

August 2009

# 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 article 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

Meyer L H, Weir K F, McClure J, Walkey F and McKenzie L (2009), **The Relationship Between NCEA Design and Student Motivation and Achievement: A Three-Year Follow-Up**, Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington.

[Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a longitudinal study exploring the impact of New Zealand's National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEAs) on students' motivation to learn. NCEAs are New Zealand's national qualifications for secondary school students. The researchers carried out a survey and focus groups with a representative sample of students from 20 secondary schools, as well as analysing achievement data. This data was compared with information collected in earlier stages of the longitudinal study. The study found that those students who were motivated by 'doing my best' had higher achievement in both internal and external assessments than those students who were motivated by 'doing just enough'. Across the two years considered in this report, one third of students maintained their level of motivation, one third showed a minor shift in motivation and another third showed larger shifts in motivation, either up or down. As in previous phases of the study, female students reported 'doing my best' more than male students, and males reported 'doing just enough' more than females. However, in real terms these differences were fairly small. Ethnicity was also significantly related to both 'doing my best' and 'doing just enough', with Asian students showing the most positive motivation patterns.

Slater H, Davies N and Burgess N (2009), **Do Teachers Matter? Measuring the Variation in Teacher Effectiveness in England**, Bristol: The Centre for Market and Public Organisation. [Link](#)

A report which discusses a research study exploring the impact of individual teachers on student outcomes and the variation in teacher effectiveness in England. Data used includes the exam results of 7305 pupils across 33 schools from 1999 to 2002, which were linked to teachers through the use of class lists. Existing research studies are also incorporated in the findings. Results indicate that teachers have a significant impact on student outcomes, as being taught by a high quality teacher in the 75th percentile as opposed to a teacher of low quality from the 25th percentile can add 0.425 of a GCSE point per subject for a student. The researchers suggest that if students from lower socio-economic groups were to be taught by teachers in the high percentile group, it is possible that their GCSE results would improve. The personal characteristics of teachers do not appear to accurately predict the quality of teachers. Previous studies also indicate that the quality of teacher credentials can have a more significant effect on student outcomes, particularly in mathematics, than class size or parental qualifications. The researchers recommend further research to explore the impact of teacher training.

## Creativity and innovation

Kendall L, Morrison J, Sharp C and Yeshanew T (2009), **The Impact of Creative Partnerships on Pupil Behaviour**, Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research. [Link](#)

A report which discusses the results of an evaluation of the UK Government's Creative Partnerships learning programme. Creative Partnerships aimed to develop young people's skills in English schools, raise their aspirations and provide them with a greater range of opportunities for the future. This report compares schools participating in the programme with schools who did not participate to explore the impact on school attendance and behaviour. Data from 2002/03 to 2006/07 relating to absence rates and from 2002/03 to 2005/06 relating to exclusions was used. Participating primary schools experienced a greater reduction, over time, in absence rates than schools who did not participate. The reduction became more significant over time and, after three years, the reduction was considered to be 'educationally significant'. However, for secondary schools there did not appear to be a reduction in absence rates or in the probability that schools would permanently exclude one or more young people. The report emphasises that, as only school-level data is available, it is not possible to examine data for the specific groups of young people participating in Creative Partnership activities.

Kendall L, Morrison J, Sharp C and Yeshanew T (2009), **The Longer-Term Impact of Creative Partnerships on the Attainment of Young People: Results from 2005 and 2006**, Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research. [Link](#)

A report which discusses results from an evaluation of the UK Government's Creative Partnerships learning programme. Creative Partnerships aimed to develop young people's skills in English schools, raise their aspirations and provide them with a greater range of opportunities for the future. This evaluation was the latest in a series and, using data from 2005 to 2006, focuses on the longer-term impact of participation on attainment levels. Findings indicated that while participating schools were based in disadvantaged areas, the young people who participated in Creative Partnership activities were generally less disadvantaged than non-participating pupils in their schools. At Key Stage 2, there did not appear to be any significant difference in average scores or attainment in English, mathematics and science for young people who had participated and other young people nationally. However by Key Stage 3, young people who participated were found to have made significantly greater progress than other young people nationally. Similar results were found at Key Stage 4, with the exception of mathematic scores where there did not appear to be significant differences between young people who participated and young people who had not participated.

