

Evidence for Education

Current Research Portfolio

November 2009

About this publication

This publication describes the 34 research projects that CfBT Education Trust is undertaking (as of November 2009). The projects are grouped into four categories: Evidence for Education; Evidence for Schools; Evidence for Youth; and Evidence for Government. These four headings match the headings used in the new CfBT publication *Evidence for Education: The CfBT Research Programme 2001–2009* which lists all of CfBT's published research from the past eight years.

Evidence for Education

CfBT is not just committed to investment in research but also to the use of evidence in education. CfBT recognises the need to promote research-based evidence and to encourage practitioners to think and act purposefully on what it says. CfBT is also a key sponsor of the **Strategic Forum for Research in Education** (SFRE) and the **Teaching and Learning Research Panel** (TLRP) Conference 2010.

eep – the educational evidence portal – is an online resource dedicated to and for educational professionals, bringing together research and evidence from multiple sources. The portal is an innovative and exciting development for education practitioners, policymakers and all interested in education – providing practical evidence and research materials to underpin practice and policymaking.

Title: **Developing CfBT schools as research-engaged institutions**
Author/lead: Mary Rose
Research partner: International Learning and Research Centre (ILRC)
Overview: This project is based on the idea that schools can be particularly effective if they focus on doing 'what works' in key areas of action. CfBT aims to make its own schools 'research-engaged', acting as key development centres for the CfBT research programme.

Title: **Developing CfBT Abu Dhabi kindergartens as research-engaged institutions**
Author/lead: Karen Whitby
Research partner: n/a
Overview: This project is based on the idea that schools – wherever they are located – can be effective if they focus on doing 'what works' in key areas. This is part of CfBT's drive to make its own schools 'research-engaged'.

Evidence for Schools: compulsory education

CfBT has a range of research aiming to improve primary and secondary education in the UK. This has included projects investigating how to design and organise schools; projects aimed at specific subject or pupil groups; action research methodologies and promotion of evidence; and research into teachers' initial training and continuing professional development.

- Title:** **An exploration of the processes and outcomes of coaching**
Author/lead: David Leat and Fred Patterson
Research partner: Newcastle University and The National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services
Overview: This project provides a strong empirical basis to guide practice and policy in coaching. It investigates what happens in teacher coaching sessions; how this influences classroom teaching; what effect changes in classroom teaching have upon pupil learning outcomes; and how coaching is being utilised within the context of whole school improvement and professional development.
- Title:** **School governing: school type, performance and socio-economic disadvantage**
Author/lead: Dr Steve Brammer and Professor Chris James
Research partner: University of Bath
Overview: The aim of this project is to analyse the relationship between school governing and school performance and the way this relationship is contingent upon the school type and socio-economic setting. The research will include an analysis of aspects of the governing of maintained schools in England (principally governing body effectiveness and roles, governor recruitment, vacancies, retention, training, and workload) in relation to school performance, type and socio-economic context.
- Title:** **Data dictatorship and data democracy: understanding professional attitudes to the use of performance data in schools**
Author/lead: Anthony Kelly and Christopher Downey
Research partner: University of Southampton
Overview: This report argues that previous research on understanding pupil and school performance data draws on the views of school *leaders* and not those of *teachers*, and misses the impact on classroom practice. It is therefore an under-researched area with no significant datasets, yet there are few more important topics in the areas of school effectiveness and school improvement than how teachers use data to improve pupil learning, and how schools build a supportive culture around this imperative. This project uses a nationwide online survey to produce a comprehensive picture of awareness, perceptions, uses, attitudes to, and 'data culture' around Value Added (VA) performance measures in English maintained secondary schools.

Title: **An overview of worldwide facilities for the education of the gifted and talented**

Author/lead: Professor Joan Freeman

Research partner: Tower Education Group

Overview: This research identifies the best practice in gifted and talented education. This means an integration of the international literature of *what is*, with an inter-culturally sensitive analysis of research-based *what ought to be*. The data will be subjected to a quality audit based on the indigenous cultural context in which each set of practices is situated, normed against recommendations for best practice arising from contemporary research into gifted education and related areas.

Title: **Community cohesion: the perceptions and aspirations of school leaders**

Author/lead: Tony Breslin

Research partner: Citizenship Foundation

Overview: This research project will help to build an understanding of how the 'duty to promote community cohesion' is 'playing out' in classrooms, staffrooms and the wider school community. The publication and dissemination of the knowledge produced through this research will add to the knowledge base that is currently in the earliest stages of development amongst school leaders and those that they work with: classroom teachers, faculty, year group and key stage managers, governors, local authority advisers, inspectors and the wider community.

