

The Members and Trustees of  
Assisi Catholic Trust  
Kenilworth Gardens,  
Westcliff On Sea, SS0 0BW

18 May 2023

Dear Francis McEvoy,

### **Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Assisi Catholic Trust in respect of St Joseph's Catholic Primary 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 16 March 2023 confirming that St Joseph's was judged to be inadequate and requires special measures. For the reasons set out below, I now consider it necessary to issue this Termination Warning Notice.

#### Concerns about Leadership and Management

- Over time, trust leaders and governors have not checked carefully enough that the quality of education offered is adequate.
- Trustees and those responsible for governance do not know the weaknesses in the school's provision. They have not challenged leaders to ensure that these are being addressed.
- The trust's work to improve quality of education, support for pupils with SEND and behaviour is weak.

#### Quality of Education

- Leaders have not implemented a broad curriculum that prepares pupils for the next stage of their education. The curriculum from early years to Year 6 is poorly designed.
- Pupils do not spend enough time learning the basics in English and mathematics. As a result, they do not develop the vital knowledge they need and get confused in lessons.
- Leaders of these subjects do not have the time, knowledge or support they need to develop the curriculum effectively. Leaders have not set out the knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember.

- Too many pupils do not have a secure understanding of basic phonics, meaning they cannot read simple texts. Pupils have large gaps in their knowledge that leaders have been unable to address.
- Pupils with SEND, including children in Reception, do not have their needs identified quickly and accurately. They cannot access the curriculum fully. Staff are not well trained to identify and support pupils' behaviour and learning needs.

### Behaviour

- Staff do not have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils do not always show positive attitudes.
- Bullying is too frequent an experience for pupils. Pupils do not trust adults to deal with behaviour issues and, as a result, do not report concerns.
- Systems for monitoring and reviewing behaviour are not effective. While incidents of behaviour concerns are recorded, leaders do not review these incidents to identify patterns or trends.
- Leaders have a curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) in place. However, this is not delivered on a regular basis and lessons are often missed.

### Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Staff know the school's safeguarding policy, including how to report concerns. However, this is not always followed, and information is not shared with the right leaders.
- Staff are not confident with reporting low-level concerns about pupils and, as a result, the early signs of abuse are not recognised.
- Leaders' record-keeping is poor. Records do not outline how concerns are followed up, what actions have been taken or the decisions reached.
- Leaders do not have a clear understanding or grasp of the safeguarding information they hold, leaving pupils at risk of significant harm.

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. Whilst addressing the points raised by Ofsted above, please also provide me with the following:

- A copy of the Post-Ofsted Action Plan;
- Information on what action is being taken to support educational improvement at the academy and the timescales of this work;
- Details of the provisions you have put in place with regards to safeguarding and how do you continue to mitigate against risk of potential harm.

Please provide me with any representations the Trust wish to make by 15 June 2023.

I am copying this letter to Ofsted, the Diocese of Brentwood Education Service, and Essex local authority. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Duff', written in a cursive style.

**Jonathan Duff**  
**Regional Director for East of England**

CC: Ofsted, Diocese of Brentwood Education Service, Essex County Council