



Department  
for Education

**Regional Director's Office**

Regions Group  
East Midlands Level 7  
St Paul's Place  
125 Norfolk Street  
Sheffield  
S1 2FJ

The Members and Trustees of Harbour Learning Trust  
Low Road  
Healing  
Grimsby  
DN41 7QD

31 March 2026

Dear Mr Cherry

**Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of Harbour Learning Trust in respect of St Giles Academy**

In accordance with clauses 5.F to 5.H of the funding agreement for St Giles 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 that the Academy requires significant improvement.

I received an Ofsted notification dated 9 March 2026 confirming that the 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 20 March 2026, graded the category of 'achievement' as needing urgent improvement, highlighting the following concerns:

- In the past, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have not been well enough prepared for the next stage in their education. For too long, pupils have left the school in Year 6 without the key skills, knowledge and personal attributes they need to experience success in secondary school.
- The legacy of a poor curriculum offer and unskilled teaching means that many pupils across the school continue to have significant gaps in their learning. This means that many pupils are not able to read fluently and accurately. They also struggle to organise and communicate their ideas clearly in writing. Many pupils have not developed the confidence and self-motivation they need to be successful learners. In contrast, there have been some improvements in the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Recent improvements to inclusion systems means that the needs of

vulnerable pupils are identified and met. As a result, some groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are beginning to reduce the deficits in their learning. However, this is not the case for other pupils. This means that they are not ready for their next stage of learning.

The report also graded the following categories as 'needs attention': attendance and behaviour; curriculum and teaching; early years; leadership and governance; and personal development and wellbeing.

The Ofsted report identifies the following 'Next Steps' for the Academy and Academy Trust:

- Leaders should establish an agreed approach to the delivery of the curriculum across all subjects and ensure that staff have the expertise they need to implement the curriculum consistently well so that pupils' achievement improves.
- Leaders should ensure that there are appropriate assessment systems in place so that staff check pupils' learning more effectively and use this information to close pupils' knowledge gaps, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders should build on the recent improvements to promote regular attendance so that persistent absence reduces and pupils attend school more regularly.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and find new interests.
- Leaders should build on the positive changes to the provision in the early years so that children are better prepared for Year 1.

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 Academy's funding agreement in order to transfer the Academy to an alternative academy trust.

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

Please provide any written representations to [REDACTED] by 11 May 2026. The deadline has been extended to take account of the school holiday.

The Termination Warning Notice issued on 9 July 2025, in relation to the special measures judgement of 29 April 2025, is withdrawn and will be removed from GOV.UK.

We continue to be mindful of creating unnecessary pressures on school leaders and staff, and as such we would ask the trust to continue to ensure that the appropriate

provision is in place to support the school workforce. Thank you for your continued engagement with my team regarding St Giles Academy.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted, the Trust's CEO, and Lincolnshire County Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely



**Nigel Minns**  
**Regional Director for East Midlands**

CC: Richard Briggs, Chief Executive Officer, Harbour Learning Trust  
Mike Sheridan, Ofsted Regional Director East of England and East Midlands  
Heather Sandy, Director of Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council