



Department
for Education

Department for Education
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Members and Trustees of Thomas Deacon Education Trust
C/O The Thomas Deacon Academy
Queens Gardens
Peterborough
PE1 2UW

10 June 2025

Dear Mr Potter,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Thomas Deacon Education Trust in respect of Queen Katharine Academy

In accordance with clauses 5F to 5H of the funding agreement for Queen Katharine Academy ("the Academy") the Secretary of State may terminate the funding agreement if the Chief Inspector gives notice to the Academy Trust that special measures are required to be taken in relation to the Academy or the Academy requires significant improvement.

I received an Ofsted notification dated 12 May 2025 confirming that Queen Katharine Academy was judged to require significant improvement. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice.

The Ofsted report published on 19 May 2025 highlights the following areas for improvement:

- Weaknesses in leadership over time have led to a decline in standards. New leaders are addressing this but the changes being implemented are very new and the differences they are making have not been fully realised. The school should continue to make the necessary changes, including develop staff expertise so standards are raised, particularly in behaviour, learning attitudes and achievement.
- Aside from sixth form, too much teaching does not precisely meet the needs of pupils throughout the school. This is because teachers do not consistently apply the right strategies or use assessment effectively enough to be able to identify what pupils know and need to learn next. As a result, over time, pupils have underachieved and continue to do so in most cases. The school should ensure that teachers are supported and well equipped to choose the right teaching strategies that precisely meet the needs of pupils. Teachers also need support to develop their expertise to be able to effectively use assessment to identify and close gaps in what pupils know.
- Many pupils with SEND do not have the appropriate adaptations made to learning they require. This prevents them from fully accessing the curriculum and achieving well. The school needs to identify the adaptations required and implement these effectively for every pupil with SEND. This is so that the needs of all pupils with SEND are met, and they are able to fully access learning to be successful.

- Systems for managing behaviour are very new and are currently not used consistently well across the school. As a result, there are a significant minority of pupils who do not behave well. This leads to pupils not always feeling safe around the school. The school needs to ensure the behaviour systems are consistently used so that behaviour is managed well by all staff to create an environment where pupils feel safe.
- The school does not actively promote the broad range of experiences beyond the curriculum that are on offer well enough. As a result, only a small proportion of pupils engage with the wealth of enrichment opportunities on offer. The school needs to work with pupils to encourage pupils to engage with activities beyond lessons, to support them to further develop their varied talents and interests.

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 written representations the trust wish to make in response to this Termination Warning Notice. In addition, please provide me with the following:

- A copy of the post-Ofsted Action Plan.
- A copy of the trust's School Improvement Strategy.

Please provide me with any representations the trust wishes to make by 1 July 2025.

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, the trust CEO and Peterborough City Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely,

<redacted>

Jonathan Duff

Regional Director

East of England, Regions Group

CC:

Mike Sheridan, Regional Director East of England and East Midlands, Ofsted

Scott Hudson, Chief Executive Officer, Thomas Deacon Education Trust

John Gregg, Executive Director for Children and Young People Services,
Peterborough City Council

Carrie Traill, Service Director for Education, Peterborough City Council