

National Pupil Data Collection - Census expansion

Dear Members of the Star Chamber,

I wrote to you on September 23, 2016 and look forward to receiving a reply from members. We ask the Department for Education to pass this letter to you as well, via [the Star Chamber email address](#).

You may have seen the recent [national press](#) with parental and professional concerns around the expansion of the National School Census and Early Years Census, starting in the 2016-17 school year, collecting country of birth and nationality data. We would like to bring to your attention the following latest information of which you may or may not already be aware and we would like your opinion on:

- Home Office access to named pupil data was confirmed via FOI¹ on 06/10/2016 [FOI Ref: 2016-0042333](#) Purposes of all cases within the Home Office requests “are a) dependant(s) of a parent/guardian who is suspected of an offence under section 24 or 24A of the Immigration Act 1971, or section 35 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 has been, or is being committed (or b) the child in question is an unaccompanied minor.” This makes it possible that NATT has accessed the data of British children, as well as migrant and/ or undocumented children, in order to return identifying data on adult relations or communities
- The Home Office access expressly for immigration control and enforcement purposes is now on a monthly basis ([FOI 41221](#))².
- House of Lords criticism. Motion of Regret on October 31st. [[Hansard](#)]³ and our [comment](#).⁴
- [Over 20 human rights organisations](#) wrote⁵ to the DfE with shared concerns on September 26 under the umbrella of the Against Borders for Children campaign and meet the DfE data team on 16th November.

We wrote to the Secretary of State, and School Standards Minister, as well as the Data Director and Deputy Director on October 14, to express our dismay at the use of data for these non-educational, punitive purposes and interference in family life. We do not trust that new data will not also be used for these purposes.

We would like to ask for your support to clarify some of these questions asked on September 23rd, and indeed if you share any of these concerns, to ask the Department for Education to pause the collection of the Spring School Census and Early Years census until they are clarified.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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About the campaign: Defenddigitalme

Defenddigitalme is a volunteer non-profit campaign group for children’s privacy rights formed in response to concerns from parents and privacy advocates about increasingly invasive uses of children’s personal data. The campaign asks the Department for Education (DfE) to change their policies and practices to protect 20 million children’s identifiable personal data in the National Pupil Database

More information: <http://defenddigitalme.com/>

¹ https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/sharing_national_pupil_database?nocache=incoming-878444#incoming-878444

² <https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/361437/response/888880/attach/3/FOI%2041221%20Persson.pdf>

³ [https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2016-10-31/debates/6D06F8D5-7709-43DF-87ED-33CBBC7324FF/Education\(PupilInformation\)\(England\)\(MiscellaneousAmendments\)Regulations2016](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2016-10-31/debates/6D06F8D5-7709-43DF-87ED-33CBBC7324FF/Education(PupilInformation)(England)(MiscellaneousAmendments)Regulations2016)

⁴ <http://defenddigitalme.com/2016/11/lords-strongly-critical-of-school-census-expansion-in-motion-of-regret/>

⁵ <https://www.schoolsabc.net/2016/09/letter-justine-greening/>