Data Collection Schedule

This document is intended to give Local Authorities (LAs) and schools a guide to the pattern of data collections/surveys for the year ahead, including both new and ongoing ones. This schedule includes data collections by the DfE and by a number of partner organisations.

The schedule covers a rolling 12 month period and will be updated at regular intervals.

The schedule is not intended to include documents such as applications for grants or test order forms or other forms whose main purpose is not data collection as such.

Layout

The schedule consists of two parts: the list by month and the alphabetical list.

- The list by month consists of a simple grid showing which data collections occur in each month.
- The alphabetical list shows more detailed information on each survey as follows:
  - Survey name;
  - Whether completing the collection is mandatory or optional;
  - The month in which the survey must be returned;
  - The organisation sponsoring the collection. This is usually the DfE but some collections are organised by partner organisations;
  - Sample size – some collections go to 100% of schools or LAs (censuses) and some go to smaller subsets (sample surveys). Schools that have been chosen to be part of a sample will be notified in advance and do not need to prepare for involvement unless they have been contacted about that survey;
  - Collection frequency – annual, termly etc. Those following irregular patterns are termed “ad hoc”;
  - Survey target – the body that information is being sought on. For example LAs fill in parts of the Early Years census but the information pertains to the EY settings rather than the LA. In that case the survey target is the EY setting even though the data is supplied by the LA;
  - Data supplier – the body actually returning the survey forms;
  - Mandatory basis – only applies to those surveys that are mandatory. This may be the legislation or regulations which mandate the data collection or it may be an explanation of why data is required without a specific statutory remit. This is supplied for information only and is not intended as a definitive legal statement of DfE’s powers in this regard;
  - Notes.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and currency of the schedule there will inevitably be some discrepancies as DfE constantly strives to strike the right balance between meeting policy needs and reducing the burden on schools. Therefore we would encourage LAs to regularly check the DfE website for changes in the planned pattern of collections.

This document is aimed at assisting LAs and schools and as such we would appreciate any comments you have that can assist us in meeting your needs. Please send any comments to Simon Grigor (Tel 020 7340 7914), email: simon.grigor@education.gsi.gov.uk).