
Director General for Regulation

Glyn Jones
Chief Statistician
Welsh Government

23 April 2020

Dear Glyn,

As agreed, I am responding on behalf of Sir David Norgrove following the letter he received from Kirsty Williams AC/AM regarding use of estimates from NASUWT of the per pupil funding gap between England and Wales in debate within the Welsh Assembly.

We are aware that since 2012 the Welsh Government has not produced official statistics on the funding gap between England and Wales. You have explained this is largely due to the added complexity resulting from the roll-out of academies in England. However, you have worked with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) to develop its estimates of the funding gap.

We have considered the analysis carried out by the IFS and the way it has been reported in your official statistics. In your Local Authority Budgeted Expenditure on Schools: 2019-20 publication you comment on the IFS report, stating:

Whilst there still may be some issues in the comparability of the data at a detailed level, we worked with the IFS researchers to consider their methods and believe it is the most robust comparison that currently exists of trends in recent years.

We agree with your conclusion and found that the IFS analysis is clear on how the figures have been calculated.

We have been unable to comment on the approach taken by NASUWT. However, we are aware that you are working with NASUWT as it looks to revise its calculations. We encourage all organisations to consider the principles set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics and therefore would encourage NASUWT to publish details of its approach to producing estimates and to consider voluntarily applying the Code of Practice for Statistics to its revised calculations.

We consider it important that figures used in public debate are based on data which have transparent sources and can be verified. This is not currently the case for the NASUWT estimates.

Your sincerely



Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation