



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Tel: 0370 000 2288  
[www.education.gov.uk/efa-enquiry-form](http://www.education.gov.uk/efa-enquiry-form)

18 October 2021

Michael Donnelly  
Chair of Trustees  
Penny Bridge Church of England Academy  
Greenodd  
Penny Bridge  
Ulverston  
LA12 7RQ

Dear Mr Donnelly

**Notice to Improve: Penny Bridge Church of England Primary School Limited**

On 11 December 2020, I wrote to Debbie Francis in her capacity as Chair of Trustees at Penny Bridge Church of England Primary School Limited ('the Trust') to serve notice that a Notice to Improve (Ntl) would be issued to the Trust.

This letter is to confirm that ESFA will be lifting the Ntl.

The Ntl was issued in response to the Financial Management and Governance report issued to the Trust on 27 November 2020, which identified several breaches of the Academy Trust Handbook (ATH). The Ntl was issued in response to concerns regarding financial management and breaches of the ATH and set out the actions that had to be taken by the Trust to make sure necessary improvements were made.

We have monitored closely the Trust's progress against the conditions set out in the notice, which included that the Trust was to:

- comply with the recommendations set out within the Financial Management and Governance Review
- implement a robust procurement policy
- consider joining a strong Multi Academy Trust.
- implement new financial and monitoring structures
- request approval from ESFA, in advance, for any actions under the revoked freedoms in Part 3 and Annex B of the AFH

I am pleased with the progress that the Trust has made with the Ntl conditions, and can confirm that the Ntl will be lifted immediately. The Trust has made significant progress, and the recent School Resource Management Advisor report confirms this.

This letter will be published on the GOV.UK website. I am copying this letter to Debbie Francis, Roslynn De Fraine, Graham Carrick and Katherine Cowell.

I would like to thank yourself, Debbie, Roslynn, Graham, and the Trust board as a whole for your significant contribution in ensuring the Trust made the requisite improvements. I would also thank you for your continued cooperation with my team, and the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner.

It is my knowledge that plans are in place for Penny Bridge Church of England Primary School to transfer to the Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust, and that transfer is likely to occur in the early months of 2022. Should this not be the case, please contact [REDACTED].

Should you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED], as per the above.

Yours sincerely

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

**Warwick Sharp**

**Director, Academies and Maintained Schools Directorate**

cc: Debbie Francis, Former Chair of Trustees, Penny Bridge Church of England Primary School Limited

Roslynn De Fraine, Chief Financial Officer, Penny Bridge Church of England Primary School Limited

Graham Carrick, Accounting Officer, Penny Bridge Church of England Primary School Limited

Katherine Cowell, Regional Schools Commissioner