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**RESEARCH BRIEFING**

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## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDED RESEARCH 2006/07**

1. This Research Briefing provides information on projects in progress at the end of 2006/07 funded by the Department of Education. Details of projects completed during 2006/07 are also provided.
2. The purpose of this Briefing is to provide clear and succinct summaries of the research projects funded by the Department of Education to ensure that policy makers and administrators in the education services, teachers, academics and other interested parties are aware of research both in progress and recently completed.
3. The findings of research commissioned by the Department of Education are disseminated:-
  - a. Through the publication of research reports as part of the Department of Education Research Report Series.
  - b. Through publication of summaries of the findings of projects as part of the Department of Education Research Briefing Series.

4. Please note that the dates given for uncompleted projects refer to when the draft final report is due to be received by the Department of Education. Projects can be affected by delays. Actual publication of reports tends to occur about 6 months after the draft final report is received.
  
5. Department of Education research publications may be obtained from the Department of Education website at [http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/32-statisticsandresearch\\_pg.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/32-statisticsandresearch_pg.htm). Alternatively contact Statistics and Research Branch at the address on the back of this Briefing.

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## SECTION A: PROJECTS IN PROGRESS AT END OF 2006/07

**1. Project Title: SPECIAL NEEDS OF BILINGUAL (IRISH-ENGLISH) CHILDREN**

Research Body: POBAL

Start Date: December 2005                      Cost: £138,552

Final Report: Due August 2008

### **Brief Description of Project**

This research project will look at the totality of special educational and health needs for bilingual (Irish-English) children from birth to the age of 18. It will produce a comprehensive overview of the current provision and identify priorities in the way forward. The findings from the research project will help inform future policy for the increasing numbers of children who are being raised and/or educated bilingually throughout Northern Ireland.

**2. Project Title: LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH WITH YOUNG MEN IN SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: July 2006                              Cost: £66,773 (part-funding)

Final Report: Due 2011

### **Brief Description of Project**

This project aims to track the lives of young males in post primary Catholic, Protestant and Integrated schools throughout Northern Ireland. The research will investigate mental, emotional and physical wellbeing and the area of academic underachievement amongst young males.

**3. Project Title: PROGRAMME FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT (PISA) 2006**

Research Body: National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

Start Date: January 2005 Cost: £147,647 (NI Study)

Final Report: Due December 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

This study forms part of an international exercise to produce student outcome indicators in reading, maths and science on a regular basis. It follows a similar study in 2003. The age group is 15-16 year olds. The main focus of PISA 2006 is on science. The study is being carried out using standardised methodology to give internationally comparable results.

**4. Project Title: AN INVESTIGATION OF INFORMAL APPROACHES TO LEARNING IN FORMAL SETTINGS**

Research Body: University Of Ulster

Start Date: February 2006 Cost: £19,973

Final Report: Received May 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

The aims of this project are to seek clarification regarding the outcomes of youth work in schools, assess the delivery mechanism for informal education, and develop a curriculum around informal education for marginalized/disaffected young people in formal settings.

**5. Project Title: PROGRAMME FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT (PISA) 2009**

Research Body: National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

Start Date: March 2007 Cost: TBC

Final Report: Due December 2010

**Brief Description of Project**

This study forms part of an international exercise to produce student outcome indicators in reading, maths and science on a regular basis. It follows a similar study in 2006. The age group is 15-16 year olds. The main focus of PISA 2009 is on reading. The study is being carried out using standardised methodology to give internationally comparable results.

**6. Project Title: LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN NORTHERN IRELAND – IDENTIFICATION OF DIFFICULTIES**

Research Body: PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

Start Date: March 2007 Cost: £39,488

Final Report: Due October 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

This study will relate to primary and non-selective secondary schools. It will inform the Department about differences in the literacy and numeracy outcomes between the controlled and Catholic maintained sectors, boys and girls, and high and low performing schools; and make recommendations on how these differences can be narrowed.