## Curriculum

Education and Training Inspectorate (2009), **An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Revised Curriculum in Primary, Special and Post-Primary Schools 2008**, Bangor: Education and Training Inspectorate. [Link](#)

A report which describes an evaluation of arrangements for the implementation of the new schools' curriculum in Northern Ireland. The Inspectorate in Northern Ireland collected information about the implementation of the new curriculum in a range of ways, including attendance at courses, conferences and implementation training days, attendance at the Partnership Management Board responsible for planning implementation, visits to schools to observe practice and planned inspection visits. The evaluation found that the overall quality of teaching in the observed lessons ranged from satisfactory to outstanding, and that in nearly all lessons the observed quality was good or better. In the most effective lessons, the inspectors identified features of planning such as the appropriate use by teachers of themes to promote the connectivity of the learning areas and contextualise them. In relation to effective teaching, the inspectors identified features such as teachers having high expectations of their pupils. The report identifies concerns about a lack of alignment between a more skills-based curriculum at Key Stage 3 and the knowledge content specifications and assessment approaches required later at GCSE.

Kidman G (2009), Attitudes and Interests Towards Biotechnology: The Mismatch Between Students and Teachers, **Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education**, 5:2, pp 135–143. [Link](#)

An article which describes a project exploring attitudes towards biotechnology among senior pupils and teachers in secondary schools in Queensland, Australia. The research involved 500 15–16-year-olds studying biological science and 35 teachers from eight secondary schools throughout Queensland. The students and teachers were asked to complete a series of questionnaires exploring attitudes towards biotechnology, risk to humans, risk to the environment and science lesson topics. The research found that there was a student/teacher mismatch in attitudes towards aspects of biotechnology such as the genetic modification of food, animals and humans. Students tended to reject the general use of biotechnology, while teachers tended to accept it.

## Early years

Fullerton E (2009), **The Development of 'Nonviolent Communication' in an Early Years Setting to Support Conflict Resolution and Develop an Emotional Intelligence Related to Both Self and Others**, Edinburgh: General Teaching Council for Scotland. [Link](#)

A report written by a participant in the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Teacher Researcher Programme, which explores interventions related to nonviolent communication in an early years setting. The researcher explored use of the Nonviolent Communication Model, developed by Marshall Rosenberg, in a nursery setting to determine the extent to which it could be successfully used by a class of 24 children aged between 3 and 5. The research involved the production of a visual resource illustrating the Nonviolent Communication Model, which could be used by the children when conflict situations arose. The researcher made written observations of the children during conflict situations, combined with use of audio recording where appropriate during these situations. A survey of other members of staff working with the children was also carried out using questionnaires. The research found that other staff members had noticed changes in conflict resolution, and in the ability of the older children, in particular, to express their feelings and needs in a range of situations, as well as recognising the needs of others. The observation of the children also indicated that they were better able to express their feelings and needs clearly, and find solutions to conflict that met the needs of everyone involved.

National Agency for Education, Sweden (2009), **Ten Years After the Pre-School Reform: A National Evaluation of the Swedish Pre-School**, Stockholm: National Agency for Education, Sweden. [Link](#)

A summary of a report evaluating the impact of reforms of the Swedish pre-school from 1998 onwards. These reforms involved Swedish pre-school education being given its own curriculum, which was closely linked to the curriculum followed in primary schools. The curriculum model in Swedish pre-school centres has been labelled 'educare', as it unites care and pedagogy in pre-school activities. At the same time, the pre-school curriculum adopted in 1998 did not set out goals for what children should achieve at certain points in time. The national evaluation of the pre-school curriculum involved a survey of local education managers in all local areas of Sweden, along with case studies of a sample of local areas and pre-school centres. The evaluation found that the pre-school curriculum had become significant for pre-school centres, and had led to pedagogical change over the past decade. The strongest impacts of the new pre-school curriculum have been seen in relation to the development of norms and values, as well as development and learning. The evaluation also found that the reform of the pre-school curriculum has led to greater decentralisation of responsibility within local areas of Sweden, with resources now being allocated directly to pre-school centres.

## Early years Continued

Ofsted (2009), **The Impact of Integrated Services on Children and their Families in Sure Start Children's Centres**, London: Ofsted. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a small-scale evaluation of the impact of integrated services on children, parents and families in 20 children's centres in England. The centres were visited by Ofsted inspectors from June to December 2008 and interviews were conducted with managers, service providers and parents. Centre activities were also observed by inspectors. The evaluation found that the impact on the learning and development of pupils and parents was good or outstanding in over half the centres visited. Schools indicated that the improvement in pupils' attitudes towards learning and social development had helped ease the transition to primary school. However, only half of schools contacted had effective links with children's centres and only one school had been monitoring the longer-term impact of these links. As a result of poor links with schools, the children's centres were not able to assess the impact they had had on children by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There also appeared to be difficulties in the collection and dissemination of reliable data on issues such as the number of vulnerable children and families in an area.

## Further and higher education

Maguire S et al (2009), **Learning Agreements Pilots: Process Evaluation**, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families. [Link](#)

A report that discusses the findings of an evaluation of the Learning Agreement Pilots launched in eight areas of England in April 2006. The Learning Agreements were managed locally by Learning Skills Councils and Connexions Partnerships and were aimed at 16–17-year-olds in jobs without training. Young people took part in various learning and training activities, including undertaking a designated course. The evaluation found the numbers of young people participating were highest in local areas which had already provided basic and technical skills programmes prior to the introduction of Learning Agreements. Young people were most likely to remain in the scheme if they received the support of their employer, training provider and Learning Agreement advisers. Benefits for young people included developing job-specific, personal and social skills as well as the opportunity to become re-engaged in learning. For employers, it allowed them to meet corporate social responsibility requirements, meet skills needs within their organisation and enhance their training provision. As the Learning Agreements paid for and provided a training structure for the young employees, this meant the employers were able to benefit without assuming responsibility for the training costs.

## Further and higher education Continued

Sutton Trust (2009), **Young People Omnibus 2009**, London: Sutton Trust. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings from the Young People Omnibus 2009 which included questions about young people's perceptions of higher education in England and Wales. The survey covered topics such as young people's likelihood of proceeding to higher education upon completion of formal schooling and their reasons for not going into higher education. Approximately 2447 pupils aged 11–16 from a total of 106 schools participated in the Omnibus survey. The proportion of young people indicating they were likely to enter higher education has increased since the survey began in 2003. Approximately 77% indicated they were likely to enter higher education and the proportion of young people indicating they are unlikely to enter higher education has remained low at 10%. Reasons given for not wanting to enter higher education include the intention of doing something other than studying from books (36%) and the desire to start earning a salary (34%). The report states, however, that the proportion of young people with these opinions has fallen by 19 percentage points each and it is suggested this is due, in part, to the current economic crisis.

## Health and wellbeing

Gibbons S (2009), Meaningful Participation of Girls in Senior Physical Education Courses, **Canadian Journal of Education**, 32:2, pp 222–244. [Link](#)

An article which presents the findings of a research project exploring the features of senior physical education courses in Canada that have maintained high enrolments of female students. The research took place in British Columbia, and involved analysis of physical education syllabi, individual interviews with 28 teachers and a survey of 131 students from 32 schools. The research found that all participants highlighted the importance of alternatives to existing senior physical education courses which could be independently maintained after they had left school. These courses included activities such as yoga, aerobics, Pilates, self-defence and walking. In addition, the research found that the research participants emphasised the importance of 'value added' physical education options, for which they could receive additional credit or recognition. Such recognition included external certification, for instance in fitness leadership, in addition to the credit they received from completing the course.

## Health and wellbeing Continued

Reid M (2009), **Report of an Attitudinal Study to Inform Year 2 of the HPV Immunisation Programme in Scotland**, Edinburgh: NHS Health Scotland. [Link](#)

A report which outlines the findings of a study which assesses the first year of communications activity for the HPV (human papillomavirus) immunisation programme in Scotland. The research explored the experiences of the immunisation programme and associated communications activities among those involved in the immunisation programme, their parents and other stakeholders. The programme included immunisation delivered at school and also an out of school catch-up programme delivered by GP practices. The research involved focus groups with 56 girls and young women and 28 parents. The research also involved mini-focus groups with teachers and school nurses, and in-depth telephone interviews with practice nurses and GPs. The research found that the communications campaign undertaken in year one of the immunisation programme had been largely successful in meeting its objectives. S2 girls also recommended that the ideal 'information package' for them would be a TV advert shown on a DVD in school, and the opportunity to ask questions of a school nurse both in a group setting and privately. Older girls also reported that they would welcome the opportunity to have a leaflet they could take away and read themselves.

## Information and communications technology

Arnold S R, Padilla M J and Tunhikorn B (2009), The Development of Pre-Service Science Teachers' Professional Knowledge in Utilising ICT to Support Professional Lives, **Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education**, 5:2, pp 91–101. [Link](#)

An article which reports on a study carried out to explore the impact of a course which aimed to enhance the professional knowledge of 18 pre-service teachers in Thailand. The course lasted for 15 weeks and specifically focused on the development of knowledge and skills in relation to the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in the learning process. The pre-service teachers attended the course for two hours a week for 15 weeks, and took part in a range of activities, including completing group work, searching for information online, taking part in seminars and holding discussions using online discussion boards. The researchers collected data using a range of methods, including observation, questionnaires and analysis of information from the online discussion boards. The findings of the study indicated that the pre-service teachers felt that they had gained ICT knowledge and skills as a result of participation in the course. In addition, the online discussion boards were used by some of the pre-service teachers, although others experienced access problems or did not take part for other reasons. Overall, the pre-service teachers felt more ready to use ICT in their professional lives as a result of taking part in the course.

## Information and communications technology Continued

Ham V (2009), **Outcomes for Teachers and Students in the ICT PD School Clusters Programme**, Wellington: Ministry of Education, New Zealand. [Link](#)

A report that forms part of an ongoing evaluation of the Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Professional Development initiative for teachers in New Zealand. This report focuses on the effectiveness of the 2005–2007 ICT Professional Development School Clusters programme which aimed to increase teachers' ICT confidence and skills, and their understanding of the use of ICT for teaching. Additionally the programme was intended to encourage online learning communities and increase the quality of the integration of different technologies for teaching and learning. Data is drawn from the end of project surveys of approximately 1250 participating teachers. Sixty per cent of participants felt the programme had been significant in their development as teachers. Most participants felt their confidence in using ICT for teaching had gone from low to high and over one third felt their classroom practice had been changed 'to a large extent' or 'completely' as a result of the programme. There also appeared to be an impact on pupils with teachers reporting increased pupil motivation, increased pupil-centred learning and greater opportunities for activities which promoted skills such as communication and enquiry skills.

Juuti K, Lavonen J, Aksela M and Meisalo V (2009), Adoption of ICT in Science Education: A Case Study of Communication Channels in a Teachers' Professional Development Project, **Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education**, 5:2, pp 103–118. [Link](#)

An article which analyses the development of a science teachers' professional development project in Finland. The science teachers were participating in a project called the Finnish Virtual School for Science Education, which aimed to improve learning and teaching in science education through use of information and communications technology (ICT). Twenty eight teachers from five local areas in Finland took part in the project, along with four researchers. The teachers explored the use of ICT in science education through a range of activities, including the introduction and evaluation of new teaching approaches and the use of simulations, videos and online courses. The researchers were interested in exploring the impact of the project on teaching and learning, and also on the most effective channels for communicating with participating teachers. The research found that teachers had increased their use of ICT in every tested activity. In addition, the most effective methods for communicating with the teachers during the project appeared to involve face-to-face contact.

## Information and communications technology Continued

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2009), **Technology in Massachusetts Schools: An Annual Report Based on Data Submitted by Districts**, Maiden: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. [Link](#)

A report which analyses data on the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in schools, submitted by school districts in Massachusetts in the United States. The report indicates that 77% of teachers in Massachusetts schools are using ICT with their students around once a week, against a target of 85%. The percentage of teachers using ICT with their students on a daily basis has increased from 43% to 47% since a previous report in 2007. The report also indicates that 86% of teachers use ICT for professional purposes, such as lesson planning, every day. The data submitted by school districts also shows that, on average, 75% of teachers in Massachusetts were able to access some form of professional development related in ICT in 2007–08. For almost half of teachers this took the form of formal professional development, such as workshops or training courses. In addition, slightly over half of teachers received ongoing professional development related to ICT, for instance through coaching or co-teaching. Eighty-seven per cent of school districts also reported some use of online professional development.

## Inclusion

Newman L, Wagner M, Cameto R, Knokey A M, Buckley J A and Malouf D (2009), **The Post High School Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities up to 4 Years After High School: A Report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)**, Menlo Park, California: SRI International. [Link](#)

A report which provides information about the experiences of disabled young people in the United States in the four years since leaving secondary education. The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) is a 10-year study which is tracking the characteristics, experiences and outcomes of a representative sample of young people with disabilities. This report analyses data from the third sweep of NLTS2, which took place in 2005, with a particular focus on young people who were aged between 17 and 25. The study found that 40% of young people with disabilities reported having continued on to post-secondary education within four years of leaving high school. The young people with disabilities were also more likely to have enrolled in two-year or community colleges than in vocational, business or technical post-secondary education providers, or four-year colleges and universities. Employment was also an aspect of the early post-high-school period of a majority of young people with disabilities. In total, 85% of young people with disabilities who had left secondary school within the last four years were reported to be in employment, post-secondary education or job training.

## Inclusion Continued

Ofsted (2009), **The Exclusion from School of Children Aged Four to Seven**, London: Ofsted. [Link](#)

A report that presents the findings of a small-scale survey which explored the small number of exclusions for children aged 4–7 in England. The report is based on information collected from a range of sources, including three groups of infant or primary schools. The first group consisted of 30 schools which had excluded several young children, often more than once. The second group consisted of 27 schools located near the schools from the first group which had not excluded any young children. The final group consisted of a further 12 schools which had only excluded one child, but on several occasions. Ofsted inspectors also visited 10 local authorities in which the exclusion rate was high compared to other local authorities. Most schools visited were based in areas with higher than average levels of deprivation and many reported high levels of involvement from social care, children's services and similar agencies. All schools had pupils with complex behavioural issues and some pupils had been victims of trauma. Use of methods such as 'circle time', the Primary National Strategy's Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme and parental involvement proved effective in preventing exclusions. Nurture groups also proved effective, although many schools indicated that they did not have sufficient funds. Efficient management of disruptive behaviour was a significant factor in the reduction of exclusions or prevention of exclusions of children aged 4–7.

Ofsted (2009), **Day Six of Exclusion: The Extent and Quality of Provision for Pupils**, London: Ofsted. [Link](#)

A report that presents the findings of a small-scale survey in England which explored the extent to which schools and local authorities had met requirements to provide full-time and suitable education from day six of a pupil's fixed-period exclusion. In autumn 2008 Ofsted inspectors visited 28 secondary, five primary and three special schools, along with five pupil referral units and two other forms of provision in 18 local authorities. There had been 128 exclusions lasting six days or more over the 2006/07 school year across all surveyed schools. Findings indicated that eight secondary schools and two special schools had not met the requirements. In total 26 schools did meet the requirements with six of these schools using pupil referral units to support excluded pupils and 13 educating the pupils on school grounds or through a partner organisation. Between 2006/07 and 2007/08, the number of exclusions of six days or more fell in 23 schools. Effective guidance on exclusions was produced for schools in 12 local authorities in addition to guidance produced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The report notes that as the survey sample size was small, generalisations should not be drawn from the findings.

## Inclusion Continued

Reid P, Lindsay S and Latimer K (2009), **Evaluation of Careers Scotland Enhanced Resource Pilot Project**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

A report highlighting findings of an evaluation of the Careers Scotland Enhanced Resource Pilot Project (ERP) developed to support young people in need of more choices and more chances. The project ran from August 2006 to June 2008 and aimed to reduce the number of pupils entering negative destinations upon leaving school. It was piloted in 13 schools in seven local authority areas. A careers adviser worked with pupils identified as being at risk of not making a successful transition upon leaving school for two and a half days per week. The evaluation involved desk research, case study visits and telephone surveys. Surveys were conducted in May 2007 with 81 ERP participants and 83 parents and in May 2008 with 86 ERP participants and 91 parents. At an individual level, 75% of pilot pupils in 2006/07 and 65% in 2007/08 achieved a positive destination. Additionally, over three quarters of pupils remained in a positive destination three months after leaving school and approximately two thirds were in a positive destination after a year. Three quarters of school leavers from pilot schools who did not achieve a positive destination had not been referred to the adviser. The pupils who were referred to the advisers received individually tailored practical support.

## Initial teacher education

Smith C (2009), **The Use of Learning Journals as a Self-Reflection Tool to Support and Develop Probationer Teachers' Skills in Critical Evaluation and Reflection**, Edinburgh: General Teaching Council for Scotland. [Link](#)

A report written by a participant in the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Teacher Researcher Programme, which explores the use of learning journals in supporting newly qualified primary teachers. In particular, the study focused on the use of learning journals as a tool for critical self-reflection and planning among 59 probationer teachers working in primary schools in one local authority area. The research involved a survey of the probationers delivered by questionnaires, interviews and feedback meetings. The report identifies a number of practical lessons learned in relation to issuing the learning journals to the probationer teachers, as well as exploring the results of the various data collection methods. The study found that initially the use of learning journals by the probationers was not high. However, further exploration of this finding indicated that a lack of knowledge or understanding about the intended purpose of the learning journals was the main barrier to their use. In response to these findings, the purpose of the learning journals was clarified for practitioners. Overall, the study appeared to demonstrate that structure, guidelines and a clear understanding of the purpose and possible benefits of learning journals, and of self-reflection, are important for this method to be successful.

## International education

Boyle A (2009), **An International Focus Group to Investigate the Regulation of Examinations and Qualifications**, Coventry: Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator. [Link](#)

A report which summarises findings from a focus group of senior education officials from nine countries which explored the regulation of examinations and qualifications. The topics covered as part of the focus group included the nature of the organisations involved in examinations and qualifications and interventions in countries where there are problems with the examinations and qualifications system. The focus group involved officials from countries including Korea, the Netherlands, Australia (Queensland) and Spain, and took place across a number of sessions. Participants in the focus group did not appear to believe that arms-length organisations responsible for examinations and qualifications had an institutional bias towards centralised examinations systems. The focus group participants also highlighted that a number of countries have experienced problems with their examinations and qualifications system, and that adopting 'heavy handed' solutions to these problems could be inappropriate.

Eurydice (2009), **Key Data on Education in Europe 2009**, Brussels: Eurydice. [Link](#)

A report which presents a comparative analysis of education systems from pre-primary to higher education level across Europe. The report covers the 27 member states of the European Union (EU), along with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey. The report is based around 120 qualitative and quantitative indicators, based on data from a range of sources, including the Eurydice Network, which collects educational data from throughout the EU, and international comparative educational studies such as PISA and PIRLS. The report also highlights a range of key issues related to education in Europe, such as the impact of demographic change, the use of pre-primary education to tackle equity issues and a trend towards a longer period of compulsory schooling to ensure students master core competences.

## International education Continued

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009), **Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First results from TALIS**, Paris: OECD. [Link](#)

A report which presents findings from the first round of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) conducted in 2007–08. This was the first international comparative survey which explored teaching conditions and the learning environment in schools. Data is drawn from over 70,000 teachers and school principals from lower secondary schools in 23 participating countries including Australia, Ireland, Italy, Norway and Austria. The survey covered topics such as professional development, school leadership and teacher appraisal. Findings indicate that the majority of teachers are satisfied with their job and are committed to participating in professional development opportunities; however, the survey highlights that more targeted opportunities are required. Few respondents had participated in the opportunities that they reported they would find the most beneficial for their work, such as individual or collaborative research. Effective school leadership was highlighted as an important factor in the working lives of teachers. The most effective leaders identified any weaknesses in their staff through teacher appraisals and then addressed these issues by providing appropriate professional development opportunities. Most teachers also indicated that they used traditional teaching methods in their classrooms rather than adopting more personalised, student-orientated approaches.

## Leadership

Bird J (2009), **How Can Newly Inducted Headteachers Create Further Improvements in their School?** London: National College for School Leadership. [Link](#)

A report which presents the findings of a small-scale project that explored the structure and practice of primary headteacher induction in England. A literature review was conducted in addition to interviews with 10 newly inducted primary headteachers in three local authorities. Additional interviews were conducted with two chairs of governing bodies and input was provided from various professionals with responsibility for developing support networks for newly inducted headteachers. Findings indicated that mentoring, other forms of personal and strategic support and a systematic structure of continuing professional development (CPD) could have a positive impact on the induction process. For example, there appeared to be variation in the extent to which newly inducted headteachers were aware of or able to access CPD opportunities. The induction process also appeared to be affected by the relationships between headteachers and the chair of the governing body as well as with other school staff, parents and pupils. The knowledge and awareness of the current school situation such as staff turnover and pupil achievement are additional factors impacting upon the induction process.

## Leadership Continued

Cottrell M (2009), **The Impact of Workforce Reforms: Investigating the Impact on Leadership and the Primary School System**, London: National College for School Leadership. [Link](#)

A report that discusses a small-scale project which explored the impact of workforce reforms from the perspective of primary school headteachers in England. In particular, it focuses on the impact of recent reforms of school systems, the leadership of change and the role of the headteacher. Research was carried out in three local authorities in the south-west of England with schools judged to be at least 'satisfactory' in Ofsted inspections. A total of nine headteachers were interviewed and the experience of those selected ranged from nine years in post to one year. Respondents who were most positive about reforms had attempted to align new reforms with the long-term strategy for their school. The key issues in the implementation of new reforms appeared to centre on the need for a cultural shift in schools, increasing responsibility for support staff and greater emphasis on the level of professionalism required of school staff. In order to support these changes, most respondents had undertaken a strategic review of their leadership teams and in some cases, increased the leadership capacity through the creation of new posts. Respondents indicated that reviewing the wider leadership team was the first step in reviewing their own leadership role.

Day C et al (2009), **The Impact of School Leadership on Pupil Outcomes**, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families. [Link](#)

A report that presents the findings of the Effective Leadership and Pupil Outcomes project, the largest and most comprehensive study of contemporary leadership conducted in England. The project focused on headteachers and other leaders in schools which had been recognised for improving pupil attainment measures from 2003 to 2005. Schools were grouped into categories – low start (based in areas of high disadvantage with high staff turnover and poor pupil behaviour), moderate start (based in more advantaged areas with low staff turnover) and high start (based in areas with higher advantage and low staff turnover). Results indicate that headteachers in low start schools were more likely to report improvement in pupil behaviour, attendance, attitude and motivation levels. This group were also more likely to prioritise teaching and learning strategies, as well as a more efficient use of data, than leaders in high start schools. School leaders impacted on pupil outcomes most significantly through improving staff motivation, commitment and teaching practices. Additionally, effective leaders in each group had taken the school and pupil background, as well as national priorities, into consideration when developing improvement strategies.

