



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sir David Norgrove
Chair, UK Statistics Authority
1 Drummond Gate
London
SW1V 2QQ

6th February 2018

Dear Sir David

The Misleading Use of Statistics by the Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP

I am writing to you to raise concerns over what appears to be the misleading use of statistics regarding per pupil funding and the national funding formula for schools at Education Questions in the House of Commons on Monday 29th January 2018.

The Education Secretary, the Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP, told the House: 'we know that real-terms funding per pupil is increasing across the system'. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has stated that this is not true, as the additional £1.3 billion of funding announced in July 2017 (£900 million for 2018-19 and £400 million for 2019-20) will mean that average funding per pupil will be 'roughly constant in real terms over the next two years.'

The Secretary of State for Education also commented that 'with the national funding formula, each school will see at least a small cash increase.' The IFS have also contested this statement, adding that funding is allocated to local authorities rather than directly to schools. Local governments then decide how to allocate funding to schools 'using their own formulae'; furthermore, local authorities can implement a cut of 1.5 per cent per pupil to a school.

The IFS point out that a cash cut could result from 'changing characteristics of the school – such as fewer students from deprived backgrounds'.

I'm sure you would agree accurate use of facts and statistics is important to fair and open political debate, yet we have recently seen the Prime Minister use misleading information in the House of Commons.

I would, therefore, welcome your views on the use of these statistics by the Secretary of State for Education.

Yours sincerely

Angela Rayner MP

Shadow Secretary of State for Education