

Privacy Notice for headteachers and teachers: The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2026

Who we are

The PIRLS 2026 study is organised by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and is being carried out by Pearson UK 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 PIRLS 2026 and Pearson UK, and their subcontractors Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment (OUCEA) and Page Bros Group, 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

Pearson UK and their subcontractors receive your personal data and are processing it on behalf of DfE and IEA so that England can participate in the PIRLS 2026 study. Studies such as PIRLS 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 headteachers and teachers about their school, teaching strategies and the school's learning environment, we can understand different things about the factors that affect learning and find ways to make schools better for everyone.

More information about the PIRLS study is available from pearson.com/pirls26england.

The nature of the personal data we are using

We use headteachers' names to personalise your school study materials, and the headteacher and the school co-ordinator's email address to correspond with you throughout the project. We may also correspond with other school staff in connection with the project e.g. IT support staff.

We collect contextual information on your school from your answers to the PIRLS school and teacher questionnaires. 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 We do not publish your answers to any question, and you and your school cannot be identified from any report or publication.

We may put the information we collect from you with other information which we already have e.g. information in the national pupil database.

Why our use of your personal data is lawful

For our use of your personal data to be lawful, we need to meet one (or more) conditions in the data protection legislation. For this project, the relevant condition that we are meeting is:

- **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.

This means that the law allows us to collect and use your data because the Department for Education have decided that England should take part in the PIRLS 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 Pearson UK 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 the purpose of this project:

- We are employing Pearson UK and their subcontractors to process your personal data on our behalf. After you have taken the PIRLS study, Pearson UK 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. They will put the pseudonymised data with that from the other (approximately 60 countries) taking part in PIRLS.
- We may share your data including the information we collect in PIRLS, 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 EEA

Pearson UK (on our behalf) will send the data from your responses to the PIRLS 2026 study questionnaires to IEA and their contractors. They will not share your personal data with them; they will pseudonymise it 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.

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. 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.

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 direct marketing (including profiling) and processing for the purposes of scientific/historical research and statistics
- 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 [pearson.com/pirls26england](https://www.pearson.com/pirls26england).

This version was last updated on 23 September 2024.