

Information Management Strategy Support Materials for Schools

National Pupil Database (NPD)

The development of a National Pupil Database for Wales was a central objective of the Assembly's Information Management Strategy (IMS) for schools, Local Education Authorities, and Post 16 providers.

The National Pupil Database plays an important role in raising educational standards in Wales and is a key project within the Individual Learner Data Programme. The database holds individual pupil records collected via the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) linked to the pupil's attainment data relating to both statutory key stage assessments and external examinations such as GCSEs. The National Pupil Database utilises the Unique Pupil Number (UPN) to increase the accuracy of data matching.

The database has enormous value as the key reporting element of the database is web based, thus allowing individuals to access data without the need for sophisticated statistical packages.

The database provides the facility for comparison at both school and local authority level, together with a range of summary information reports. Schools have the facility to compare themselves against other statistically similar schools across Wales, using more detailed comparator factors such as language and ethnic mix. In addition the database allows users to identify statistically similar schools or LEAs and liaise anonymously via email to share examples of good practice. The National Pupil Database provides schools a powerful tool in the self evaluation process.

In addition to on-screen reporting via the Internet, the package allows downloading of data for detailed analysis.

The database provides an invaluable analysis tool for LEAs and stakeholders, removing some of the "number crunching" enabling them to focus more closely on the use of data and on helping schools to use management information effectively to the benefit of pupils.

For all users there are benefits in terms of reducing duplication of effort and data collection by making data readily available in formats that users need, for example national curriculum results presented in formats for use in Governors Annual Reports and School Prospectuses, Estyn pre-inspection reports, and comparative analysis for LEAs.

Recent developments have seen a selection of key performance indicators, already in the public domain made available to the public via the NPD on pages that do not require a login to the main site. In this way an individual

can access a limited selection of information about a single specific school in a straight forward manner via the NPD, one school at a time.

Guidance on appropriate use of the data is also available.

The range of reports and analysis available on the NPD is continually reviewed; responding to feedback, ensuring the database meets the need of the end user. For example, Benchmark Tables for schools have been made available on the site since 2006 allowing schools to download tables pre-populated with their own school performance.

The NPD is a secure website, with access restricted to authorised users only. Access to the database is strictly controlled via allocated User IDs and passwords. Individuals wishing to apply for access to the NPD will be required to complete an application form to determine their level of permissions.

- School staff can have access to the database on the authorisation of their Headteacher. Local Authority staff may also have access to the database co-ordinated by the authority's National Pupil Database representative.
- Stakeholders such as the Welsh Assembly Government and Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (ESTYN), together with researchers can have access to the National Pupil Database. The level of access is dependant upon the Protocol produced by the Assembly.

To apply for access to the NPD please complete the application form on the NPD website at the following address: www.npd-wales.gov.uk An example is provided for your information.

Statistics for Wales

The Assembly's Statistical Directorate carries out detailed analysis of data from every statutory collection. Electronic copies of their publications and bulletins can be found here: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/?lang=en>

Any queries on the content of this webpage should be sent to IMS@wales.gsi.gov.uk.