

Privacy Notice for pupils: The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2027

Who we are

The TIMSS 2027 study is organised by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and is being carried out by National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) who have been contracted by the Department for Education (DfE) to deliver the project in England. For the purpose of data protection legislation, DfE and IEA are the joint data controllers for the personal data processed in England as part of TIMSS 2027 and NFER are our data processors.

This means that we (DfE) are responsible for making sure that the way your data is collected and used meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

How we use your information

NFER receive your personal data and are processing it on behalf of DfE and IEA so that England can participate in the TIMSS 2027 study. Studies such as TIMSS show us how education in England compares to that in other countries around the world; what we are good at, and where we can do better. By asking pupils about their home, school and what they think about the subjects they study and their lessons, we can understand different things about the ways that people learn and find ways to make schools better for everyone.

More information about the TIMSS study is available from www.nfer.ac.uk/timss27England

The nature of the personal data we are using

We use the names and date of birth of pupils in your school to randomly select pupils to take part in TIMSS.

We collect information on what you have learnt about maths and science from your answers to the TIMSS assessment questions. We also ask questions about your home and school. The answers to these questions help us to understand how the things you tell us about affect the ways that people learn. We do not publish the answers to any question, and you and your school cannot be identified from any report or publication. We put the information we collect from you, including your test results and your answers to questions about home and school with other information

which we already have. This includes information in the national pupil database provided to us by your school such as your marks in national curriculum tests.

Some of the information we ask for, or which we already have and will use in TIMSS is called special category personal data. This includes whether you were born in England. To use special category data we have to tell you that we are using it, and to take extra care to protect the information.

Why our use of your personal data is lawful

For our use of your personal data to be lawful, we need to meet conditions in data protection legislation for both personal data and special category personal data . For this project, the relevant conditions that we are meeting are :

- **Article 6(1) (e)** of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018: To collect and process the information is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest while exercising a function of a Minister of the Crown or a government department.
- **Article 9(2)(j)** of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 - processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes based on 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

This means that the law allows us to collect and use your data because the government have decided that England should take part in the TIMSS study.

Who we make your personal data available to

We sometimes need to make personal data available to other organisations. These might include contracted partners, such as NFER and others who we have employed to process your personal data on our behalf, and/or other organisations with whom we need to share your personal data for specific purposes.

Where we need to share your personal data with others, we ensure that this data sharing complies with DPA 2018. For this project:

- We are employing NFER and their subcontractors to process your personal data on our behalf. After you have taken the TIMSS study, NFER will pseudonymise your personal data (i.e. they will remove your name and anything else which could be used to identify you or your school and replace it with a code) and they will send it to organisations in other countries who are part of the international consortium of organisations that run TIMSS (IEA and their partners). They will put the pseudonymised data with that from the other (approximately 70 countries) taking part in TIMSS.
- We may share your data including the information we collect in TIMSS, and the information from the national pupil database with other people and organisations who want to use it for research. The data will be shared in pseudonymised format. This data sharing is lawful because the law allows us to collect, and to share personal information for the purposes of research and statistical analysis that is in the public interest pursuant to Regulation 3(6) of

the Education (Individual Pupil Information) (Prescribed Persons) (England) Regulations 2009.

Transfer to Countries Outside the UK

NFER (on our behalf) will send the data from your responses to the TIMSS 2027 study to IEA and their contractors. The data will be pseudonymised by removing names and anything else which could be used to identify you or your school and replace this with a code prior to release.

TIMSS is directed by the International Study Centre (ISC) based at Boston College, USA, and most of the data analyses occur there. The transfer of the data to the USA, as a third country, relies on Standard Contractual Clauses and is safeguarded by appropriate and suitable technical and organisational measures.

How long we keep your personal data

We only keep your personal data for as long as we need it for the purpose(s) of this piece of work, after which point it will be securely destroyed. Data Protection legislation, and in compliance with the relevant data processing conditions, personal data can be kept for longer periods of time when processed purely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research, and statistical purposes.

NFER, our data processor, retains international survey data for 12 months after the release of the International and National reports. This will be December 2028.

Your data protection rights

Under certain circumstances, you have the right:

- to ask us for access to information about you that we hold
- to have your 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 our processing of your personal data (i.e. permitting its storage but no further processing)
- to object to processing
- not to be subject to decisions based purely on automated processing where it produces a legal or similarly significant effect on you

Contact information

If you need to contact us regarding any of the above, please do so via the DfE site at: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe>. For the Data Protection Officer (DPO), please mark it 'for the attention of the 'DPO'.

Further information about your data protection rights appears on the Information Commissioner's website at:

[A guide to the data protection principles | ICO](#)

Last updated

We may need to update this privacy notice periodically, so we recommend that you revisit this information from time to time at www.nfer.ac.uk/timss27England

This version was last updated on 11 November 2025.