

Data Management and Analysis Group

Education Team Workplan 2009/10



DMAG Briefing 2009-10

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Introduction

The publication of this year's workplan has been delayed by the Organising for Delivery (OfD) agenda. The GLA Education Team has been part of the Data Management and Analysis Group (DMAG) within the Communities and Intelligence Directorate. As a result of OfD it will become part of the Intelligence Unit reporting to the Assistant Director of Intelligence.

This report covers:

- the role of the Team
- staffing
- clients and stakeholder liaison
- 2009/10 priorities
- the work programme
- publications

The Role of the Team

The Education Team's role is to help provide the GLA and its partner agencies with the evidence base needed in policy development. In 2008/09, those policy issues continued to reflect a commitment to the related issues of social justice, regeneration, sustainability, educational improvement, and to the concerns expressed in the 2004 Children Act. One key means by which the Team carries out its role is through the provision of impartial analyses of education data. Individual pupil and institution level data are key information used in those analyses. The second main means by which the Team carries out its role involves partnership work with groups in the GLA and elsewhere. Work of this type in 2009/10 is referred to in the section on Clients, Partners and Stakeholder groups.

Individual pupil records and a range of information on individual schools are held in the English Pupil Dataset (EPD). This is based largely, but not entirely, on anonymised information released under strict terms of confidentiality by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). DCSF records have been updated annually from 2002 to 2008, and individual pupil records from a number of different years have been linked to create merged longitudinal datasets. While the early datasets focussed on London pupils, the 'geography' of the data expanded steadily from 2004, and data for 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 are for all pupils attending maintained schools in England. This will enable educational outcomes in London to be analysed in their national context. The largest of the merged English Pupil Datasets is the single largest dataset held in the GLA.

Analysing large national pupil datasets, containing individual pupil records for the approximately 7.5 million young people on roll in maintained schools in England, requires national-standard computing capacity, and the Education Team worked with the GLA's Technology Group in 2006/07 to achieve progress in this area. While the development time had an impact on the Team's work programme for that year, a medium term solution has been achieved. Nonetheless, the Education Team's data holdings will continue to grow, and

this will have further implications for computing capacity. At the extreme, a full national data extract held in a single dataset, able to track each pupil's progress from age four to age 15, would be at least 12 times the size of a national pupil dataset for any one year. It would be larger if pupil progress were to be tracked from age four to the end of the 6th form. This is, potentially, an issue facing all researchers and statisticians working with longitudinal national pupil level data, and discussions continue with colleagues at the Institute of Education, University of London, to identify possible ways forward.

The Team also uses summary information for individual schools and individual boroughs. School roll projections are provided under contract to 24 of London's 32 boroughs. A pan-London roll projection system, which uses summary information at London borough level, and for the unitary authorities and shire county districts around London, is being developed to meet GLA needs. A number of London boroughs support the further development of the evidence-base for planning school places across London, and there is scope for practical progress in this area. This could, potentially, have significant benefits for children and young people in the capital, and the Education Team will work with colleagues in City Hall, with its clients through the London School Roll Projection Liaison Group, and with other like-minded authorities, to take that forward.

In order to meet the needs of the Team's client base, the work programme aims to strike a balance between the following main areas of work:

- tailored research and statistical analysis designed to inform policy discussion through, for example, the analysis of low educational attainment and the impact of social disadvantage on educational attainment
- development of the school roll projection service in consultation with clients in local authorities
- updates of earlier analyses to facilitate monitoring of the GLA's strategies and plans
- development of reference shelf material to help deal more effectively with the numerous data requests the Team receives
- development and maintenance of data holdings
- liaison with the DCSF and other agencies to ensure access to data needed by the GLA
- pro-active development of joint work with external agencies
- research for, and research and statistics user advice to, project steering groups and to advisory groups

As with the approach to computing capacity, the Team's approach elsewhere has been pro-active, and its work has been presented in a wide range of professional and policy forums. The Education Team also makes its research and statistical analyses available via DMAG Briefings, as contributions to GLA reports, and in the extensive material on school roll projections provided to local authorities.

