



Department  
for Education

**Regional Director's Office**  
Regional Director  
North West Regions Group  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

The Members and Trustees of Champion Education Trust  
c/o BCHS,  
Haslingden Road,  
Blackburn  
BB2 3HJ

By email: [REDACTED]

Tuesday 21 February 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Champion Education Trust in respect of Lotus School**

In accordance with clauses 5.F, 5.G and 5.H of the funding agreement for Lotus School ("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 17 January 2023 confirming that Lotus School was judged to be inadequate and in need of special measures. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice.

In its inspection report, published on 01 February 2023, Ofsted highlighted a number of concerns, including that:

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Leaders and those responsible for governance have not established a strong culture of safeguarding.
- Governors and trustees have not held leaders to account well enough. This has resulted in statutory responsibilities not being fulfilled. These include safeguarding being ineffective and pupils with SEND, including many who are disadvantaged, not receiving their entitlement to a high-quality education.
- Leaders have not ensured that the designated safeguarding leads are suitably qualified. This limits their ability to help pupils stay safe.
- Pupils wander around school when they should be in lessons. They frequently try to leave the school site. Some succeed. Leaders have a suitable policy for

when this occurs. However, staff do not follow this policy as intended. This puts pupils further at risk of harm.

- Some pupils have learned about online safety and the dangers of drugs. However, there is no systematic teaching of PSHE or RSE and health education. This means that pupils, many who are vulnerable, do not develop a suitable knowledge of the dangers that they may face in society.
- Leaders have not established high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct. Leaders and staff do not implement strategies to improve behaviour consistently well. Staff do not have the skills and knowledge that they need to improve pupils' behaviour. Consequently, serious and challenging behaviour puts pupils at risk of harm and regularly disrupts the learning of others.

You will appreciate that, as Regional Director, I need to be satisfied that the trust has the 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 that has the capacity and experience to support the academy to improve in the longer term.

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. Please therefore provide me with any representations the trust wishes to make by 14 March 2023. This deadline takes into account school holidays.

As well as the written representations, I would also like to see:

- A copy of your post-Ofsted action plan
- Information on what action has been taken to improve safeguarding arrangements at the Academy.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted and Paul Turner, Assistant Director of Education and Children's Services at Blackpool Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely



**Vicky Beer CBE**  
**Regional Director - North West**

CC: [REDACTED], National Director of Education - Ofsted, [REDACTED] Director

Strategy and Engagement - Ofsted, [REDACTED], Assistant Director of Education and Children's Services – Blackpool Council.