

Welcome to the PGCE Programme's research bulletin. If you are undertaking any research or professional enquiries, we would welcome the opportunity to share this with the Partnership. You can find more about research across the partnership on the [Partnership website](#), including items/blogs at [Y Llais](#). If you wish to know more about PGCE Programme research activities, please contact Alison Glover (alison.glover@open.ac.uk).

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Children's perceptions of social media surveillance

'People can say stuff that is not true and make other people really scared and not knowing what to do. There are people who get really worried and frightened about using social media.'

Sixteen 10–11 year olds from four schools in South Wales participated in a creative method of collaging, accompanied by interviews. The study explored how the children understood and experienced social media surveillance and how this affected the cultural practices of childhood. Visual combined with verbal analysis found a nuanced picture of how social media surveillance had influenced the children's cultural and social practices of their childhood. Despite the challenges of peer and adult control exemplified, children did demonstrate agency within their digital spaces and demonstrated discernment and self-censorship in terms of perceived physical dangers. Policy implications should involve a stronger emphasis on developing children's emotional resilience and discernment surrounding perceived surveillance.



Remembering learning maths in school

'I always felt in my school anyway, the teachers were more interested in the people who were naturally able to do it and they were at the front, and they got more attention and so the people at the back were, well, I felt like we were just pushed aside.'

Thirteen adult females, who did not achieve Grade C or above in maths describe their experiences of learning mathematics in primary and secondary education. Each participant has considerable mathematics anxiety, which, they reported, resulted in reactions towards mathematics ranging from avoidance to fear and distress. Small group interviews used a narrative methodology to collect and analyse data. Common themes were unsupportive relationships with teachers and memories of being excluded and humiliated. The data suggests their teachers did not see supporting students' well-being as part of their role, resulting in strong negative emotional reactions. It is concluded that where warm, respectful, relationships are built, barriers to learning mathematics can be overcome.

Lee, C. and Morgan, J. (2024) Remembering learning mathematics – we can run but we can't hide, *Teacher Development*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2024.2360134>.



Language trends in Wales

'Seeing my team upskilling is good for students to see because I think with languages, we are all expected to be... perfection and it's not, it is a learning process.'

The findings gathered from 75 primary, 67 secondary schools' and eight post-16 colleges' survey responses, and three interviews with language teachers in Wales in 2023; public examination results were also explored. French is the most popular language taught in primary schools, but in these schools 67% reported staff proficiency in languages as the main concern for meeting the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. A-level French, German and Spanish entries have stabilised to pre-pandemic levels. Schools engage effectively with initiatives to promote language learning such as Routes into Languages, Cerdd Iaith and MFL mentoring.

Duff, S., O'Boyle, A. and Collen, I. (2023) *British Council Language Trends Report Wales 2023*. Available at: https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_trends_wales_2023.pdf.



Sun safety in schools in Wales

'Schools that do not currently have a policy appear to be open to the idea, with 73% indicating they would welcome assistance with policy development.'

This report provides a snapshot of the current situation in primary schools in Wales; it summarises the findings from 471 school responses; 183 (39%) of schools have a formal sun safety policy, with Welsh-medium schools and schools in North Wales more likely to report having a policy. Responding schools with more children receiving free school meals and with lower attendance records were less likely to have a sun safety policy. The main reasons for not having a policy included: 'not aware of the need' and 'need assistance with policy development'. There is inconsistency in formal sun safety provision and primary schools are unaware of the importance of sun safety.

Peconi, J., Lanyon, K., Tod, D., Driscoll, T., Prathap, S., Watkins, A. and Abbott, R.A. (2024) Are Welsh primary schools sunproofed? Results of a national survey, part 1: scoping the landscape of sun safety policies in Wales, *Clinical Experimental Dermatology*, 49, pp. 566-572. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ced/llad458>.



Open University ITE Partnership research activities

Working with student teachers PGCE Wales is currently exploring **reflective practice**. Supported by OU PRAXIS funding a couple of day workshops are planned for student teachers to develop a tool-kit/resources to support reflective practice.

Mentors and student teachers contributed to an important study on **effective mentoring** a couple of years ago, and a publication focusing on the creative research approach applied – using artefacts – is available [here](#). Another recently published paper, with contributions from partner school staff and student teachers, focuses on effective **professional conversations** and is available [here](#).

PGCE team staff contribute to the **Collaborative Research Networks** (CRN) with other Welsh universities; the Equity and Inclusion CRN is delivering a seminar on Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning (DARPL) on Tuesday 18th February (4-5pm), please register [here](#) to attend.

Feeling the untouchable

In collaboration with others, [The Open University](#) has recently been awarded a grant to explore how children could experience and learn about the natural world through touch.

Integrating tactile experiences into the learning process, the project seeks to foster a deeper connection between learners and their environment, making science education more engaging and inclusive.



Using Wales as a case study – the ‘Changemakers’ research project explored improving young adults’ understanding of making political and social change.

[A range of outputs](#) is available about this project and the political understanding of young people in Wales. Other resources linked to the project can be found [here](#).