



Department  
for Education

Department for Education  
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Sally Lockyer  
Chair of Seax Trust  
Seax Trust Head Office  
Grove House School  
Sawyers Hall Lane  
Brentwood  
CM15 9BZ

8 February 2024

Dear Ms Lockyer,

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Seax Trust in respect of Langham Oaks**

I notified the trust on 5 October 2022 that Langham Oaks (“the Academy”) is not making necessary improvements.<sup>1</sup> On 31 January 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 31 March 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) 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 has engaged with my team. However, I need to be satisfied that the trust has put support in place 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.

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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 the Coasting Schools (England) Regulations 2022

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

The school has been with Seax Trust since April 2015. It has been inspected by Ofsted twice while with the trust, in June 2017 and November 2021. Both these inspections resulted in requires improvement judgements.

The November 2021 inspection report recognised that pupils have experienced a lot of recent changes. The school has grown in size and has relocated to new, fit for purpose buildings. A new headteacher has been recruited and will be supported by a team of leaders to manage the school. Some staff have left, and new staff have joined. Some pupils have had to work at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, staff have ensured that pupils remain safe and able to continue with their learning.

The Ofsted inspection report from November 2021 also noted the following areas for improvement:

- Leaders should ensure that all staff understand the agreed procedures to manage pupils' behaviour. They should monitor that these procedures are used consistently. They should make regular checks that staff feel fully supported when tackling incidents of serious misbehaviour.
- Leaders should take action to raise the profile of reading and writing. They should ensure that in all subjects, staff plan regular opportunities for pupils to read aloud, read by themselves and write regularly, at length.
- Leaders should monitor that all staff make full use of curriculum plans. They should provide training in adapting them, so that learning in lessons meets the different academic and personal needs of pupils and enables them to remain fully engaged in learning.

For these reasons, 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 the in accordance with sections 2B and 2D of the Academies Act 2010.

- The trust must put in place a school improvement strategy and set this out in a school improvement action plan (the ‘Plan’). The Plan should address curriculum planning, behaviour management and raising the profile of reading and writing; as well as demonstrating that there is capacity within the trust to drive forward improvement in the Academy. Please provide your Plan **by 8 March 2024**. The Plan and milestones for compliance will be subject to agreement by the department.
- The trust must implement the agreed Plan and provide termly updates to my team on the progress against the actions and the impact of those actions in the Academy. Where there are delays or risks, please provide details how these are being addressed. Please provide the first update **by 31 March 2024** and thereafter on or before the last day of each term until I confirm that no further updates are required.
- Along with termly updates, my team will hold termly progress meetings with you to discuss this. Please email [rg.eoe@education.gov.uk](mailto:rg.eoe@education.gov.uk) within 10 days of this letter to arrange the first meeting.

We are mindful of creating unnecessary pressures on school leaders and staff, and as such we would ask the trust to ensure that appropriate provision is in place to support the school workforce. We also ask the trust not to create specific documents for the purpose of the termly updates, but to share any existing documents which provide evidence of the progress made against the actions in the Plan and the impact of those actions in the Academy. We may request additional information from the trust if the evidence provided by way of existing documents is incomplete and where this would be reasonably expected as part of normal high quality trust processes.

I will monitor progress made towards meeting the Specified Action(s). If the trust fails to meet any of the above Specified Action(s) by the specified date(s), I will consider whether to terminate the Academy's funding agreement in order to transfer the Academy to an alternative trust.

The trust must respond to this Termination Warning Notice **by 1 March 2024** 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 1 March 2024**, 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 Essex County Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Jonathan Duff.

**Jonathan Duff**

Regional Director

East of England, Regions Group

CC: Ofsted, Essex County Council