



Department  
for Education

Regional Director for the West Midlands  
Regions Group  
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Woodard Academies Trust  
1 Adam Street  
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18 August 2023

Sent via email to:

██████████, Chair of Trustees – ██████████  
Mike Pettifer, CEO – ██████████

Copied in:

Matthew Welton, Acting Director of Education, Diocese of Lichfield –

██████████

Lisa Lyons, Director of Children and Family Services, Stoke-on-Trent City  
Council – ██████████

Kate Dethridge, Regional Director for South East Region – ██████████

Dear ██████████

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Woodard Academies Trust in respect of St Peter's CofE Academy**

I notified the trust on 18 April 2023 that St Peter's CofE Academy ("the Academy") is not making necessary improvements.<sup>1</sup> 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](#).

I refer to my letter of 6 July 2023. As stated in that letter, 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 therefore intend to issue a Termination Warning Notice.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 regulation 4 of the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022.



In accordance with sections 2B and 2D of the Academies Act 2010<sup>2</sup>, any funding agreement of an academy may be terminated by the Secretary of State where paragraphs (2), (3), (4) or (5) of regulation 4 of the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022 applies to the academy and the Secretary of State has notified the Academy Trust.

St Peter's CofE Academy joined Woodard Academies Trust on 1 September 2011. In June 2013, almost two years after joining, the school received a "Requires Improvement" rating from Ofsted. In January 2015 it received an "Inadequate" judgement. The school has since had three consecutive Requires Improvement judgements, in January 2017, May 2019 and November 2022.

There are some positive comments in the Ofsted inspection report of November 2022. The 'quality of education is rated 'Good', and safeguarding is seen as effective. The report reflected that "*leaders have designed a curriculum that aims to give pupils a broad and ambitious education. They have identified the important things that pupils need to know to succeed. Leaders plan the key knowledge in the right order so that pupils' understanding builds over time*" and "*Leaders have recently simplified their behaviour expectations for pupils to six key points. Pupils know what these are and how leaders expect them to behave.*"

The report also identified that "*pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are generally supported well*" and "*leaders are developing more opportunities for all pupils to read widely and often.*"

However, the report identified a number of areas in which improvement is required:

- There are times when pupils' behaviour is not as good as it should be. There are clear expectations about how pupils should behave but some pupils do not treat others with respect and use derogatory language. Staff monitor pupils' behaviour around the school, including at social times. However, some staff do not address and deal with pupils' poor behaviour well enough.
- Sometimes teachers do not check what pupils know and remember well enough. When this happens, teachers do not spot if pupils fall behind or miss chunks of learning. This leads to pupils having gaps in their knowledge. This is especially so for pupils who speak EAL.
- The PSHE education curriculum is underdeveloped, for example in

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<sup>2</sup> Inserted by section 14 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016



terms of how it intends to develop pupils' respect for others. Pupils do not all have a clear enough understanding of positive relationships. They say that some pupils are unkind and lack respect.

- Leaders, including those responsible for governance, do not have an accurate view of some aspects of the school's effectiveness. This includes pupils' behaviour. This means that their actions to address behaviour issues across the school have not been effective. Leaders do not ensure that all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour expectations and policy.

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 sections 2B and 2D of the Academies Act 2010.

- Trust to provide an updated Post Ofsted Action Plan with clear milestones for improvement to my team. The plan is to be provided on **22 September 2023**. The plan and milestones will be subject to agreement by the Regional Director. In relation to the above Ofsted action points, the Post Ofsted Action Plan should include:
  - How leaders will ensure that all staff deal with poor behaviour in line with the school's behaviour policy.
  - How leaders will ensure that the PSHE education curriculum helps all pupils to understand how to show respect and kindness to one another and respect differences.
  - How leaders will ensure that teachers explain precisely what they want pupils to do and check that pupils have understood this before pupils begin their work.
  - How leaders will ensure that all teachers use assessment strategies consistently well to check on what pupils know and can do.
  - How leaders and governors will ensure that they gain a more accurate view of the school's performance and take prompt action to address any identified weaknesses.
- Implement the agreed Post Ofsted Action Plan and provide termly updates on the plan, including updating on the actions and milestones within the plan and how any delays or risks are being addressed. The first update is to be submitted by **Friday 9 February 2024** and thereafter **Friday 24 May 2024** and **Friday 25 October 2024**.

I will monitor progress made towards meeting the Specified Actions. If the



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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.

The trust must respond to this Termination Warning Notice **by Friday 22 September 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 **Friday 22 September 2023**, I may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted, Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority and the Diocese of Lichfield. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely

**Andrew Warren**  
**Regional Director for West Midlands Regions Group**

CC: Ofsted, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Diocese of Lichfield