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for Education

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The Members and Trustees of Pathfinder Schools Trust  
Pathfinder Offices  
Loatlands Primary School  
Harrington Road  
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NN14 2NJ

4 December 2024

Dear Ms Woods

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Pathfinder Schools Trust in respect of Rothwell Junior School**

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 18 November 2024 confirming that Rothwell Junior School was judged to require special measures. We met, along with Stephen Mitchell the interim CEO of Pathfinder Schools Trust, on 16 October 2024 to discuss the Trust's capacity to support Rothwell Junior School in both the short and longer term. As the Ofsted report was not yet available, we did not discuss the Termination Warning Notice (TWN) in any detail. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this TWN. The Ofsted report, following inspection, highlighted the following areas as requiring improvements:

- The school's expectations of pupils with SEND are low. Too often, these pupils are not provided with the support that they need to learn all that they should. Consequently, many pupils with SEND do not achieve well enough. The school must ensure that pupils with SEND receive the help that they need with their learning so that they achieve well in all aspects of school life.
- Some pupils in the early stages of learning to read do not get the support that they need to catch up. The texts they are given are sometimes too difficult for them to read. This prevents these pupils from becoming accurate, confident

and fluent readers. The school must ensure that all aspects of the phonics programme are implemented consistently well so that pupils catch up quickly.

- The school's curriculum for reading does not set out clearly enough what pupils need to know and do in order to read with understanding. Not enough thought has been given to the texts that pupils will read. Pupils do not read a wide range of texts. Consequently, many pupils do not learn to read as well as they should. The school must ensure that it develops pupils' ability to understand increasingly complex texts, so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school's curriculum is not sufficiently well ordered in several subjects. In some subjects, there is too much content to get through. In others, the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember is not broken down into small enough steps. Not all subjects match the breadth of the national curriculum. As a result, pupils do not gain the knowledge and skills that they need for their future learning. The school must ensure that the important knowledge that pupils must learn is set out clearly in all subjects and that pupils gain a secure understanding of this key content.
- Sometimes, pupils are taught curriculum content that they are not ready for. Conversely, they sometimes spend too long on knowledge and skills that they have already mastered. Neither approach is meeting pupils' needs well enough. The school must ensure that learning is adapted to meet pupils' needs.
- The school's expectations of pupils' behaviour for learning are not high enough. Staff do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. When pupils do not engage actively in lessons, their understanding is less secure, and they do not complete tasks successfully by themselves. The school must ensure that staff follow the school's behaviour policy, helping pupils to develop positive and focused attitudes to learning.
- While pupils have respectful attitudes, they do not have sufficient knowledge of fundamental British values, the differences between people or world faiths. Consequently, they are not prepared well enough for life in modern Britain. The school should review its curriculums for promoting pupils' personal development to ensure that pupils develop a deep understanding of equality and diversity appropriate to their age.
- Over time, not enough has been done to tackle weaknesses at the school. As a result, pupils do not receive an acceptable standard of education. The school, including those with responsibility for governance, must work with staff to bring about swift and sustained improvements to the school's curriculum so that all pupils benefit from high quality education.

I acknowledge the way in which the interim 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 Rothwell Junior School.

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

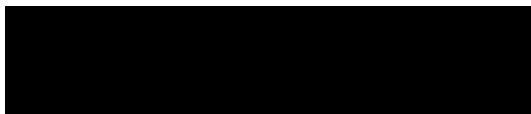
In making the decision on whether to terminate the funding agreement I will consider any written representations the Trust wish to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice.

Please provide me with any representations the trust wish, to make by **8 January 2025**. This deadline has been extended to take account of the school holidays.

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 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 Carol Gray.

**Carol Gray**  
**Regional Director for East Midlands**

CC: Mike Sheridan, Ofsted Regional Director East of England and East Midlands and Charisse Monero, DCS for North Northamptonshire County Council