

March 2010

Research Round-Up

Research Round-Up presents a selection of educational research and statistical reports from a range of government departments, educational agencies, research organisations and other sources – summarised by the Research Team at Learning and Teaching Scotland. Research Round-Up can be found on the [LTS website](#)



How to find information that is relevant to you

On the next page, the summary titles are grouped by **keyword**, allowing you to find all the information on a certain topic. Each title has been hyperlinked to take you directly to the relevant research summary. You may find that the range of research evidence will support you in implementing key aspects of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Using the information

Research Round-Up does not claim to be comprehensive and the reports included have not been quality assured.

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Achievement

Caro D H, McDonald J T and Williams D (2009), **Socio-Economic Status and Academic Achievement Trajectories from Childhood to Adolescence**, Canadian Journal of Education, 32(3), pp 558–90. [Link](#)

An article which presents the findings of a research study exploring the relationship between socio-economic status and academic achievement, based on evidence from Canada. The research analysed the achievement of young people in Canada by using data from four cycles of the National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth (NLSCY), which covered the period from 1994/95 to 2000/01. The researchers focused on young people's achievement in Mathematics, based on a short assessment undertaken in schools as part of the NLSCY. Over 6,000 school pupils aged 7–15 undertook this assessment in at least two cycles of the NLSCY, and so were included in the sample.

The research found that children's achievement in Mathematics increased as they grew older. However, the research also indicates that there is an achievement gap in Mathematics which is related to socio-economic status. Analysis indicates that the gap between young people of higher and lower socio-economic status widened at an increasing rate of change as they grew older. This gap begins to widen significantly when young people are aged 12 and continues until they are 15. The average attainment gap between 12 and 15 year olds is twice as large as the average gap between the 7 and 11 year olds.

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (2010), **Evaluation of the Making Good Progress Pilot**, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families. [Link](#)

A report which presents findings from an evaluation of the Making Good Progress Pilot in England, which aimed to raise achievement levels by focusing on progression in key strands. These included Assessment for Learning, Single Level Tests, Progression Tuition (for up to 10% of Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils in English and Mathematics performing below national expectations), Progression Targets (based on the number of pupils making two levels of progress) and Progression Premium (incentives based on the proportion of schools entering below national standards but showing improvement). Stakeholder engagement, interviews and surveys were carried out in over 450 schools and 50 case studies conducted. Analysis of the National Pupil Database also took place.

The research found that at Key Stage 2 87.5% of pupils made at least two levels of progress in reading, 72.6% in writing, 80.7% in English and 78.8% in Mathematics. All local authority representatives, 83% of headteachers, 69% of heads of department and 71% of teachers indicated that the pilot had contributed to an improvement in progression rates. One-to-one tuition was found to have a positive impact on progression while controlling for other factors. The use of Single Level Tests and the incentives used as part of Progression Premium were found to have had the least impact on progression rates.

Assessment

Kim M, Lavonen J and Ogawa M (2009), **Experts' Opinions on the High Achievement of Scientific Literacy in PISA 2003: A Comparative Study in Finland and Korea**, *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 2009, 5(4), pp 379–93. [Link](#)

An article which presents the results of a research study exploring the reasons for high performance in science in Finland and Korea. These countries were selected because of their high performance in the PISA 2003 international assessment of scientific literacy. The researchers wished to explore whether these countries' high performance in PISA 2003 was related to public education policy or other types of educational provision, such as tutoring. The research involved an online survey of 82 experts in science education in Finland and Korea, who were asked how much they agreed that various factors were responsible for 15-year-old students' attainment.

The research found that the use of private educational provision in Korea was perceived by the experts to account for its high performance in scientific literacy in PISA 2003. Findings from the research, along with the existing literature, indicate that since the 1980s Korea has achieved high levels of economic growth by combining private expenditure on educational provision with public expenditure. Reasons for Finland's success in PISA 2003 were perceived by the experts to include a culture of trust towards teachers. The researchers conclude that close attention should be paid to the characteristics of individual education systems in interpreting the results of international educational assessments.

