



Department
for Education

Regions Group North West
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2AW

The Members and Trustees of Halliard Trust

By email only



21 November 2025

Dear Mr Gorton

**Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Halliard Trust
in respect of The Winsford Academy**

In accordance with clauses 5.F to 5H of the funding agreement for The Winsford 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 3 October 2025 confirming that The Winsford 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 10 November 2025 highlights the following areas for improvement:

- The intended curriculum is not delivered well across most subjects. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge well over time. The school should ensure that staff develop the knowledge and skills to design learning activities that help pupils to progress successfully through the curriculum.
- Staff do not identify gaps in pupils’ understanding and have low expectations of the quality of work that pupils produce. This means that misconceptions are not addressed well, and pupils’ learning is not secure. The school should ensure that staff use effective assessment strategies to help address gaps in pupils’ knowledge and raise achievement.
- The school does not provide enough well-tailored support to help pupils in key stage 4 who struggle with reading. As a result, many older pupils cannot read well enough and this limits how well they access the curriculum. The school

should ensure that it provides effective support for all pupils who struggle with reading so that they can access the curriculum well.

- Staff do not apply behaviour management systems consistently well. Consequently, off task or inattentive behaviour remains unchallenged. The school should ensure that behaviour expectations are applied fairly and consistently so that pupils learn without interruption.
- Many pupils, particularly pupils with SEND, miss school frequently. This limits their progress through the curriculum. The school should strengthen its attendance strategies so that barriers to attendance are removed and absence levels reduce.
- Some pupils are not confident that staff address derogatory language and unkind behaviour effectively. This impacts negatively on their views of the school. The school should ensure that it strengthens how it tackles unkind behaviour and derogatory language so that pupils' experiences across the school are more positive.
- The school does not ensure that Year 8 and 9 pupils receive sufficient encounters with organisations and employers. As a result, these pupils are not informed about possible career choices as well as they should be. The school should ensure that suitable careers guidance and learning opportunities are designed for younger pupils so that they are better informed about their next stage in education and future employment.

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.

Please provide me with any representations the trust wishes to make by **11 December 2025**. These should include, but are not limited to:

- A copy of the post-Ofsted inspection action plan for the academy, which addresses the areas the school needs to improve on as detailed in the Ofsted report.
- Provide clarity on the steps the trust is taking to address needed improvements in the oversight of the Academy and detail how it will ensure the school respond to the areas identified in the Ofsted report.
- Any other information you feel would demonstrate how the trust is taking rapid actions to improve the school.

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 Jonathan Smart, Ofsted, Jeremy Spencer, CEO and Amanda Perraton, Cheshire West and Chester Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature, with a small grey arrow pointing to the right.

Vicky Beer CBE
Regional Director for North West Region

CC: Jonathan Smart Ofsted, Jeremy Spencer CEO, Amanda Perraton Cheshire West and Chester Council.