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Learners' Trust  
Eckington Business Centre 2  
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23 November 2023

Dear ██████████

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Learners' Trust in respect of High Greave Infant School**

I notified the trust on 8 June 2023 that High Greave Infant School (“the Academy”) is not making necessary improvements<sup>1</sup> and 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 29 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 intend to issue a Termination Warning Notice.

In accordance with clauses 5.B to 5.E of the funding agreement for High Greave Infant School, the Secretary of State may terminate the 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.

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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.

The Academy has been part of Learners' Trust ("the Trust") since July 2016. When the Academy joined the Trust, its predecessor was judged a good school, however, since joining the Trust, the Academy has been judged requires improvement overall on two separate occasions – June 2019 and January 2023. Whilst I acknowledge the slight upward trajectory in terms of the sub judgements from the June 2019 inspection and the January 2023 inspection, I remain concerned that leadership and management and quality of education have been judged as requires improvement in both inspections in the Trust.

The Ofsted report published following the inspection in January 2023 highlighted areas for improvement specifically in relation to quality of education and leadership and management. Whilst the report highlighted that *"the chief executive officer (CEO) and trustees support and challenge the leadership team so some improvements have been made over time"* and *"senior leaders have developed a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum"*, the report also stated:

- *In some subjects, teachers do not always choose the most appropriate activities or present information clearly to help pupils learn the planned knowledge long term. Pupils do not always retain the key knowledge that teachers want them to acquire. Leaders should ensure that teachers receive appropriate training to support them in selecting the activities that best support pupils in acquiring the knowledge set out in the curriculum.*
- *Adults have not been trained sufficiently well to teach the new phonics scheme. This results in inconsistencies in the delivery of the phonics curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all adults are adequately trained to deliver effective phonics teaching.*

I acknowledge the challenges at the Academy including pupil numbers and staff retention, as outlined in your representations. I have reviewed the support you have invested in the school as outlined in the Trust's representations, including via additional executive leadership support and practitioners across the Trust. I also understand that the Trust has previously engaged with the Department to accept school improvement support via the Department's Trust and School Improvement (TSI) offer. Whilst I recognise the support being provided by the Trust, I need to be assured that progress will be embedded and sustained so that the Academy will be judged good at its next Ofsted inspection.

Given these concerns, 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 5.E.

- Enter into a partnership with a school improvement partner via the department's trust and school improvement (TSI) offer. The school improvement partner should have experience of improving schools in areas of high disadvantage. Such arrangements to be entered into **within six weeks of this notice**.
- Work closely with the school improvement partner to produce an improvement plan ("the Plan") focusing on the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted

and also any additional measures the school improvement partner may consider necessary, with specific focus on driving rapid improvement in pupil outcomes. **The plan with clear milestones must be provided on or before 29 February 2024.**

- Implement the Plan and provide termly updates to my team on progress against the action plan and impact of those actions in the Academy. **The first update to be provided by 28 March 2024 and thereafter by the last day of each term.** Progress updates will be reviewed by my team who will check to see if sufficient progress and improvements are being made.

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 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 **14 December 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 **14 December 2023**, I may issue a notice terminating the Academy's funding agreement.

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

Yours sincerely

**Alison Wilson OBE**  
**Regional Director for Yorkshire and the Humber**

CC:

Ofsted

██████████ Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

██████████ Chief Executive Officer, Learners' Trust