

**The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2023 in
Northern Ireland**

Privacy Notice for Schools

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1. What is TIMSS?

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is a research study that collects information on the mathematics and science attainment of primary school pupils in Northern Ireland and enables comparisons to be made across 60 countries that are taking part. TIMSS also asks pupils about their home, school and what they think about learning mathematics and science. We also invite parents to complete a short questionnaire about their child's early learning experiences, what they do together at home and their views about things related to their child's school.

By collecting this information, we hope to find ways to make schools better for everyone.

We will not use your personal data for any other purpose than TIMSS 2023 and we will not publish your answers to any question. You, the children that take part and their schools will not be identified or identifiable from any TIMSS report or publication.

The Department of Education (DE) has retained the services of Pearson Education Ltd (Pearson), to deliver TIMSS 2023 in Northern Ireland.

DE is the data controller for TIMSS 2023 and Pearson acting on our behalf is the data processor. This means that we are responsible for making sure that the way your data are collected and used meets the requirements of data protection legislation.

TIMSS is sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and this privacy notice also details how they process data.

More information about TIMSS 2023 is available on the IEA website <https://www.iea.nl/studies/iea/timss/timss2023>

2. How will we use personal data obtained?

Pearson will collect, from schools, personal information for identified staff in order to facilitate the administration of the study. If the details of these staff members change or there is a change in personnel, we kindly ask schools to inform Pearson of this as soon as possible in order to ensure the information we hold is up to date.

3. What are the personal data that we will use?

Pearson will collect personal information, from schools for the principal and a nominated school co-ordinator:

- Name
- Job Title
- Email address
- Direct telephone number

Pearson will also collect the following through the school and teacher questions.

For Principals:

- Qualifications
- How long you have been in role in total
- How long you have been in post at current school

For class teachers:

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- How long you have been teaching for
- Qualifications

No individual teacher, principal or school will be identified or identifiable in any reporting¹.

4. Our lawful basis for processing your personal data

For our use of your personal data to be lawful, we need to meet one or more of the conditions in data protection legislation. For TIMSS 2023, the relevant condition that we are meeting is Article 6(1) (e) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) 2018 because the collection and processing of the information is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest while exercising a function of a government department. This means that the law allows DE to collect and use your personal data because the Government has decided that Northern Ireland should take part in TIMSS.

¹ School and Teacher responses may be anonymously linked to pupil data. All participants can choose whether or not they wish to answer any question.

5. Who will the personal data be shared with?

To help with recruitment for TIMSS 2023 and administration of the study, the names of sampled schools will be shared by DE with, the Education Authority (EA) and the Council for Catholic Maintained School (CCMS).

DE, EA and CCMS will not see any results for individual schools or pupils who take part in the study.

Assessment and questionnaire data are shared by Pearson with the international consortium² that compares the outcomes between different countries. However, this data will be de-identified prior to sharing.

Pearson will send the de-identified data to the IEA via a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site, who will combine your data with that from all 60 countries taking part in TIMSS. TIMSS is directed by the International Study Centre (ISC) based at Boston College, USA and most of the data analysis occurs there. ISC employees who access the data for analysis have signed a confidentiality agreement. The transfer of the data to the USA, as a third country, is safeguarded by appropriate and suitable technical and organisational measures.

6. How is the security of your data maintained?

Measures have been put in place to prevent personal information from being accidentally lost, used or accessed in an unauthorised way, altered or disclosed. DE and Pearson limits access to your personal information to staff members who have a business need to see it.

7. How long will personal data be retained?

Pearson will only securely store the personal data, name, job title, email and direct telephone number for as long as they need it for the purpose of this piece of research, after which point it will be securely destroyed in accordance with internal policies. Principal and school co-ordinator contact details will be retained until the end of the contract in September 2025.

The data from the questionnaires, in a de-identified format, may be retained, indefinitely by the DE under data protection legislation and in compliance with the relevant data processing conditions for research and statistics, to allow further analysis into educational attainment in the future.

² The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA); TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, Boston College.

8. Where, how and for how long are data from TIMSS stored with IEA?

TIMSS data are stored securely and cannot be accessed by any external persons or systems. Moreover, any IEA employees who access the data for processing have been suitably briefed on what constitutes an acceptable treatment of data and have signed a confidentiality agreement.

The data are stored as follows:

De-identified response data are stored indefinitely so that they remain available for analysis. These responses eventually result in a database that allows researchers to compare education systems worldwide.

The final international research database will be accessible to the public from the following sites:

<https://www.iea.nl/data> (Hamburg, Germany)

<https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/index.html> (Boston, USA)

9. Your data protection rights

You have the right:

- to ask us for access to the information that we hold;
- to have your personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete;
- to request the deletion or removal of your personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing;
- to object to and / or restrict processing of your personal data (e.g. permitting its storage but no further processing).

If you wish to contact DE in relation to your rights under data protection legislation, you can contact the DE's Data Protection Officer:

Alan Macdonald
Data Protection Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road, Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Telephone: (028) 9127 9788

Email: dataprotectionofficier@education-ni.gov.uk

Further information about your data protection rights appears on the Information Commissioner's [website](#).

10. Your rights to lodge a complaint

TIMSS is a voluntary study and even if you agree to take part you may still decide that you do not wish to do so. If you are unhappy with our use of your personal data, please let DE's statistician responsible for TIMSS know by [email](#) or by telephoning 02891 279616 Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

If you remain dissatisfied you have the right to raise any concerns with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) via their [website](#).

11. Last updated

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

12. Contact Information

If you have any questions about how your personal information will be processed and/or TIMSS in general, please contact:

RESPONSIBLE STATISTICIAN	TIMSS POLICY LEAD
Michael Woods	Lynne Hackworth
Department of Education	Department of Education
Analytical Services Unit	School Improvement Team
Rathgael House	Rathgael House
Balloo Road	Balloo Road
Bangor	Bangor
BT19 7PR	BT19 7PR
Email: Michael.Woods@education-ni.gov.uk	Email: Lynne.hackworth@education-ni.gov.uk
Tel: 02891 27 9616	Tel 02891 277626

And for the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement:
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The Netherlands: Telephone: +31 20 625 3625: Email: secretariat@iea.nl