



Dear Director

We are writing on behalf of all employees working in your local authority who are members of NAHT, ASCL and the National Education Union (NEU).

You will recall that, last year, local schools agreed through your Schools Forum to partially 'de-delegate' funding for supply cover costs, including for trade union facilities time. Where de-delegation took place, we believe this was the right decision and would like to see this replicated for both Primary and Secondary phases.

We believe that the central retention and distribution of funding for trade union facilities time is the most effective and efficient arrangement and we would like to work with you to ensure that this arrangement applies to all schools. This accords with advice issued by the Local Government Association and the National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers.

Discussions are now taking place in your authority on funding arrangements for supply cover costs from April next year and we are asking you to pass the information in this letter to members in your Schools Forum and to encourage them to vote for de-delegation of funding arrangements for trade union facilities time.

Successive governments have recognised the importance of good industrial relations and have legislated to provide a statutory basis for facilities time as follows.

- Paid time off for union representatives to accompany a worker to a disciplinary or grievance hearing.
- Paid time off for union representatives to carry out trade union duties.
- Paid time off for union representatives to attend union training.
- Paid time off for union 'learning representatives' to carry out relevant learning activities.
- Paid time for union health and safety representatives during working hours to carry out health and safety functions.

These provisions are contained within the Employment Relations Act 1999 and the Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

NAHT, ASCL and NEU have members and union representatives in academies as well as maintained schools within your authority and, in addition to seeking your support for de-delegation, we are seeking your agreement for this funding arrangement for facilities time to be formally extended to academies within your local authority boundary.

As the DfE Advice on Trade Union Facility Time acknowledges, the trade union recognition agreement between the authority and the recognised unions will have transferred to each academy school as the new employer of the transferred staff as part of the conversion process to academy status under TUPE. We believe that, following conversion, academies should also become parties to local authority trade union facilities arrangements.

The academies within your authority will have received funding for trade union facilities time in their budgets and they are permitted to use that funding to buy-back into local authority arrangements. Indeed, many academies across England have already agreed to buy in to local authority trade union facilities arrangements.

Pooled funding will help the local authority and all schools to meet their statutory obligations on trade union facilities time. Setting up a central funding arrangement will allow academies to pay into a central pool if they wish to. But most importantly it will help maintain a coherent industrial relations environment where issues and concerns whether individual or collective can be dealt with more effectively. All these points are echoed in the advice issued by the LGA and NEOST.

We urge you therefore to support the de-delegation of funding for trade union facilities time, extending it, where necessary, across all schools in order to continue or establish (if you did not do so previously) a mechanism whereby academies within your authority are able to buy into a central fund for trade union facilities time. If you agree to do so, we will write to academy principals to encourage them to buy in to your arrangement.

Yours sincerely



**General Secretary
ASCL**



**General Secretary
NAHT**



**Joint General Secretary
NEU**



**Joint General Secretary
NEU**