



Email: RSC.WM@education.gov.uk

The Members and Directors/Trustees of The Talentum Learning Trust

Westwood College
Westwood Park Drive
Leek, Staffordshire
ST13 8NP

23 June 2022

Dear Patricia and Lise,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Directors/Trustees of The Talentum Learning Trust (“the Trust”) in respect of Leek High School (“the Academy”).

In accordance with sections 2A and 2D of the Academies Act 2010¹ any funding agreement of an academy may be terminated by the Secretary of State where special measures are required to be taken in relation to 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 16 May 2022 confirming that Leek High School was judged to be inadequate and requires special measures.

For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice:

- Leaders do not fully carry out the required pre-employment checks on new staff. This means that pupils are potentially at risk.
- Leaders’ self-evaluation is weak and inaccurate. They do not recognise the significant weaknesses in many aspects of the school’s provision.
- The curriculum lacks ambition and is not well sequenced. As a result, pupils do not progressively build on their prior knowledge nor make strong progress in their learning.
- Not all teachers have the pedagogical knowledge to teach effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve well and some have poor attendance. Leaders have not used pupil premium funding effectively to improve outcomes for these pupils.
- Teachers do not use the information about pupils with SEND to plan and deliver learning that meets their needs. In addition, teaching assistants do not have strong specialist knowledge. As a result, pupils with SEND do not make the progress they

¹ Inserted by section 14 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016.

should.

- Interventions to support weaker readers are not effective. As a result, weaknesses in pupils' reading skills are not addressed.
- Assessment practices do not indicate how well pupils know and understand what has been taught. Teachers do not regularly check knowledge and understanding in lessons and predominantly rely on examination board questions for assessments.
- The management of pupils' misbehaviour is inconsistent. This leads to high levels of low-level disruption in lessons and some inappropriate behaviour in social time. There are a high number of suspensions and exclusions.
- Attendance continues to be below average and too many pupils are persistently absent. This impedes pupils' learning.

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.

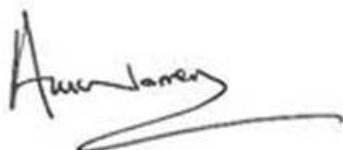
Please provide me with any representations you wish to make by 14 July 2022.

This information should include, but is not limited to:

- A copy of the Post Ofsted Action Plan;
- Information on what action is being taken to support educational improvement at the Academy and timescales of this work;
- Details of current governance and leadership arrangements.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted, and Staffordshire County Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Warren', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Andrew Warren
Regional Schools Commissioner for West Midlands

CC:
Rob Hackfath, Ofsted
Tim Moss, Staffordshire County Council