
Director General for Regulation

Neil McIvor
Chief Data Officer and Chief Statistician
Department for Education
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08 October 2018

Dear Neil,

We have discussed the recent Tweet and blog on schools funding. The way statistics have been presented gives a potentially misleading picture of changes in schools funding. In particular, the graph in the Tweet had a truncated axis that gives an exaggerated picture of the improvements; and the Tweet was presented in cash terms, not real terms¹. It also did not take account of an increase in the number of school age children in England. In addition, we are concerned about a related blog on school funding (which the Department has now updated). In this blog, the Department compared spending on education with that in other OECD countries. The comparison included a range of aspects of spending that are unrelated to school funding.

It is important that the Department present statistics and data professionally and I encourage you to continue to work with communication teams to minimise the risk of misleading the public.

I am copying this letter to Mike Jones, Deputy Head of Profession for Statistics in the Department.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation

¹ Department for Education (28 September 2018): Tweet regarding school funding