



Permanent Secretary

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Robin Walker MP
Chair, Education Select Committee
SENT VIA EMAIL

19 December 2023

Dear Robin

Independent report on quality assurance process surrounding the calculation of the National Funding Formula (NFF)

I wrote to you on 6th October to let you know of an error in the provisional NFF calculation for 2024-25, and apologise for it. I also set out what we had done to correct the figures, and said that we would conduct a formal review of the quality assurance process surrounding the calculation of the NFF, with independent scrutiny.

The review, which has been led by Peter Wyman CBE, Chair of the Board of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, has now concluded. I have attached to this letter a copy of the report of the independent review, which includes clear recommendations for improvement. The department has accepted the recommendations in full. Improvements in the quality assurance process have already been identified and implementation is under way.

Local authorities have received their allocations for 2024-25 today, with the publication of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The total level of core funding for mainstream schools and high needs will be over £59.6 billion in 2024-25, as promised - the highest ever in real terms per pupil. The funding equates to an average of £5,300 per primary school pupil and £6,830 per secondary school pupil in 2024-25, up from £5,200 and £6,720 respectively in 2023-24.

I am grateful to Peter Wyman for his support and challenge. His report, as well as giving clear recommendations, makes reference to the importance of the open, non-defensive culture he found in the Department, focused on learning and improvement. I take this very seriously, and commit to continuing to act and learn across the Department to ensure similar errors don't happen again.

**SUSAN ACLAND-HOOD
PERMANENT SECRETARY**