Behaviour

Munn P et al (2009), **Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2009**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents findings from the Behaviour in Scottish Schools survey, which explores the nature and extent of behaviour in Scottish schools. Conducted every three years, it involved a large-scale survey of 1,468 secondary teachers, 560 primary teachers, 246 secondary and 244 primary headteachers, and 678 secondary and 391 primary support staff from a representative sample of schools. As part of the survey, visits to seven primary and eight secondary schools were also conducted. The visits included interviews with senior staff and headteachers, two focus groups of teachers and one focus group of support staff. Surveys and focus groups of P5, P7 and S1 pupils took place and interviews were conducted with local authority representatives.

The research found that staff felt all or most pupils were well behaved around the school and in classrooms, and that the most frequent form of positive behaviour was pupils greeting staff pleasantly. There were low levels of serious indiscipline and 65% of primary teachers, 77% of primary headteachers and 64% of support staff in primary schools indicated that serious indiscipline had not had a significant impact on the school. Approximately 77% of secondary head teachers agreed with their primary counterparts that serious indiscipline had not had a significant impact on their schools.

Behaviour continued

Welsh Assembly Government (2009), **All-Wales Survey of Bullying in Schools**, St. Asaph: Welsh Assembly Government. [Link](#)

A report which outlines the results of a research study exploring bullying in Welsh schools. The research was conducted by questionnaire, and involved a survey of around 7,400 school pupils from years 4, 6, 7 and 10 in 162 schools and five pupil referral units.

The research found that 15% of year 4 pupils reported being bullied 'all the time'. In line with other research, bullying was seen to decline with age. In year 6, 32% of pupils reported being bullied in the last two months, while for year 7 this figure was 30% and for year 10 15%. The proportion of pupils in years 6, 7 and 10 who report being bullied 'for about a year' (6–8%) does not decline with age. The most common type of bullying was found to be being called nasty or hurtful names, while newer forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying, were reported by a relatively small proportion of pupils. In all four groups 'appearance' and 'being different' were mentioned as the most common reasons for bullying. Other types of bullying included homophobic bullying, or being bullied because of learning difficulties, race or ethnic origin.

Continuing professional development

Egan D (2009), **Evaluation of the Chartered Teacher Pilot in Wales: Full Report**, Cardiff: General Teaching Council for Wales. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of an evaluation of a pilot Chartered Teacher Scheme in Wales. One hundred and twenty two teachers took part in the pilot between 2007 and 2009, either by submitting evidence showing they had already achieved Chartered Teacher status (the portfolio route), or by completing a number of modules which included taught courses and self study (the programme route). The evaluation involved a number of research methods, including a literature review, a questionnaire survey of all participants and face-to-face interviews with a sample of participants.

The evaluation found that a number of education systems are constructing new roles for expert teachers who can undertake leadership roles in relation to teacher pedagogy and professional development at school level. There are a number of models for allowing such teachers to take on new leadership roles, including the Chartered Teacher programme in Scotland. In relation to the portfolio route to Chartered Teacher status in Wales, the evaluation found that it was an effective model, but that it could be strengthened through changes such as a stronger emphasis on demonstrating outcomes linked to student achievement. Overall the programme route modules were also found to have been beneficial for participants; however some individual modules were unsuitable.

Continuing professional development continued

Melville W and Yaxley B (2009), **Contextual Opportunities for Teacher Professional Learning: The Experience of One Science Department**, Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education, 5(4), pp 357–68. [Link](#)

An article which presents the findings of a research study from Australia exploring the shift from professional development to professional learning among teachers. The research was carried out in the science department of one secondary school in Tasmania, which was staffed by ten full-time teachers. Within the school, there had been a shift from a requirement to undertake professional development to a loosely specified requirement in staff development policy to take part in professional learning. The research involved a narrative case study methodology, which involved tape recording and then transcribing departmental staff development meetings over a period of two years, and then analysing this data for trends and patterns.

The research found that the teachers were willing to utilise appropriate expertise in their professional learning, regardless of the source of this expertise. In addition, the teachers were also found to have developed a community in which teaching practices could be discussed and critiqued. Both staff development policies, whether professional development or professional learning, introduced by the school had had a negligible impact. The researchers concluded that it was the teachers themselves, working within the department and the science education community, who were making the shift from professional development to professional learning.

