



Department
for Education

**Regions Group
East Midlands**
Department for Education
Level 7, St Paul's Place
125 Norfolk Street
Sheffield
S1 2FJ

Paul Ainsworth, Chair of Trustees
Pathfinder Schools Trust
Greening Road
Rothwell
Kettering
NN14 6BB

19 February 2024

Dear Mr Ainsworth,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Pathfinder Schools Trust in respect of Montsaye Academy

In accordance with sections 2A and 2D of the Academies Act 2010 any funding agreement of an academy may be terminated by the Secretary of State where special measures are required to be taken in relation to the academy or the academy requires significant improvement and the Chief Inspector of Ofsted has given notice of that under section 13(3)(a) of the Education Act 2005.

I received an Ofsted notification dated 10 January 2024 confirming that Montsaye Academy was judged to be inadequate and requires special measures. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice. The Ofsted report, following inspection, highlighted the following weaknesses:

- This school is failing many of its pupils, including students in the sixth form. The quality of education it provides is inadequate. Pupils significantly underachieve. Reasonable expectations around behaviour, attendance and punctuality are routinely flouted.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective. The safeguarding culture is poor. Some pupils do not trust that they will receive help if they should need it. Failed procedures and delays in taking action have put some pupils at risk.
- There is insufficient oversight and governance of pupils who attend alternative provision. The school has not assured that pupils who attend these provisions are safe and well educated.
- The school has failed to ensure that pupils' behaviour is well managed. Some pupils are fearful during social times and in lessons. The behaviour of some pupils is very poor and goes unchallenged. Shouting and swearing between pupils is commonplace. Pupils say that bullying happens and is not dealt with effectively.

- Pupils do not have a strong understanding of British values. They are not prepared well for life in modern Britain. Their knowledge of different faiths and cultures is limited. They do not understand why it is important to respect those who are different from themselves. Homophobic comments are routine. Boys sometimes use sexualised language towards girls. Some pupils experience racism.

Following receipt of the inadequate judgment, our team has been in regular contact with the CEO and Deputy CEO to seek assurance around the immediate safety of children. Through these meetings we were made aware that United Learning Trust have been providing a range of support measures to address safeguarding concerns and introduce wider school improvement strategies.

I acknowledge the way in which leaders of the trust have engaged positively with our team. However, I remain concerned about the ability of Pathfinder Schools Trust to deliver at pace the significant improvements which are required at Montsaye Academy.

As Regional Director, I need to be satisfied that the trust has capacity to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement at the academy. If I am not satisfied that this can be achieved, I will consider whether to terminate the funding agreement in order to transfer the academy to an alternative academy trust.

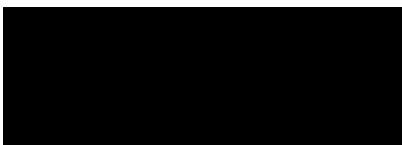
In making the decision on whether to terminate the funding agreement I will consider any additional written representations the trust wish to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice. I acknowledge however, that prior to issuing this notice, the trust board has provided written consent of its agreement for Montsaye Academy to transfer to another trust.

If you wish to make representations, please provide them by 8 March 2024.

We are mindful of creating unnecessary pressures on school leaders and staff, and as such we would ask the trust to ensure that the appropriate provision is in place to support the school workforce.

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

Yours sincerely



Carol Gray and Kate Copley
Regional Director
Regions Group East Midlands

CC: Mike Sheridan Regional Director, Ofsted,
David Watts - Director for Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing and interim DCS,
North Northamptonshire Council