



**Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose**

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Dear colleague,

Thank you for your tireless work through the pandemic and your dedication to your pupils and staff. I appreciate enormously the time and expertise you provide.

I am writing to provide a short update on changes to the Academies Financial Handbook.

As you will be aware, the Department for Education updates the Academies Financial Handbook annually. This is to ensure that the wording is clear, up to date and reflects Departmental policy. I am grateful to the many trusts and sector bodies who contribute to the Handbook's development.

As I discussed at my speech to the Confederation of School Trusts Annual Conference, multi-academy trusts have played, and will continue to play, a crucial role in overseeing and setting high standards for their academies. That is why I am committed to ensuring the academy trust regulatory framework is as effective as possible in driving trust quality and capacity.

This year, as part of the Department's annual update, the name of the Academies Financial Handbook will be amended. The name of the document going forward will be 'The Academy Trust Handbook (also known as the Academies Financial Handbook).' This is to ensure the title of the Handbook accurately reflects the full range of important content it contains.

In tandem with this, the Financial Notice to Improve will be renamed the Notice to Improve. This will better reflect the current parameters of the Handbook and Notice, to ensure coherence and recognise the duties on trusts and the important role they have beyond financial oversight, a role that has been made even clearer through the pandemic.

As in previous years, the Handbook will be published by the end of June, with new requirements coming into force at the start of the new academic year in September.

Yours sincerely,

**BARONESS BERRIDGE OF THE VALE OF CATMOSE**

**PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY**