

School Funding

I have received a further update on School Funding:

There has been considerable discussion of international comparisons of education spend. Following publication of the most recent volume of the definitive international guide to education, the OECD's Education at a Glance. This was published on 11 September 2018, and includes the most recent comparable data available, which is from 2015.

You can see the OECD's full report on their website (<https://bit.ly/2oWhReb>) and you may also want to look at the World Bank's interactive tool (<https://bit.ly/2zUB863>) which allows you to pick different measures and compare between different countries. Data are collected by the OECD, using a common methodology to allow for comparison between countries. The figures include (for all countries) money direct to schools, and school support programmes. Our data are included at the UK level. Across the UK, England accounts for 84% of pupils, Scotland for 8%, Wales for 5% and Northern Ireland 3%.

Multiple measures show the UK as a relatively high spender on education. The widest measure is total expenditure on educational institutions, which includes state-funded and independent schools, further education, and tertiary education (i.e. university and post-18 FE), from all sources, including government, private and international (this is the basis for all countries in the analysis, not just the UK). On this comparison, the UK is one of the very highest spenders among OECD nations and partner countries – see Figure C2.1 in Education at a Glance (<https://bit.ly/2yepukp>).

It is also possible to look at measures which isolate government funding of primary and secondary schools only. On these measures, the UK had the highest total government expenditure as a percentage of GDP in the G7, and was one of the higher G7 countries (though below the US) on expenditure per student (with all countries' spend converted to US\$ using purchasing power parity rates to allow international comparisons to be made). Data on expenditure as a percentage of GDP by source of funds can be found in Table C2.2 (<https://doi.org/10.1787/888933804242>) and data on expenditure per student by source of funds can be found in Table C1.5 (<https://doi.org/10.1787/888933804109>).

Of course, spending our money well is as important as how much we spend. For schools, we have just launched our Supporting Excellent School Resource Management guide (available here: <https://bit.ly/2Rsw27R>). This summarises the range of practical help and support available to schools to help reduce cost pressures and make every pound count to produce the best outcomes for pupils, on the £10 billion spent across England each year on non-staff costs. The document also shows at a macro level how increases in funding over the last 20 years have been spent. Comparative spend data for individual schools can be found through our benchmarking service (<https://bit.ly/2BUJ8q1>).

Damian Hinds
Secretary of State for Education