

**Value for Money Comparison of Public and Third Sector Provision
of Pre-school Childcare and Education:**

Scoping Study and proposal for stage 2 work

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1 Introduction

This scoping report sets out a way forward for analysis on the Value for Money Comparison of Public and Third Sector Provision of Pre-School Childcare and Education project, which forms part of the wider Quality Measurement Framework (QMF) project. Underpinning the project is the idea that value for money should determine who delivers public services and that the third (voluntary and community) sector has the potential to contribute more than at present.

A recent Treasury discussion paper (HM Treasury, 2005) identified the need to improve the evidence base demonstrating the third sector's contribution to higher quality service provision. The products of this project will help to define what measures and evaluation processes can be used to identify the direct and wider benefits of third sector organisations.

The purpose of this project is to develop effective, but easily usable methodologies and procedures for measuring and assessing the value added of the relevant public services. They will constitute a tool so that service commissioning authorities can assess and monitor the performance of public services delivered by third sector organisations in a way directly comparable with performance of public or private sector providers.

It is important to note upfront, that in the provision of pre-school childcare and education, parents typically have a key role in deciding which provider their child attends. However, there is clearly a role for local authorities to ensure that parents have a choice of different types of provider (see section 8 for further discussions about the role of local authorities).

This scoping report builds on the initial proposal (NIESR 2006) and the preliminary draft literature review (Stokes and Wilkinson, 2007) and is informed by discussions with officials from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), local authorities, academics with experience in early years research and very recently published research.

The primary aim of this report is to review the available data sources and to present a way of carrying out the necessary analysis. The report is deliberately brief with much of the detailed discussion of data sources included in the aforementioned literature review.

2 The original study strategy

The starting point for this scoping study is the original proposal submitted by NIESR in 2006. The study strategy covered the following elements:

- Measurement of child outcomes using Foundation Stage Profile Assessments (FSPA);
- Assessment of pre-school providers using Ofsted reports;

- A survey of parents in a small number of pre-school settings to provide data on family socio-economic circumstances and parental views on the nature of pre-school provision;
- Comparison of costs for these selected providers.

The proposal provided a brief review of available data sources, which led to the positive identification of Ofsted reports and FSPA data for the purpose of measuring provider inputs and child outcomes respectively. However, the proposal also ruled out the use of other data sources, in particular data from the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS). Following early discussions with officials from the DfES, it became clear that further exploration of MCS data was warranted. We were unaware of the planned linkages of other data to the children in the MCS and as outlined below it seems that these linked data allow for much of the required analysis to be based on MCS data.

The primary goal of this scoping exercise is to provide a new in-depth assessment of whether the use of data from the MCS would be appropriate for this study. We identify the strengths and weaknesses of an approach based on MCS data.

The format of this report is to first provide some background information to the MCS and then to re-consider the data for each of the four elements of the study highlighted above, namely: child outcomes, provider assessments, parent and children surveys, and comparison of costs.

3 The Millennium Cohort Study

The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) is the first new birth cohort study in the UK since 1970, and one of the largest studies of its kind. The ESRC-funded study has been operating since 2000 and is following the lives of nearly 19,000 babies born between 2000 and 2002 in the UK.

3.1 The first sweep

The first sweep of the MCS (MCS1) comprises information on 18,818 children, collected when they were around 9 months old. Interviews were conducted with the baby's mother (or other main carer) and father (or other partner of main carer).

The mother or main carer interviews covered a wide ranging of topics including ethnicity and language, the baby's father, lone parenthood, pregnancy, labour and delivery, baby's health and development, childcare, grandparents, friends and social support, parental health, education and training, employment and earnings, housing, community and local services, time with and without the baby and other interests. The interview also included a self-completion element covering baby's temperament and behaviour, relationship with partner, previous relationships, domestic tasks, previous pregnancies, mental health, attitudes to relationships, parenting, work, etc.

The father's or main carer's partner interviews were similarly comprehensive covering ethnicity and language, father's involvement with the baby, lone parenthood, baby's mother (if not resident), grandparents and friends, parental health, education and training, employment and earnings, time with and without the baby and other interests. The self-completion element of the father's/main carer's partner interview

covered baby's temperament and behaviour, relationship with partner, previous partners, previous children, mental health and attitudes to marriage, parenting and work.

Either parent or carer could answer the household module questions, which covered household composition and relationships, children, employment status, caring responsibilities for the baby born in 2000 and language spoken at home.

