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**Director General for Regulation**

11 March 2015

Iain Bell  
Director for Data and Education Standards Analysis  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

Dear Iain,

**UNLAWFULLY LARGE INFANT CLASS SIZE STATISTICS**

Thank you for your letter setting out the situation regarding your statistics on unlawfully large infant class sizes. I am grateful to you for consulting with us in this proactive and constructive way. I note that you have reflected upon users' needs and the Authority's guidance on quality assurance of data from administrative sources. Given the importance of these statistics for managing class sizes in infant schools in England, it is regrettable that the data collection methods do not support the production of statistics to a sufficient level of quality.

Your letter invited me to consider whether it would be appropriate for the Authority to agree that these statistics should be regarded, at the moment, as official statistics, rather than National Statistics. Designation of official statistics as National Statistics shows that the statistics meet the needs of users and that the statistics are produced, managed, and disseminated to high standards in compliance with the Code of Practice. Having reviewed the information that you have shared with us, I agree with you that these statistics should not currently be designated as National Statistics. I note your acknowledgement that these data are important and that you propose to continue publishing them, in the interests of transparency, and with appropriate caveats. I also note that you have set out in your technical report your planned actions to improve the quality of these statistics. I look forward to updates from you as your improvement work proceeds.

We will also want to consider in due course arrangements for a re-assessment of these statistics. I agree with your suggestion that we should look to plan to start the re-assessment towards the end of 2015. In the light of the fact that it is five years since our first assessment of these statistics, and the importance of the wider suite of school and pupil characteristics, I propose that we take this opportunity to re-assess the whole suite.

I am copying this letter to John Pullinger, the National Statistician.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Humpherson