

Independent evaluation of the EasyPeasy programme

Submission date 21/11/2017	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 21/02/2018	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 01/11/2019	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

EasyPeasy is a smartphone app for parents of pre-school aged children. It is designed to improve early child development through increasing positive parent-child interactions and learning at home. The app sends regular game ideas to parents that they can play with their children, combined with a text schedule which includes information on child development and an explanation of each of the games. Research suggests that the attainment gap between the richest and the poorest pupils begins at an early age; early intervention at this stage, specifically in tailoring the activities parents do with their children, can have a positive impact on cognitive ability and later life outcomes. Whilst stimulating activities may help children with specific skills, it may also develop the child's ability and motivation towards learning more generally. A previous study reported that EasyPeasy led to moderate positive effects on parenting self-efficacy and on children's cognitive self-regulation (parental reports), an increase in parental consistency with discipline and boundaries, and improvements in child concentration and persistence (parental reports). The main aims of this study are to evaluate the impact that EasyPeasy has on the development of children aged three and four years old in terms of their language communication development, behaviours related to their social and emotional development and self-regulation, and their home learning environment.

Who can participate?

Children aged 3+ and due to enter Reception class in the academic year 2018/19

What does the study involve?

Nursery classes are randomly allocated to one of two groups. The intervention group are offered the EasyPeasy programme for 20 weeks. EasyPeasy provide the app for the parents and the webinar training for the Pod Leaders. Those nursery classes allocated to the control group continue as usual. Language communication development, behaviours related to social and emotional development and self-regulation, and home learning environment are all assessed before and after the intervention.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Benefits of participating in this study include potential improvements in language development, children's behaviours related to their social and emotional development and self-regulation, as well as the home learning environment. There are no risks of taking part in this study.

Where is the study run from?

School of Education at Durham University in collaboration with York Trials Unit, University of York (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

June 2017 to June 2018

Who is funding the study?

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) (UK)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Lyn Robinson-Smith

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Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

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Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number

IRAS number

ClinicalTrials.gov number

Secondary identifying numbers

CRE175

Study information

Scientific Title

Independent evaluation of the EasyPeasy programme: a two-arm five-month randomised controlled trial

Study objectives

Implementing the EasyPeasy programme with children aged three and four years old, has a positive impact on their language communication development, behaviours related to their social and emotional development and self-regulation, and their home learning environment, compared to not offering the EasyPeasy programme.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Durham University School of Education ethics committee, 31/08/2017

Study design

Multicentre pragmatic two-armed cluster randomised controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Secondary study design

Cluster randomised trial

Study setting(s)

School

Study type(s)

Other

Participant information sheet

Not available in web format, please use the contact details to request a patient information sheet

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

State-funded schools (in areas of high deprivation), with nurseries that have provision for children 3+. Children are due to enter Reception class in September 2018.

Interventions

Randomisation will be implemented at nursery level, all children who have consent to participate will be tested at two pre-assessments (prior to randomisation): Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals Preschool 2 UK (CELF- Preschool 2 UK) and Child Social Behaviour Questionnaire (CSBQ). Nurseries will be randomised to one of two study arms: intervention or control.

Schools allocated to the intervention arm of the study will nominate the Pod Leader to manage the participation and contribution to the trial. Their parents are allocated to receive the EasyPeasy Intervention (five months duration). EasyPeasy is a smartphone app for parents of pre-school aged children. It is designed to improve early child development through increasing positive parent-child interactions and learning at home. The app sends regular game ideas to parents that they can play with their children, combined with a text schedule which includes information on child development and an explanation of each of the games.

Nurseries randomised to the control arm will continue with usual nursery provision.

At the end of the trial, all children, in both control and intervention groups, who were tested per-intervention will be re-tested by the two assessments, CEFL and CSBQ, post-intervention.

Intervention Type

Mixed

Primary outcome measure

Expressive and receptive language skills, measured using the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals Preschool 2 UK (CELF- Preschool 2 UK) pre- and post-intervention. Pre-assessment has been scheduled for December 2017/January 2018, and the post-assessment from June to July 2018.

Secondary outcome measures

1. Children's self-regulation and social-emotional development measured using Child Social Behaviour Questionnaire (CSBQ) pre- and post-intervention
2. Changes to the home learning environment assessed using Home Observation and Measurement of Environment (HOME) pre- and post-intervention

Overall study start date

01/06/2017

Completion date

04/06/2018

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Eligible schools will ideally be located in areas of high deprivation with an average ever-Free School Meal percentage of > 30 overall
2. Eligible schools will ideally be state funded whose child population includes children who are three years old
3. Eligible schools should not have been involved in the previous EasyPeasy intervention
4. Eligible schools should be willing to agree to randomisation and all of the other study requirements outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding
5. Participating parents should have a smartphone to install EasyPeasy app
6. Participating children should be due to start Reception class in September 2018

Participant type(s)

Other

Age group

Child

Sex

Both

Target number of participants

120 nurseries (1560 children)

Total final enrolment

1205

Key exclusion criteria

1. Schools that have been previously involved with the EasyPeasy programme
2. Nurseries in the intervention group that do not nominate a Pod Leader
3. Nurseries that are not willing to agree to randomisation and all of the other study requirements outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding
4. Children who are not three years old at the start of the intervention and are not due to start Reception in September 2018
5. Children whose parents/carers do not provide opt-in consent

Date of first enrolment

01/09/2017

Date of final enrolment

31/10/2017

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

England

United Kingdom

Study participating centre

School of Education, Durham University

Leazes Road

Durham

United Kingdom

DH1 1TA

Study participating centre

York Trials Unit

University of York

York

York

United Kingdom

YO10 5DD

Sponsor information**Organisation**

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)

Sponsor details

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Sponsor type

Charity

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

Publication and dissemination plan

The protocol is available on the EEF website: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Protocols/Round_11-_EasyPeasy_Evaluation_Protocol.pdf

The main report for the evaluation project will be published in December 2018 by Education Endowment Foundation and will be available on their website. The EYFSP report will be

published at the beginning of 2019. Other academic papers will be published in a high-impact peer reviewed journal as yet undecided.

Intention to publish date

01/12/2018

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be stored in a non-publically available repository. This will be the Education Endowment Foundation's data archive managed by FFT. This data will follow a standard form and will include: a pupil identifier, school identifier, information about pupil context (gender, date of birth/age at testing, free school meals status), treatment allocation (intervention or control), attainment test data at pre and post assessment (CELF scores), pupil self-regulation data at pre and post-test (CSBQ scores) and home visit scores at pre and post-test (for subsample of 50 participants). The data in this archive will be used by the funder to look at the long-term impact of this intervention (and others) on future educational outcomes using the National Pupil Database. The data may also be analysed by the funder (or those the funder has given access to) to confirm or conduct additional analyses on the data. Opt-in consent from participants' parents has been obtained for the transfer of the participants data to the Education Endowment Foundation's data archive for longitudinal follow up and additional analysis. Access to the data would be via the Education Endowment Foundation and FFT. Additionally, an anonymised dataset with reduced information will also be shared with FFT for inclusion in a publically available repository via the UK Data archive. This will include an ID for participant and school but care will be taken to remove any method of identifying individual schools and participants. Age at pre-test to the nearest month will be the only age identifier. Further information on the specifics of anonymisation and how this data will be accessed will be made available at a later date.

IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in repository

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Funder report results	results		01/11/2019	No	No