



Department  
for Education

**Regional Schools Commissioner for  
Lancashire & West Yorkshire**

Department for Education  
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Manchester  
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The Members and Trustees of Abbey Multi  
Academy Trust  
Abbey Multi Academy Trust  
c/o Chapter House  
Butcher Hill  
Leeds  
LS16 5EA

13 February 2019

Dear Mr Paul Whitman, Ms Catherine Garrett and Ms Helen Pratten,

**Minded to Terminate Letter to the Members and Trustees of the Abbey Multi  
Academy Trust in respect of Lightcliffe Academy**

In accordance with section 2A of the Academies Act 2010<sup>i</sup> 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 24 January 2019, confirming that Lightcliffe Academy was judged to be inadequate and requires special measures.

Following confirmation of the Ofsted judgement, Kate Baddeley, Deputy Director for the Regional Schools Commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire met with you and the joint CEOs, Catherine Garrett and Helen Pratten, on 1 February 2019. In the meeting you discussed the steps you have taken so far to address the issues at Lightcliffe Academy, and the trust's capacity to make the improvements required at pace to bring the school out of special measures. I have now discussed this with Kate 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 Lightcliffe, I remain concerned about the trust's ability to delivery those plans. You have two inadequate academies to support and drive rapid improvement and will need support from the DfE and Diocese as well as external school improvement support to sustain the progress required.

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 which I will take into account when assessing whether the school is making sufficient improvements:

- a copy of an updated post-inspection action plan, setting out clear lines of accountability and timescales
- the outcomes of your meetings with The GORSE Academies Trust and White Rose Academies Trust to discuss school improvement support through an SLA
- that you have requested a pack and will ensure the relevant teaching school submits an application for emergency strategic school improvement funding to support Lightcliffe Academy
- changes to governance structures and trustees across the trust and removal of levels of autonomy through amendments to schemes of delegation setting out how this results in a more robust structure
- information on the improvement of pupils' performance through data capture and assessment, in particular pupils receiving pupil premium funding, showing progress being made under new assessment frameworks
- section 8 report from Ofsted following the first monitoring visit

I would like to proceed in the following way:

- review progress against the post-inspection action plan on a half termly basis
- review of progress on the provision of the above mentioned evidence on a half termly basis

Please respond to me within ten working days of the date of this letter, copied to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] outlining the actions that you will be taking to remedy the matters identified above.

I am copying this letter to the National Schools Commissioner, the Diocese, Calderdale's DCS and the academy's local MP. 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 to [National.SCHOOLSCOMMISSIONER@education.gov.uk](mailto:National.SCHOOLSCOMMISSIONER@education.gov.uk),  
[richard.noake@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:richard.noake@leeds.anglican.org), [Julie.Jenkins@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.Jenkins@calderdale.gov.uk),  
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<sup>i</sup> Inserted by section 14 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016