



Department  
for Education

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The Members and Trustees of Cornelius Vermuyden School  
Dinant Avenue  
Canvey Island  
Essex  
SS8 9QS

23 January 2024

Dear Ms Cathryn Adams

**Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of the Cornelius Vermuyden School in respect of Cornelius Vermuyden School, Canvey Island.**

In accordance with sections 2A and 2D of the Academies Act 2010<sup>i</sup> 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 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 confirming that Cornelius Vermuyden School 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.

- There are multiple failings with safeguarding practice and the school lacks a robust safeguarding culture. School leaders and staff are not consistently following statutory guidance to keep children safe.
- Pupils are typically disengaged in lessons. They may ignore the teacher and chat among themselves. Some pupils can be defiant. They do not respond to adults' requests, and they leave lessons because they want to. Some pupils think they need to misbehave to fit in. Certain behaviour is dangerous, such as planned fights, and this has left pupils and staff feeling unsafe.
- There is a lack of safeguarding culture at the school. Too many pupils are not confident that staff will deal with behavioural issues or concerns about bullying. Thus, there is a reluctance to report issues as they occur. Many parents and staff agree that pupils are not safe on site.
- The behaviour policy and its delivery are not working. The school's core values of 'respect, responsibility and resilience' are often ignored. Too many pupils have a lack of respect for one another and for adults who work at the school. Some behaviour is unsafe.
- Pupils do not treat one another with respect. Name-calling, the use of homophobic language and bullying are features of everyday life for too many

pupils. Pupils have stopped reporting bullying because, too often, 'nothing happens'. The negative experiences pupils have at school mean they do not want to attend.

- There are flaws with the curriculum and its delivery. In some subjects, pupils' starting points are not sufficiently taken into account. This limits learning, leads to boredom and, in some cases, misbehaviour, as pupils do not want to do the work. Some pupils are absent too frequently, which impacts on their achievement.
- The support for pupils with SEND is weak in a range of lessons. Some support plans for pupils with SEND are unhelpful as they contain limited guidance or no guidance at all for staff. This means that pupils with SEND struggle to access the curriculum.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), like their peers, are not served well by the curriculum and how it is taught. Pupils' support plans, including those who have an education, health and care plan, have not been reviewed for some time.
- The school has not addressed longstanding weaknesses in the quality of provision. Some decisions have not been made in the best interests of pupils. The curriculum has been narrowed for some pupils, reduced timetables are used inappropriately, and pupils undertake some courses that serve no useful purpose for them.
- Governors do not have a clear understanding of the weaknesses in the school's provision. Over time, the school's actions to bring about improvements have been ineffective. There are now many issues to tackle as a result.

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 wish to make by 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

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 and Essex County Council. 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  
East of England, Regions Group

CC: Mike Sheridan – Regional Director, East of England and East Midlands  
(Ofsted)  
Helen Lincoln – Executive Director for Children and Families, and  
Education  
(Essex County Council)

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<sup>i</sup> Inserted by section 14 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016