

An evaluation of the KiVa Anti-Bullying programme in Welsh Schools

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Registration date 10/06/2013	Overall study status Completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Last Edited 04/03/2021	Condition category Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

This study will assess the effectiveness of a school-based intervention called KiVa an anti-bullying programme. KiVa aims to reduce rates of bullying through a concrete set of universal and targeted school-based activities. It was developed in Finland by Professor Christina Salmivalli at Turku University. It has been evaluated in a large study in Finland, between 2007 and 2009, in both primary and secondary schools. Over 8,000 pupils were involved, with 39 schools implementing the programme and 39 continuing with their existing anti-bullying action plans or policies. The results indicated that KiVa was effective at reducing bullying, particularly in the mid to late primary school years and led to further roll-out of the programme across Finland. One KiVa unit has been delivered in a small pilot study in Wales over the last year (2012-2013) to test the acceptability of the programme and teachers have responded positively to it. The study we are proposing is important because, despite a number of Welsh Government led strategies and events to raise awareness and provide guidance for schools on anti-bullying policies very little evidence-based intervention or practical provision, such as teacher training, has been delivered in Wales. This study of KiVa will provide much-needed data on its effectiveness in this important area. Our main aim is to study the impact of the KiVa bullying prevention programme in primary schools in Wales, focusing on bullying and victimisation rates, childrens social and emotional well-being, and childrens school attendance rates. We are also examining the programmes impact on childrens school connectedness and on teachers stress and strategies for managing bullying.

Who can participate?

All children in participating schools will be included in the universal provisions and the KiVa lessons will be delivered to all pupils on the full time register in Years 3-6 (aged 7-11 years).

What does the study involve?

We will randomly allocate 22 schools to an intervention group or control group. The 11 intervention group schools will be trained to provide the KiVa intervention during the first year of the project (2013/2014) and the second group of 11 schools will commence delivery in the second year (2014/2015). The second group will act as the control group at the end of the first year.

During the first year the class teachers in intervention schools will use the KiVa materials to

deliver 10 two-hour monthly class lessons (the 11 control group schools will continue their usual practice during this period). As part of these lessons pupils will play web-based games to enable them to experience bullying situations in a virtual, online environment, and schools will have additional resources, including posters to remind pupils and staff that they are a KiVa school. Parents will receive information on KiVa through a website, leaflets and a parent meeting. Bullying incidents will be dealt with by a designated KiVa team in each school (consisting of, for example, a teacher, school nurse and/or educational psychologist), who will facilitate individual discussions with pupils involved in bullying incidents. The class teacher will encourage pro-social peers of the victimised classmate to support them. During the second year of the study the control group schools will be trained to provide the KiVa programme. Members of the research team will work with all the schools to ensure that KiVa is implemented properly. We will provide all KiVa materials, training (one day for all teachers and associated school staff) and coaching (three sessions for all teachers). We will undertake observations of the way in which KiVa is being implemented to see how schools are delivering the programme and to examine differences and similarities in delivery across different school contexts (using a semi-structured checklist). We will conduct focus groups with teachers and other school staff, with pupils and their parents from KiVa schools and with policy makers and advocates concerned with anti-bullying work to find out their experiences of the KiVa programme. Both sets of schools will have programme costs funded for two years, at the end of which schools will need to decide whether to continue to implement KiVa using school funds or by seeking alternative grant funding.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The potential benefits to participating schools include reduction in rates of bullying and victimisation, improved social and emotional well-being of the pupils, and improved attendance. There are no known risks to participating schools or pupils.

Where is the study run from?

The study is run from the Social Research Unit at Dartington UK in collaboration with the Centre for Evidence-Based Early Intervention at Bangor University, The Bangor Trials Unit (NORTH), the Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation (all at Bangor University) and the Childrens Early Intervention Trust, a registered charity also based at Bangor University.

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

Funding for the project began on 1st April 2013, since which time work has focused on school recruitment. The trial start date will be the date on which 22 schools confirm their participation, expected to be start of May, at which point randomisation will be undertaken. The study is funded till September 2016.

Who is funding the study?

The Big Lottery Fund, UK, is providing the bulk of the funding to cover the period April 2013 - July 2015. Additional funds provided by the Childrens Early Intervention Trust have been pledged to support a PhD student throughout the study and will enable the longer-term 36-month follow-up.

Who is the main contact?

