



Department
for Education

Regional Schools Commissioner's
Office
Department for Education
Bishopsgate House
Darlington
DL1 5QE

The Members and Trustees of Dales Academies Trust
Blair Avenue
Ingleby Barwick
Stockton on Tees
TS17 5BL

25 May 2022

Dear Paul Ferguson

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Dales Academies Trust in respect of Trinity Academy Richmond

In accordance with clauses 5F to 5H of the funding agreement for Trinity Academy Richmond ("the Academy") the Secretary of State may terminate the funding agreement if the Chief Inspector gives notice to the Academy Trust that special measures are required to be taken in relation to the Academy or the Academy requires significant improvement.

I received an Ofsted notification dated 25 March 2022, followed by the published report on 12 May 2022 confirming that Trinity Academy Richmond was judged to be inadequate and has serious weaknesses. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice. Of serious concern to me are Ofsted's conclusions that:

- The curriculum is not coherently planned and does not have sufficient focus on what knowledge pupils should learn;
- Middle leaders do not have the required knowledge to lead their subjects or phase of the school effectively resulting in pupils under-achieving;
- Leaders have been self-evaluating the school performance inaccurately which has resulted in key priorities for school improvement being neglected;
- Expectations for children in the early years are too low and the curriculum is incoherent and lacks precision leaving children with a lack of purpose to learning;

- Expectations for pupils' behaviour are not high enough so pupils become easily distracted in learning causing low-level disruption; and
- Lack of clear approach to the reading curriculum in the early years and key stage 1 that does not help pupils to become fluent readers.

As Regional Schools Commissioner, I need to be satisfied that the Trust has capacity to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement at the Academy. If I am not satisfied that this can be achieved, I will consider whether to terminate the funding agreement in order to transfer the Academy to an alternative academy trust.

In making the decision on whether to terminate the funding agreement I will consider any written representations you wish to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice. You should provide assurances that trustees understand the challenges and strengths/weaknesses in all schools within Dales Academies Trust and have the strategy and capacity to address them. We would expect to see at a minimum the actions taken since the Ofsted report, your Post Ofsted Action Plan and your trust wide school improvement strategy.

Please provide me with any representations you wish to make by 22 June 2022.

I am copying this letter to the National Schools Commissioner, Ofsted, North Yorkshire County Council and the Diocesan Directors of Education for Leeds and York. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely



Katherine Cowell
Regional Schools Commissioner for the North

CC: National Schools Commissioner, Ofsted, North Yorkshire County Council and the Diocesan Directors of Education for Leeds and York