

Data Collection at the Department for Education, England

Graham Knox
Rosalyn Harper
June 2012



Department
for Education

Outline

- **Background and overview on data collection**
- **Research applications using ECEC data in DfE**
- **Evidence base on early years**



Early Years Census Data Collection - background

- **History – Then and Now**
- **Purpose and Usage**
- **Coverage – Establishment and Children**
- **Legislation**
- **Timing**



Key Data Items Collected

Establishment information

- Postcode, Unique reference number, Category of Provider, Total children, Total Staff.

Child information

- Surname, Forename, Date of Birth, Postcode, Gender, Ethnicity, Hours funded, Hours attended



Data Collection process

- Policy requirements
- Internal Scrutiny Board
- Technical Specification
- Software Suppliers
- Data Providers
- Local Authorities
- Departmental systems
- Data Cleaning

Cyclical and ongoing!



Data Collection System

- **Design**
- **Build and technology**
- **Accessibility and security**
- **Functionality**
- **Data cleaning**



Unique Child Identifier?

- **Unique Pupil Number (UPN) - uses and limitations**
- **A single unique identifier across the education sector?**
- **Future possibility for UPN**
- **Life without a UPN:**
 - Department's National Pupil Database
 - “Fuzzy” matching – living without a unique single identifier
 - Matching accuracy



Lessons Learned

- **Pilot, and consult early**
- **Allow a flexible approach**
- **Be clear on requirements and expectations**
- **Allow for scalability**
- **Establish working groups and consult regularly**
- **Manage timescales and lead in times**
- **Clear project planning**
- **Give something back!**



Other Sources of Data

- **School Census**
- **School Workforce Census**
- **Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)**
- **National Pupil Database**



Research application - Follow-up to the Early Education Pilot

- Policy background
- Impact of original pilot for 2 Year Olds

Next steps

- Assessing impact of the pilot at age 5
 - matched original survey data to NPD
 - used child name, date of birth, gender and postcode
 - 86% of the original sample were matched to the NPD



Some other applications in early years

- Sampling frame for social surveys e.g. Disabled Children's Access to Child Care evaluation
- For monitoring implementation of specific early years policies e.g. free entitlement to early education for 3 and 4 year olds



Evidence base: National Evaluation of Sure Start

- Sure Start Local Programmes developed to improve the life chances of children and their families
- The NESS Impact Study assessed the impact of SSLPs on outcomes in 150 SSLP areas
- Impact measured overall and by demographic sub-group



Evidence base: National Evaluation of Sure Start

- Longitudinal impact study
- Data is collected through a home visit lasting c.90 minutes.
- Comparison group is the Millennium Cohort Study. MCS is carried out 2 years ahead of NESS



Evidence base: National Evaluation of Sure Start

- Key findings when children aged 5
 - positive benefits primarily for mothers and parenting styles, home learning environment
 - some health and behavioural benefits for children
 - no measurable benefits for child's cognitive and educational development



Evidence base: Effective Pre-School and Primary Education

- Longitudinal study, 3000 children aged 3
- Key messages
 - pre-school makes a difference to later outcomes
 - high quality makes the difference
 - effects persist to at least KS 2
 - especially beneficial for disadvantaged
 - home learning environment matters



Future: Evaluation of Children's Centres in England

- Evaluate the impact of Sure Start Children's Centres, also look at provision, use, delivery and reach, value for money
- Will include follow up Foundation Stage Profile matching in 2017 when children aged 5 (using the NPD)



Future: Evaluation of Early Education in England

- Changing early years landscape:
 - 95% take up of free entitlement
 - free entitlement to disadvantaged two year olds
 - universal network of Children's Centres
 - introduction of Early Years Foundation Stage
- New large scale programme of research agreed – will update early years evidence base



Questions?



Department
for Education