The above demonstrates that even when the babies were aged nine months there is extremely detailed information about child development and parental background that we could never capture in a survey of parents of children aged three or four, when the data would have to be collected retrospectively.

3.2 The second sweep

The second sweep (MCS2) was carried out with the same respondents when the children were three years of age, mainly in 2004. The survey attempted to follow all the 18,553 families who took part in MCS1 where the child was still alive and living in the UK. It also attempted to make contact with another 1,389 families in England who appeared to have been living in sampled wards at the time of MCS1 but whose addresses reached DWP records too late to be included in the first survey. From the original families, 71 were not issued to the field for various reasons and one family was dropped from the MCA sample altogether. Therefore, the MCS 2 issued sample was 19,870; 18481 were the productive families in MCS 1 and the 1,389 new families.

15,590 of these were productive in the survey which is 78 percent of all MCS 2 families. There were 15,808 cohort members in the 15,590 productive families.

At sweep two, six data collection instruments were used: Main Interview, Partner Interview, Proxy Partner Interview, British Ability Scales, Bracken School Readiness Assessment, Height and Weight. These provided further background information on families and children and particularly important for us child development at age three.

The British Ability Scales (BAS) is a battery of individually administered tests of cognitive abilities and educational achievements suitable for use with children and adolescents aged from two years, 6 months to seventeen years, 11 months. The BAS Naming Vocabulary scale was administered by interviewers to the members of the cohort during the MCS2 data collection.

The Bracken Basic Concept Scale – Revised (BBCS-R) is used to assess the basic concept development in children in the age range of 2 years, 6 months to 7 years, 11 months. BBCS–R measures the comprehension of 308 functionally relevant educational concepts in 11 subtests or concept categories. Following consultation with advisors and piloting, only six subtests were administered by interviewers to the members of the cohort during the MCS2 data collection.

The sub-tests administered together form the Bracken School Readiness Assessment (BSRA). The readiness concepts assessed in these sub-tests are argued to be directly related to early childhood education and to predict readiness for more formal

education. The test is individually administered and suitable for children aged 2 years 6 months to 7 years 11 months.

The MCS data therefore includes considerable data on child development at age three that could be related to child outcomes later on together with further information on parental background.

3.3 The Quality of Childcare Settings in the Millennium Cohort Study

Several subsidiary studies have been conducted along with the main MCS survey data collection exercises, and one of these was concerned with the quality of childcare settings. Pre-school providers for children who were identified to be in a pre-school childcare and education setting in MCS2 were identified.

Providers in each of the nine English Government regions were selected using a clustered sample design. This yielded a sample of 300 group day-care settings. They were visited by a team of specialist pre-school researchers, who collected information on the nature of the pre-school provision being offered by the nurseries, playgroups, pre-schools and nursery schools (Mathers et al. 2007).

Visits to the settings took place between March 2005 and October 2005. Observations of up to a day were conducted in one of the rooms providing for pre-school children between the ages of 3 and 5 years.

Data was collected using four instruments

- The ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised);
- The ECERS-E (Extended Curricular Subscales);
- The CIS (Caregiver Interaction Scale);
- A Centre Manager Interview.

Three of the seven ECERS-R scales were used which measure the quality of personal care routines, language reasoning, and interaction. ECERS-E assesses curricular provision in terms of literacy, mathematics, science and diversity. The CIS consist of 26 items forming four subscales which measure positive relationships, punitiveness, permissiveness and detachment.

The centre manager interview covered a wide range of centre characteristics, but unfortunately, for our purposes, this did not include costs.

3.4 The third sweep

At the beginning of 2006 the third sweep (MCS3) began when children were five years of age. Fieldwork finished in January 2007. Over 15,200 families took part and provisional figures suggest that over 90% of families who took part in both the 9 month and Age 3 surveys took part again at Age 5. In addition, about half of families who had been interviewed at the first survey but not at the second took part at Age 5.

The most important data in MCS3 for our purposes are the cognitive assessments. Four measures of cognitive ability are collected. These include the BAS naming vocabulary subscale (also administered in MCS2), two further BAS subscales, for 'Picture Similarities' and 'Pattern Construction'. The fourth measure is the 'story of Sally and Anne', which assesses whether a child is able to recognise that someone else may hold a different belief from their own.