Creativity and innovation

Ofsted (2010), **Learning: Creative Approaches that Raise Standards**, London: Ofsted. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings from a small-scale survey which evaluated 44 schools in England identified as using creative approaches to learning. The approaches used encouraged pupils to question, be imaginative, be open to possibilities and to critically reflect on the effect of their ideas and actions. Ofsted inspectors visited two nursery schools, 22 primary schools and one special school. Evidence was also drawn from visits to 180 other schools as part of Ofsted's programme of subject survey inspections. All schools had been classified as 'good' or 'outstanding' in terms of the curriculum, pupil enjoyment of learning and preparation for pupils' future economic well-being.

The research found that pupils who were supported by good teaching, which encouraged questioning, debate, experimentation and critical reflection, enjoyed the challenge and indicated a sense of personal achievement. They became more confident and their increased confidence encouraged them to be imaginative, to develop and confidently present their own ideas. In order to promote creative learning effectively, teachers' subject knowledge needed to be secure and extensive enough to support more critical thinking and debate in the classroom. Professional development appeared to be a key factor in enabling teachers to encourage and assess creative approaches to learning.

Curriculum

Cowie B, Hipkins R et al (2009), **Curriculum Implementation Exploratory Studies: Final Report**, Wellington: Ministry of Education, New Zealand. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of research exploring the implementation of a revised curriculum in New Zealand. The Curriculum Implementation Exploratory Studies (CIES) project aimed to provide detailed 'snapshots' of the way the New Zealand curriculum was being implemented in schools. Fifteen schools took part in phase 1 of the CIES project, and 20 schools in phase 2. The research involved document analysis, interviews with school staff and classroom observation, where this was possible.

The research found that there was a view among school leaders in the sample schools that the implementation of the new curriculum should be carried out as an urgent, but gradual, process that avoided doing too much at one time. In addition, it was important for staff to develop a shared understanding of the curriculum and how to implement it. The importance of the school principal's strategic leadership of learning was one of the key themes to emerge from the research. The implementation of the new curriculum was also seen as a cyclical process, and in the sample schools principals had set in place professional development processes to allow the whole school to develop a shared understanding of the new curriculum.

Early years

Sullivan A and Dex S (2009), **Millennium Cohort Study Sweep 3 Scotland Report**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents the Scottish findings from the third sweep of the Millennium Cohort Study, a longitudinal study which gathers data about children born in 2001 and their families. The majority of research for this sweep took place in 2006 when the children were aged 5 and gathered information from 1,814 Scottish families. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the child's main carer and the main carer's partner, if available. Previous interviews had been conducted in 2001/02 when the children were aged 9 months and in 2004 when the children were aged 3.

The research found there was a reduction in the number of children living with cohabiting natural parents from one in four in 2001/02 to one in seven in 2006. With the exception of sports, mothers engaged in activities with their children more frequently than fathers and parents with lower qualifications did not engage with their children in educational activities as frequently as parents with higher qualifications. Children from advantaged backgrounds had higher cognitive ability and fewer behavioural problems than children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Employment rates were higher for mothers in couples (62%) than lone mothers (44%) and part-time employment (45%) was more common than full-time employment (16%).

Health and wellbeing

Muir K et al (2009), **Headspace Evaluation Report – Independent Evaluation of Headspace: The National Youth Mental Health Foundation**, Sydney: University of New South Wales: Social Policy Research Centre. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of an evaluation of Headspace, an Australian initiative designed to address youth mental health issues. Headspace aims to promote and facilitate improvements in the mental health, social wellbeing and economic participation of young people aged 12–25. To do this, a range of services were offered, including holistic services via 30 Communities of Youth Services (hubs which provide services for young people). The evaluation involved desk research, interviews and surveys with key stakeholders, including nearly 200 young people.

The evaluation found that on average it took the Communities of Youth Services seven months to set themselves up, and longer to begin offering a full range of services. The most frequently occurring diagnoses for young people attending Headspace were anxiety and depressive disorders. The evaluation found that Headspace had been effective in its goal of early intervention, as 53% of those using its services had no, or low, levels of psychological distress. Most young people who were surveyed also reported improvements in their mental health.

