

***Project Title: Building Resilience in Children. The CUES-Ed research project: randomised controlled trial of the CUES for schools programme.***

*INFORMATION SHEET for headteachers/senior leaders – V3 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022.*

*Ethical Review Reference Number: HR/DP-21/22-28344*

Dear Headteacher and school senior leadership team,

We would like to invite your school to take part in a research project to evaluate a new resilience-building digital programme for primary schools (7-10 year olds) called CUES.

Before you decide whether you want your school to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Please take time to read the following information carefully. It should take about fifteen minutes.

If you have any questions or would like more information, then please contact the research team on [cues.ed@slam.nhs.uk](mailto:cues.ed@slam.nhs.uk) and one of us will go through the information sheet with you and answer any questions you have.

Talk to other people about the project if you want to.

- Part 1 tells you the purpose of this project and what will happen if your school takes part.
- Part 2 gives you more detailed information about how the project will be carried out.

Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. You will be given a copy of this information sheet.

**PART ONE: About the CUES for schools programme and the CUES-Ed research project**

**What is CUES and who we are:** CUES is an interactive digital programme aiming to teach primary school children about emotional well-being and resilience. We want to know if children will learn to eat well, sleep well, and balance being active with relaxing, as well as understanding and managing their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. We have tried to make the programme fun, using friendly and appealing characters. The programme follows the National Curriculum and has been developed by the CUES-Ed team. We are a team of health professionals and researchers from the South London and Maudsley National Health Service Foundation Trust and King's College London.

**What is the CUES-Ed research project and why my school?** We want to find out if the CUES digital programme is helpful for children. This needs a large study, with lots of schools. We are asking schools all over London and the surrounding area if they would be interested in participating. There are two parts: what we are asking if schools agree to and what we are asking if parents and children agree to.

**How will you tell if CUES is helpful?** Some schools will do CUES straight away, some schools will do CUES later in the school year, or the following school year.

For all schools taking part, whether they are having CUES now or later, teachers will complete brief ratings of how their class behaves (e.g. paying attention, getting on together). The ratings take around 20 minutes to complete and teachers will complete them twice, at the start and end of the study. The teacher rating contains no personal information about anyone and is agreed by the school; parents and children cannot opt-out of this.

Children will complete quizzes about their learning from CUES, their thoughts, feelings, behaviour and coping, and how they are doing at school and home (on a 0-10 scale). The quizzes include puzzles, designed

by the CUES-Ed team to be fun. Lots of children have filled them in and have enjoyed doing them. They include scenarios about understanding and coping with emotions and common perceptual experiences (like hearing your name called when nobody is there). The purpose is to assess common day-to-day emotional and behavioural difficulties for children that might affect them in the classroom. We do not ask about any specific mental health problems or risks.

The questions take around 15-30 minutes to answer, and children will complete all of them twice, at the start and end of the study, and one questionnaire three times, after 8 weeks as well. A member of the research team will be available to support this, by a remote link.

We will compare children's ratings and class ratings for schools doing CUES now and schools not doing CUES yet to see if there is a difference. Which schools do CUES now and which schools do it later will be decided randomly, a bit like tossing a coin. This means the study is a randomised controlled trial.

**What will my school be doing:** We are asking if you agree for the following aspects of the project.

- 1) For your school to be randomly allocated to receive CUES now or later. Later means later in the school year, or the following year. The exact timing can be negotiated with the CUES-Ed team.
- 2) For teachers of Year 4 children to use the digital programme to teach CUES, now or later, according to the school's allocation. If 'later' is the following school year, this will mean Year 5 teachers teaching CUES. Children will learn CUES for around an hour each week in three 20-minute sessions. CUES sessions will be in the normal school day, in the usual classroom. Children will be given materials and activities aiming to help their learning. They will be encouraged to share and practise their learning with parents at home. The programme is designed to be fun and interactive, with friendly characters. Once they have completed the programme each child will be provided with a hard copy workbook and there is a website they can visit from home. Teachers will receive a short video training in how to deliver the programme. Teachers will rate themselves on their completion of CUES lessons. We will not make any audio or video recordings of the class.
- 3) For teachers to rate the behaviour of their class twice, at the start of the study (0 weeks), and after 16 weeks. They will rate the class as a whole, not any individual child. The rating takes around twenty minutes and contains no personal information about anyone.
- 4) For teachers to facilitate giving out and collecting quizzes for children, at the same time points (0 and 16 weeks), with one questionnaire also given at 8 weeks, and ensure that children complete these as privately as possible.
- 5) For teachers to ensure throughout the study that if anything of concern is raised by a child or made apparent through their responses or behaviour, the school will follow their usual procedures for addressing this. Children's responses should otherwise be treated as confidential.
- 6) For teachers to record children's attendance during the study, and particularly, the dates of and attendance at CUES sessions, and pass this on to the research team, without identifying details for each child.
- 7) For the school to allow teachers to make an independent decision about their own participation, and communicate with the research team, without being influenced by the school, and without their decision impacting on any aspect of their employment at the school.
- 8) For the school to send information sheets and covering letters to parents. We will ask parents to opt-out if they do not want us to use their child's answers to the quizzes and questions in the research to find out if CUES is helpful. Administering the opt-out process will entail:

