



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

Education and Skills Funding Agency
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

31 October 2019

Mr D Freeman
Chair of Trustees
The Engage Multi Academy Trust
c/o Dereham Sixth Form College
Crown Road
Norfolk
NR20 4AG

Dear Mr Freeman,

Financial Notice to Improve

On 3 September 2018, I wrote to your predecessor in their capacity as the Chair of Trustees at The Engage Multi Academy Trust. This was to serve notice that Engage Multi Academy Trust (“the trust”) was required to improve its financial management, controls and governance.

This notice was as a consequence of the trust operating with a deficit budget, lack of financial controls and poor governance. The Financial Notice to Improve (FNtl) set out the actions that were needed to be taken by the trust to make sure necessary improvements were made.

We have closely monitored the trust’s progress against the conditions set out in that notice, which were:

- a) reduce overlaps between Trustees and Members by making new governance appointments which are to be agreed with the ESFA – by 17 September 2018;
- b) provide a recovery plan which includes efficiency savings and costed implications of reorganisation and clarifying accountability for SEND and AP delivery by 30 September 2018;
- c) strengthen the executive team by appointing an interim CEO in agreement with the ESFA and RSC by 10 September 2018 replacing previous business manager and Chief Operating Officer with appropriately qualified and experienced staff, as agreed with the ESFA. Recruitment timetable to be agreed with ESFA by 10 September 2018;

d) update Articles of Association to the latest model – by 28 September 2018;
and

e) provide monthly management accounts by the 22nd of each month, with first report due 22 September 2018, in a format to be agreed with ESFA. This should include cashflow forecast.

I am pleased to inform you that I am satisfied that the above FNtl conditions have all been met. As a result, the FNtl will be lifted with effect from the date of this letter.

This letter will be published on gov.uk. I am copying this letter to Glyn Hambling (CEO of Engage Trust), Accounting Officer of the trust, and Sue Baldwin, Regional Schools Commissioner for East England and North East London.

It is important that the trust continues to embed the controls and processes which have led to this improvement and continues to exercise strong financial oversight of the trust.

I would like to thank you for your contribution in ensuring the trust has reached this position.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Pettifer', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Mike Pettifer
Director, Academies and Maintained Schools Directorate