



Department for Education

Mr Nick McNeil
St Mary's Sixth Form College
Shear Brow
Blackburn
BB1 8DX

Rt. Hon. Anne Milton MP
Minister of State for Apprenticeships
and Skills

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith St,
London
SW1P 3BT

T +44 (0) 370 000 2288
E enquiries@education.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/education

July 2017

Dear Mr McNeil

I am writing to let you know about the government's view of the St Mary's Sixth Form College's position following the Sixth Form College Commissioner's review, and to invite you to confirm the actions your college will now take in response to the significant concerns raised.

As you are aware, in light of the college's 'inadequate' financial health grade, a financial notice to improve was issued on 27 February 2017. I asked Peter Mucklow as Sixth Form College Commissioner to review the position of your college in line with the intervention policy set out in 'Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills' (April 2013). He has completed his assessment.

I have now received his assessment, a summary of which is attached, which includes a set of recommendations. I have accepted all of these recommendations.

As you will see, the assessment identifies the need for the college to become more financially resilient. The report recommends a Commissioner-led Comprehensive Options Review, working closely with college leaders and governors, to be undertaken as soon as possible to support the identification of strategic options for the corporation to consider in autumn 2017.

The funding agency will be regularly monitoring progress at the college, and will be looking for evidence that the college has responded to the recommendations and is delivering the changes necessary.

Please confirm, in writing, in three weeks time, what actions you are taking to address all of the recommendations and your timetable for doing so. In the interests of transparency, after I have received your response, I intend to ask the Education & Skills Funding Agency to publish this letter, the summary report and recommendations on the government's website.

If you have any questions about the Sixth Form College Commissioner's assessment or this letter, my officials will be happy to meet with you to discuss. Please contact

Stephen Jones at the Education & Skills Funding Agency
(stephen.jones@sfa.bis.gov.uk) in the first instance.

I am copying this letter to Kate Hollern MP.

Yours sincerely,
ANNE MILTON

ANNE MILTON MP