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Government backs down on academy charity registration

After a much publicised debate, on 2 February 2010, the government decided to withdraw from The Children, Schools and Families Bill, the proposal that will deem academies exempt charities.

There are 200 academy trusts which are already registered charities and the decision by the government means that academies will continue to register and be regulated by the Charities Commission. This regulation will ensure their independence and accountability.

The Charity Commission states:

“Today’s decision gives clarity and certainty for those academies which are currently registered charities and for those who will be establishing academies in the future. By keeping academies within the mainstream charity framework it avoids any confusion about their status, accountability, transparency or independence”.

For more information on the Charity Commission’s statement and on their guidance for academies visit the Charity Commission’s website - http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/news/pr_academies.asp

However, this may not be the end of the story, if the Conservative Party win the next general election, it is reported that they would give academies exempt status.

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As a top ten UK audit practice, Horwath Clark Whitehill has been a leading adviser to charities and schools for many years and our professionals are skilled at delivering quality, business focussed advice. We draw upon our combined expertise to help new academies understand and interpret the various requirements they face. We work with academies through the feasibility, implementation and opening phases, ensuring that legal obligations are met and they follow best practice reporting.

We act for a number of academies, including multi-academy groups, providing the added value business advice the sector needs. For more information on how Horwath Clark Whitehill can add value to your academy please email nonprofits@horwath.co.uk.