

Kirsty Williams, AM  
Cabinet Secretary for Education  
Welsh Government

24 October 2018

Dear Kirsty

**Revised eligibility criteria for free school meals in Wales due to the rollout of Universal Credit**

I refer to our earlier correspondence relating to the Welsh Government's proposals to amend the eligibility criteria for free school meals, and the concerns that had been raised with the Committee by the Children's Society.

As you are aware, the Committee considered this matter at its meeting on 20 September, but have since heard further concerns from stakeholders. In your letter of 27 September you confirmed that you were happy to provide additional information to the Committee if this was required, and the Committee would be grateful if you could clarify the following:

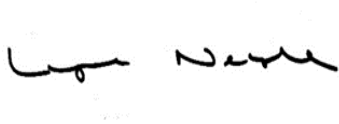
- How did the Welsh Government decide on a net annual income threshold of £7,400?
- Did the Welsh Government consider any other thresholds, for example £14,000 as in Northern Ireland?
- How many more pupils does the Welsh Government estimate would be eligible for free school meals if a net annual income threshold of £14,000 was applied and what would be the additional costs of this?



- What implications would the adoption of a higher threshold than the proposed £7,400 have on eligibility for the Pupil Development Grant and associated costs?

It would also be helpful if you could confirm the date on which the relevant regulations will be laid before the Assembly. I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Neagle', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Lynne Neagle AC / AM**  
**Cadeirydd / Chair**

