



Education & Training

RESEARCH BRIEFING

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDED RESEARCH 2005/06

1. This Research Briefing provides information on projects commenced in 2005/06 funded by the Department of Education. Details of recently completed projects 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**. Alternatively contact Statistics and Research Branch at the address on the back of this Briefing.

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¹ *In some cases this refers to the signing of the contract rather than the commencement of fieldwork*

SECTION A: PROJECTS COMMENCED IN 2005/06 AND STILL IN PROGRESS AT END OF 2005/06

1. Project Title: BULLYING

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: August 2005 Cost: £76,231

Final Report: Due November 2006

Brief Description of Project

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

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

Research Body: POBAL

Start Date: November 2005 Cost: £137,231

Final Report: Due Summer 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.

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

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: February 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.

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

Research Body: NFER at Queen's

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

Final Report: Due October 2006

Brief Description of Project

The aim of this project is 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 DE and other educational policy makers.

5. 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.

6. 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: Due March 2007

Brief Description of Project

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

SECTION B: PROJECTS RECENTLY COMPLETED

1. Project Title: THE NATURE OF YOUTH WORK IN NORTHERN IRELAND: PURPOSE, CONTRIBUTION AND CHALLENGES

Research Body: University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast

Start Date: October 2002 Cost: £10,000

Final Report: Published June 2005

Brief Description of Project

The central aim of this research was to investigate the role of youth work in combating social disadvantage and low achievement.

2. Project Title: PARENTAL ATTITUDES TO THE STATUTORY ASSESSMENT AND STATEMENTING PROCEDURES ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Research Body: University of Ulster at Coleraine

Start Date: September 2001 Cost: £27,094

Final Report: Published September 2005

Brief Description of Project

The aim of this project was to conduct a survey of the parents of children with statements of special educational needs, to ascertain whether the process met their children's needs; parental expectations of the process; and parental attitudes towards inclusion in mainstream schooling.

3. Project Title: A STUDY INTO CURRENT PRACTICE AND POTENTIAL MODELS FOR THE EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AT KEY STAGE 3 IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND CURRICULUM

Research Body: Graduate School of Education, Queen's University Belfast

Start Date: February 2002 Cost: £20,618

Final Report: Published November 2005

Brief Description of Project

The project was an in-depth study of current best practice in the delivery of Personal Education to KS3 pupils in five post-primary schools with a view to suggested models for the development of, support of, and training for, effective classroom practice.

4. Project Title: LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: COVERAGE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PROVISION IN NORTHERN IRELAND (0-36 MONTHS)

Research Body: Stranmillis University College

Start Date: October 2002 Cost: £9,867 (part-funding)

Final Report: Published December 2005

Brief Description of Project

Language programmes for the 0-3 age group are diverse, ranging from formal intervention by a Speech and Language therapist to parenting programmes with language development activities embedded within them. This project documents existing provision, and identifies effectiveness criteria.

5. Project Title: ATTITUDES OF THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED TOWARDS EDUCATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Research Body: Graduate School of Education, Queen's University Belfast

Start Date: November 2000 Cost: £1,000

Final Report: Published March 2006

Brief Description of Project

This project reviewed existing evidence on the attitudes of socially disadvantaged parents and children towards education. The report includes material on young mothers, persistent non-attenders and excluded pupils.

6. 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.

7. Project Title: EVALUATING THE POTENTIAL FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (VLEs)

Research Body: Graduate School of Education,
Queen's University Belfast, and C2K

Start Date: September 2002 Cost: £59,270

Final Report: Received September 2004

Brief Description of Project

The aim of the project was to evaluate the readiness of schools to undertake the transition to integrating e-learning into their everyday activities. The project developed a Virtual Learning Environment with the focus on the new curriculum area of Citizenship Education. A key finding from the research was that a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) can considerably enhance citizenship education, making it amenable to Key Stage 3 pupils.

8. 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: Received February 2005

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.

9. 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.

10. Project Title: AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Research Body: University of Ulster

Start Date: June 2005 Cost: £10,450

Final Report: Received March 2006

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.

11. Project Title: ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROVISION (AEP)

Research Body: Queen's University Belfast

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

Final Report: Received March 2006

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.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESEARCH BRIEFINGS (2000 TO DATE)

Three years later: a follow-up survey of teachers who qualified in 1995	RB 1/2000
Immersion education: a literature review	RB 2/2000
From pre-school to school: a review of the research literature	RB 3/2000
The effects of the selective system of secondary education in Northern Ireland	RB 4/2000
Department of Education funded research 2000/01	RB 1/2001
Assessment of the effectiveness of the Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme (YSCRSS) during 1998/1999 and 1999/2000, in relation to the needs of youth and community groups	RB 2/2001
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Bullying in schools: a Northern Ireland study	RB 8/2002
Community use of schools: an international literature review	RB 1/2003
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Out of School Hours Learning Provision and School Improvement in Northern Ireland	RB 2/2004
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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 -
www.deni.gov.uk/index/32-statisticsandresearch_pg.htm**

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If you have difficulty getting access to DE Research on the DE website please contact us at:

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