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for Education

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Sent via email to:

[REDACTED]

The Members and Trustees of Academies Enterprise Trust (AET)

3 July 2023

Dear David,

**Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Academies Enterprise Trust in respect of Tamworth Enterprise College and AET Academy**

John Edwards, Regions Group Director General, notified Academies Enterprise Trust (“the Trust”) on 5 October 2022 that the Tamworth Enterprise and AET Academy (“the Academy”) is not making necessary improvements.<sup>1</sup> On 20 February 2023 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 10 May 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 intended to issue a Termination Warning Notice.

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)

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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.

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

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

I need to be satisfied that the 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 Academy's circumstances in line with the criteria set out in chapter 4 of the [Schools Causing Concern guidance](#).

The Academy joined Academies Enterprise Trust in September 2012 and, since then, has received four OFSTED inspections less than Good. I remain concerned that the Academy has not been able to demonstrate stable, consistent improvement over a prolonged period of time.

The OFSTED report from June 2022 highlights:

- *“Assessment is not used effectively in all subjects in order to identify gaps in pupils’ knowledge and understanding. As a result, some misconceptions go unnoticed and persist”.*
- *“IEPs are not as effective as they could be in supporting the learning of pupils with SEND. Information about what support will look like for individual pupils is not precise enough. This means that pupils may not get the specific support they need to achieve well”.*
- *“Leaders’ high expectations for pupils’ behaviour and conduct are not always realised. Learning in some lessons is hindered by poor behaviour. This hinders pupils’ progress and pupils’ enjoyment of school”.*

I note in the Trust's representations that it has identified Tamworth Enterprise College and AET Academy as a high priority school and it is therefore being provided with additional support and challenge from the Trust. I have also considered:

- The current CEO took up the role in June 2021.
- The Trust has refocused its school improvement strategy and has established five regions led by 10 Regional Education Directors, across primary, secondary and special.
- The additional school improvement support received by the Academy since its latest Requires Improvement judgement, including: Weekly Regional Executive Principal support visits; regular visits by the Secondary Regional Education Director; direct support from the Director of Improvement; AET-wide subject leads for English and Maths supporting curriculum development and delivery.

Notwithstanding the above, the long-standing history of underperformance at the Academy means I need to be assured that progress will be embedded or sustained. 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 of sections 2B and 2D of the Academies Act 2010:

- Provide me with an up-to-date statement of action plan for the Academy. **Please provide this to me by 31 July 2023.**
- Provide further information on the support provided by the Secondary Regional Education Director for the Midlands, specific to the Academy. This may include information detailing time spent at the Academy, actions undertaken and progress evidenced, or details and feedback from any reports or meetings concerning the Academy to date. **Please provide me with this information by 29 September 2023.**
- The Secondary Regional Education Director for the Midlands to provide the Staffordshire team with termly updates against the Academy's action plan and meeting termly to measure progress against the stated milestones. These updates may include progress reports, updates to the Academy's action plan showing actions completed, minutes from any school improvement meetings and/or the outcomes of any evaluative work completed by the Academy/Trust. Updates should cover the impact of actions being taken to address the issues raised by OFSTED **with the first meeting being held by 31 October 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 above 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 24 July 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 above dates.

If the Trust fails to respond to this Termination Warning Notice by 24 July 2023, I may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement.

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

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Warren  
Regional Director for the West Midlands

CC:  
Rebecca Boomer-Clark, AET CEO,  
OFSTED,  
Neelam Bhardwaja, Director for Children and Families, Staffordshire County Council,