Department for Education

Regional Director's Office
Regions Group
East Midlands Level 7,
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125 Norfolk Street
Sheffield
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Email: RG.EM@education.gov.uk

The Members and Trustees of De Aston School Academy Trust
De Aston School
Willingham Road
Market Rasen
LN8 3RF
By email only: [redacted]

19 October 2026

Dear Mr White,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of De Aston School Academy Trust ("the Trust") in respect of De Aston School ("the Academy")

In accordance with clauses 7.6 and 7.7 of the funding agreement for the Academy, the Secretary of State may terminate the funding agreement if the Chief Inspector gives notice to the 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 22 September 2026 confirming that the Academy was judged to require special measures. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice. The Ofsted report, published on 1 October 2026, highlights the following areas for improvement:

- Leaders should develop a strategic approach to improving pupils' attendance, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. They should specifically support pupils, who are persistently and severely absent, to improve their attendance urgently.
- Leaders should support staff to manage pupils' behaviour and support pupils to manage their own behaviour to help reduce the number of suspensions, including for pupils who are repeatedly suspended and in particular for pupils with SEND.
- Leaders should ensure that their evaluation of the quality of teaching is accurate and identifies specific areas that need improvement. They should ensure that staff receive the necessary training, support and guidance to improve their practice.
- Leaders should ensure that staff have the necessary information and strategies about how to meet pupils' needs, so that they can provide pupils with the right support, at the right time.

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently and regularly check pupils' knowledge and understanding in lessons, correcting misconceptions and moving learning forward, when knowledge is secure.
- Leaders should ensure that they take appropriate action to identify and assess pupils' needs and reduce barriers to their learning.
- Leaders should ensure that all staff have high expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve and do in all aspects of the school's work.

As set out in Support and intervention in schools, there is a presumption that academies found by Ofsted to require special measures will receive structural intervention, which means they will be transferred to an alternative academy trust. This presumption may be set aside in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances may apply, for example, if I am satisfied that the Trust has demonstrated, through its representations and/or other evidence, that there has been an exceptional improvement or change in leadership capacity at both trust and school levels since or shortly before inspection, which already shows impact, and therefore the Trust is now demonstrating that it has the capacity to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement at the Academy.

If I am not satisfied that exceptional circumstances apply, I will, in accordance with the Department's policy, consider terminating the Academy's funding agreement in order to transfer the Academy to an alternative academy trust.

In making the decision on whether to terminate the Academy's 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 13 November 2026. This deadline has been extended to take account of the school half term holiday.

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 Academy's workforce.

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

[redacted]

Nigel Minns
Regional Director for East Midlands

CC: Mike Sheridan, Ofsted Regional Director, East of England and East Midlands
Simon Porter, Chief Executive Officer, De Aston School Academy Trust
Heather Sandy, Director of Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council