



Department  
for Education

Department for Education  
Eastbrook  
Shaftesbury Road  
Cambridge  
CB2 8DR  
[REDACTED]

The Members and Trustees of The Shared Learning Trust  
Leagrave High Street  
Luton  
LU4 0NE

(Sent via email to: [REDACTED])

16 October 2023

Dear [REDACTED], Chair of Trustees,

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Shared Learning Trust in respect of The Stockwood Park Academy**

I notified the trust on 5 October 2022 that The Stockwood Park Academy (“the Academy”) is not making necessary improvements.<sup>1</sup> On 14 November 2022 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 28 February 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 acknowledged, however, that the trust is currently engaging with the department on options to transfer the Academy to a strong trust, appreciating the benefits that the transfer will bring. I also stated that, although you have agreed to work with the department on a transfer, I intend to issue a Termination Warning Notice to reflect the fact that the Academy remains subject to this intervention power, and the trust remains accountable for the outcomes of the Academy and its pupils until the transfer takes place.

---

<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 the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022

In accordance with clauses 5B to 5E of the academy's supplementary funding agreement, 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.

I recognise the positive way in which the trust is engaging with my team in relation to the future of the Shared Learning Trust and we will continue to work together on this.

I have listened to your rationale against issuing a Termination Warning Notice (TWN). I do not believe the publication of the Termination Warning Notice will be a hindrance to how the Shared Learning Trust develops. I consider this action will emphasise the urgency we place on resolving the challenges The Stockwood Park Academy is facing.

In taking my decision, I have considered the number of years the Stockwood Park Academy has been led by the Shared Learning Trust. I noted the areas of concern highlighted by Ofsted in its 2022 inspection.

- Some teachers do not check that pupils have secured key knowledge before moving on. Some pupils have gaps in what they know. These pupils then struggle with new learning that relies on what they have done previously. Leaders need to ensure teachers identify and address gaps in pupils' learning before pupils need to move on in their learning.
- Pupils do not always treat each other with sufficient respect. As a result, some pupils, and girls in particular, worry about the attitudes of a minority of boys. There is some bullying and it is not always dealt with as well as it should be. Leaders need to ensure pupils value and respect each other, and that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively.
- Systems and processes are not as robust as they need to be for pupils attending alternative provision. There is an overreliance on checks carried out by the local authority rather than the school's own checks. Some pupils accessing alternative provision have a narrower curriculum offer and more limited engagement with the school. Leaders need to ensure there is a systematic and rigorous approach towards checking the quality of alternative provisions for pupils who attend them.
- Leaders are working to bring about improvements in the curriculum. Despite this work, pupils in Years 7 to 11 experience inconsistent curriculum quality across subjects.
- Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not well supported in lessons because teachers do not use planned strategies to support them effectively. A small minority of pupils, including some pupils with SEND, access alternative provision. They do not access a broad curriculum, and they are not as well prepared as they should be to move on to their next steps in education at the end of Year 11. Leaders' records and some of their checks on how well these

pupils are faring lack rigour.

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 clauses 5B to 5E of the academy’s supplementary funding agreement:

- By 30 November, provide me with the school improvement plan for Stockwood Park academy for the academic year 2023/24. The improvement plan with milestones will be subject to agreement by the Department. The plan should allow me to identify the steps being taken to address the areas of concern identified by Ofsted, highlighted above, and to assess the extent of progress addressing those issues since the last inspection.
- Implement the agreed plan and provide termly updates on the actions and milestones within the plan (or other information as requested) and where there are delays or risks how these are being addressed.
- Accept bespoke school improvement support, funded by the Department’s Trust and School Improvement (TSI) offer, and delivered by a school improvement partner (approved by me) that has a track record in delivering improvement.
- Continue to work closely with the school improvement partner to support improvement at the academy. Implement actions identified through the partnership and provide me with termly updates on progress.

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 Academy’s 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 6 November 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 6 November 2023, I may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement.

Once again, I appreciate the trust's willingness to work with the department to secure the best outcomes for children at the Academy.

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

Yours sincerely,

**Jonathan Duff**

Regional Director

East of England, Regions Group

CC: Ofsted

██████████, Corporate Director, Children, Families and Education,  
Luton Borough