4 Measuring child performance

4.1 Foundation Stage Profile Assessments

The original proposal identified the Foundation Stage Profile Assessment (FSPA) as our measure of child performance. A FSPA is carried out on all children, being completed in the summer term of the child's first year at primary school so as to indicate their development at that point. They cover a range of issues with some areas having several scales. The issues covered are as follows:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (3 scales)
- Communication, Language and Literacy (4 scales)
- Mathematical Development (3 scales)
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World (1 scale)
- Physical Development (1 scale)
- Creative Development (1 scale)

These assessments are intended to provide a comprehensive picture of each child's development as perceived by educational experts. As such they seem to be useful outcome measures for which we can assess the impact of different pre-school experiences. Their sole disadvantage is that they describe children at the end of their first year in primary school rather than on leaving pre-school education. Hence some of the development measured will be attributable to their primary schooling. However, since substantial resources and expertise would be needed to collect such data earlier, it is sensible to use these readily available measures of development.

As part of MCS3, the name of each child's school will be collected. This will allow us to identify, for English pupils, each child's Unique Pupil Number. This will allow any data collected about the school that the child attends, or the child itself to be linked into the MCS data.

This will enable linkage to the Pupil Level Annual School Census data set held by DfES, which includes school level information, as well as individual pupil performance data. For England, all LEAs collect FSPA data on all their pupils. Thus FSPA results will be matched in to the data files for all the children in the MCS.

This data is expected to be available by the end of 2007.

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have different curricula for children of this age and thus have different assessments. However, the MCS team devised an assessment that was equivalent to the FSPA which was applied to children in the survey living outside of England so that there is a UK wide FSPA type assessment for all children in the MCS.

4.2 Assessment of data availability

In terms of measuring child performance the MCS data will not only provide FSPA results for all children, but it will also provide information at the third sweep on a range of other cognitive ability assessments discussed above. This will allow for a wider assessment of child performance than would be possible under our initial proposal where we only planned to consider FSPA results.

The main drawback is that this data will not be available until the end of 2007. Whilst this may seem a long way off, the original consideration of when FSPA data would be available assumed that we would not get it until July 2008, and hence adopting a MCS based approach would not require any delay to our original timetable.

5 Assessment of pre-school providers

The original proposal set out a plan to study a sample of Ofsted reports so as to establish how far Ofsted's assessments of the different categories of pre-school provider differ. The expectation was to look at about 200 local authority providers and a similar number of voluntary sector providers.

Our discussions with officials from Ofsted indicated that they would be willing to provide a list of facilities inspected recently for use as a sampling frame. These providers would be the basis for the study.

5.1 Data from Ofsted Reports

Following the introduction of the free entitlement to early education in 1998, Ofsted has been responsible for inspecting the quality of education provided by all establishments eligible to deliver this, including the private, voluntary and independent sectors. Furthermore, inspection of early education in maintained nursery schools and nursery classes in maintained primary schools has been carried out by Ofsted since its formation.

Ofsted carries out hundreds of inspections and regulatory visits each week, publishing findings on its' website. It also publishes themed and subject specific findings and recommendations on wider issues within the care, learning, and skills agenda, as well as statistical information.

A new programme of early years inspections commenced in April 2005. From this point onwards, a setting could be judged as:

- outstanding,
- good,

- satisfactory
- or inadequate.

Providers which are deemed inadequate are required to take actions to improve their results and are re-inspected.

All providers of the free entitlement, regardless of sector, are assessed on children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals set out in the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The five outcomes identified in "Every Child Matters": being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being, have formed much of the basis for the framework that Ofsted has used for its inspections of pre-school education since April 2005.

5.2 Assessment of data availability

Ofsted only covers England, and the providers in the Quality of Childcare Settings in the MCS sample are also only based in England, hence this part of the study will have to be based only on data for England.

We have recently been informed that Ofsted data for the providers in the Quality of Childcare Settings in the MCS sample will not be linked to the MCS data. However, we can apply for special license to access details about the providers in this study and with this we can match in the data from Ofsted ourselves.

Using this approach will give us extremely rich data about providers including both data from Ofsted reports and detailed measures for other aspects of provider quality from the MCS sub-study. Thus we will have a richer source of provider quality data than we would have available if we were to rely solely on data from Ofsted reports allowing for more sophisticated analysis.

6 Socio-economic data and parental views

The original proposal outlined a survey of parents so as to identify families' socio-economic circumstances and also to establish parents' views on the nature of the provision, both in terms of the way they perceive their children as interacting with it and the extent to which it facilitates other parental obligations. This will enable us to explore on the one hand whether providers differ in this respect and on the other hand whether any of the differences are identified from the quality assessments in the Ofsted Reports.

