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Your ref:
Our ref: 2017/0045372
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PIRLS 2016

Thank you for email of 10 December to the Deputy First Minister, which has been forwarded to me for reply.

Scotland withdrew from participation in PIRLS in 2010 (so did not participate in 2011). This was for a number of reasons:

- The need to rationalise our data collections
- A smaller coverage of nations in PIRLS and TIMSS compared to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
- PISA assesses a body of skills developed independently of national curriculums, so is a more valid comparison of performance
- PISA also measures the final outcome of student skills at the end of compulsory education, at age 15, rather than the earlier stages assessed by PIRLS and TIMSS

Subsequent consideration of the issue confirms that PISA continues to have more extensive coverage than PIRLS, and also that PIRLS does not appear to be a consistent indicator of how a similarly aged cohort will perform when they reach the age assessed by PISA.

Accordingly, the Scottish Government has decided not to re-join PIRLS

Yours sincerely

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