

## Accountability and children's outcomes in high-performing education systems

Analytical maps of approaches to measuring children's education, health and well-being outcomes in high-performing educational systems

### What do the researchers want to know?

The research team wished to establish what approaches to measuring children's education, health and wellbeing outcomes existed in countries with high-performing education systems and how these measurements were used.

### Who wants to know and why?

The study aimed to provide an international perspective for policymakers and strategic planners involved in reviewing the types and uses of child outcome indicators as part of an initiative to ensure system-wide improvements in children's outcomes in England.

### What did the researchers find?

Education indicators were most commonly collected. In the main, these covered attainment and participation in education training and employment. Social and emotional development and environmental indicators were also collated, albeit less frequently.

Health indicators were varied in type but found infrequently. Measures included aspects of general public health and healthy lifestyles.

Well-being indicators were also varied in type but not often found. They encompassed perceptions of wellbeing; family environment; relationships and

social participation; education, employment and income; housing, homelessness and environment; and criminal activity.

Outcome indicators were often used for the purposes of monitoring and accountability, although the nature and purposes of these functions varied markedly between systems. Educational indicators were used for monitoring schools and national standards. They were sometimes used as a means of holding individual schools and the education system to account; they also informed the development of policies, as well as school and area improvement. Only two countries reported a broad range of outcomes in a holistic way.

### What are the implications?

The reporting of a broad range of child outcome indicators in a meaningful way that allows policymakers and planners to use them is a serious challenge for most governments; there is considerable policy interest in how this can best be done. Localised accountability at school-level may not be the most productive way to improve the school system as a whole.

### How were these results obtained?

Thirteen countries with high-performing education systems were identified. Through systematic searches of the internet and recommendations from contacts, 109 documents were found, which contributed to summaries of each country's approaches. From this, descriptive accounts were developed, outlining whether, which and how indicators were used.



## Where to find further information

**For more information about the content of this review please contact:**

Professor Chris Husbands  
Faculty of Culture and Pedagogy  
Institute of Education, University of London  
20 Bedford Way,  
London WC1H 0AL

Email: [c.husbands@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:c.husbands@ioe.ac.uk)

**For more information about the EPPI-Centre's systematic review programmes please contact:**

Mark Newman  
EPPI-Centre  
Social Science Research Unit (SSRU)  
Institute of Education, University of London  
18 Woburn Square  
London WC1H 0NR  
United Kingdom

tel: +44 (0)20 7612 6575

fax: +44 (0)20 7612 6400

email: [m.newman@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:m.newman@ioe.ac.uk)

The results of this systematic review are available in four formats:

### SUMMARY

Explains the purpose of the review and the main messages from the research evidence

### REPORT

Describes the background and the findings of the review(s) but without full technical details of the methods used

### TECHNICAL REPORT

Includes the background, main findings, and full technical details of the review

### DATABASES

Access to codings describing each research study included in the review

These can be downloaded or accessed at <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/reel/>

Reports published by the EPPI-Centre in December 2008.

The EPPI-Centre's reference numbers for the reports of this review are 1617T (Technical Report) and 1617R (Report). The full citations are:

#### TECHNICAL REPORT

Husbands C, Shreeve A, Jones NR (2008) Accountability and children's outcomes in high-performing education systems: analytical maps of approaches to measuring children's education, health and well-being outcomes in high-performing education systems. Technical report. In: *Research Evidence in Education Library*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

#### REPORT

Husbands C, Shreeve A, Jones NR (2008) Accountability and children's outcomes in high-performing education systems: analytical maps of approaches to measuring children's education, health and well-being outcomes in high-performing education systems. Report. In: *Research Evidence in Education Library*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

---

This document is available in a range of accessible formats including large print. Please contact the Institute of Education for assistance:

Tel: +44 (0)20 7947 9556 email: [info@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:info@ioe.ac.uk)