

## Tips by Text: Engaging Parents in Early Learning

*This project is a collaboration between the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), Qa Research and the University of Oxford.*

### Summary

- We are inviting state primary schools (Reception classes) in the **North West, London, South East, and Yorkshire and the Humber** to take part in an innovative project testing a digital curriculum delivered to parents at home to improve language, literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional skills.
- A version tested in the US improved literacy by approximately +2 additional months' progress.
- Tips by Text involves parents/carers receiving three texts per week for nine months. Messages are sent by BIT and contain simple activities for parents/carers to do with their children at home.
- We have limited spots for this project. **If you are interested in participating or finding out more, [please book a call now](#).** We look forward to hearing from you soon!

### What?

Tips by Text is a nine-month curriculum adapted in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP).

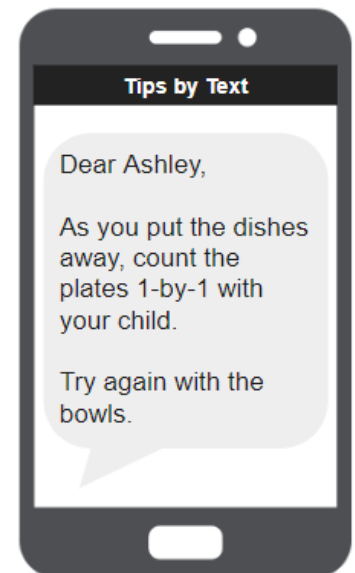
Parents will receive three text messages weekly, sent by BIT, which contain tips for specific and easy to implement activities designed to improve language, literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional skills. Each week messages will centre on a particular topic like letter recognition, counting or managing emotions. An example text message is outlined in the image on the right.

A US study has already tested a version of the curriculum with positive results - the programme improved literacy outcomes of the children whose parents/carers received the messages by the equivalent of +2 additional months' progress.

### How?

We are testing the impact of Tips by Text on pupil outcomes using a randomised controlled trial (RCT). This means the curriculum will be delivered to half of the parents/carers of reception children in each participating school. These parents will be chosen at random in October 2024 so that some parents will receive the texts and other parents from the same school will not receive the text.

It is important that staff are made aware that parents who do receive the texts must not share them with any other parents as this may affect the results of the research.



If any parents ask about how or why they were selected to receive the intervention text messages, staff should reassure them that they have been chosen randomly and this has nothing to do with a child's ability.

### When?

We won't start sending text messages until **October 2024**, but the number of school places is limited so sign up today!

### What are the benefits to my school?

By participating in this study your school will receive:

- **Potential improvements in EYFSP results:** the curriculum has the potential to improve pupils' attainment;
- **Free tips** for parents to build their child's language, literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills at home; and
- The opportunity for your school to **work with the EEF to build groundbreaking evidence** on what works to improve educational outcomes for all children.

### What will it cost my school?

Participation is **free**. All costs will be covered by the EEF.

### How much time will be required?

The curriculum itself will be implemented entirely by BIT; school staff will not be required to undergo any training, send any text messages or provide ongoing support to parents regarding the text messages.

Schools will be required to:

- Send out a parent information letter, which will include the option for parents to withdraw themselves or their child from the study;
- Provide school, pupil and parent level data;
- Facilitate pre and post testing in schools, delivered by Qa Research (the trained assessors); and
- Participate in a short online survey at the start and end of the project.

### How will the programme be evaluated?

We will use a mix of short assessment tests and qualitative feedback from teachers and parents to evaluate impact. All reception pupils at your school will receive a pre and post test (standard assessments of language skills and self-regulation which combined will take no longer than 20 minutes per child). External researchers will come into your school to deliver these assessments in September 2024 and June/July 2025, at a time and date that has been arranged with you.

## How will data sharing work?

Participating schools will be required to provide pupil data (including pupil name, date of birth, unique pupil number) to facilitate the evaluation and enable linkage to the National Pupil Database. Schools will also need to provide parent data (parent name, email address and mobile telephone number) for BIT to send the text messages, and so that parents can be contacted to participate in the surveys and interviews that will form part of the evaluation.

All personal data collected as part of the study will be treated with the strictest confidence by the project team and processed only in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. BIT has run research studies in more than 500 schools nationwide complying with GDPR since May 2018.

Further details about the precise roles of each member of the project team in relation to the processing of personal data will be included in a Memorandum of Understanding, project privacy notice and information sheet for parents which we will share in due course.

## Project team

This is a major study, and several different organisations are collaborating on it. They are:

- **Behavioural Insights Team (BIT)** - *The main organisation your school will have contact with during this study* - BIT is a social purpose company that applies insights from behavioural science to improve public policy. BIT is owned by the innovation charity Nesta.
- **The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR)** - *One of the project's independent evaluators* - NIESR is a charity and Britain's longest established independent research institute.
- **The Institute for Employment Studies (IES)** - *One of the project's independent evaluators* - IES is an independent, international centre of research and consultancy in education, public employment policy and organisational human resource management.
- **Qa Research** - *The project's test administrators* – Qa are an independent research organisation who have substantial experience of working with schools to carry out pupil assessments.
- **The University of Oxford (UO)** - *Conducting secondary analysis* - Researchers at OU will conduct secondary data analysis once the project has completed.
- **Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)** - *Funding the study* - The EEF is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. They run projects which test the efficacy of education interventions to generate new evidence of what works.

## Key dates/timeline

Month	Activity
Jan 2024 - July 2024	Schools sign up to the project (first come, first served!)
Sept 2024	Schools send the information sheet to parents and submit pupil and parent data
Sept/Oct 2024	In school pre-testing (NIESR and IES)
Oct/Nov 2024 - after half term	Delivery of texts to your reception parents begins (BIT)
Jul 2025	Delivery of texts to your reception parents ends (BIT)
Jun/Jul 2025	In school post-testing (NIESR and IES)
Summer 2026	Results of project published (EEF)

## Next steps

We have limited spots for this project. **If you are interested in participating or finding out more, [please book a call now](#).** We look forward to hearing from you soon!