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**Director General for Regulation**

Neil McIvor  
Chief Data Officer and Chief Statistician  
Department for Education  
2 Rivergate  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6EH

17 September 2018

Dear Neil,

**National Statistics designation of Characteristics of Children in Need statistics**

Thank you for providing evidence demonstrating the actions that you have taken to restore the quality of your statistics on children in need statistics following you raising concerns about their quality with me last year. I welcome the positive and constructive attitude of your team to improve the quality of these statistics.

We have reviewed the documentation that you intend to publish alongside the next release of statistics. This clearly describes the issue that you found and the impact on the statistics. The use of case studies was particularly helpful. We welcome the publication of a revised time series including Local Authority level tables.

On the basis of the evidence that we have seen, I am pleased to restore the National Statistics designation of your characteristics of children in need statistics. National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and value and is something to be celebrated. We invite you to include a statement alongside the statistics which reflects this status.

Alongside reviewing the evidence that you provided, my team also carried out a high level check of the compliance of these statistics with all areas of the Code. From this we have some suggestions for further improving these statistics.

- a) We welcome the data linking of the Children in Need Census and the National Pupil Database to provide statistics on the educational outcomes of children in need. This adds real value to users. This value could be further enhanced through better sign posting between the tables and the commentary on the figures. They are currently on different areas of your website.
- b) We note the strong engagement that your team has with Local Authority data providers and users. The value of these statistics could be further enhanced by more proactive engagement with a wider set of users.
- c) We note that your team previously held regular meetings with their counterparts in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to discuss coherence between the statistics for the different

countries and upcoming innovations. The value of these statistics could be further enhanced by reinstating these meetings.

Please feel free to discuss any aspect of this with us at any time. I am copying this letter to Mike Jones and John Pullinger, the National Statistician.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', written in a cursive style.

Ed Humpherson  
Director General for Regulation