The plan was to carry out a survey of children in their final year of pre-school education, in about twenty of the selected providers of each type. This means first that, unless children have moved between providers, parents will have had reasonable time to form impressions of their providers.

Questions on parental views would derive heavily from existing surveys of parents (e.g Bryson et al, 2006). Much of this material is included in the MCS data. One of the primary aims of the MCS was to provide data for sub-groups of children, in particular those living in advantaged and disadvantaged circumstances, hence the

MCS includes extremely comprehensive data on family backgrounds to go with better data than we anticipated about child performance and provide quality.

7 Measuring costs

In line with the other elements of the original proposal, a comparison of costs was planned for a sample of providers initially sampled from Ofsted reports who co-operate in the survey of parents.

The preceding sections of this report have identified improvements in data availability based upon the MCS, relative to our original planned approach, for child performance measures, provider assessments and socio-economic background information.

Unfortunately, this is not the case for data on costs faced by different providers. There is no data on costs for the providers who were included in the Quality of Childcare Settings in the MCS sample. Clearly, this renders impossible a value for money assessment for these providers.

To get an explicit value for money comparison would require a new study of a fresh sample of providers as outlined in the original proposal. However, as noted in the introduction, the project sets out to develop effective, but easily usable methodologies and procedures for measuring and assessing the value added of the relevant public services. Thus it is not necessary to carry out an actual value for money an assessment within this project; rather we need to develop a method for doing so. This could be done by undertaking an assessment of costs for a completely separate group of providers.

8 Local Authorities

Whilst ultimately it is the parents of children that largely determine the provider their child attends, local authorities have some scope for determining the mix of providers in their area. Thus local authorities would be important beneficiaries of this research. Indeed, one of the ultimate aims of this work is to provide recommendations on measures of provider quality and value for money that can be readily accessed by users of their services.

Local authorities have the responsibility to provide pre-school places for children and many local authorities conduct their own audits of childcare needs. This means that they are responsible for expanding the number of places where there is the demand for places as well as ensuring the quality of such provision. In some areas there are capacity problems. There is no remit about the sector that provides such provision.

Furthermore many authorities and providers have their own quality assurance schemes that are often based on those promoted by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It seems important in the context of this research to not only utilise the quality measures used by Ofsted and the MCS, but to understand what underpins the quality assurance schemes used by local authorities. Bringing these three quality measures together should ultimately lead to a fuller understanding of what determines pre-school quality and how it can be measured on a regular basis in a cost-effective way.

9 Summary and Proposed Study Strategy

Our original proposal was to collect new data for a sample of providers sampled from Ofsted reports. Further consideration of the MCS data has highlighted significant advantages in terms of data availability from basing our analysis on the MCS. The third sweep of the MCS includes child performance outcomes that we had not considered in our original proposal as well as linked FSPA data. Furthermore, as well as the possibility of linking data to Ofsted reports there is a detailed provider quality study that will yield useful information for a large number of providers. Data on background family characteristics are also comprehensive in the MCS, and the case for basing our analysis on the MCS is compelling. The only drawback is the lack of cost data for providers.

ONS has clarified that the study does not need to produce a value for money assessment, but to develop methodologies in order to do so. Hence, we believe that a separate study of costs will deliver that objective.

Our brief discussions with local authority employees, who are likely to be the beneficiaries along with parents, of this research, highlights differing practices and approaches to quality assessment and provision of early years services. Furthermore, as primary beneficiaries of the research, an understanding of what outputs would be most useful for them would be beneficial to the study. We feel that part of the research should focus on an understanding of practices in a range of different local authority climates, selected at least in part on the basis of their level of deprivation.

Our proposed strategy then encompasses three elements:

- A comparison of the quality of provision through analysis of MCS data and other data linked to the children in the survey;
- Research with local authorities and other key organisations.
- A cost comparison study;

Whilst in addition we will need to merge in data from Ofsted reports for the 300 providers in the Quality of Childcare Settings study.

9.1 Merging Ofsted data

In order to merge in Ofsted data we will need to apply to the UK Data Archive for a Special License for access to confidential information about the providers in the Quality of Childcare Settings study. With this information we will then ask Ofsted to supply us with recent inspections data for these providers. Given that the new inspection regime runs from April 2005 to March 2008 it is possible that not all providers will have had an inspection since April 2005, so we will need to get inspection reports from the previous round of inspections. We will then update the data as new inspections take place.

