
Mastering Number at Reception and KS1 (Reception focus) trial 2025-26: Parent and carer privacy notice for QED

1 Why are we collecting this data?

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to carry out an evaluation of Mastering Number at Reception and KS1 (Reception focus), delivered by the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM). The evaluation will use a randomised controlled trial (RCT) design.

The Mastering Number programme, developed by the NCETM and funded by the Department for Education (DfE), is an approach to teaching mathematics focusing on key knowledge and understanding needed in Reception and Key Stage 1. The programme aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children from Reception through to Year 1 and Year 2. The programme provides training to participating teachers and access to lesson resources to support delivery to pupils.

The quasi experimental design (QED) strand of this research will investigate the impact of Mastering Number for Reception children at a school where the programme has already been embedded for a year. This analysis will include all primary schools in England, subject to their Mastering Number participation between 2022/23 and 2025/26.

This document outlines how pupils' personal data will be collected and processed for the purposes of this QED. A separate privacy notice outlining how pupils' personal data will be collected and processed for the purposes of the randomised controlled trial (RCT) strand of this research can be found on the [project webpage](#).

NFER makes decisions about how personal data is used for the QED strand of the research and is the data controller. NCETM supports the evaluation but does not process any personal data. For the delivery of the NCETM programme, the DfE is the data controller and NCETM are a processor following their instruction on how personal data is used in delivery. Further information about their processing is available here: <https://www.tribalgroup.com/privacy-policy>

2 What is the legal basis for processing activities?

The legal basis for processing personal data is covered by GDPR Article 6 (1) (f):

Legitimate interests: the processing is necessary for your (or a third party's) legitimate interests unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests.

We have carried out a legitimate interest assessment, which demonstrates that the evaluation fulfils one of NFER's core business purpose (undertaking research, evaluation and information activities). It cannot be done without processing personal data, but processing does not override the data subject's interests. The research has wider societal benefits as it will contribute to improving the lives of learners by providing evidence about the impact of teaching techniques used in the classroom.

The legal basis for processing special personal data is:

GDPR Article 9 (2) (j) - processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) based on Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject.

The research should not cause damage or distress to the data subjects. Its outcomes will help to build an evidence base for the use of the Mastering Number programme in Reception and will not result in the creation of measures or decisions being made about any individual.

3 How will personal data be obtained?

NFER will obtain pupil data from the National Pupil Database (NPD), via the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Secure Research Service using the Department for Education's (DfE's) secure exchange portal and the Office of National Statistics' secure access procedures.

4 What personal data is being collected by this project?

We will collect the following 'optional' personal data from the NPD school census about each child enrolled in Reception in mainstream English schools between 2022/23 and 2025/26:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile outcomes (EYFSP),
- sex,
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) status, *
- eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM),
- pupil's first language, *
- absence rate,
- URN.

*special category personal data

Additionally, we will collect all 'default' items from the school census for the same pupils. These items relate to: enrollment status, school phase, planned learning hours, year group and whether a school lunch is taken.

5 Who will personal data be shared with?

No data sharing takes place during the QED strand of the research. Three months after the publication of the evaluation report, pseudonymised¹ matched outcome data will be added to the EEF archive, which is managed by the Fischer Family Trust on behalf of EEF and hosted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). This will enable the EEF and other research teams to use the pseudonymised data as part of subsequent research through the ONS Approved Researcher Scheme. At this point, EEF will become the data controller and is responsible for taking decisions about the means and purposes of processing. NFER will no longer be responsible for the data and will no longer be the data controller. FFT Education (<https://fft.org.uk/about-fft/>) and the designated EEF archive evaluator will act as data processors for the archive. Further matching to NPD and other administrative data may take place during subsequent research.

Further information about the EEF archive is available here:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/evaluation/evaluation-guidance-and-resources/evaluation-data-archive>

6 Is personal data being transferred outside of the UK?

All data will be analysed using the ONS SRS. The SRS system does not allow users to remove or copy data from its servers. No personal data will be transferred outside the UK.

7 How long will personal data be retained?

All data will be available to NFER only within the SRS for the duration of the license (expected to be valid till end of December 2027). ONS will delete all data in this SRS area one year after data access ends (deletion expected to be end of December 2028). NFER will share all the pseudonymised data with EEF's data archive processor within three months of the publication of the report. Once ONS delete the data from the original SRS area, EEF will retain sole data controller responsibility for the archived data.

¹ Pseudonymisation is a technique that replaces or removes information (like names or other meaningful identifiers) in a dataset that identifies an individual.

8 What are my rights with respect to personal data?

NFER handles personal data in accordance with the rights given to individuals under data protection legislation. Under certain circumstances data subjects have the right:

- to request access to information that is held about them (a data subject access request).
- to have personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete.
- to request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing.
- to restrict processing of personal data (for example, permitting its storage but no further processing).
- to object to processing
- to data portability
- not to be subject to decisions based purely on automated processing where it produces a legal or similarly significant effect.

We may need to request specific information from you to help us confirm your identity and ensure your right to access the information (or to exercise any of your other rights). This helps us ensure that personal information is not disclosed to any person who has no right to receive it.

9 Who can I contact about this project?

Any queries about the day-to-day management of the data processing outlined in this privacy notice, please contact the project team at masteringnumber@nfer.ac.uk.

If you have concerns about the way NFER processes personal data or wish to exercise a data subject right (see section 8), please contact the Compliance Officer: compliance@nfer.ac.uk.

If you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office, the body responsible for enforcing data protection legislation in the UK, at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.

10 Updates

We keep this privacy notice under review to make sure it is up to date and accurate. Any changes will be noted. We recommend that you revisit this information from time to time. The date when this privacy notice was last updated is shown in the footer at the bottom of this document.