## Literacy and numeracy

Clark C (2009), **Why Fathers Matter to Their Children's Literacy**, London: National Literacy Trust. [Link](#)

A report which briefly summarises research relating to the impact of paternal involvement on children's literacy outcomes in Britain. As the research on this topic is limited, the impact on wider child outcomes is also discussed. Recent research indicates that young people consider their father to be the second biggest influence on their reading following their mother. However, there appears to be a lack of male literacy role models, particularly during a child's early years, and some research suggests this is a possible cause of declining achievement levels for boys. The level of interaction with their child's reading has been linked with fathers' qualifications as those with higher qualifications reportedly read more to their children than fathers with fewer or no qualifications. Studies indicate that fathers read less to their children than mothers, for example the Millennium Cohort study found 16% of surveyed fathers read to their children every day and 34% said they read to their children several times a week. The benefits of fathers' involvement in their children's literacy practices and other areas include greater cognitive skills, higher levels of educational success, participation in a wider range of extra-curricular activities and a greater enjoyment of education.

Bolduc J and Fleuret C (2009), **Placing Music at the Centre of Literacy Instruction**, Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario. [Link](#)

A practitioner-focused report which presents the findings of research over time into the relationship between music and literacy. In particular, the authors highlight six studies which indicate that music has a positive effect on the skills needed to develop an awareness of the sound structure of language, word recognition and the development of writing strategies. For instance, the authors cite one research study which indicated that learning programmes combining literacy and music have a positive effect. This study involved children aged 4 and 5 who were involved in a music and literacy programme. The researchers found that the children had greater awareness of the sound structure of language, compared to children who were only involved in a music programme. The authors go on to recommend the type of music interventions which the evidence suggests helps the development of reading and writing skills, including singing and using percussion.

## Literacy and numeracy Continued

Nunes T, Bryant P, Sylva K and Burns R (2009), **Development of Maths Capabilities and Confidence in Primary School**, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families. [Link](#)

A report that discusses the findings of a project which explored the development of maths competence and the effect on young people's key stage results in England. Data was drawn from the Avon Longitudinal Survey of Parents and Children which has gathered information on levels and patterns of understanding in mathematics at different stages of young people's transition through primary and early secondary school. The project found that mathematical reasoning and knowledge of arithmetic (assessed in year four) have a significant impact on young people's mathematical achievement at Key Stages 2 and 3. It appeared, however, that mathematical reasoning was more significant than knowledge of arithmetic. Spatial skills also play a key role in mathematics attainment and this role increases from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 as geometry lessons become more important and young people are being tested on spatial awareness. Results indicated that young people from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to perform better at mathematical reasoning than their peers. Self-confidence in mathematics tends to be predicted by young people's competence, gender (with girls less confident than boys) and the ability group the young people are placed in by their school.

Sokal L, Thiem C, Crampton A and Katz H (2009), Differential Effects of Male and Female Reading Tutors Based on Boys' Gendered Views of Reading, **Canadian Journal of Education**, 32:2, pp 245–270. [Link](#)

An article which presents the findings of a study exploring the effects of the gender of reading tutors on boys from Winnipeg in Canada. The study involved 180 boys from grades three and four who attended 12 schools in Winnipeg, and who had been identified as struggling readers. The boys participating in the study were randomly assigned to either a male or a female reading tutor. The reading tutors collected various types of information from the participants over two years, including their comprehension of reading passages, their perceptions of gender roles and their perceptions of themselves as readers.

The study found that all the participants made significant gains in their reading achievement and self-perception of themselves as readers. For the majority of boys, who had viewed reading as a masculine or neutral activity, the gender of the reading tutor had no effect on their self-perceptions as readers. In terms of reading achievement, the gender of the reading tutor was also not a significant factor.

