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for Work &  
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Lord Foulkes  
House of Lords

16 July 2019

*Dear George,*

I received your follow up letter of 10 July regarding the serious allegation concerning the accuracy of statistics I quoted during a topical oral question on 10 January.

I can confirm that the statement you refer to of there being "300,000 fewer children in absolute poverty than in 2010" was entirely accurate based on statistics available at that time.

According to the Housing Below Average Income statistics, the figure for children in absolute poverty (after housing costs) in 2009/10 was 3.8 million. This is the reference year we use for 2010 as this is the last full year of the previous Government. In comparison, in 2016/17 this figure was down to 3.5 million- a decrease of 300,000. I believe you may be referring to 2017/18 figures, which were not released until 28 March- over two months after I took the Question in Parliament.

In light of this, I would appreciate if you could look correct the official records to reflect the situation.

I am copying in the Leader of the House of Lords and the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords. I will also be placing a copy of this letter in the House library.

Yours sincerely,



**Baroness Buscombe**  
**Minister for Work and Pensions (Lords)**

Cc: The Leader of the House of Lords – The Rt Hon. Baroness Evans of Bowes Park  
and The Rt Hon. Baroness Smith of Basildon