Blyth and Thomas Hepburn Academies

The purpose of this Pre-Warning Notice Letter is to inform you, as the Directors of the Company, that the Secretary of State is satisfied that the standards of performance at North Shore, The Blyth and Thomas Hepburn Academies are unacceptably low. Unless the matters on which our conclusions are based are remedied to the Secretary of State’s satisfaction, she will move to issue the relevant Warning Notices, as referred to below.

The standards of performance of pupils at North Shore Academy are unacceptably low

The Secretary of State is able to issue a Warning Notice to the Company further to Article 60 of the Articles of Association, and, if that Warning Notice is not complied with to the Secretary of State’s satisfaction within a reasonable period of time, she will be entitled to appoint additional governors to North Shore Academy as she sees fit (in accordance with Article 62).

The matters on which our conclusions are based are:

1. The Company has been accountable for this academy since September 2012. Attainment for pupils achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs (including English and mathematics) has declined over this three year period: 2013 53%; 2014 40%; and 2015 34% and is now below the minimum floor standard of 40%.
2. English progress has improved over the same period, but mathematics has fluctuated and not enough pupils are making the expected progress – 2013 51%; 2014 59% compared to the national median of 67%; and 2015 48%.

The standards of performance of pupils at The Blyth Academy are unacceptably low

The Secretary of State is able to issue a Termination Warning Notice to the Company further to clause 5.2(c) of the Supplemental Funding Agreement for The Blyth Academy. If the Termination Warning Notice is not complied with to the Secretary of State's satisfaction within a reasonable period of time, then she will be entitled to issue to the Company a Written Notice of her intention to terminate this Funding Agreement.

The matters on which our conclusions are based are:

1. The Company has been accountable for this academy since October 2013. Attainment for pupils achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs (including English and mathematics) has remained well below the minimum floor standard of 40% over this period: 2014 29%; and 2015 29%. The academy opted into Progress 8 for 2015 and under this measure its score was -0.60, below the floor standard of -0.5.
2. English progress has shown some improvement over the same period, but mathematics has declined and not enough pupils are making the expected progress: 2014 51% compared to the national median of 67%; and 2015 45%.

The standards of performance of pupils at Thomas Hepburn Academy are unacceptably low

The Secretary of State is able to issue a Termination Warning Notice to the Company, further to clause 5.2(c) of the Supplemental Funding Agreement for Thomas Hepburn Academy. If the Termination Warning Notice is not complied with to the Secretary of State's satisfaction within a reasonable period of time, then she will be entitled to issue to the Company a Written Notice of her intention to terminate this Funding Agreement.

The matters on which our conclusions are based are:

1. The Company has been accountable for this academy since October 2013. Attainment for pupils achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs (including English and mathematics) was static in 2014 at 37%, but declined in 2015 to 33% , and continues to be below the minimum floor standard of 40%.
2. Progress in both English and mathematics showed some improvement in 2014, but declined in 2015 to 34% and 43% respectively. Not enough pupils are making the expected progress.

Please would you respond to me within fifteen working days from the date of this letter, outlining the actions that you will be taking to remedy the matters identified above, how such actions will be implemented, how their effectiveness will be measured and the timescales for doing this.

Yours sincerely,



VICKY BEER CBE

Regional Schools Commissioner - Lancashire & West Yorkshire