## School improvement and performance

Ofsted (2009), **Good Practice in Extended Schools**, London: Ofsted. [Link](#)

A report that presents the findings from a small-scale survey of effective extended schools in areas of high disadvantage in England. Ofsted inspectors visited 13 primary and 10 secondary schools that offered extended services to assess whether this provision had been significant in the schools' success. In addition, four secondary schools with similar characteristics, but which did not provide extended services, were visited to explore issues surrounding pupils' transfer. Results indicated that schools had identified young people at risk of failing and through extended services had supported them, enabling them to stay in school and achieve national qualifications. In secondary schools, most pupils identified had gone on to further education. Individual pupil needs were assessed and personalised strategies put in place. As a result, attendance levels increased, exclusions decreased and achievement levels rose. Parental concerns, such as negative views of education as a result of their own experiences, were dealt with sensitively and engagement with parents was identified as being an important factor in succeeding with pupils. The study also indicated that although pupils improved within school in areas such as behaviour, this improvement was not always transferred to the pupils' personal life outside formal education.

## Skills

Karmel T (2009), **The Contribution of Vocational Education and Training to Australia's Skills Base**, Adelaide: National Centre for Vocational Education Research. [Link](#)

An article which explores the contribution of vocational education and training to the skills base in Australia. In particular, it focuses on the relationship between the training and occupations of vocational education and training graduates and the extent to which the proportion of qualified workers as a whole has increased. Research indicates that there has been an increase in the number of qualified workers in Australia. Although many students leave their course early, they often choose to leave and enter the workforce only once key skills have already been acquired. The relationship between the course studied and the occupation of graduates is strongest for those who studied trade or technical skills. Approximately, 54.2% of graduates from a trade or technical course are in a related occupation. The number of graduates from other training courses who are in occupations related to their course is significantly lower, but most still indicate that their training was highly or somewhat relevant to their occupation. Researchers believe this reflects the high generic content of many vocational education and training courses, along with the continued value of vocational education and training.

## Skills Continued

Leighton J P (2009), Can You Learn How to Learn for Life? Components from Expert Learning Research, **Journal of Applied Research on Learning**, 2 (special issue), Article 4, pp 1–14. [Link](#)

An article which presents information relating to the components which existing research has identified as necessary for lifelong learning. The author suggests that research into how experts, such as musicians, professional writers and leaders in medicine and law, become efficient learners can assist in planning for the challenges of lifelong learning. The author identifies three components for effective lifelong learning from existing research: (1) deliberate practice; (2) (seeking and securing) mentorship and (3) developing specific personal dispositions in relation to learning. Deliberate practice is an activity that is directed at improving practice, for instance spending time on activities that are relevant to the domain where learning is taking place. Mentorship involves opportunities for feedback from teachers, parents, coaches or tutors, and can involve activities such as modelling, coaching and scaffolding. The final component, personal dispositions, includes qualities such as interest, motivation and perseverance.

## Statistics

Scottish Government (2009), **Follow Up Survey of Leavers from Scottish Schools: Leavers from School Year 2007/08**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

An official statistics publication which summarises information on school leavers from the school year 2007/08 and acts as a basis for the Scottish Government's national indicator on positive and sustained destinations for leavers from publicly funded schools. The summary indicates that the proportion of school leavers in sustained positive destinations (higher or further education, employment, voluntary work or training) was 84% in March/April 2009, in comparison to 87% in positive destinations in March/April 2008. Additionally, the proportion in further or higher education rose from 47.9% in March/April 2008 to 51% in March/April 2009. There was a decrease in the proportion of those in employment from 34.4% in March/April 2008 to 28.5% in March/April 2009 and an increase in the proportion of school leavers who were unemployed (either seeking, or not seeking, employment or training). This rose from 12.5% in March/April 2008 to 15.4% in March/April 2009. The proportion of those who remained in positive destinations in both September 2008 and March/April 2009 was 78.4%. In comparison, 8.2% were not in a positive destination in either September 2008 or March/April 2009.

## Statistics Continued

Scottish Government (2009), **School Meals in Scotland 2009**, Edinburgh: Scottish Government. [Link](#)

An official statistics publication which presents the results of the latest annual survey of school meals, for the school year 2008/09. In 2007/08 a pilot project offered free school meals for all P1–P3 pupils in five local authority areas. As a result of this pilot, the figures for free school meal uptake in primary schools in 2007/08 were inflated. This has affected the comparison of free school meal figures in these areas for the past three years. Including trialling authorities, 45.1% of pupils present on the survey day took a school meal compared to 47.1% in 2008. Excluding trialling authorities, 44.2% took a school meal, compared to 45.1% in 2008. Of those pupils registered for free school meals, 82.2% took a free school meal on the survey day which was down marginally from 82.7% in 2008. All local authority primary schools participate in the Free Fruit in Schools scheme and provide free fresh fruit to P1 and P2 pupils. Fifty-one per cent of schools also indicated they had extended the scheme in some way such as providing fruit to pupils in other stages. A breakfast club was provided by 36% of all schools, which was down from 38% in 2008.

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