

Evaluation of the REACH primary (reading with comprehension) reading support programme

Submission date	Recruitment status	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
24/07/2019	No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date	Overall study status	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
29/07/2019	Completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited	Condition category	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
20/12/2021	Other	

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

REACH Primary is a programme to support struggling readers. It is delivered by trained Teaching Assistants to individually targeted pupils over a period of 20 weeks during the 2019/20 school year. The project is being run by a team from the University of Leeds, and evaluated by the Sheffield Institute of Education.

Who can participate?

Pupils and Teaching Assistants in schools in the North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humber and Lincolnshire regions of England.

What does the study involve?

Schools were required to identify ten year-3 pupils that are working below the expected standard in reading, and nominate two teaching assistants to deliver the one-to-one support (if randomised into the intervention group). Schools will then be randomly allocated to either receive REACH Primary or to act as a 'Business as Usual' control school.

The evaluation will measure the impact of the REACH Primary programme on reading through a standardised test and secondary measures of decoding and language comprehension. The intervention is delivered over twenty weeks through 3 x 30 minute sessions of individual Teaching Assistant support per week for each participating pupil for a 20-week period. Two sessions per week will focus on word recognition/ decoding skills and reading aloud fluently and accurately. The third session targets language comprehension skills. Control schools operate on a business as usual basis.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Participating pupils in the intervention group will receive a structured programme of individual support, delivered by Teaching Assistants in school and during school hours, which has the potential to improve their progress in reading. Pupils in control schools will continue with whatever support is provided by their school on a business as usual basis. The support sessions will be delivered by Teaching Assistants employed by the school, so pupils will not be in contact with unknown adults. Risks to pupils therefore appear to be negligible.

Where is the study run from?
Sheffield Hallam University, UK

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2019 to February 2021

Who is funding the study?
Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

Who is the main contact?
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Contact information

Type(s)
Public

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Additional identifiers

Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)
Nil known

ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)
Nil known

Protocol serial number
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/reach-primary/>

Study information

Scientific Title
Reading with comprehension (REACH) primary, a two-arm cluster randomised trial of a targeted reading support intervention for pupils aged eight

Acronym

REACH Primary

Study objectives

The REACH Primary targeted reading support intervention is associated with better reading attainment among participating pupils when compared with a business-as-usual control condition

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 11/02/2019, Sheffield Hallam University Ethical Review Committee (SSH-ResearchEthics@shu.ac.uk) ref: ER12082254

Study design

Multisite cluster randomised trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Reading

Interventions

Multisite CRT with three levels (school, TA and pupil). Randomisation took place at school level. A total of 79 schools were randomised within five geographical hub areas. 40 were allocated to the intervention and 39 to the control condition. Intervention schools nominate two Teaching Assistants for CPD, which includes three days of training and remote support during the study period.

The intervention is delivered over twenty weeks through 3 x 30 minute sessions of individual Teaching Assistant support per week for each participating pupil for a 20-week period. Two sessions per week will focus on word recognition/ decoding skills and reading aloud fluently and accurately. The third session targets language comprehension skills. Control schools operate on a business as usual basis.

Randomisation was stratified to ensure balance between the intervention and control groups on two school-level controls; geographical hub area and KS1 reading score. The first stratifying variable was geographical region, the five categories are 1) Yorkshire and Humber (North) 2) Yorkshire and Humber (South) 3) North East 4) Lincolnshire and 5) Greater Manchester.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

Reading comprehension measured using the GL New Group Reading Test (NGRT), a well-established, multiple-choice test for pupils aged 6 - 16. The digital adaptive version of this test

will be used. Baseline tests taken during May 2019 (KS1 Reading). Outcome tests conducted as the pupils are toward the end of Y3 (May-July 2020).

Added 17/12/2020:

The outcome testing period was delayed until November 2020 due to COVID-19. Some participating schools reported difficulty in supporting pupils to complete the testing before Christmas due to absences and hygiene protocols, so it was agreed that testing would continue into January 2021.

The NGRT was the original choice for primary outcome measure. Pilot testing during late 2019 showed that this test was not ideally suited to the programme, and it was agreed that the Reading Comprehension subtest of the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (3rd edition for teachers) would become the primary measure. Data was collected from November 2020, with test administrators employed by the evaluation team testing pupils over video calls. Participating pupils were in Y4 by this time, and began the test at the starting point for age 8. The test is scored on a scale from 0-42. The baseline measure remains KS1 Reading.

Key secondary outcome(s)

Tests conducted as the pupils are toward the end of Y3 (May-July 2020):

1. Word recognition/decoding measured using the GL Diagnostic Test of Word Reading Processes (DTWRP).

This has three sets of items that pupils read aloud, 1) 30 exception words which provide a measure of lexical-semantic processes 2) 30 non-words which provide a measure of phonological recoding processes 3) 30 regular words which can be read by either process.

2. Language comprehension measured using the Understanding Spoken Paragraphs subscale of the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF -5). Pupils listen to short spoken passages, and after each passage orally respond to a series of comprehension questions.

Added 17/12/2020:

The outcome testing period was delayed until November 2020 due to COVID-19. Some participating schools reported difficulty in supporting pupils to complete the testing before Christmas due to absences and hygiene protocols, so it was agreed that testing would continue into January 2021.

Completion date

01/02/2021

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Schools in the North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humber and Lincolnshire regions of England.

Participant type(s)

Mixed

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

780

Key exclusion criteria

1. Schools outside of travelling distance of the training locations
2. Pupils with no KS1 baseline data

Date of first enrolment

01/03/2019

Date of final enrolment

18/07/2019

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

Sheffield Hallam University

10101 Arundel Building

Sheffield

United Kingdom

S1 1WB

Sponsor information

Organisation

Education Endowment Foundation

ROR

<https://ror.org/03bhd6288>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Charity

Funder Name

Education Endowment Foundation

Alternative Name(s)

EducEndowFoundn, Education Endowment Foundation | London, EEF

Funding Body Type

Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be stored in a non-publicly available repository. After the project ends, data will be transferred to the EEF data archive, which is only accessible by researchers commissioned by EEF to conduct meta-analysis of EEF data. Participants are informed of archiving requirements at the start of the evaluation.

IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in repository

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Funder report results		16/12/2021	20/12/2021	No	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes