



Department
for Education

Regional Director's Office
Regions Group
East Midlands
Department for Education
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Ms Sue Hall
Chair of Trustees
QEGSMAT

The Green Road
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 1EP

6 September 2022

Dear Ms Hall

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of QEGSMAT in respect of Chellaston Academy

In accordance with clauses 5F to 5H of the funding agreement for Chellaston Academy ("the Academy") the Secretary of State may terminate the funding agreement if the Chief Inspector gives notice to the Academy Trust (the "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 27th June 2022 confirming that Chellaston Academy 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. In the Ofsted inspection report, Ofsted highlighted a number of concerns including that:

- Senior leaders and members of the local governing body are not aware of the extent of the school's weaknesses. They have not acted with urgency to address significant weaknesses. They have not shown that they are able to bring about sustained improvement.
- There are widespread failures in leaders' work to keep pupils safe. Many pupils feel unsafe because of the poor and inappropriate behaviour of other pupils. Many parents and carers, and members of staff, expressed the same view.

- The culture of safeguarding is poor. This puts pupils' welfare and safety at risk. Trustees and leaders, as a matter of urgency, must improve the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
- Leaders, including those from the trust, preside over a poor culture of safeguarding. They do not provide all staff with up-to-date and effective training. Many members of staff do not understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- The quality of education is not good enough. Although leaders have made changes to the curriculum to develop its ambition, they have not ensured consistently high expectations of pupils' learning in all classrooms.
- The provision for pupils with SEND is ineffective. Leaders have not ensured that pupils with SEND receive the support they need to achieve well. These pupils do not benefit from a good quality of education. Trustees should implement their plans to improve the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is too high. Many disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND do not attend often enough. Leaders must quickly improve pupils' attendance.

On receipt of the provisional Ofsted judgement (Form 2), my team contacted your Chief Executive Officer, Anne Martin, to seek assurance on the safety of pupils. Through the regular contact that has been in place since then, I am aware of the immediate improvement measures the trust has put in place, including a change of leadership, and Anne has shared your Academy Improvement Plan.

I acknowledge that Chellaston Academy joined the Trust just over a year ago in June 2021, having been judged inadequate by Ofsted in July 2019 under the leadership of PEAK MAT. It is however disappointing not to have seen more evidence of improvement in the Academy over this period. I am particularly concerned about Ofsted's assessment of safeguarding culture, practice and leadership under QEGSMAT.

As Regional Director, I need to be satisfied that the Trust has the capacity to deliver rapid and sustained improvement at Chellaston 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 wish to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice. The Trust's representations should set out the actions it plans to take at school level to address the significant issues highlighted in the Ofsted report, as well as at trust level to ensure there is strong oversight of school improvement and safeguarding. I would also like to understand what external support the Trust is drawing on, including from other trusts with strong practice in these areas.

Please provide me with any representations you wish to make by Tuesday 27th September (15 working days from the date of this letter). This date takes account of

the school holidays following the concern Anne raised about providing representations during this period.

I am copying this letter to the Regional Director at Ofsted and the Director of Children's Services at Derby Local Authority. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Kate Copley / Carol Gray
Regional Director
Regions Group, East Midlands

CC: Ofsted Regional Director and the Director of Children's Services at Derby Local Authority.