Rees R et al (2009), **Children’s Views about Obesity, Body Size, Shape and Weight**, London: EPPI Centre. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings from a systematic review of research which focused on UK children’s views on obesity, body size, shape and weight. The review focused on children aged 4–11 and explored children’s perceptions of body size, their views on influences on body size and their views about factors which could help maintain a healthy weight. A total of 28 studies were included in the review, drawn from databases, journals, websites and published papers. The studies had been published between 1997 and 2009.

The research found that unless children were overweight, they did not perceive body shape to be a significant issue to them. However, many children did believe that body size was an issue and some indicated negative feelings regarding their own body size. They tended to compare their body size with others and indicated feelings of blame, responsibility and punishment when discussing body fat. Girls, in particular, were aware of social pressure to be thin and sometimes applied this pressure to themselves. A variety of influences on body size were highlighted, including diet, and many children indicated that support was needed to help them cope with social pressure and maintain a healthy weight.

Health and wellbeing continued

The Prince's Trust (2010), **The Prince's Trust YouGov Youth Index 2010**, London: The Prince's Trust. [Link](#)

A report which presents the highlights from a piece of research carried out to explore how young people in the UK feel about their lives. The research involved a sample of over 2,000 16–25 year olds, including 130 who were in the category known in England known as 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET), who completed an online questionnaire. Participants were asked how happy or unhappy they felt about different aspects of their lives, and how confident they felt about the future.

The research found that the overall youth index number was 73, which represents young people's happiness and confidence as a number out of 100. However, young people who were NEET were less happy and confident in all aspects of their lives than those young people who were in work, employment or training. The overall index calculation for young people who were NEET is 62. In addition, a clear majority of young people (64%) felt happy all or most of the time. However, a significant minority regularly felt isolated, unloved, down or depressed. Most young people (68%) also agreed that their life had direction; however 15% of young people overall, and 42% of the NEET group, appeared to feel that their life lacked direction.

Welsh Assembly Government (2009), **Schools Learner Voice Survey 2008**, St. Asaph: Welsh Assembly Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents the results of a research study exploring the perceptions of school pupils in Wales. The research involved a survey which aimed to provide measures of satisfaction and related topics among young people in school sixth forms (16–17 year olds), and years 10 and 11 pupils (14–15 year olds). The survey was delivered by questionnaires, which were completed by over 2,000 young people.

The research found that the majority (85%) of years 10 and 11 pupils enjoyed the subjects they were currently studying. However they also based their choices on future aspirations, with 43% needing the subjects or qualifications for the jobs they wanted to do. The proportion of years 10 and 11 pupils describing themselves as being very satisfied with their learning was low, however 84% of pupils did describe themselves as being satisfied to some degree. Around one in ten sixth-form pupils reported that they were extremely satisfied with the overall quality of their teaching, while another 40% said they were very satisfied. In addition, the majority of sixth-form students had had expectations about their chosen courses, and in most cases these expectations had been met.

Inclusion

Adams E, Smart D and Greig C (2009), **Young Offender Learning and Skills: Workstream Report**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents information from the Scottish Government's Young Offender Learning and Skills work stream. The work stream was established as a result of a commitment made in the Skills for Scotland strategy and is one of three independently chaired work streams. It focused on how to deliver effective integrated learning, skills and employability provision for young people aged 16–18 who have been involved in the justice system or who are at risk of offending. Secondary analysis was conducted on data drawn from the Children's Hearing System and Criminal Justice System.

The data showed that there were a total of 7,578 young people aged 16–18 involved in the Children's Hearing System and Criminal Justice System in 2006/07. Young people at risk of offending indicated that they responded to the teaching approach used in primary more than the approach at secondary school. The report indicates that generational offending is common and teachers should be aware of the impact that a parent entering custody can have on a child's learning. A range of studies were also highlighted which indicated a link between truancy, school exclusion and the risk of offending.

Hills J et al (2009), **An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK: Report of the National Equality Panel**, London: Government Equalities Office. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings from the National Equality Panel review of economic inequality in the UK. The review aimed to gather information on a range of key areas, including educational outcomes, employment status, income and the position of different social groups. A wide range of evidence was gathered for the review, including data from the European Union Labour Force Survey, the UK Labour Force Survey, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and relevant research studies and surveys.