- a. Sending letters to parents by the usual school system
  - b. Acting as a first contact point for parent queries, which can then be passed on to the research team if the school prefers
  - c. Ensuring that any information about CUES given to parents is consistent with the parent information sheet, and in particular that parents make their decision regarding opt-out freely, with no impact on any other aspect of their involvement with the school or influence from the school regarding their decision
- 9) For the school to manage any parental requests for children to be fully withdrawn from CUES sessions or from completing the quizzes. We ask that schools manage this in the way they would usually manage a request to withdraw a child from a lesson. However, parents must not be made to feel that their child has to do CUES, and every effort should be made to avoid children not taking part in CUES feeling stigmatised in any way. Children not taking part in CUES must be provided with an alternative classroom-based active learning activity. A note of the number of these requests and the arrangements made should be kept and passed to the research team. The research team can assist with this process if preferred.
- 10) For teachers to administer the assent process for children, with support from the research team by remote link. Child assent forms are included with the quizzes for children to indicate if they agree for their answers to be used by the CUES-Ed team to find out if CUES is helpful. Teachers should ensure that any information they give to children about CUES is consistent with the child information sheet, and in particular that children make their decision regarding participation freely and privately, with no impact on any other aspect of their involvement with the school or influence from the school regarding their decision. Quizzes will be passed on to the CUES-Ed research team so that those with parent opt-out or without child assent can be securely and confidentially destroyed, without the research team seeing the child's responses. The remainder will be used for the research.
- 11) For teachers to manage any child requests to withdraw from a CUES lesson or from completing the quiz. As for parental requests to withdraw, we ask that schools manage this in the way they would usually. Children must not be made to feel that they have to do CUES or the quizzes, and children not taking part in CUES must be provided with an alternative classroom-based active learning activity. A note of the number of these requests and the arrangements made should be kept and passed to the research team. The research team can assist with this process if preferred.
- 12) For the school and teacher to adhere to the research timetable and protocol in teaching CUES and completing the teacher class ratings and child quizzes. The timetable is for teachers to complete the first class rating and children to complete the first quiz a week after parents and children are informed of the study. After this, the school will be advised whether they have been randomised to be teaching CUES now or later. Schools teaching CUES now need to start the programme within a month of children first completing the quizzes. Teacher ratings and quizzes will need to be completed again after sixteen weeks, with one questionnaire completed additionally at eight weeks. This will be the case for schools receiving CUES now and those still waiting to receive CUES later. Once all the ratings and quizzes are completed, schools waiting to receive CUES later can start the programme.

**How will information from the school and children be used in the research?** The CUES-Ed team will keep a database of each school participating in the study, with teacher ratings of class behaviour, and the self-rating of teachers' delivery of CUES sessions. We will not keep any personal or other information about teachers. We will collect data on child attendance and the number of children attending each CUES session from the teacher. If children agree and parents do not opt-out, we will also keep children's quiz booklet answers in a database, with their age, and sex.

### **Data handling and confidentiality (how we will keep the information)**

Data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018).

Paper or electronic consent forms for headteachers, teachers, and parents and children's paper assent forms will only be kept for those agreeing to take part, and otherwise will be confidentially destroyed. They will be kept separately from the data, without any identifying number, in the CUES team office, which is kept locked and is in a secure building accessible only to staff at the South London & Maudsley Denmark Hill site, and will be confidentially destroyed at the end of the study (31<sup>st</sup> January, 2024).

Children's answers will be kept on paper and as an electronic file.

Papers will be kept in the CUES team office, which is kept locked and is in a secure building accessible only to staff at the South London & Maudsley Denmark Hill site, and will be identified only by a number and initials, not by children's names. Children's names will be kept separately, with the number, on paper, so that we can find a child's answers if we need to (for example, if the parent or child decides they no longer want to be part of the study). We will only identify children's answers for a reason like this. Children's details will be kept until the end of data collection for the study (31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023), and then will be confidentially destroyed.