Historically, the Education Briefings have focussed on issues of moment, approached in a way that is accessible to a reasonably numerate non-specialist, and without oversimplification. In line with the provisions of the 2004 Children Act, which gives local policy makers responsibilities for locally resident children, Briefings have tended to concentrate on outcomes for pupils grouped in their home boroughs. This provides a counterpoint to local authority analyses, which ordinarily group pupils in terms of the schools each maintains. (The two groups are not the same. Large numbers of pupils attend schools in boroughs

other than the one in which they live). Complex statistical analyses are also part of the Team's brief, and will play a more prominent role in 2009/10.

Staffing

David Ewens is the Senior Research and Statistical Analyst, and is responsible for research and data analysis, and for liaison with researchers, statisticians and others elsewhere.

The Research and Statistical Analyst post is mainly responsible for the school roll projection service to 24 of London's 32 London boroughs. Shen Cheng is the substantive post-holder. She is currently on secondment until January 2010. The post is at present covered by Ben Corr on a short-term contract. The post is also responsible for a number of digests of education statistics.

Taken in isolation, the Education Team is very small by London standards. However, the Team has part of the time of the GLA's Demographic Consultant (John Hollis) who manages the Social Exclusion Data Team and the Education Team as well as his major responsibility for the Demography Team. The Education Team also has day-to-day access to other specialist teams within the current Data Management and Analysis Group, where a number of staff have national reputations in their fields. A range of data available to colleagues, including information from the 2001 Census and equivalised income information for small areas, has been added to the LPD. These factors provide an area of strength and a character that may well be unique in public sector education research and statistical analysis, and is not necessarily commonplace elsewhere. The names, areas of responsibility, and contact details of the current DMAG staff are given at the end of the Briefing.

Clients, Partners and Stakeholder Groups

The Education Team's main clients, partners and stakeholders may be segmented as follows:

- Mayor's Office – contributing to the evidence-base to support policy development, in particular through work with the Children and Young People's Unit and through work on project advisory groups
- GLA Directorates
- Greater London Assembly
- Functional bodies
- London boroughs - forecasting demand for school places - and through contract work on specific projects
- London Councils
- central government departments and agencies
- researchers in higher education and in research institutes
- research users more generally, including policy makers and practitioners

In addition to its own research and statistical analysis, the Education Team has also worked to bring a wide range of policy-relevant research and statistical expertise to City Hall. Taken together, pro-active partnership work with the wider education research, statistics and policy community has aimed to strengthen the evidence-base and expertise available to policy

makers and to stakeholders generally, and to ensure that the case for London is heard. This has been the second main way in which the Education Team has carried out its role.

There is an awareness in the Education Team that policy requires a firm evidence base drawing on different methodologies and disciplines. The team works co-operatively with colleagues in higher education and in local authorities who have an expertise in different methodologies and disciplines. Additionally, there is an awareness in the Team that a firm evidence base for policy in London requires a firm, continuing, research and statistics base. The Team has provided general support to the local authority London Education Research Network (LERN) and to LERN's post-16 education group, and all London boroughs were invited, through their Children's Services research and statistics staff and their school places planning staff, to suggest research questions that might be included in the Education Team's work programme for 2009/10.

The Team strongly welcomed the continuing work of the comparatively new London Education Research Unit (LERU) at the Institute of Education, University of London. LERU is making a major contribution to research capacity in the capital. Successful co-operation with LERU since 2007 will be continued in 2009/10.

In 2004, the Education Team launched the DMAG Evidence-based Education Research network (DEBRe) to bring together researchers and research users, including policy makers, practitioners and others, who have a stake in evidence-based education research. DEBRe has organised conferences and workshops, both on its own, and in partnership with the Children and Young People's Unit in the Mayor's Office, LERU, LERN, the Education Management Exchange at the National Foundation for Educational Research (EMIE at NfER), and the think tank Longview.

Events in 2008/09 included a joint workshop with the think tank Longview on the possible development of a new national sample survey able to provide longitudinal analyses at regional level,

The Education Team and its event are largely self-funded. The staging of future events will depend in part on the availability of funding from elsewhere for consultancy services. A case in point in the current year was a conference on Socio-economic Status, Social Class and Education, organised jointly with the Institute of Education, University of London. Any further development of pan-London school roll projections may also, in practice, rest on external financial support.

