

# Lies, damned lies, and DfE statistics: The 4 dodgy claims

## 1. CHILD LITERACY

**Claim:** That England “leapfrogged up the rankings last year, after decades of falling standards, going from 19th out of 50 countries to 8th”

**Made by:** Nick Gibb, the schools minister

**What the UKSA said:** “This is not correct. Figures published last year show the increase was from 10th place in 2011 to 8th place in 2016.”

## 2. SCHOOL FUNDING

**Claim:** There is “more money going into schools than ever before”

**Made by:** The DfE, in a tweet

**What the UKSA said:** “[The] figures were presented in such a way as to

misrepresent changes in school funding. In the tweet, school spending figures were exaggerated by using a truncated axis, and by not adjusting for per pupil spend.”

## 3. SCHOOL FUNDING

**Claim:** The UK government spent the highest percentage of GDP on institutions delivering primary and secondary education

**Made by:** The DfE, in a media blog

**What the UKSA said:** “An international comparison of spend which included a wide range of education expenditure unrelated to publicly funded schools was used, rather than a comparison of school spending alone. The result was to give a more

favourable picture. Yet the context would clearly lead readers to expect that the figures referred to spending on schools.”

## 4. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

**Claim:** There are 1.9 million more children in ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ schools than in 2010

**Made by:** The DfE, ministers and MPs on multiple occasions

**What the UKSA said:** “While accurate as far as it goes, this figure does not give a full picture. It should be set in the context of increasing pupil numbers, changes to the inspection framework and some inspections that are now long in the past.”