In the electronic file, we will use a number, rather than children's names and no initials. We will keep all the information until the end of the project which we expect to be 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. After then, we will remove any information that could identify children (like the name of the school) and just keep their booklet answers, their age and sex. We would keep this database indefinitely. It will be stored securely in a King's College London server-based data repository. Data in the repository will be fully anonymous and can be shared with other researchers with permission. Our reports of the study will be fully anonymous.

King's College guidance will also apply to the study data, which may be monitored or audited by responsible individuals from the College.

### **Data Protection Statement**

If you would like more information about how study data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection laws please visit the link below:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

If you would like a printed copy of the information, please ask us.

**What if the school or staff change their minds about taking part?** If the project has already started, it will be difficult to change this without an impact on parents and pupils, who may have had expectations of the delivery of the CUES programme, that may not be met if the school withdraws. It will be possible for schools or staff to change their minds about participating until letters are sent to parents. After this, withdrawal would ideally require careful discussion with the research team to minimise any impact on parents or pupils. If teachers change their mind about participating, we ask that that wherever possible the school finds another teacher who will be willing to participate in the CUES-Ed study. You should let the research team know if you change your mind, or a member of your staff changes their mind.

**What if parents or children change their minds?** They can let us know they have changed their minds until the end of data collection for the project (31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023). We will remove the child's information from the database. We will not be able to remove them from any evaluation we have already done. After the end of the study, we will not be able to identify individual children, so it would not be possible to remove their data.

**What if I say no, and do not want my school to take part?** Your school will not be part of the study and you will have no further contact about the study from the CUES-Ed research team. Taking part is completely voluntary; there will be no disadvantage to the school in any other contact with our services if you decide not to take part.

**What if parents or children say no to the research?** We will confidentially destroy the booklets if a parent or child says they do not want us to use their answers. We will not keep any record relating to the child individually. We will still use teacher ratings of the class, which contain no personal information about anyone. We will only use children's answers if children agree and parents do not opt-out.

**Who has approved the study?** The study has been approved by the King's College London, College Research Ethics Committee (KCL CREC).

**What will you do with the research?** We will tell schools what we find out about CUES and help schools to share this with parents and children (for example, by newsletters). We will write reports for our organisations and for academic journals, so that other people know about what we have found. Any information for schools and in reports will be fully anonymous.

**How do I tell you whether I agree or not?** Please complete the consent form attached to this sheet.

**This completes Part 1 of the Information Sheet.**

**If the information in Part 1 has interested you and you are thinking about agreeing for your school to take part, please continue to read the additional information in Part 2 before making any decision.**

## **PART TWO: Further details about the CUES-Ed research project and what happens if there is a problem**

**Is there any risk from taking part?** We do not think CUES is harmful in any way. We want it to be helpful and it has been designed to be fun. The programme and booklets are designed for children, by researchers with many years' experience working with children. They ask about day-to-day experiences that may impact on classroom behaviour. We do not expect them to be distressing. If any child is distressed in any way by taking part, please contact us directly ([cues.ed@slam.nhs.co.uk](mailto:cues.ed@slam.nhs.co.uk)). The programme is also designed to be taught by teachers. We do not expect CUES to cause difficulties for schools or staff, but if it does, please tell us.

**Are there any benefits of taking part?** We hope that the children will enjoy taking part in the study and will learn some useful ways of coping with day to day stresses. We hope teachers will learn new (or refresh existing) knowledge and skills. We hope that taking part will enhance the school curriculum. The CUES project is to find these things out.

**What happens when the project stops?** When children and teachers have finished taking part in the research, they will carry on as usual with their school year. We expect the project to run until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024, and we cannot guarantee that the programme will still be available after this.

**What if relevant new information becomes available?** Sometimes we get new information during a project. If we find out anything new about the CUES programme or the booklets which means they might be harmful in any way, we will tell the school and parents at once.

**Who should I contact for further information?** If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact us using the following contact details: [cues.ed@slam.nhs.uk](mailto:cues.ed@slam.nhs.uk).

**What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?** If this project has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

**The Chair, Health Faculties Research Ethics Sub-Committee** [rec@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:rec@kcl.ac.uk)

**Who is organising and funding the research?** The research is organised by the CUES-Ed team, who are members of academic and clinical staff at the South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and King's College London. The research is funded by The Monday Trust Charity and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

**Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.**