The review found that many economic inequalities are linked to qualification levels. There appeared to be a significant degree of low achievement amongst 16 year olds and the UK is behind other countries in terms of the proportion of the working age population with upper level secondary qualifications. While girls have better educational outcomes than boys at age 16, women in full-time employment earn 22% less than men. The net income for young people under 25 has fallen, due in part to longer periods of education. Individuals from minority ethnic groups with GCSE results around or below the national median are more likely to study at higher education level than White British pupils with the same qualifications. However, those from Black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups are less likely to gain higher class degrees.

Inclusion continued

Muskens G (2009), **Inclusion and Education in European Countries: Final Report Summary**, Brussels: European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture. [Link](#)

A report which summarises a Europe-wide research study of inclusion practices within different education systems. The research project as a whole gathered evidence from ten European countries on good practice in relation to including different groups of young people in their education systems. The research involved teams of researchers in the different countries gathering and synthesising evidence in relation to inclusion, using sources such as national and comparative educational indicators, survey data and case studies of good practice.

The research found that, in general, policies put in place to halve early school leaving in Europe between 2000 and 2010 have not been successful. However, the national reports on Italy, Spain and Scotland revealed that the ideal of inclusive education is feasible for almost all pupils with special needs and physical or mental disabilities. This conclusion was supported by international research evidence that showed good educational results 'for all'. Overall, inclusive education appeared to be a demanding commitment for schools, teachers and pupils. In addition, inclusive education required supporting factors such as personal assistants for pupils and specially adapted buildings.

Puma M et al (2009), **Head Start Impact Study**, Washington DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a study that explored the impact of the Head Start programme in America. Head Start aimed to improve the school readiness of low-income children by providing comprehensive services, including pre-school education, mental health care, nutrition and support for parents to encourage their child's development. The study was conducted with 84 delegate agencies and included almost 5,000 3 and 4 year olds randomly assigned either to a group with access to Head Start services or a control group which did not have access to these services but did have access to alternative early childhood programmes.

The research found that access to Head Start services had a positive impact on children's pre-school experience and there were significant differences between the experiences of children in the Head Start group and the children in the control group. The benefits from participation included improvements in vocabulary skills, colour identification, letter naming and spelling. The differences between those in the Head Start group and those in the control group narrowed by the end of first grade with significant differences apparent in only a few areas. Head Start children performed better in vocabulary and oral comprehension tests and the younger cohort appeared to have more positive relationships with their parents, improved behaviour and more positive approaches to learning.

Inclusion continued

Ross A (2009), **Disengagement from Education among 14 to 16 Year Olds**, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families. [Link](#)

A report which presents findings from an analysis of disengagement from education among 14–16 year olds in England. Data for the analysis was drawn from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, a study which follows the lives of a cohort of young people who completed compulsory education in 2006. The focus, for this analysis, is on the first three years of the study, which relate to years 9, 10 and 11. Destinations in year 12 are also included.

The research identified four types of engaged or disengaged young people. These included young people who were highly engaged in education and intended to study at degree level and young people who were disengaged from school but not education. The latter group disliked school and missed classes but did intend to continue to degree level. Other groups included young people engaged with school but not higher education and disengaged young people who did not have high aspirations, disliked school and were more likely to truant. Schools working with parents, the quality of relationships with teachers and the curriculum were among the factors which impacted upon engagement with school.

Information and communications technology

Daly C, Pachler N and Pelletier C (2009), **Continuing Professional Development in ICT for Teachers: A Literature Review**, Coventry: Becta. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a literature review focusing on continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for ICT in England. Forty-two small-scale studies of ICT CPD which had been published from 2006 to 2009 were included. The report focused on both primary and secondary schools. Becta overview reports, inspection reports and broader generic literature were also included.