**7. Project Title: GOOD PRACTICE IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY – CITIES COMPARISON**

Research Body: PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

Start Date: March 2007                      Cost: £36,050

Final Report: Due October 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

This study will inform the Department about what is working successfully in delivering better literacy and numeracy outcomes in comparator cities elsewhere in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

## **SECTION B: PROJECTS PUBLISHED/COMPLETED DURING 06/07**

**1. Project Title: EFFECTIVE PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION IN NORTHERN IRELAND (EPPNI)**

Research Body: Birkbeck College, University of London

Start Date: March 1998 Cost: £316,160 (part-funding)

Final Report: Published April 2006

### **Brief Description of Project**

This project, also funded by DHSSPS and inter-Departmentally, parallels a similar exercise in England. The Northern Ireland study identified the most effective types of pre-school provision (in terms of progress within the pre-school and subsequent progress within the first 4 years of primary school) and described the characteristics that make them effective, using methods developed from previous pre-school and day care research. The results of the research will help to guide future planning of pre-school provision.

**2. Project Title: THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: A MODEL OF BEST PRACTICE**

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: May 2003 Cost: £62,135

Final Report: Published July 2006

### **Brief Description of Project**

This project examined existing practices that increase the motivation, participation and achievement of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream nursery, primary and post-primary, in special and in alternative education provision throughout Northern Ireland.

**3. Project Title: THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS IN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Research Body: Stranmillis University College

Start Date: January 2003 Cost: £15,500

Final Report: Published September 2006

**Brief Description of Project**

The main aim was to identify subjects that currently, or may in the near future, present schools with staffing difficulties. The project investigated whether there is a shortfall in the recruitment of teachers in any subject areas in post-primary schools in Northern Ireland.

**4. Project Title: AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: June 2005 Cost: £10,450

Final Report: Published January 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

This research identified the current extent of early needs (i.e from the point of diagnosis) across Northern Ireland and provided a literature review of best early intervention practices to inform effective planning. It makes recommendations to ensure that parents of children with Autism receive support tailored to individual needs and circumstances from the point of diagnosis until pre-school.

**5. Project Title: ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROVISION (AEP)**

Research Body: Queen's University, Belfast

Start Date: April 2003 Cost: £73,042 (part funding)

Final Report: Published April 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

This project examined the AEP experience of young people in terms of effective engagement with learning, re-integration into mainstream provision, accreditation achievement and transition to the labour market with a view to assessing the effectiveness of this means of intervention and helping guide further planning of provision in each of the three types of AEP.

**6. Project Title: THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF BULLYING IN SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND**

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: August 2005 Cost: £76,231

Final Report: Published June 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

This research establishes the scale and nature of bullying behaviour by pupils in schools including analysis by pupils' characteristics such as gender. It draws comparison with the pupils' behaviour section of the previous research published by the Department of Education in October 2002.

**7. Project Title: E-CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS: A PILOT STUDY**

Research Body: NFER at Queen's University, Belfast

Start Date: February 2006 Cost: £8,000 (part-funding)

Final Report: Received March 2007

**Brief Description of Project**

The aim of this project was to pilot a range of methods for e-consultation with young people with a view to providing an evidence base for the development of an effective e-consultation strategy for the Department of Education and other educational policy makers.



## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESEARCH BRIEFINGS (2000 TO DATE)**

Three years later: a follow-up survey of teachers who qualified in 1995	RB 1/2000
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From pre-school to school: a review of the research literature	RB 3/2000
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## PURPOSE OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESEARCH BRIEFINGS

The Department of Education (DE) places a high value on the wide circulation of research results to ensure that research has the maximum impact on policy and practice in education. DE Research Briefings are designed to provide attractive, interesting and easy access to research findings for policy makers, researchers, teachers, lecturers, employers and the public to facilitate informed discussion of education issues. Research cannot make decisions for policy makers and others concerned with improving the quality of education. Nor can it by itself bring about change. But it can create a better basis for decisions, by providing information and explanation about educational practice and by clarifying and challenging ideas and assumptions.

**The full range of DE Research Briefings can be accessed at the DE Internet site -  
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