Title: **Developing an awareness of the learning brain in the classroom, improving students' motivation to learn**

Author/lead: Susan Greenfield

Research partner: Oxford University

Overview: The overall aim of the proposed research is to assess whether equipping pupils and teachers, collectively, with an awareness of the functioning of the learning brain is a powerful and cost-effective means of improving teachers' practice, pupils' motivation to learn, and ultimately, academic performance. A central theme of these interactions is promoting an awareness of the plasticity and potential of the learning brain to illustrate the flexible nature of intelligence, and so improve learner motivation.

Title: **Integrating ICT within play-based curricula in the early years**

Author/lead: Justine Howard

Research partner: Swansea University

Overview: Research into play and ICT largely focuses on the effectiveness of particular software or on innovative (often expensive) technological toys or equipment. Research into children's play however, demonstrates that feelings of playfulness are determined by things such as why, where and with whom an activity takes place. Previous research has shown that teachers can adopt relatively simple strategies to increase children's feelings of playfulness and these do not depend on the introduction of expensive materials. Computer use remains the predominant form of ICT provision in early years classrooms and research that actively seeks to hear children's voices about their experiences is limited. This project will investigate the integration of ICT within a play-based curriculum.

Title: **Extended services: ensuring sustainability using the social enterprise model**
Author/lead: Lesley Miller
Research partner: Social Enterprise London
Overview: Government figures show that over 8,000 schools are now providing access to extended services in partnership with voluntary, private and independent providers. By 2010, all schools will provide the full core offer. However, no funding has been identified beyond 2011 and schools are expected to identify their own ways to sustain and grow the delivery of their own services. The challenge is therefore to identify ways to ensure extended services can be sustained after the funded period. This project will identify ways by which extended services can be sustained and grown past 2011 using the social enterprise model.

Title: **A systematic review of research on early childhood programmes**
Author/lead: Bette Chambers and Robert Slavin
Research partner: University of York
Overview: This project is a systematic review to examine the evidence for the effectiveness of various pre-school/nursery programmes for young children who are at risk of school failure due to poverty. The aim of the review is both to assist educators and policymakers in deciding the types of programmes to implement and to inform researchers about the current evidence on nursery programmes and guide further research.

Title: **The next level: good schools becoming outstanding**
Author/lead: Peter Dougill
Research partner: Research, Review and Development Ltd
Overview: This project will identify and share 'what has worked' when good schools become outstanding. It will consider what practice is transferable whilst at the same time moving towards an understanding of the effect an outstanding school might have on its local context and/or on a local authority. Within the context of the Ofsted framework the project will focus on improvements in five key areas: consistency of teaching, distributed leadership, the engagement of pupils and parents, transition, and action to raise the attainment of underachieving groups.

Title: **Facilities-based management**
Author/lead: Ilfryn Price
Research partner: Sheffield Hallam University
Overview: This project aims to inform the creation of a national schools facilities management network and an ongoing programme to research and benchmark the impact of school condition and design on pupils, teachers and educational outcomes.

Title: **How effective are bullying prevention programmes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities?**
Author/lead: Emma McManus
Research partner: Young Voice
Overview: Due to the increased risk children with special needs have of being involved in bullying, it is imperative that ways are found by which this can be prevented. Methods that have been used in mainstream schools may not be suitable for special needs populations unless adaptations are made. This project will evaluate the outcomes of bullying prevention work for children with different special needs and/or disabilities.

Evidence for Youth: advising young people

CfBT has a range of research aiming to inform practitioners and policymakers concerned with providing advice to young people. This includes providing information, advice and guidance on careers; providing education and advice for young people in custody and other secure settings; advice for families and young mothers; and advice for young people at risk.

Title: **An investigation into the skills needed by Connexions Personal Advisers to develop internet-based guidance**
Author/lead: Jenny Bimrose
Research partner: Institute for Employment Research, Warwick University
Overview: There is an unstoppable movement towards widespread access to advanced internet-based services through phones and/or mobile devices, with young people immersed in practices relating to popular culture, media and new technologies from birth. In response to this profound technological and social change, this project will investigate the communication skills and other technical competences needed by Connexions PAs to deliver guidance via internet-based methods.