The research shows that the control over provision of ICT CPD has been devolved to local authorities and this has resulted in varied provision. There has been an inconsistency in reporting the effectiveness of CPD and so it is difficult to generalise about the success of different approaches. Most CPD takes place in school and the experience varies for teachers according to the individual department, the relationship between the school and their local authority and the degree of teacher motivation. Teachers were critical of one-off courses, external programmes which did not take the school context into consideration and of school CPD which did not consider subject differences and differences in their technical abilities. In order for ICT CPD to be effective, the report indicates that skills training was not enough, teachers need to appreciate how technology could enhance learning.

Information and communications technology continued

Goodwyn A, Protopsaltis A and Fuller C (2009), **Harnessing Technology Strategy: Celebrating Outstanding Teachers**, Coventry: Becta. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a survey which aimed to identify what constituted good teaching from expert practitioners and explores the experts' use of ICT in schools in England. The survey included teachers and teaching assistants from infant, primary and secondary schools who had been nominated by colleagues for being 'expert' or 'outstanding'. Thirty-five schools nominated 93 practitioners: 35 from infant or primary schools and 58 from secondary schools. Interviews were conducted with 54 practitioners and a total of 13 case studies were conducted.

The research found that experts had common qualities such as enthusiasm, creativity and knowledge of different learning styles. Experts viewed technology as an important component of teaching and used some form of technology in every class. The range of technologies included interactive whiteboards, Virtual Learning Environments, cameras and podcasts. The research identified a number of benefits from using technology for both practitioners and pupils. The most significant benefits for practitioners were the improved quality of teaching materials and the increased range of opportunities to collaborate with colleagues. The benefits for pupils included increased motivation and support for less able students with tasks such as writing.

Underwood J et al (2009), **Narrowing the Gap: An Exploration of the Ways Technology Can Support Approaches to Narrowing the Gap for Underachieving and Low-Achieving Learners in Secondary School**, Coventry: Becta. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings from the second phase of the Narrowing the Gap project which focused on low-achieving and underachieving pupils in England. Two groups of secondary schools were recruited to take part in the project. The first group comprised eight secondary schools which had been identified as e-active and also had a clear inclusion policy. The second group consisted of four secondary schools and two primary schools from within one large local authority. The local authority included in this group had a significant number of low achievers and had established the Narrowing the Gap agenda as a priority for schools.

The research found that developing effective approaches to deal with low-achievement and underachievement in schools was a priority at all levels of the education system. With the increased availability of technology, there has been an increase in learner profiling and this has led to the development of many effective strategies to narrow the gap. Technology has had a number of benefits, including encouraging reluctant speakers to contribute through the use of active learning and education being made more relevant to the pupil. While technology was felt to be beneficial in narrowing the gap, participants indicated it should not be the only approach used in schools.

Literacy and numeracy

Canadian Education Statistics Council (2009), **Key Factors to Support Literacy Success in School-Aged Populations: A Literature Review**, Toronto: CESC. [Link](#)

A report which presents the results of a literature review from Canada exploring the key factors which promote success in literacy for young people. The focus of the review is on reading, as this is seen as being fundamental to children's literacy development and success at school. The review examined a wide range of research studies, with an emphasis on the most recent Canadian and international literature on effective programmes to promote reading.

The research found that effective reading programmes contain a number of essential elements. For instance, a comprehensive approach to reading instruction should be adopted, which includes allocating sufficient time to reading and the development of strategies to build oral language, fluency, comprehension and motivation. Also important are clearly articulated competencies, which specify what children should know and be able to do as readers. In addition, the resources and professional capacity to ensure effective delivery should be in place. Finally, effective intervention for children experiencing difficulties is required, including children with learning difficulties.

Parental involvement

Save the Children (2009), **Helping Families Support Children's Success at School**, London: Save the Children. [Link](#)

A report which presents the results of a literature review of the most effective forms of family or parental support which have an impact on children's achievement. The literature review focused on evidence relating to programmes, projects and initiatives which had been effective in improving learning outcomes for children. The review presents the findings of 15 international studies which the researchers felt were particularly relevant to the aim of the review.

The review found that earlier interventions have the most impact on improving children's learning outcomes. It was also found to be important to offer parents/carers and children a number of entry routes into targeted support, as well as various types of provision. Support at transition points, such as the entry to primary school, is also particularly important, and can make a difference to attainment. Factors that were found to contribute to the success of family/parental support include interventions that address more than one area of children's lives, and investment in high-quality staff training and qualifications. In addition, for all children the quality of the home environment at pre-school level is more important for intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income.

