



Department
for Education

Regions Group North East
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The Members and Trustees of Huntcliff Academy Trust
Huntcliff School
Redbourne Mere
Gainsborough
Lincolnshire
DN21 4NN

20 July 2022

Dear Ms Whipps,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Huntcliff Academy Trust (“the Trust”) in respect of Huntcliff School (“the Academy”).

In accordance with sections 2A and 2D 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 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 20 June 2022 confirming that Huntcliff School 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.

The Ofsted report, published on 09 July 2022, highlights the following key areas of serious concerns:

- Inspectors found a deep-rooted culture of bad attitudes to learning in some pupils that is not tackled effectively.
- Bullying is an issue at Huntcliff School. Some staff support pupils who are bullied well. Others do not.
- Although leaders have introduced revised curriculum plans across all subjects, there is some variation in the way in which the agreed content is delivered. This is having a detrimental impact on the consistency of quality across the curriculum.
- Trustees and the headteacher are tackling areas of poor practice but progress is slow.

- Senior leaders do not have the capacity to implement the improvement strategies identified in the school's improvement plans. Some leaders are close to being overwhelmed with the task they face.

Given the issues raised in the Ofsted inspection, I have significant concerns about the ability of the trust to deliver the required improvements.

As Regional Director, 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 the trust board wish to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice.

Please provide me with the representations of the trust board by 22 September 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, including details of how governance is organised to support improvement at pace;
- Any additional information the board consider would be helpful for me.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted and North Lincolnshire LA. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely



Katherine Cowell
Regional Director, North East

CC: Ofsted
Jemima Flintoff, North Lincolnshire Council.

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