



Department
for Education

Regional Director's Office for the South West
Second Floor
3 Glass Wharf
Avon Street
Bristol
BS2 0PS

██████████, Chair of Trustees
Leading Edge Academies Partnership
Unit H Pattern Shop
Trevoarn
Hayle
TR27 4EZ

20 November 2023

Dear ██████████,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Leading Edge Academies Partnership in respect of Fowey River Academy

I notified the trust on 5 October 2022 that Fowey River Academy is not making necessary improvements.¹ On 22 June 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 15 September 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 clauses 5.B to 5.E of the Supplemental Funding Agreement for Fowey River Academy the Secretary of State may terminate the Supplemental Funding Agreement 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.

The Academy has been part of Leading Edge Academies Partnership since May 2019. In September 2019 the Academy received a Requires Improvement judgement from Ofsted and in February 2023, the Academy received a further Requires Improvement judgement.

I acknowledge the Ofsted report reflects that "Leaders have made improvements across the school since the previous inspection." However, the report goes on to explain that "These have not yet led to every pupil receiving a consistently high quality of education." The report published following the inspection also highlights the following areas in which the school needs to improve:

¹ 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 some subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the knowledge they want pupils to learn. This leads to pupils not always securing a complete understanding of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum and assessment of pupils’ learning are well planned and structured in every subject.
- Leaders have not ensured that the learning needs for some pupils with SEND are understood by staff. As a result, pupils with SEND struggle to learn parts of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are communicated to staff to allow their support in lessons to be effective.
- Despite the introduction of a new approach to managing pupils’ behaviour, some staff remain concerned about disruptive behaviour. They do not always feel that leaders support them well to manage behaviour. This causes frustration for staff and pupils. Leaders and staff should work together to ensure that the behaviour system is applied consistently and fairly to improve pupils’ behaviour.”

From your representations I acknowledge that the trust has recruited for several school improvement positions to ensure that improvements are delivered at greater pace. Whilst I have confidence that these actions will help to ensure the trust has more capacity to deliver rapid and sustained improvements at the Academy, it remains too early for the impact of these appointments to be evidenced. Of particular concern to me is whether Fowey River Academy is supporting pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve. Whilst the February 2023 Ofsted report does not discuss disadvantaged pupils, the trust’s representations refer to the levels of deprivation within some community groups. Despite this, there is little reflection on how the school or trust supports pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve. For these reasons, I require the trust to take the specified action 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 Supplemental Funding Agreement pursuant to clauses 5.B to 5.E of the Supplemental Funding Agreement for Fowey River Academy.

- For Leading Edge Academies Partnership to provide a plan to show how it will support the progress of disadvantaged pupils at Fowey River Academy. Plan to be provided on or before 16 October 2023. The plan and milestones will be subject to agreement by the RD/Department.
- 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. The first update should be provided on or before 9 February 2024 and thereafter on the last day of each term until further notice.
- For Leading Edge Academies Partnership to continue to work closely with agreed partners to support improvement of the academy and to implement actions identified through the partnership work, providing me with termly updates on progress for the 2023/24 academic year. The first update should be provided on or before 19 December 2023 and thereafter on the last day of each term until 24 July 2024.
- For Leading Edge Academies Partnership’s Interim Trust Strategic Leader of School Improvement to meet with my office on or before 15 December 2023 to discuss their approach and priorities in relation to school improvement at Fowey River Academy and for the Permanent Strategic Leader of School Improvement to meet with my office on or before 9 February 2024.

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 Supplemental 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.

I am copying this letter to [REDACTED], South West Ofsted Regional Director, and to C [REDACTED], Strategic Director of Together for Families at Cornwall Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Lastly, I wanted to recognise the positive way in which the trust has engaged with my team during this process, and the constructive conversations that are taking place between Leading Edge Academies Partnership and other partners in Cornwall to strengthen and consolidate the trust landscape.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Hannah Woodhouse
Regional Director, South West Regions Group

CC: Ofsted

[REDACTED], Strategic Director – Together for Families, Cornwall Council