

What's in progress at NFER?

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Outcomes of food growing activities in schools

The Learning Outside the Classroom (LOT)C Manifesto emphasised the benefits of learning in areas including school grounds and gardens, for raising pupils' academic achievement, improving attitudes to learning, and increasing motivation. A number of programmes and activities involving growing food in schools have supported this Manifesto.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) established a Fruit and Vegetable Taskforce in 2010, which endorsed efforts to ensure that gardening is embedded within schools and used as a tool to deliver the curriculum and as a strategy for increasing the domestic consumption of fruit and vegetables. To support the taskforce recommendations, Defra have commissioned a literature review to explore the impact of food growing in schools on such areas as:

- Health outcomes (including healthy eating and longer-term physiological and psychological benefits for pupils)



- Pupils' educational attainment and broader learning outcomes
- Pupils' practical skills and knowledge about food (including horticultural techniques and progression to relevant careers/sectors)
- Environmental behaviours and participation (including out-of school participation in gardening, better understanding of food sustainability and of environmental responsibility)
- Community engagement (including enterprise activity, awareness cultural food growing diversity, and better community cohesion)
- Other broader issues, such as family eating habits.

The review will also consider the cost-benefits associated with food in schools programmes as well as factors that challenge and enable success.

The first NFER podcast out soon!

NFER are preparing to publish our review of police work with schools. Look out for a podcast on the key findings, a free to join webinar where the report will be presented to interested parties, and an online report, available in mid October.

Citizens in transition: civic engagement among young people 2001-2015

Building on a previous NFER study, the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, will be following the cohort of young people, who have been tracked from age 11 to 18/19, for a further two years to the age of 20/21. This study will examine how these young people are educated and prepared for their roles and responsibilities as adult citizens, and how their views of those roles and responsibilities may be changing over time.

Preparation for PISA Main Survey



Schools across the UK will soon be receiving invitations to participate in PISA 2012. Schools in Scotland will be invited to participate from September 2011 and schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland from January 2012.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is the world's biggest international education survey, involving schools and students in over 60 countries. It is developed jointly by member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). PISA assesses knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds in maths, reading and science. PISA 2012 will

particularly focus on maths skills and attitudes towards maths.

To ensure good quality data is collected, strict international quality standards are applied at all stages of the PISA survey. For instance, we are unable to invite schools other than those sampled to take part and we require high participation rates from schools so that the data we collect can be used to make comparisons with other countries.

To find out more about the survey and also see the DfE Research Bite, visit our PISA webpages at www.nfer.ac.uk.

The evaluation of 'Starting Out' pilot

'Starting Out' was a two-year pilot scheme, funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), concerned with mentoring and supporting early career science and mathematics teachers. The pilot has been delivered by the Learning and Skills Network (LSN) in three regions – London, East of England and the West Midlands. The evaluation is exploring the quality and effectiveness of the models of mentoring support that was piloted, and the impact they have had on mentees' personal, professional and career development.



NFER hosts two key international information projects: **Eurydice at NFER** and **INCA**.

Eurydice at NFER is the unit for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in the European Commission's Eurydice information network on education. It provides reliable, comparative information on education systems and policies in Europe.

The Eurydice at NFER website is available at:

www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice.

The Eurydice network website is available at:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/>.

INCA provides descriptions of the curriculum, assessment and initial teacher training frameworks in several countries in Europe and Asia, plus the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

The **INCA** website covers pre-school, primary and secondary education and is available at: www.inca.org.uk.

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