To: Council Lead Members in England
Chief Executives in England
Directors of Children's' Services/Chief Education Officers in England
Diocesan Directors of Education
Directors of HR
Chairs of Governing Bodies of all Maintained Schools in England
Head Teachers of all Maintained Schools in England
Trade Union National Secretaries

May 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

UPDATE ON SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATING BODY

We are writing to update you on developments in the new School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB).

The SSSNB continues to undertake work through its Core Contract and Working Year Working Group and Role Profile and Job Measurement Working Group. This involves the development of contractual terms and conditions of employment, the design of national job role profiles, the development of a bespoke job evaluation scheme and a strategy to implement a national pay and conditions framework in all schools

While considerable progress has been made within the SSSNB and its working groups it has not been able to finalise agreements by the deadline of 28 May 2010 which had been set by the former Secretary of State in his Referral Letter to the Body last year. As a result a revised timetable for the Body was agreed by the former Secretary of State and is as follows:

- To complete negotiations on the pay and conditions framework by 14 December 2010;
- Formal consultation on the agreement between December 2010 and February 2011;
- Submission of SSSNB agreements to the Secretary of State by 1 April 2011;
- Ratification by the Secretary of State in June 2011;
- Full implementation by April 2012.

In accordance with the Referral Letter the Body continues to work in the following areas:

- The development of a Terms and Conditions Handbook which will include contractual terms and conditions. It is hoped that this work will be completed in autumn 2010.
- The finalisation of 100 draft national role profiles for school support staff. These fall into five job families: teaching and learning support; administrative and management; facilities; specialist and technical; and pupil support and welfare.
- The SSSNB has agreed the principle of a bespoke job evaluation scheme to reflect the nature of the support staff workforce.
- Both the role profiles and job evaluation scheme will be tested between May and October 2010.

The plan is that the testing during this summer will be managed through a sample of 10 local authorities to cover a sample of 750 schools. Local authorities, with consultancy support, will be collating sample job descriptions from schools and then testing them against the national role profiles according to SSSNB's proposed job matching process. Up to date job descriptions in schools will be essential to the testing. The matching process will include employer and employee representatives and input from schools. The testing results and accompanying pay and grading data will be available in late summer and early autumn. The results will inform SSSNB's on-going detailed negotiations to establish an appropriate pay and grading framework for support staff.

Following this both Employer and Trade Unions Sides will undertake a consultation process leading up to the submission of an agreement in April 2011.

The SSSNB, Employer and Trade Union Sides will give support staff, local authorities and governing bodies adequate notice of change and the likely implementation timetable. At this stage we could advise that job descriptions for support staff roles are kept up to date in preparation for implementation and we will continue to keep governing bodies, head teachers and support staff aware of developments,

For anything not covered by this circular or available on the website (www.ome.uk.com) you are asked to seek advice from your representative body. We shall continue to keep you in touch with developments and ensure that you get adequate notice of everything you need to do locally in preparing for implementation.