

Educational Research Centre Newsletter



Winter/Spring 2015/2016

Welcome to the “New” Educational Research Centre

The Educational Research Centre (ERC) was founded on the St Patrick's College Campus in 1966 with Dr Thomas Kellaghan as Director and a very small staff. With support from the Department of Education and a number of international foundations, it quickly grew into an internationally recognised centre of excellence in research, assessment, and evaluation in education. Although it functioned independently of St Patrick's College, the Centre had no separate identity and no dedicated governance structure.

After many years of negotiations, in 2015 Minister Jan O'Sullivan TD established the Centre as a body corporate under Section 54 of the Education Act of 1998. This will not change greatly the work that we do and will not change at all the nature of our relationship with schools.

In particular, we will continue to treat data gathered during research projects as strictly confidential.



Dr Peter Archer, CEO

Thus, 2016 is a most auspicious year for the Centre because it marks our 50th anniversary and our first year as a Statutory Agency.

We very much look forward to continuing our work with schools, teachers, parents and all others in the educational community.

Peter Archer, CEO

What do we do at the ERC?

While a large proportion of the work of the Centre is carried out following requests from the Department of Education and Skills, research is also commissioned by other agencies or initiated within the Centre. Almost all of the Centre's reports are published with a view to contributing to a better understanding of how the education system works (e.g., describing the strengths and weaknesses of the system).

Tests and other assessment instruments developed in the Centre (e.g., Drumcondra Tests) are made available to schools through the Centre's Test Department.

Since 1967, the Centre has published the Irish Journal of Education which is one of a number of ways in which the Centre provides a service to the education system as a whole including students, parents, schools, and centres for education.

“The ERC is a key piece of our national educational infrastructure. Its staff have the skills and expertise to enable Ireland to participate in major international studies such as TIMSS, PIRLS and PISA. There is a growing awareness of the importance of assessment and research in education systems. The formal, legal establishment of the Centre will ensure that Ireland continues to have a strong capacity to carry out such work into the future.”

Jan O'Sullivan T.D.
Minister for Education and Skills
July 2015

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Overview of the work of the Centre

- ◆ Evaluations of Educational Provision and Services
- ◆ Evaluations of Initiatives and New Programmes
- ◆ Research on Critical Issues in Education, including Equality
- ◆ Analysis of Public Examination Results
- ◆ National Assessments of Educational Achievement
- ◆ International Studies (PISA, PIRLS, TIMSS, and previously ICCS and TALIS)
- ◆ Development of Assessment Instruments
- ◆ Other Work (national and international consultancy, participation in various working groups and expert bodies, and publication of the Irish Journal of Education).



Recent Publications

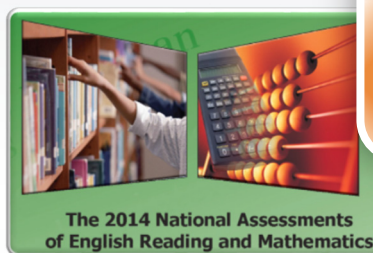
- ◆ The 2013 ICT Census in Schools. Published on the occasion of the launch of the new Digital Strategy for Schools.
- ◆ The 2014 National Assessments of English Reading and Mathematics Volume 1: Performance Report.
- ◆ An evaluation of a JUMP Math pilot programme in Ireland.
- ◆ Educational Experiences and Outcomes for Children with Special Educational Needs: A Secondary Analysis of Wave 1 Data from the Growing Up in Ireland Study (GUI).
- ◆ Project Maths and PISA 2012: Performance in Initial Project Maths Schools and in Non-initial Schools on PISA 2012 Mathematics and Problem-solving and on Junior Certificate Mathematics.

Coming Soon

- ◆ The 2014 National Assessments of English Reading and Mathematics. Volume 2. Context Report.
- ◆ Teachers' Guide to PISA 2012 Mathematics.
- ◆ Analysis of Wave 2 Data from GUI Relating to Special Educational Needs.

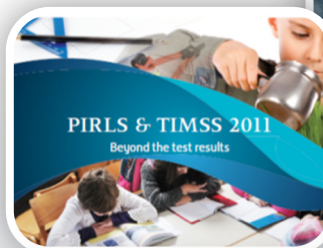
Further information on all of the above can be found on www.erc.ie

Selection of our publications



Project Maths and PISA 2012

Performance in Initial Project Maths Schools and in Non-initial Schools on PISA 2012 Mathematics and Problem-solving and on Junior Certificate Mathematics

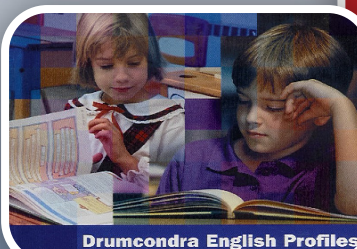


The 2013 ICT Census in Schools Summary Report

International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS): Report for Ireland



The evaluation of the School Support Programme under DEIS: Changes in pupil achievement in urban primary schools between 2007 and 2013



Educational Experiences and Outcomes for Children with Special Educational Needs

A Secondary Analysis of Data from the Growing Up in Ireland Study

Learning for Life:

The Achievements of 15-year-olds in Ireland on Mathematics, Reading Literacy and Science in PISA 2012

Ongoing projects at the ERC

- ◆ NAMER (National Assessments of Mathematics and English Reading)
- ◆ Assessing Levels of Disadvantage in Schools
- ◆ Evaluation of DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools)
- ◆ Studies of Educational Disadvantage in Schools in Rural Settings
- ◆ PISA (The Programme for International Student Assessment)
- ◆ PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study)
- ◆ TIMSS (Trends in Mathematics and Science Study)
- ◆ Development of Tests for Primary and Post-Primary Levels
- ◆ Exploration of Computer-Based Testing
- ◆ Analysis of School Attendance Data for Primary and Post-Primary Schools
- ◆ A Study of Summer Learning Loss
- ◆ Transition Year Survey
- ◆ A Study of Differences between Schools in terms of Intake and Outcomes
- ◆ A Study of Academic Resilience among Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds
- ◆ A Secondary Analysis of Growing Up in Ireland Data on Educational Experiences and Outcomes for Children with Special Educational Needs
- ◆ European Literacy Policy Network (ELINET)



Our sincere thanks goes to all the schools – principals, teachers, secretaries and students for their assistance in the various projects undertaken by the Educational Research Centre.

February/March 2016

Mini Standardisation
(computer-based)
of Drumcondra Reasoning
Test (DRT)
Post-primary schools
Primary schools
2,000 students

April/May 2016

PIRLS/ePIRLS
Paper- and computer-
based testing
150 post primary schools
4,800 students

April/May 2016

Standardisation
(computer-based)
of Drumcondra Reading &
Mathematics Tests
70–100 post-primary schools
3,500–5,000 students

May/June 2016

DEIS Evaluation
119 primary schools
17,000 students

Autumn 2016

Standardisation
(computer-based) of
Drumcondra Reasoning Test
(DRT)
100 post-primary schools
5,000 students

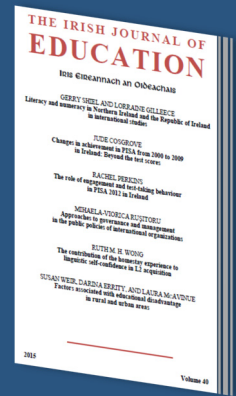
Irish Journal of Education

Published by The Educational Research Centre, 1967 - present

The Irish Journal of Education is a periodical devoted to education. Articles dealing with all aspects of the subject – philosophy, history and sociology of education, educational and child psychology, comparative education, curriculum studies – are considered for publication. More information on article submissions are available on our website: <https://www.erc.ie>.

The Journal is intended to serve teachers at all levels of education and all others interested in educational matters. As well as publishing studies of Irish education, the journal brings new developments in educational theory and practice in other countries to the notice of Irish readers. The Journal can be obtained from Educational Research Centre, St Patrick's College Campus, Drumcondra, Dublin, D09 DY00. Cost €10.

For details about becoming a subscriber – Phone 01 8373789, email IJE@erc.ie.



Test Department

As part of its work, the Educational Research Centre develops standardised tests of achievement and ability, normed for an Irish population. The **Test Department** is the division of the Centre that sells these tests to schools. In addition, it provides schools with the option of an automated machine-scoring service for some of our tests.

The tests are designed to provide primary and post-primary teachers with high quality, accurate information on the aptitudes and achievements of their pupils.

Almost all tests have been specifically developed for an Irish population, and draw on the relevant Irish school curricula. Our tests draw on 40 years of experience in test development, and provide research-based, reliable information to schools.

The Test Department is located at:
66 Richmond Road
Drumcondra, Dublin D03 E702
Ph: 01 8377614 / 01 377380
Email: tests@erc.ie

Selection of our Tests

**Drumcondra
Post-Primary
Reading / Math Tests
Levels 1-6**



**Drumcondra
Primary
Reading / Math Tests
Levels 1-6**



**Drumcondra
Tests of Early Literacy /
Early Numeracy**



For a full list of our paper - based tests, see *testsales* on our website www.erc.ie

Computer-based testing Website

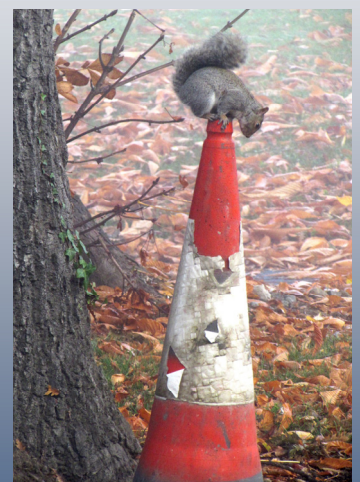
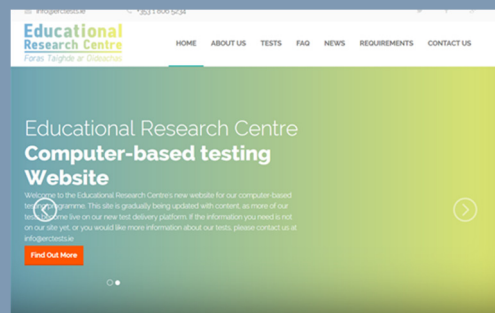
trythetests.erc.ie

Online tests will soon be available for purchase by schools. Why not visit our computer-based test website to read more about our upcoming tests and view some sample questions online?

The team at the Educational Research Centre will be delighted to answer any questions that you might have about computer-based testing in your school.

Tests will only be available through our new website.

For further information and contact details, please type trythetests.erc.ie (no www needed) into your browser's address bar.



Want a parking space?