Areas of success in the past year have, *without exception*, reflected a high level of professionalism, and a willingness to co-operate in good faith, on the part of a wide range of well-informed individuals and groups within DMAG, the GLA, local authorities, higher education and the wider research and policy community. The Education Team will maintain its focus on that type approach in 2009/10.

2009/10 Priorities

The Education Team will continue to provide analyses of data and expertise on relevant topics for the GLA, and for those elsewhere involved in partnership projects. The Team will ensure that the school roll projection service for subscribing authorities is maintained and developed in consultation with those authorities, working through the GLA-LA liaison group. This will be extended, where a partnership approach permits, to work with other London local authorities. School roll projections will be delivered promptly and, taking the available data into account, accurately and with a commentary appropriate to customer needs. After the priority given to the roll projection service, the Education Team's Research and Statistical Analyst will give priority to the timely production of digests of up to date available information on schools and on teachers.

Discussions within the GLA, and with colleagues in London boroughs, at London Councils, in higher education and elsewhere point to a number of priorities for DMAG education research and statistical analysis more generally in the coming year. These take account of the wider national data that will be available to the Education Team, as well as the fine detail of analyses that can be carried out at sub-regional, borough and neighbourhood level. The main areas that have been raised in discussion are

- child mobility, including children moving to and from London
- the social and educational correlates of low attainment in London compared with the situation nationally
- the impact of social disadvantage on educational attainment in London compared with the situation nationally
- pupil progress and other change over time
- the social context of educational attainment, including new data on language spoken
- educational attainment and young people's life chances – entry to higher education
- longer-term issues of computing capacity raised by longitudinal national pupil datasets.

Discussion continues on the best way/s of identifying the extent to which individual schools serve their local communities and/or neighbourhoods. All London boroughs have been asked to comment on that possible area of work. Continuing interest has also been expressed in the characteristics of high attaining pupils. This would be a substantial project and, given existing commitments, is unlikely to go ahead in 2009/10 without external funding.

The Work Programme

Some of the themes above overlap and can, in a number of instances, be brought together. Child mobility and children missing from maintained schooling might usefully be analysed as a part of the same piece of work.

The themes that have been raised with the Education Team are clearly extensive, as is the list of the Education Team's clients, partners and stakeholders. Additionally, related work will be carried out elsewhere, and new issues will emerge, in the course of the year. Either or both may change stakeholders' and partners' expectations. While contract and partnership

work entail timetabled programmes of work, which will be observed, changing expectations and newly emerging issues mean that themes in the work programme are indicative and may be developed further or changed in the light of circumstances.

Data Supply

DCSF has continued to give a high level of support in providing what the Team recognises are internationally significant pupil level datasets. Data from the national pupil dataset are for all pupils attending maintained schools in England, and include detailed information on pupil social characteristics (other than social class) and educational attainment. As such, the data overcome any doubts as to whether conclusions about educational outcomes based on smaller datasets, whether from national sample surveys, or from individual London boroughs, actually apply across London.

Additionally, the 2007 and 2008 datasets include information on

- language spoken where this is in addition to, or other than, English
- the 'source' record of ethnicity, including any detailed 'extended' ethnic categories where these have been used by schools

The 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 datasets continue to include pupil home postcode, type of special educational need and pupil looked after status available in the smaller 2004 datasets. Data will otherwise be anonymised and the Education Team will continue to apply the conditions of confidentiality to the data, which the GLA's Code of Ethics and Standards and the DCSF both require. The Department has also released information on pupils admitted to higher education, which has considerable implications for the analysis of social mobility in London. Given the small size of the Education Team, discussion is taking place with local authority colleagues as to how that work might best be progressed.

In contrast, publicly available data and analyses of data on students in further education continue to be in remarkably short supply. However, the Connexions service in London, which provides support and advice on education and careers issues to individuals aged 13-19, is in the process of developing a pan-London database. This will cover pupils in school, as well as pupils attending further education, those in work and those not in education, employment or training (NEET). The Education Team will work with colleagues in the GLA to identify high priority information that may, subject to relevant resources being available, be reported by Connexions from that database.

Data Analysis

Further work will be carried out to forecast demand for school places for those local authorities subscribing to the GLA school rolls projection service and for London as a whole. This will include work on cross-border pupil mobility, and work comparing numbers of locally resident children in individual age groups at ward level attending (any) maintained school with numbers of children in the same age groups in the locally resident population as a whole. Further analysis will be carried out for those areas identified by clients, partners and stakeholders as priorities for 2009/10, and as data and other resources permit.

Pupil level data received from DCSF requires substantial reworking, extending over several weeks, before analysis can begin. Additionally, the data received is used to calculate additional ('derived') variables, such as the distance between each child's home and the school attended measured as a straight line, and this is also time-consuming.

Requests and Reference Publications

As well as project work, DMAG Education deals with a wide range of enquiries and ad hoc requests for analyses of data. Some will be met by summaries of available data on pupils, teachers, schools and the context of education in London.

Longer Term Priorities

The Education Team will continue the successful partnership approach to projects followed in recent years, and will continue to work to identify and, where possible, develop the capacity needed to provide the evidence-base clients, partners, and stakeholders seek. The Team will, for example, continue its assessment of the costs involved in making the large volume of detailed work it produces more readily available via the Internet, and will consult with DCSF on the ground rules to be observed in releasing detailed analyses of pupil level data in that way. As noted above, data holdings within DMAG Education will continue to increase. Work to identify means of enhancing computing capacity will remain a high priority.

Regular Briefings from the GLA Data Management and Analysis Group - DMAG

Recent DMAG Briefings:

2008-04	Council Tax Analysis	Elizabeth Williams
2008-05	A Profile of Londoners by Country of Birth	Lorna Spence
2008-08	Greater London Authority Constituency Profiles	Elizabeth Williams & Caroline Hall
2008-09	Family Resources Survey 2005/06: Results for London	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-10	London Borough Migration 2001-06	John Hollis
2008-15	2001 Census Profiles: Black Caribbeans in London	Richard Cameron
2008-17	Lone Parents on Income Support by Ethnic Group	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-18	Schools Key Facts and Trends 2003-07	Shen Cheng
2008-19	2008 Elections results summary	Gareth Piggott
2008-21	Indices of Deprivation 2007: A London perspective	Rachel Leeser
2008-22	London Ward Level Summary Measures for the Indices of Deprivation 2007	Rachel Leeser
2008-24	2001 Census: Ethnic Group Migration Structures (as used in Model)	Baljit Bains/Ed Klodawski
2008-26	London Council By-Election Results, May 2006 to July 2008	Gareth Piggott
2008-27	Social Selection, Social Sorting and Education; "Missing" Children	David Ewens
2008-28	Summary of Social Trends 2008	Elizabeth Williams
2008-29	Children in Benefit Families 2007	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-30	Londoners and the Labour Market: Key Facts	Lorna Spence
2008-31	Child Poverty In London: 2008 Update	Social Exclusion Data Team
2008-33	Paycheck 2008	Lovedeep Vaid
2008-34	Background Poverty Profiles	Lovedeep Vaid
2009-01	Claimant Count Model 2009: Technical Note	Social Exclusion Data Team
2009-02	GLA 2008 Round Demographic Projections	John Hollis/Jessica Chamberlain
2009-03	Greater London Demographic Review 2007	John Hollis
2009-04	Census Information Note 2009-1	Eileen Howes
2009-05	Census Information Note 2009-2	Eileen Howes
2009-06	2001 Census Consortium and Information Scheme	Eileen Howes
2009-07	2009 European Election Results for London	Gareth Piggott
2009-08	GLA 2008 Round Ethnic Group Population Projections	Ed Klodawski

A full list of DMAG Briefings is available to internal customers through the GLA Intranet; otherwise please contact dmag.info@london.gov.uk A CD containing PDF versions of the Briefings, or hard copies, can be provided.

Contact details for the Data Management and Analysis Group

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Please use the above descriptions in deciding whom to contact to assist you with your information needs.