



Department
for Education

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Mr Peter Cox and Mrs Sarah Findlay-Cobb
Landau Forte Charitable Trust
Fox Street
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Sent by email

8 February 2023

Dear Mr Cox and Mrs Findlay-Cobb

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Landau Forte Charitable Trust in respect of Landau Forte Moorhead Academy

In accordance with sections 2B and 2D of the Academies Act 2010¹, any funding agreement of an academy may be terminated by the Secretary of State where the academy is coasting as set out in the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022 and the Secretary of State has notified the Academy Trust that the academy is coasting.

I notified the trust on 6 October 2022 that Landau Forte Moorhead Academy (“the Academy”) meets the legal definition of a school that is coasting (not making necessary improvements) as defined in the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022. On 14 October I invited the trust’s representations in response to the notification letter. The trust provided its representations on 11 November 2022. When considering whether to take intervention action with schools that meet the coasting definition, I will apply the principles set out in the published document, Regional Directors decision making: 2022² and consider a school’s circumstances in line with the criteria set out in chapter 4 of the Schools Causing Concern guidance³ including, but not limited to:

- Inspection evidence relating to the academy and its predecessor institutions, in particular evidence concerning the quality of leadership and management, including both graded inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005, and monitoring inspections under section 8 of the Education Act 2005;

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

² [Regional directors decision making 2022 - December 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/regional-directors-decision-making-2022-december-2022.pdf)

³ [Schools Causing Concern Guidance Update \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/schools-causing-concern-guidance-update-2022.pdf)

- The trajectory of academy inspection outcomes, including those of its predecessor schools, and whether the RD has confidence that the current academy trust can sustain any improvements without intervention;
- Performance data and other quantitative information, where it is available;
- The local context and any additional information provided by the academy trust (and where relevant, the religious body) on receipt of notification of their eligibility for intervention.

Having considered all the information and evidence, including the trust's representations, I am not satisfied that the trust currently has the capacity or capability to deliver sustained improvements at the Academy. For the reasons set out below, I am issuing a Termination Warning Notice to the trust in respect of the Academy. I need to be satisfied that the trust is taking action to address the outstanding concerns, and the purpose of this Termination Warning Notice is to set out the actions that I expect the trust to comply with in order to raise standards at the Academy.

We issued a Termination Notice in respect of the Academy following its second Ofsted inadequate judgement, with the intention of transferring the Academy to a different trust that could deliver at pace the much-needed improvements. We withdrew the Termination Notice when the Academy was judged by Ofsted to be requires improvement in April 2022. The introduction of the new power from 1 September 2022 allows the Secretary of State to intervene in schools which meet the coasting definition. As the Academy meets the coasting definition, I must now assess the capacity of the trust to achieve rapid and sustained improvements at the Academy and decide whether intervention is needed to secure the necessary improvement.

The Academy has been part of Landau Forte Charitable Trust ("the trust") since 2012 and has been repeatedly judged by Ofsted to be no better than requires improvement. Under the trust's leadership, the Academy has twice been judged inadequate and requiring special measures.

The report of the Ofsted inspection in April 2022 shows some positive progress at the Academy, with Ofsted noting that: *"this is an improving school"* and that:

"Leadership is strong. Leaders have a clear vision for the school... Trustees and governors know the school well. They provide a good balance of support and challenge to leaders and staff. Leaders at all levels are well placed to build on the improvements that have been made."

Inspectors observed that reading and maths are well taught and that leaders have set out a clear curriculum for all subjects. The report notes that expectations for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are high, that pupils receive the support that they need to achieve, and expectations have been raised about how all pupils should behave in school.

In their published report, Ofsted noted the following areas for improvement:

- For all subjects, leaders have identified what pupils will learn and when. However, in some subjects, including in the early years, the activities that teachers plan to help pupils to recall prior learning do not have the desired effect. Pupils do not always reliably recall what they have been taught. When this is the case, they do not build on prior learning well enough. Leaders must ensure that teachers understand how best to design activities that enable pupils to build strongly on prior knowledge and remember in the long term what they have learned.
- Pupils struggle to recall what they have learned about different religions and cultures and about British values. Their knowledge of these concepts is not sufficiently developed. They cannot talk about them with confidence. Leaders must ensure that pupils' understanding of the different religions and cultures and the different British values is secure, so preparing them fully for life in Britain.
- Most pupils behave well and are respectful. They live up to the expectations as set out in the school's behaviour policy. However, some pupils do not reliably self-regulate and behave as well as leaders expect. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils understand the importance of demonstrating good behaviour, including by abiding by the recently launched behaviour policy.

I note that the trust's representations demonstrate a commitment to improving the pace at which weaker performance is identified and addressed across the trust's schools. The development plan for the Academy prioritises improving the quality of teaching and learning and has a strong focus on improving KS2 outcomes. It addresses the 3 key areas for improvement from the April 2022 inspection.

Notwithstanding the recent improving trajectory, the inspection history of the Academy demonstrates fluctuating periods of improvement and deterioration despite action taken by the trust. Throughout that period KS2 outcomes for pupils have remained poor.

Whilst I am hopeful that the changes noted by inspectors in April 2022 provide a solid foundation for further improvement at a faster pace, the longstanding history of underperformance means I am not yet fully confident that progress will be embedded or sustained, nor will it have the significant impact on pupil outcomes that is required. I am sure that, like me, the trust board is concerned about the pace of progress in the Academy (particularly in contrast to the trust's other schools) and is keen to ensure that it receives all the support it needs to achieve significantly improved pupil outcomes and a good judgement at the next Ofsted inspection.

Given these concerns, I would ask that the trust takes the following actions ("the Specified Actions"), which I consider will help it secure the rapid and sustained improvements that are required at the Academy:

- Accept bespoke school improvement support, funded by the department's trust and school improvement (TSI) offer, and delivered by a school

improvement partner (identified by me) that has a track record in delivering improvements in schools and for pupils with a similar context. Arrangements for the support to be in place within 4 weeks of the date of this letter.

- Work with the school improvement partner to review the Academy's development plan for any areas of weakness and to identify additional actions that could be put in place with a specific focus on driving rapid and sustained improvement in pupil progress and outcomes in the early years, KS1 and KS2. Revised and quality assured improvement plan in place and shared with my team by the end of the spring term.
- Implement actions, as agreed with the school improvement partner, and provide termly updates to my team on progress against the action plan and evidence of the impact of those actions in the Academy with the first update submitted by the end of June 2023.

I hope that the trust will work positively with the department to take these Specified Actions in respect of the Academy. I will monitor progress made towards meeting the Specified Actions and on the impact of these and other actions the trust is taking to improve the Academy. If the trust fails to meet any of the above Specified Actions by the specified date, 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 8 March 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 8 March 2023, I may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted, and to Derby local authority. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely

Carol Gray/Kate Copley
Regional Director for the East Midlands

CC:

Ofsted

Pauline Melvin, Director of Learning, Inclusion and Skills, Derby local authority

Andy Smith, Director of Children's Services, Derby local authority