Principal Investigator: Dr. Nick Axford (naxford@dartington.org.uk)

Co-Principal Investigator: Dr. Judy Hutchings, FBPsS, OBE (j.hutchings@bangor.ac.uk)

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

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Contact details

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Additional identifiers**Protocol serial number**

BI/1/010430196

Study information**Scientific Title**

A randomised controlled trial of the KiVa anti-bullying programme in twenty two primary schools across Wales

Acronym

KABiWS

Study objectives

It is hypothesised that relative to the control group children in the programme group (i.e. receiving KiVa) will show:

1. Reduced bullying behaviour
2. Reduced victimisation experiences
3. Improved social and emotional well-being
4. Improved school attendance
5. Improved school connectedness

It is also hypothesised that relative to the control group teachers in KiVa schools will show:

1. Improved strategies for managing bullying
2. Reduced stress

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

School of Psychology Ethics and Research Committee, Bangor University, 30/05/2013, reference: 2013-9162 KiVa Anti-Bullying Programme: The BIG Lottery Welsh Randomized Controlled Trial

Study design

Single-centre parallel cluster randomised controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Bullying behaviour, victimisation experiences, school attendance, deficits in social and emotional wellbeing

Interventions

Randomisation will be undertaken by the North Wales Organisation for Randomised Trials (NORTH) at Bangor University (with stratification to take account of school size and the proportion of children on free school meals).

The KiVa programme comprises activities for pupils aged 7-11 in primary schools to prevent bullying and activities to tackle incidents of bullying. The universal elements of the programme include 10 monthly two-hour class lessons, interactive web-based games, and school-wide materials to remind pupils and staff about KiVa principles. Class lessons are delivered by the teachers and include discussion, video films and exercises performed in pairs and small groups. They cover a variety of topics related to group interaction and group pressure, the mechanisms and consequences of bullying, and, especially, what the students can do together in order to counteract bullying and support their victimised peers. The web-based games enable children to experience a bullying situation in a virtual, online environment and learn about the effect on the other participants following the choices that they make. School materials include posters and highly visible vests for staff who are supervising at breaktimes. There are also parent materials and a parent website. The universal element seeks to influence group norms and help all children to support victims and discourage bullying. The targeted parts involve individual discussions with pupils involved in perpetrating bullying incidents, facilitated by the school KiVa team. At the same time the class teachers work with high-status pro-social peers of the victimised child, encouraging them to support the victim.

The waiting list control group schools will continue their usual practice during the first year of the project and will be trained to deliver the intervention for September 2014 after the 12-month follow-up (in June 2014). Schools in both conditions will have all programme costs funded for two years.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

These measures will be administered/collected at baseline in June 2013, at 12-month follow-up in June 2014, 24-month follow-up June 2015 and 36-month follow-up in June 2016. They will be administered to all children in Years 2-6 (Year 2 children will become Year 3 in the September and therefore will be receiving the class lessons):

1. Social and emotional well-being measured by the teacher-completed Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ; Goodman, 1997)
2. Rates of bullying, victimisation and perceived bullying measured using the child self-report Bullying and Victimization Questionnaire (Kärnä et al., 2011 based on Olweus, 1996)

3. Days of pupil authorised and unauthorised absence measured using school attendance records.

Key secondary outcome(s)

These measures will be collected at baseline, 12-, 24- and 36-month follow-up:

1. Pupils connectedness to their school measured using the child self-report School Connectedness Scale (SCS; Resnick et al., 1997)
2. Consistency of schools handling of bullying incidents measured using the teacher-completed Handling Bullying Questionnaire (HBQ; Rigby, 2012)
3. Teacher stress measured using the teacher-completed Teacher Stress Inventory (Boyle et al., 1995)

Completion date

30/09/2016

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Primary schools within Wales (headteacher consent is required)
2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 (Years 2-6, aged 6-11 years) for data collection and Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6, aged 7-11 years) for programme delivery (parent consent is required for data collected to be used in the trial)
3. Key Stage 1 and 2 teachers in participating schools for data collection, and Key Stage 2 teachers for programme delivery

Participant type(s)

All

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

7 years

Upper age limit

11 years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

21

Key exclusion criteria

1. Secondary schools, special educational schools and any schools outside Wales
2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 or Foundation stage (with the exception of Year 2 pupils for whom child- and teacher-report measures will be collected in June prior to moving to Year 3 in the following September)

Date of first enrolment

09/05/2013

Date of final enrolment

30/09/2016

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre**The Social Research Unit**

Dartington

United Kingdom

TQ9 6AB

Sponsor information

Organisation

The Social Research Unit (UK)

ROR

<https://ror.org/00shbds80>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Charity

Funder Name

Big Lottery Fund (UK) (ref: BI/1/010430196) - major source of funding

Alternative Name(s)

BIG

Funding Body Type

Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Other non-profit organizations

Location

United Kingdom

Funder Name

Children's Early Intervention Trust - additional funds

Alternative Name(s)

Ymddiriedolaeth Ymyrraeth Cynnar Plant

Funding Body Type

Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Other non-profit organizations

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Not provided at time of registration

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article	results	01/07/2020	04/03/2021	Yes	No
Protocol article	protocol	01/02/2016		Yes	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes