



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Foras Taighde ar
Oideachas
Educational
Research Centre

PISA

Letter for Parents and Guardians

PISA Field Trial – March to April 2024

OECD Programme for International Student Assessment

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's school has been selected to participate in an international study, PISA, which looks at 15- and 16-year-olds' knowledge, skills, and competencies. In this cycle of PISA, the main focus is on science, but students will also answer questions on mathematics, reading, and a new innovative domain – learning in the digital world. The study is carried out by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) on behalf of, and with support from, the Department of Education.

The study will be conducted in your child's school by Inspectors from the Department of Education and supported by test administrators from the ERC on a date between March and April (2024) that has been agreed with the school. The PISA results will be used to make recommendations for improvements to our education system.

Included in this pack are two information sheets on the PISA study – one for you and one for your child.

The enclosed information sheet provides more information about PISA and what you are being asked to do. If you have any additional queries or concerns about your child's involvement with the study, please email the ERC at PISA.Ireland@erc.ie.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this information.

Kind Regards,

Evelyn O'Connor
Principal Officer
Dept of Education

Anastasios Karakolidis
PISA 2025 National Project Manager
Educational Research Centre



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Information for Parents and Guardians

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OECD Programme for International Student Assessment

What is PISA?

- The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a project of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Over 90 countries are taking part, making PISA the largest study of its kind.
- Since 2000, PISA has been assessing the skills and knowledge of 15 - and 16-year-olds in three areas – science, mathematics, and reading. In this cycle, science will be the main focus and Ireland will also be participating in the innovative domain – learning in the digital world.
- In Ireland, PISA is carried out by the Educational Research Centre (ERC) in Dublin on behalf of the Department of Education.
- A Field Trial will take place between March and April 2024, and the Main Study will take place in 2025. The data collected during the Field Trial will be used to refine the tests and questionnaires for use in the Main Study in 2025. The procedures will also be reviewed and refined based on our experiences with schools that participated in the Field Trial.

How was my child chosen for the study?

In Ireland, 53 post-primary schools have been selected to take part in the Field Trial (different schools will be selected for the Main Study). In each school, 50 students have been picked at random from all students in the school who were born in 2008.

What will my child be asked to do?

Students will be asked to take a test and a questionnaire. Each student will carry out the PISA computer-based test in two of the following four domains (science, mathematics, reading and learning in the digital world - 2 hours), and a computer-based Student Questionnaire (about 1 hour).

The PISA tests consist of 'real-life' tasks that are not connected to the Junior or Leaving Cert. The tests are not based on school subjects.

The Student Questionnaire asks students about their family and home backgrounds, learning environments, attitudes and interests in science, well-being, educational and occupational aspirations, and use of computers.

Students don't need to prepare in advance for PISA.

There is a practice session before the test begins.

However, if students want to look at the kinds of questions that PISA includes, please visit:

<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/test>

How are results used?

PISA is important because it helps us to find ways to improve our education system. We use the information to find out how students in Ireland compare with students in other countries. We also use the results to find out how well our education system is preparing students for life after school.

The OECD will publish international results for PISA 2025 Main Study in 2026. The ERC will publish the national results the same year. Findings from the most recent cycle of the assessment (PISA 2022) are available on our website www.erc.ie/pisa.

All information collected in the survey is confidential and it is not possible to identify individual students, or schools in the database constructed following the study, since numbers, rather than names, are used.

For GDPR information and our data protection declaration, please visit:

<https://www.erc.ie/studies/pisa/gdpr/>

Where can I find out more about PISA?

More information, including results from previous rounds of PISA, is at the PISA national website at www.erc.ie/pisa. International results and reports are at the international PISA website at www.pisa.oecd.org.

If you have any additional queries or concerns about your child's involvement with the study, do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

Caitriona Fitzgerald, PISA National Research Team

Natasha Toole, PISA National Research Team

Anastasios Karakolidis, PISA National Project Manager

PISA 2025, Educational Research Centre, Drumcondra, Dublin 9 D09 AN2F

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Many thanks for your participation and support for PISA.



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Information for Students

PISA Field Trial – March to April 2024

OECD Programme for International Student Assessment

What is PISA?

Your school has been selected to participate in an international study, PISA, which looks at 15- and 16-year-olds' knowledge, skills, and competencies. In this cycle of PISA, the focus is science, but students will also answer questions on mathematics, reading and a new innovative domain – learning in the digital world. The study is carried out by the Educational Research Centre on behalf of and with support from the Department of Education.

How was I chosen?

You were chosen at random! First, we picked 53 schools from across Ireland and then we made a list of all students born in 2008 in each of these schools. We chose 50 students at random from this list.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to take a test and answer a questionnaire in your school sometime between March and April. You will start in the morning and should be finished by lunchtime.

Each student will take a two-hour computer-based test on two subjects from the following list: science, mathematics, reading literacy and learning in the digital world. You will then complete a computer-based questionnaire (about 1 hour).

The PISA tests were put together by experts across the participating countries. They are not based on school subjects – they look at 'real life' situations that you might come across as a young adult.

The questionnaire asks about your family and home background, what you think about science, your well-being, what you plan to do in the future and your use of digital devices.

You don't need to prepare in advance for PISA.

There is a practice session before the test begins.

However, if you want to look at the kinds of questions that PISA includes, please visit:

www.oecd.org/pisa/test

Will anyone see my results?

No! The tests and questionnaires are **totally confidential**. When you finish the assessment, all information is sent to the ERC. We then build a database of results, where you are only identified by a number. We never give information on individuals to others – not schools, teachers or parents.

Your results will be combined with the results of other students to compare students in Ireland **as a group** with students in the other countries participating in PISA.

For GDPR information and our data protection declaration, please see

<https://www.erc.ie/studies/pisa/gdpr/>

Why take part?

PISA is important because it helps us to find ways to improve our education system. We use the information to find out how students in Ireland compare with students in other countries. We also use the results to find out how well our education system is preparing students for life after school.

Where can I find out more about PISA?

More information, including results from previous rounds of PISA, is on the PISA national website at www.erc.ie/pisa. International results and reports are on the international PISA website at www.pisa.oecd.org.

If you have any additional queries or concerns, do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

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Thanks for your participation, it is really appreciated!