Parental involvement continued

Wiggins A, Coe R, Jones K and Kan M (2009), **Evidence of Educational Support Outside School**, London: Sutton Trust. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a research study exploring how the amount of educational support children receive outside school in the UK varies by parental characteristics. In particular, the research focuses on how educational support varies according to parental occupation and parental educational attainment. The researchers used two existing datasets: (1) data from the Year 11 Information System on 23,000 students in 160 schools who completed a school survey in 2007 and (2) data from the Office for National Statistics Time Use Survey of 1,000 students and their parents collected in 2000.

The research found that both parental education and occupation are closely linked to the amount of reading for pleasure that children do. In addition, the parent's educational level is more closely related to the amount of homework children do than their occupation. There is also evidence which suggests that the children of less educated parents are more likely to be in classes or schools that do not set much homework. Overall, the research indicates that children with more highly educated parents spend more time doing educational activities (both inside and outside school), and there is evidence that this will lead to better educational outcomes for these children.

Statistics

Scottish Government (2010), **Exclusions from Schools 2008/09**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents the latest statistics on exclusions from Scottish schools in 2008/09. Exclusions include both temporary exclusions and instances where pupils were removed from the register. Statistics refer to local authority schools only.

The statistics show that in 2008/09 there were 33,917 cases of exclusion, which was a decrease of 15% from 2007/08 (39,717 exclusions). More than 99% of all exclusions were temporary, but in 87 cases pupils were removed from the register of the school. This was a decrease of 47% from 2007/08 (164). The rate of exclusion per 1,000 pupils was 49.9, which is a decrease from 57.5 in 2007/08. The rate of exclusion appears to increase with the age of pupils and rose to a peak in S3 (157 exclusions per 1,000 pupils). However, there is a significant drop in the number of exclusions once pupils enter non-compulsory education in S5 and S6. There were 4,953 cases of exclusion from primary schools and 27,704 cases of exclusions from secondary schools. The reasons for exclusion included general or persistent disobedience, verbal abuse of staff, physical assault with no weapon and insolent behaviour.

Statistics continued

Scottish Government (2009), **Attendance and Absence in Scottish Schools**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents results from the attendance and absence survey in Scotland in 2008/09. Caution should be used when considering the figures as there have been differences in how local authorities recorded information on attendance and absence.

The statistics showed that the overall attendance rate was 93.3% and had not changed significantly from 2007/08 (93.2%). For primary schools, the attendance rate was 95.2% and for secondary schools, the attendance rate was 91.1%. Attendance in special schools was 91.3%. Authorised and unauthorised absence in primary schools was 4.8% and in secondary schools it was 8.8%. In special schools, the absence rate was 8.4%. Average statistics show that approximately 43,000 pupils were absent each day, of which approximately 530 were temporarily excluded. Boys had higher absence rates related to temporary exclusion than girls. Pupils who lived in the most deprived areas were, on average, absent for 14 more days than pupils living in the least deprived areas. Pupils who were looked after by the local authorities were on average absent for ten more days than other pupils.

Scottish Government (2009), **Destination of Leavers from Scottish Schools: 2008/09**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report which presents the latest national and education authority level information on the destinations of young people leaving Scottish schools. This report updates *Destination of Leavers from Scottish Schools: 2007/08*. This is the first report of school-leaver destinations which reflects the effects of the recession.

The statistics show that 85.7% of school leavers are in positive destinations (higher education, further education, employment, voluntary work or training) and this figure has decreased from 86.4 % in 2007/08. The proportion of school leavers entering higher or further education has increased from 55.9% in 2007/08 to 61.9% in 2008/09 and the proportion entering employment has decreased by around 7 percentage points to 18.4%. This is the largest annual decrease since 1992/93. Additionally, the proportion of school leavers who are unemployed and seeking employment has risen slightly from 1.5% in 2007/08 to 1.6% in 2008/09. School leavers from disadvantaged areas, with additional support needs or looked after children are less likely to arrive at a positive destination.

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