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## **A survey of learners' perspectives on the primary and secondary curriculum**

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### **Background**

The main body of the paper will describe the design and results from the third in a series of national learner surveys. These surveys have investigated learners' knowledge, understanding and experiences of the curriculum as they progress through school. Each survey has been designed around a series of core research questions which have now been consistently researched over three years.

### **Research Questions**

The paper will contain an analysis of trends in the following areas:

How do learners see teachers and schools:

- increasing the levels of challenge and inspiration within their learning experiences?
- increasing the degrees of flexibility and choice that they encounter?
- enabling them to think and learn about ways of enhancing their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being?
- developing and supporting their educational and career aspirations?

### **Methods**

The survey will access a representative sample of a minimum of 6,000 learners drawn from both secondary and primary phases. Responses to the survey will also have been discussed in a series of ten focus groups with learners in years 4 - 9.

### **Frame**

This large scale national survey presents a longitudinal study of learners' perceptions of recent curriculum development changes and their impact on learning experiences. For analyses, where there were more than two predictor variables, pair wise comparisons were carried out in minitab (a statistics package) in order to identify where significance lay between groups. The survey findings were further explored during student focus groups which supported increased student participation in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. A popular game format was used to surface their views and support and structure the reflection process. The study aimed at informing policy, knowledge transfer and supporting learner participation and engagement through pupil voice activities.

### **Research findings**

Within each annual survey additional questions have been asked to address issues emerging from current primary and secondary reforms. This year those that will be reported on include:

- the teaching of modern foreign languages (primary);
- narrowing the gap;
- transition between primary and secondary school; and
- resilience/persistence.

## References

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