9.2 Comparison of quality of provision

Given the large amount of detailed information about provider quality we will need to develop some sophisticated models to compare quality of provision by type of provider.

The simplest types of analyses will assess how the different quality measures correlate with each other. The quality measures under consideration will range from child outcome measures as measured by the FSPA and cognitive and behavioural assessment undertaken in the MCS to the provider input type assessments as measured by Ofsted and in the Quality of Childcare Settings study.

Following this we will develop a range of multivariate analyses for each aspect of provider quality with a full range of control variables taken into account provider characteristics, child characteristics and family characteristics. These will seek to assess whether there are significant differences between the quality of provision between the third sector and the public sector. Again these will cover the full range of quality measures.

Our main measure of quality, however, will be based around the child outcome measures which are collected after completion of pre-school education. Thus we will be able to assess the extent to which the various provider input measures determine child outcomes. The child outcome measures will begin with an assessment of the FSPA type measures, but we will also give some consideration to the outcome measures covered under the Every Child Matters framework.

One of the final challenges to this analysis will be to try to boil down provider quality into a single measure using a weighting scheme to rate the importance of different aspects of quality. This will be extremely challenging. We will attempt to do this by considering evidence from the Childcare and Early Years Provider survey series which collected detailed information on provider characteristics and fees charged by providers to get an assessment of how charging varies with the characteristics of the provider. The idea here is that if providers can charge a higher fee for having a specific characteristic then that characteristic should have a higher weight when creating a single quality measure.

The analysis will focus primarily on the children in the setting covered in the MCS sub-study assessing quality of childcare settings. Thus it covers a little over 600 children in roughly 300 settings across England.

Separate analysis of the full MCS sample will also be conducted, but this will not be able to control for the quality of provider inputs. However, results from this analysis can act as a benchmark for the independent impact of other factors on child performance for a much bigger sample of children.

9.3 Research with local authorities and other key organisations

The final element of the research will involve some case studies with 11 selected local authorities together with a small number of interviews with key people at Ofsted and charities with a special interest in early years' provision.

The Local Authorities will be selected to cover a range of economic circumstances to ensure some coverage of deprived areas that will have access to different types of funding, which are specifically targeted at them. Eight of the local authorities will be in England with one each in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The research will seek to gain a better understanding of how the mix of providers evolves in different areas; capacity issues experienced in each area; the nature of the quality assurance schemes they employ; and the types of outputs that would be beneficial for them from this type of research.

We will conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with people who have responsibility for early years' policy in each authority, as well as interviews with Business Development Officers (BDO) in each authority. The BDOs help providers to develop business capabilities in line with the requirements of the free places under consideration.

We also think it will be extremely valuable to conduct interviews with key people responsible for early years' inspections at Ofsted, as well as policy officials with some of the key charitable organisations with early years' experience. At this stage, we envisage that this will include the Pre-School Learning Alliance, the Daycare Trust and the National Childminding Association.

9.4 Comparison of costs of provision

This part of the study will draw on experience in related studies (e.g. in assessing Surestart) that has shown that it is not always easy to identify the costs faced by different providers. Providers who receive money from a range of different sources may be concerned that if one funder were fully aware of the magnitude of other forms of funding then some funds might be lost. This militates against clarity in the representation of both income and expenditure.

For the purposes of understanding which type of provider offers better value for money to the tax-payer it can be argued that output relative to publicly-provided funds is more important than output relative to total costs. However if one wishes to assess the overall social efficiency of different forms of provision, then it is necessary to look at resources from all sources, including appropriate costing of volunteer time.

We will develop a semi-structured cost survey to be undertaken in a face-to-face interview with provider managers. This will take place in four of the selected local authorities with six providers selected in each area, ensuring a mix of organisations. The analysis will build on the interviews with the local authority officials.

10 Timetable and Outputs

Developing a precise timetable is difficult when much of the research relies on data from the MCS, which is not yet available. Below is an outline of the work required and broad timetable for each of the elements of the study.

10.1 Merging Ofsted data

Work to merge in Ofsted data will begin in June 2007 with approaches to the UK Data Archive, the MCS research team and Ofsted. It is a little unclear how long this process will take and the form in which the data will be available.

We have allowed six months for this to take place to cover any problems with the process. If permissions are granted quickly and the data is supplied by Ofsted in a readily usable form then this time will be considerably shorter. However, we have allowed for the possibility of having to input data by hand from Ofsted reports.

