



Department
for Education

Department for Education
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The Members and Trustees of The Kemnal Academies Trust
The Atkins Centre Kemnal Technology College
Sevenoaks Way
Sidcup
Kent
DA14 5AA

18 June 2026

Dear Ms McGuinness,

Termination Warning Notice to the Members and Trustees of The Kemnal Academies Trust (“the Trust”) in respect of Hylands School (“the Academy”)

In accordance with sections 2A and 2D of the Academies Act 2010ⁱ 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 1 June 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 9th June highlights the following areas for improvement.

- Trustees and governors must strengthen their challenge and support to leaders in order to ensure that their actions, including the use of additional funding such as the pupil premium, are making a positive difference for pupils.
- Trustees, governors and leaders should ensure that they have an accurate oversight of the quality of the school's provision, so that they can identify and act on the most urgent priorities for improvement.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' starting points and provide work that is appropriately ambitious and well adapted so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can access the curriculum and achieve well
- Leaders should strengthen systems to identify, review and support the needs of pupils with SEND, and ensure that staff develop the appropriate expertise to help pupils with SEND access learning successfully.
- Leaders should evaluate more rigorously the impact of strategies to improve pupils' foundational skills, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders should continue to develop and embed their strategies to improve attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND and those who are persistently absent.

- Leaders should ensure that careers education, information, advice and guidance are effective in raising pupils' aspirations and improving their understanding of the full range of pathways available, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders should take steps to increase pupils' participation in enrichment opportunities. This is to ensure that a much greater proportion of pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, benefit from activities that develop their confidence, leadership skills and sense of belonging.

In addition to these concerns, I note that the most recent Ofsted inspection outcome represents a further decline in the Academy's performance. The Academy has been governed by the Trust since August 2011, and during that time has been subject to four section 5 Ofsted inspections. The first resulted in a headline judgement of 'Good', while the subsequent three resulted in judgements of 'Requires Improvement.' Therefore, I have significant concerns as to whether the Trust has the capacity to secure and sustain the rapid improvements required at the Academy.

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 8 July 2026.

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 to Essex County Council. A copy of this letter will also be published on GOV.UK.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Duff

Regional Director
East of England, Regions Group

CC: Ofsted, Russell Hobby (CEO, The Kemnal Academies Trust), Clare Kershaw (Director of Education, Essex County Council)

ⁱ Inserted by section 14 of the Education and Adoption Act 2016