



Department
for Education

Regional Director's Office
Regions Group
East Midlands
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The Members and Trustees of
Voyage Education Partnership
Venture House
Enterprise Way
Boston
Lincolnshire
PE21 7TW

5 June 2023

Dear Mr Penney

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Voyage Education Partnership in respect of Haven High Academy

I notified the trust on 18 January 2023 that Haven High Academy (“the Academy”) is not making necessary improvements.¹ I invited the trust’s representations in response to the notification letter, which the trust provided. I have applied the principles set out in the published document, [Regional Directors decision making: 2022](#) and considered the Academy’s circumstances in line with the criteria set out in chapter 4 of the [Schools Causing Concern guidance](#).

As Regional Director I must be confident, based on the information available and evidence provided, that the trust can deliver rapid and sustained improvements at the Academy. Currently, I am not satisfied this is the case. I am therefore issuing a Termination Warning Notice.

In accordance with clauses 5.B to 5.E of the funding agreement for Haven High Academy the Secretary of State may terminate the funding agreement where paragraphs (2), (3), (4) or (5) of regulation 4 of the Coasting Schools (England)

¹ The term “not making necessary improvements” is used in the Schools Causing Concern guidance (October 2022 update). A reference in that guidance, and in this letter, to schools “not making necessary improvements” should be read as meaning that such schools meet the statutory definition of ‘coasting’, contained in the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022

Regulations 2022 applies to the Academy and the Secretary of State has notified the Academy Trust.

The Academy has been part of the trust since 2012. Under the trust's leadership, 4 full Ofsted inspections have occurred – 3 of those inspections have resulted in overall requires improvement judgements, including the 2 most recent inspections on 22 January 2019 and 02 November 2022, despite a monitoring inspection in December 2021 which indicated improvements were being made.

There are some positive findings in the most recent Ofsted inspection (November 2022). For instance, the report reflected that "*Senior school and trust leaders have a clear vision as to how the school needs to improve*" and "*Pupils enjoy learning an increased variety of academic and practical subjects*". I am also pleased to note that *personal development* was judged good. However, the report also makes clear that, in a number of areas, the school is still not delivering well and improvements remain necessary, including:

- A significant number of leaders, including senior leaders, pastoral leaders and subject leaders, are relatively new to their positions. Some do not have a precise enough understanding of what needs to get better in their areas of responsibility and how to bring about the improvements necessary.
- The implementation of the planned curriculum is not consistent across all subjects and in all year groups. Some teachers do not reliably choose the most effective approaches to deliver the curriculum. They do not check pupils' learning closely enough and correct any errors. Some pupils disengage from learning during lessons. They do not learn as well as they could. They do not know what they need to do to improve.
- A small minority of pupils do not reliably tell staff about incidents of bullying or when their peers use derogatory language towards others. These pupils are not confident that all staff will respond appropriately.
- Not all teachers adapt their teaching carefully enough when pupils do not understand. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is inconsistent.
- Some pupils are absent from school too often. These pupils miss out on learning essential knowledge. They do not benefit as much as they could from the school's extensive enrichment opportunities.

I note the trust's representations identify priority areas for improvement, including leadership and the quality of education at the Academy, and that, following a change in senior leadership at the Academy, the trust reports that it:

- has supported the new headteacher to recruit new leaders and teachers
- has added extra capacity to the leadership team at the Academy
- is working with external partners to improve the Academy and are willing to bring in additional support if necessary.

I also note the representations identify a positive impact of the trust on the Academy's work with EAL learners and their families.

Whilst it is encouraging to hear the steps the trust is now taking to address the weaknesses identified in the latest Ofsted report, the longstanding history of underperformance and lack of evidence of improvement over the last 6 years, means I am not confident that progress will be embedded or sustained, nor that it will have the significant impact on pupil outcomes that is required.

For this reason I require the trust to take the specified actions below.

The following actions ("the Specified Actions") must be taken by the stated timescales or the Secretary of State may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement pursuant to clause 5.E.

- The trust must agree to enter a partnership with a school improvement partner, in doing so the trust should consider a school improvement partner proposed by me or my team, that has a track record in delivering improvements in schools and for pupils with a similar context, including any appropriate support for SEND provision. Such arrangements should be entered into within 6 weeks of the date of this letter and informing me when this is confirmed.
- The trust must work with the school improvement partner to review the Haven High Academy post-inspection action plan for any areas of weakness and to identify additional measures that could be put in place, with a specific focus on driving rapid improvement in pupil outcomes and addressing the issues identified by Ofsted as set out above. The revised and quality assured improvement plan should be in place and shared with my team by 9 October 2023, taking into account the summer break. The plan and milestones will be subject to agreement by the department.
- The trust must implement the agreed plan and provide termly updates to my team on progress against the action plan and impact of those actions in the Academy, with the first update submitted by 15 December 2023.
- The trust must commission an external review of the trust's governance arrangements to identify any gaps and recommendations for changes to lead to improvements at the Academy. The scope of the review should be shared with my team by 3 July 2023 for my agreement. Share the findings of the review and submit the trust's action plan in response to the review's recommendations, by 23 October 2023, taking into account the summer break. The plan will be subject to agreement by the department.
- The trust must implement the agreed governance action plan and provide termly updates to my team on progress against the action plan, with the first update submitted by 15 December 2023.

I will monitor progress made towards meeting the Specified Actions. If the trust fails to meet any of the above Specified Actions by the specified dates, I will consider whether to terminate the funding agreement in order to transfer the Academy to an alternative trust.

I reserve the right to amend this Termination Warning Notice to specify further action which the trust must take, and the date by which it must be completed.

The trust must respond to this Termination Warning Notice by 26 June 2023, making any representations the trust wishes to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice and the above Specified Actions, or providing confirmation that the trust intends to comply with the above Specified Actions by the specified dates.

If the trust fails to respond to this Termination Warning Notice by 26 June 2023, I may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement.

I appreciate the trust's engagement with the department to secure the best outcomes for children at the Academy.

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

Yours sincerely

Kate Copley and Carol Gray
Regional Director for East Midlands

CC:

Ofsted

Heather Sandy, Director of Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council