



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

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Tel: 0370 000 2288  
[www.education.gov.uk/efa-enquiry-form](http://www.education.gov.uk/efa-enquiry-form)

25 May 2022

Nick Luckock  
Chair of Trustees  
The Basildon Academies  
The Basildon Upper Academy  
Wickford Avenue  
Pitsea, Basildon  
SS13 3HL

Dear Mr Luckock

### **The Basildon Academies Trust: Financial Notice to Improve**

On 20 December 2016, the Director of the Academies & Maintained Schools Directorate (AMSD) wrote to your predecessor in their capacity as Chair of Trustees of The Basildon Academies Trust (the trust) to serve notice that the trust was required to improve the financial management, control and governance at the trust. This was as a consequence of the trust projecting deficits which required additional financial support, failing to provide a satisfactory recovery plan and failing to ensure robust financial management, control and oversight. 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 the notice. This included the requirement to provide and implement a robust deficit recovery plan setting out a cumulative balanced budget and repayment of all debt. The trust was also required to commission a full and independent review of financial management and governance and prepare and implement an action plan to address any underlying weaknesses identified. The trust has since returned to a cumulative balanced budget position and completed the repayment of all additional financial support in November 2020.

More recently in the 2021/22 academic year you have instigated an overhaul of the governance arrangements of the trust ensuring they comply with current model departmental documents and the requirements set out in the Academy Trust Handbook, 2021. As a result, the FNtl will be lifted with effect from the date of this letter.

This letter will be published on the GOV.UK website. I am copying this letter to Gary Smith, Accounting Officer of the trust and Jonathan Duff, Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for East of England & North-East London.

Now that the trust has recovered financially and implemented compliant governance arrangements it is important that you remain vigilant in ensuring effective financial management, including robust financial controls, remains in place. The trust must also work to ensure the new governance arrangements are properly embedded and should ensure arrangements move toward best practice. Annual self-reviews and the commissioning of objective independent external reviews of governance at regular intervals will help provide the necessary assurance and allow governance arrangements to continuously improve.

I would like to thank you for your contribution in ensuring the trust has reached this position, especially the rapid progress made since you assumed the role of Chair in September 2021.

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**