

## **Privacy Notice for parents: 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 and your child's data is collected and used meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

### **How we use your child's information**

NFER receive your and your child's 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 about 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](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/timss27England)

### **The nature of the personal data we are using**

We collect the names and dates of birth of pupils in your child's class to administer the study.

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 We do not publish the answers to any question, and your child and their school cannot be identified from any report or publication.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

### **How we will use your information (parents of Year 5 pupils)**

We also invite parents of children in Year 5 to complete a short questionnaire about your child's early learning experiences, what you do together at home and your views about things related to your child's school. It also asks about your country of birth, highest qualification and job type.

Your questionnaire responses will be linked to your child's data. No names of parents or children are ever recorded in the final data set and you can choose whether or not you wish to respond to any question.

There is no questionnaire for parents of pupils in Year 9.

### **Why our use of your and your child's personal data is lawful**

For our use of your and your child's 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 and your child's data because the government have decided that England should take part in the TIMSS study.

### **Who we make your and your child's 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 and your child's 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 and your child's personal data with others, we ensure that this data sharing complies with DPA 2018. For this project:

- We are employing NFER to process personal data on our behalf. After your child has participated in the TIMSS study, NFER will pseudonymise their personal data (i.e. they will remove their name and anything else which could be used to identify them or their 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 child's 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 child's 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 them or their 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 analysis occurs 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 and your child's personal data**

We only keep your and your child's 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. Under 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 and your child that we hold
- to have your and your child's 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 or your child's 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 or your child.

## 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](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/timss27England)

This version was last updated on 11 November 2025.