Title: **Learning to learn in post-16 education: literature review**
Author/lead: Rebecca Goodbourn
Research partner: Campaign for Learning
Overview: This literature review will examine the issues for metacognition in post-16 research and practice. It will concentrate on developments in England but will link these with work in Europe and elsewhere in the world. The aims of the project are: to examine the issues for metacognition in the post-16 education sector within a national and international context; and examine the issues in the context of current policy developments in England.

Title: **International review programme: adult basic skills development**
Author/lead: Shona MacLeod
Research partner: NFER
Overview: The overall purpose of this research is to identify and review best practice internationally in order to inform continuous improvements in the teaching and learning of adult basic skills. The project will produce a programme of six literature reviews, focusing on interrelated themes within adult basic skills (post-16), which identify and review best practice internationally. The reviews will cover, in chronological order of production, six key themes: work based learning (including apprenticeships); impacts of basic skills development on individuals and employers; basic financial skills competence; employability skills (including soft skills); family learning; and flexible learning (including internet-based distance learning).

Title: **An impact evaluation of student integration in the United World College-International Baccalaureate project in Bosnia and Herzegovina**
Author/lead: Mary Hayden and Jeff Thompson
Research partner: University of Bath
Overview: This project is an impact evaluation of the United World College initiative in the Mostar Gymnasium, which brings together students from different ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focused on differing segments of the student body. The project's aim is to investigate the success or otherwise of the initiative in encouraging greater integration of 16–19 year old students at Mostar Gymnasium.

Title: **InSITE 2: Integrating systematic investigation into teaching English**
Author/lead: Matt Davis and Richard Kiely
Research partner: City of Bristol College and University of Bristol
Overview: This project integrates systematic investigation into the teaching of English and examines the operation and impact of an innovative CPD programme for experienced teachers of ESOL, literacy and related subjects in the FE sector. The focus of the CPD project is the development of participating teachers' research skills so that they can collaborate in the micro-analysis of critical classroom episodes in their own classrooms, and more widely a contribution to the understanding of teaching as 'craft'.

Title: **The impact of an Urban Scholars Programme for raising achievement and aspirations of inner-city students with special reference to their orientation to Higher Education**
Author/lead: Valsa Koshy and Catrin Pinheiro-Torres
Research partner: Brunel University
Overview: The Urban Scholars Programme aims to support young people aged 12–16 from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds to enhance their academic achievement and educational aspirations, with particular focus on the students' orientation towards Higher Education. This research project aims to monitor the effectiveness of the intervention programme and to learn lessons about the design and transportability of intervention studies in the field.

Evidence for Government: local, national, international education policy

CfBT has a range of research reviewing, and in some cases recommending changes to local and national education policy.

- Title:** **An international perspective on integrated children's services**
Author/lead: Sharon O'Donnell and Pippa Lord
Research partner: NFER
Overview: This project provides a factual scoping of the international policy landscape in relation to children's services, and a complementary review of international research literature in the field. It aims to clearly identify those countries which are developing policy documents and services for children, and which reflect similar integrated organisational structures, aims, values and targets to those expressed in Every Child Matters and the Children's Plan. At the same time as summarising those countries' individual definitions and understandings of the provision of integrated children's services, the scoping will also identify the key alternative structures to integrated children's services.
- Title:** **How are local authorities delivering integrated youth support services to 14–19 year olds?**
Author/lead: Jon Adamson
Research partner: National Youth Agency
Overview: The key research question for this study is: 'How are local authorities delivering integrated youth support services?' This research project will provide a benchmark for local authorities in England with regards to the methods adopted to deliver IYSS. It will identify how integration has been defined locally and the progress made to date. This will include identifying any commonality in models of delivering IYSS, the barriers faced and/or benefits already achieved.
- Title:** **Costs and benefits: the organisation, control and funding of education in England since 1976**
Author/lead: Tina Annetts
Research partner: The Learning and Skills Network
Overview: This research will produce a major piece of work that will provide a chronology of change for the organisation, funding and control of education in England since 1976 and a distinctive time-line for each major sector of education, with cross-referencing to changes of political control. The research will also identify the drivers of change in organisation, control and funding of education over the last three decades.
- Title:** **Sustainability of early childhood projects in South Africa**
Author/lead: Helen Penn
Research partner: University of East London, International Centre for the Study of the Mixed Market Economy (ICMEC)
Overview: This project examines the notion of sustainability in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in poor communities in South Africa. The Education for All (EFA) initiative has as its first goal to expand and improve early childhood education for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. However almost all provision is in the private and voluntary sector, and relies heavily on self-help, in-kind support and fee-paying, and is either unsustainable over time, or excludes the most vulnerable children.

