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for Education

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Ms Sue Hall  
Chair of Trustees  
QEGSMAT  
The Green Road  
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03 March 2023

Dear Ms Hall

### **Termination Warning Notice in respect of Castle View Primary School**

In accordance with clauses 5.B. to 5.E. of the funding agreement for Castle View Primary School (“the academy”) the Secretary of State may terminate the funding agreement if the academy is coasting as set out in the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022, provided that the Secretary of State has notified the academy trust that the academy is coasting.

I notified the trust on 11 November 2022 that 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 25 November 2022, I invited the trust’s representations in response to the notification letter, which the trust provided on 9 December 2022.

I need to be satisfied that the academy trust is taking action to raise standards at the academy. In considering whether to take intervention action, I have taken into account all the available evidence, including the representations received from the trust. I have also applied the principles set out in the published document, [Regional Directors decision making: 2022](#) and considered the school’s circumstances in line with the criteria set out in chapter 4 of the [Schools Causing Concern guidance](#).

Having assessed all the information and evidence, I am not satisfied that the trust currently has the capacity and capability to deliver rapid and sustained improvements at the academy, therefore I am issuing a Termination Warning Notice to the trust in respect of the academy.

Castle View Primary School has been part of QEGSMAT (“the trust”) since February 2018. Prior to joining the trust, the school had been judged no better than requires improvement since July 2013. The first Ofsted inspection of the academy took place in June 2022, 4 years after joining the trust. Ofsted judged that the academy’s overall effectiveness remained requires improvement.

Although the Ofsted report published following inspection on 29 June 2022 highlighted that *“The small number of senior leaders work tirelessly”* and *“Pupils behave well”*, the report also outlined areas for improvement, particularly in relation to the quality of education; leadership and management; and early years provision. The report stated that:

- *“The school uses two phonics programmes. This results in inconsistent teaching.”*
- *“Beyond phonics, the reading curriculum is not fully sequenced. Leaders are unable to check how well pupils are learning the reading curriculum.”*
- *“There are inconsistencies in the school’s curriculum. In some subjects, the curriculum is not taught in its entirety and in others it does not make clear enough the precise content that pupils are expected to know and remember.”*
- *“The early years curriculum is not consistently applied. Some staff require additional training in order to implement it effectively.”*
- *“A recent and significant turnover in staff has resulted in in too much of senior leaders’ time being taken up by teaching and leading too many subjects. As a result, leaders have not been able to address the weaknesses in the curriculum and its implementation.”*

I have reviewed the specific support you have invested in the academy since the Ofsted inspection, as outlined in your representations, and acknowledge that you confirm that staffing is now stable and a headteacher and early years lead have been appointed. I also welcome that you are sourcing external validation from a specialist primary national leader of education with a focus on quality assuring the trust’s work.

Whilst I am encouraged by the above targeted actions, the impact is yet to be evidenced and I do not yet have sufficient confidence in the trust’s capacity to drive improvements, especially when accounting for the Ofsted trajectory of schools across the trust. Out of the 6 schools which have been inspected since joining the trust, only 2 have been judged good by Ofsted. The remaining 4 schools have been judged either requires improvement or inadequate. I acknowledge the recent positive monitoring report at Chellaston Academy following inspection on 13 and 14 December 2022 and the trajectory of improvements at City of Derby Academy, alongside the recent appointments made to the trust central team. However, I remain mindful of the level of support required across the wider trust alongside Castle View Primary School.

Given these concerns, I require the trust to take the following actions (“the specified actions”) within the stated timescales or the Secretary of State may issue a notice terminating the academy’s funding agreement pursuant to clauses 5.B. to 5.E. of the funding agreement for Castle View Primary School.

- Take up bespoke school improvement support, funded by the department’s trust and school improvement (TSI) offer and delivered by a school improvement partner, identified by the department, 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 six weeks of the date of this letter.
- Work with the school improvement partner to review the Castle View Primary School development 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.

- Produce a revised and quality assured improvement plan to be shared with my team by 30 June 2023. The plan and milestones will be subject to agreement by the department.
- Implement the agreed plan and provide termly updates to my team on progress against the action plan and the impact of those actions in the academy with the first update submitted by the end of this academic year.

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 date, I will consider whether to terminate the funding agreement in order to transfer the academy to an alternative trust.

I hope that the trust will continue to work positively with the department in taking forward the above specified actions in respect of the academy. 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 24 March, 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 24 March, I may issue a notice terminating the academy's funding agreement.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted, and to Derbyshire 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

Carol Cammiss, Executive Director of Children's Services, Derbyshire County Council

Anne Martin, CEO, QEGSMAT