

Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA)

Information for parents/carers

Why do we need your child to take part in the survey?

In order to make the best decisions about how to improve our education service, the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and other partners including HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIe), the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) need accurate, up-to-date information about our pupils' attitudes and attainment. We are keen to help all our pupils do well in all aspects of school life and achieve their full potential. Accurate and up-to-date data collected through the SSA allows us to meet the following objectives:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of specific groups of pupils
- better understand some of the factors which influence pupil attainment and achievement
- share good practice
- target resources better.

What pupil data is collected and transferred?

Information is collected for statistical and research purposes only. **Pupils' names and addresses are not collected as part of the survey.** Your child will be given an SSA number which acts as a unique identifier throughout the survey. In order to better meet the objectives of the survey and to minimise the data we collect about your child in the SSA, the data will be linked with other statistical sources, none of which will allow identification of your child. All data is held securely and **no information on individual pupils or schools will be published.**

The SSA is not a test of individual attainment, but it is used to create summary information across Scotland as a whole.

Your data protection rights

The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of SSA data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data.

Scottish Government may make anonymous data available for specific pieces of research or statistical analysis in order to help us meet our objectives (set out above). In addition, we will provide our partners (listed above) with the information they need in order to fulfil their official responsibilities. In all cases, the data which is shared will be anonymous and will not allow the identification of an individual. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of Scottish Government, which will ensure that no individual data will be made public and that these data will not be used to take any actions in respect of an individual. Scottish Government will retain responsibility for the sharing and use of the data collected through the SSA and will take all decisions on sharing data based on the need to maintain the anonymity of those taking part in the survey.

Concerns

This information sheet can give only a brief description of how we use data. If you have any concerns about the Scottish Survey of Achievement data collections you can contact your school in the first instance or contact Educ.Outcomes.Stats@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

Want more information?

The report of the 2009 SSA (Reading and Writing) will be published during 2010. Meanwhile, you can find general information about the SSA and the reports of previous surveys at: www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/of/ssa/.