Title: **Health education in the UAE: a rapid review of international literature on childhood obesity and targeted interventions**

Author/lead: Rachel Dixey

Research partner: Leeds Metropolitan University

Overview: It is widely recognised that childhood obesity has become a major concern and key public health issue throughout developed and developing countries. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) ranks as one of the top ten countries with overweight people, and has the second highest rate of diabetes in the world. Twelve per cent of children in the UAE are currently believed to be overweight, with Type-2 Diabetes now being seen routinely in children, whereas a few years ago it did not have a significant prominence. This research aims to provide a detailed understanding of what is known about childhood obesity internationally and school-based interventions that have been put in place to combat childhood obesity.

Title: **Public Private Partnerships**

Author/lead: Michael Latham and Harry Patrinos

Research partner: World Bank

Overview: Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in education are a multi-dimensional phenomenon that can take many forms, ranging from governments subsidising private schools to big businesses supporting education; from private publishers of textbooks to tax-alleviated philanthropy; from school fees and student loans to academies and charter schools to educational vouchers; and from foreign foundations to local home-grown initiatives such as the Grameen Bank. But evidence of their actual impact for primary and secondary education within the context of developing and middle-income countries is scarce. Further research into PPPs for basic education is vital since there are multiple and varied cases but little in the way of shared experiences, robust reviews and in-depth analyses. The overarching aim of this programme will be the production of case studies that illustrate the pros and cons of PPPs in education, a synthesis of lessons learnt and a matrix with a set of variables, scenarios and models.

Title: **Are education sector-wide approaches still relevant in the post-Accra era of development effectiveness?**

Author/lead: Susy Ndarahutse

Research partner: n/a

Overview: The aim of this project is to map out the evolution of good practice and lessons learnt in sector-wide approaches (SWAs) since the 1990s, to examine SWAs in light of the *Accra Agenda for Action* and to set out related recommendations on improvements to be made to the design and implementation/management of SWAs in order to increase development effectiveness.

Title: **Mainstreaming multilingual education in developing country education systems**

Author/lead: Helen Pinnock

Research partner: Save the Children

Overview: This project will contribute to the research base on language and education, through identifying and testing key supports that enable mother-tongue based multilingual education to be brought into school systems in effective and sustainable ways. It will add to the international knowledge base on minority education and second language teaching, and will be useful to agencies working to improve second language learning competences for all, as well as to those focused on minority rights in education.

Title: **Restorative practice**
Author/lead: Paul Howard
Research partner: East Sussex School Improvement Service
Overview: This perspective report will establish links between the restorative practice in schools and broader professional contexts. The report will relate aspects from the field of restorative practice to other contemporary policy issues, including exclusion, social capital, the development of relational schools and organisations, and the evolution of integrated services.

Title: **Is initial teacher training failing to meet the needs of all our young people?**
Author/lead: James Wetz
Research partner: n/a
Overview: This perspective report starts with the proposition that increasing numbers of young people are acting out 'attachment difficulties' which neither their families nor our schools know how to address and which our teachers are inadequately trained and resourced to attend to. The report will explore whether teachers are disadvantaged by inadequate and reductionist routes to Qualified Teacher Status which provide them with neither the appropriate skills and understandings nor the theoretical framework and practical experience to secure successful educational and personal outcomes for disaffected and disengaged young people.

Title: **School inspection benchmarking study – what happens next?**
Author/lead: Geoffrey Penzer
Research partner: Penzer Allen Ltd
Overview: This report will consider the post-inspection arrangements in 17 countries. Most are in Europe as inspection is less ubiquitous in other parts of the world (such as North America) where educational evaluation is more closely tied to the results of student tests. The report will draw out some general themes that emerge from countries with an independent inspectorate and illustrate them with specific examples.

Title: **School inspection – recent experience in high-performing education systems**
Author/lead: Karen Whitby
Research partner: NFER
Overview: With school decentralisation becoming increasingly widespread internationally, especially as regards staff and resource management or even educational practice in general, school inspection systems are assuming key importance in ensuring quality provision for all. This project aims to produce an authoritative survey of existing literature relating to the impact on school improvement of school inspection practice in a range of countries with developed education systems.

Title: **International comparative study in mathematics teacher training**
Author/lead: David Burghes
Research partner: University of Plymouth
Overview: This project investigates best practice in the training of teachers of mathematics in some of the most successful countries in the world, for both primary and secondary sectors. It aims to achieve this by undertaking a longitudinal comparative international study involving countries that have a good track record in mathematics teaching and learning and that represent diverse practice across the world.



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