

INSTITUTE FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATION RESPONSE (VIA E-MAIL)

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A vital part of the Institute for Effective Education's mission, and something that makes us distinctive from most university departments, is our emphasis on improving the access and use of research data outside of academia. This is underpinned by a realisation that research will only make a difference if it can be converted into initiatives that change practice. Although we are supportive of more open use of data *about* schools, for the purpose of this consultation we therefore focus more on the use of data *for* schools.

With the current trend towards decentralisation in education, schools and colleges are going to have greater freedoms around all aspects of their practice - what to teach, which materials to use, and most importantly, what teaching methods to adopt. Devolution will mean that teachers will be able to choose from a myriad of different teaching programmes and approaches, with various levels of effectiveness, but all of which claim to be successful.

It is in this context that we believe it is essential that professionals are provided with robust, reliable and accessible research-based evidence in order to make informed decisions about their practice. This includes:

- Accessible overviews of effective interventions – What works? How does it work?
- Trustworthy assessments of the evidence - What are the proven outcomes?
- Practical information on training, costs, materials, school links etc so practitioners may apply an approach with confidence.

We can see a number of promising areas of development in this area at present, including greater support from central government in creating the necessary infrastructure to support better access and use of research information. Although far from exhaustive, the following examples provide an indication of where progress is being made:

- [The Education Endowment Foundation](#) - Under the guidance of the Sutton Trust and Impetus Trust, the EEF is planning to invest as much as £200m over the next 15 years in initiatives that raise the achievement of pupils in the most challenging circumstances. Managed at arms length from government, the EEF aims to "identify, develop, support and evaluate practical projects, with a focus on innovation and scaling up programmes that are cost-effective and replicable".

At the heart of the EEF's commitment to proving 'what works', approximately 10% of the fund is being allocated to rigorous and independent evaluations of the funded projects, including the use of robust experimental trials. This information will then be made widely available to all schools across the sector.

- [The Best Evidence Encyclopadeia \(BEE\)](#) – The Best Evidence Encyclopaedia (BEE) was launched by the IEE in May 2009, and aims to provide reliable, unbiased evidence on the effectiveness of educational programmes. The BEE is intended to give educators, policy makers, and researchers fair and useful information about the strength of evidence supporting a variety of programmes available for both primary and secondary pupils. Users can access full reports that analyse all existing research in a particular area, for example primary maths, or can refer to simple summaries.

- Government's [Early Intervention review](#) - MP for Nottingham North, Graham Allen, has led a government review on Early Intervention that bases its recommendations around an evidence-based approach to children's services and early intervention. The report, *Early Intervention: Next Steps*, recommends that nineteen early intervention programmes with rigorous evidence of effectiveness should be supported and expanded, tackling issues such as early literacy, parenting and drug/alcohol abuse. The IEE have played a role in setting the standards by which these programmes are reviewed, which is based on the highest research standards.

The interim findings of the review also recommend the formation of an independent 'Early Intervention Foundation', which would expand and improve the provision for Early Intervention across the UK, by capturing and spreading data on effective child health and development programmes.

The long term aim is present data in a similar in which way a consumer might receive when buying say a new television, washing machine or car in a 'Which?' magazine style report i.e. the necessary level of detail to be able make an informed decision around implementing a new approach. This will include practitioner feedback in addition to research-based data.

- [Better magazine](#) - A very simple way in which we aim to open access to research information is through our magazine for practitioners, called *Better*. Aimed at educational leaders and policy makers, the magazine offers easy access to the latest developments in education research. It features accessible articles from some of the most respected educational researchers in the world, all of which are rooted in rigorous research on what really works in the classroom.
- The [Education Media Centre](#) - a new initiative, set up by the Coalition for Evidence-Based Education (CEBE) that aims to make education research more accessible to the media and policy makers and so improve policy development, practice and public understanding of education. The EMC will provide users with authoritative, independent and accessible insights from education research in response to current research and policy developments.

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