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David Davies OBE
Chairman, Free-to-Air Review Advisory Panel
c/o Tony Dyer
Programmes Directorate
Department for Culture, Media & Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
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20th May 2009

Dear Sir

26.5.09
JD

Free-to-Air Review

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the consultation and comment on behalf of the National Council for School Sport (NCSS).

The NCSS is an umbrella body representing 32 National School Sport Associations, or National Governing Bodies where no separate School Sport Association exists. I hope the following reflections prove useful:

- In order to introduce young athletes to competitive sport it is important that the widest possible range of sports, including those played at a high level or of national significance, are available to view on Free-to-Air channels.
- In school, students are always engaged in conversation about their recent viewing - normally 'last nights' TV including 'last nights' match. If sport is only seen on subscription channels, we create a situation of 'haves and have nots' which divides children and families which is unacceptable in a time when we strive for inclusive education.
- Outside this remit there is a dearth of TV coverage of school sport – national and international. In order to promote school sport, I hope it would be possible within the review, to consider the mandating of companies when awarding the right to broadcast national sporting events that they be obligated to broaden their commitment by televising national school sport events. Over the last three years we have enjoyed coverage of the UK School Games and lately, the English Schools' Athletic Association National Championships. We need this to spread to other sports. Many sports are involved in a Government initiatives to increase the amount and variety of competitive sport organised in and for schools. I am sure additional TV coverage would help with this promotion.

Should you have any specific questions please feel free to contact me.

Yours faithfully

John Arnold
Chairman
National Council for School Sport