Months	Activity
June 2007	Apply for Special License Discussion with MCS team Discussion with Ofsted
July - November 2007	Merge in Ofsted data

The output here will be an anonymised dataset with Ofsted inspection report information for the 300 providers in the MCS quality of childcare settings study linked into the MCS data. This is expected to be available by the end of November 2007.

10.2 Quality Comparison

Work on the quality comparison has already started with preliminary analysis and understanding of the MCS data. Given the complexities of the data a considerable amount of time is required for data set up and this will be the focus of the work over the first few months. We will attend a two day course which introduced users to the data at the end of June.

The third sweep of the data together with data from quality of childcare settings study is expected to be available in August 2007, so a new round of data set up will take place when that data is made available.

The linked FSPA data is expected at the end of 2007, and by then we expect to have linked in the Ofsted data, so that early in 2008, we will have all the data required for analysis.

The outputs here will be a fully merged dataset by the end of January 2008; a descriptive analysis report by March 2008; and a final analytical report by the end of December 2008.

Months	Activity
June - August 2007	Attend training course Set up data from MCS1 and MCS2
September – October 2007	Set up data from MCS3 and the quality of childcare settings study
November 2007- December 2007	Conduct preliminary descriptive analysis
January - February 2008	Set up data from linked FSPA
March 2008	Produce report on preliminary descriptive analysis
April – August 2008	Conduct multivariate analysis
September – October 2008	Produce first Draft report
November– December 2008	Revise and complete final report

10.3 Research with local authorities and other key organisations

The research with local authorities will start in July 2007 and would last for 12 months. It would entail:

- Selection of local authorities to participate in the research
- Making contact with local authorities and identify key people responsible for early years policy.
- Developing topic guides for interviews
- Examination of policy documents
- Conduct interviews with person responsible for early years policy.
- Coding and analysis of interviews
- Reporting.

Months	Activity
July - August 2007	Set up meetings

	Make contact with LAs and other organisations
September 2007	Design and revise topic guides
November 2007- January 2008	Conduct Interviews
February – March 2008	Code Interviews
April – June 2008	Analysis and Reporting

The outcome from this part of the research will be an analytical report completed by June 2008.

10.4 Comparison of costs

The comparison of costs would follow once the local authorities had been identified, because their support for this part of the research would be valuable. This work would last roughly nine months and would entail:

- Selection of providers
- Making contact with selected providers
- Developing a cost survey for all providers
- Analysis of survey data
- Reporting

Months	Activity
October – November 2007	Set up meetings Make contact with providers
September – December 2007	Design and revise survey/ topic guides
January – March 2008	Conduct Interviews
April– May 2008	Code Interviews
June – August 2008	Analysis and Reporting

The outcome from this part of the research will be an analytical report completed by September 2008.

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Appendix A Timetable

	2007							2008							2009							
	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
MERGING OFSTED DATA																						
Apply for Special License	*																					
Discussion with MCS team and Ofsted	*																					
Merge data		*	*	*	*																	
Check data																						*
MERGED DATASET																						*
QUALITY COMPARISON																						
Training Course	*																					
Set up MCS1 & MCS2	*	*	*																			
Receive MCS3 and quality study data				*																		
Set up MCS3 and quality study data				*	*	*																
Get linked FSPA data										*												*
Set up linked FSPA data										*			*									*
Descriptive analysis and reporting						*	*	*	*													
MERGED										*												*

DATASET																								
REPORT																								
				2007										2008								2009		
	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M		
Multivariate analysis										*	*	*	*	*										
Write draft report																*	*							
Revise report																		*	*					
REPORT																						*		

RESEARCH WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER KEY ORGANISATIONS

Set up meetings	*																					
Sample LAs	*																					
Make contact with Las	*	*																				
Design topic guides			*																			
Conduct Interviews						*	*	*														
Code interviews									*	*												
Analysis and reporting											*	*	*									
REPORT													*									

COMPARISON OF COSTS

Sample providers			*																			
Make contact with providers			*	*																		
Design survey / topic guides			*	*																		
Conduct Pilot				*	*																	
Revise survey / topic						*																

guide																							
Conduct Interviews								*	*	*													
				2007									2008									2009	
	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	
Code interviews											*	*											
Analysis and reporting													*	*	*	*							
REPORT																							*
DISSEMINATION																							* * *
