

# Evaluating the effectiveness of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) for children with autism

**Submission date**  
29/07/2005

**Recruitment status**  
No longer recruiting

☐ Prospectively registered

☐ Protocol

**Registration date**  
17/08/2005

**Overall study status**  
Completed

☐ Statistical analysis plan

☒ Results

**Last Edited**  
16/09/2009

**Condition category**  
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

☐ Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

Not provided at time of registration

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Scientific

### Contact name

Prof Patricia Howlin

### Contact details

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## Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number

IRAS number

ClinicalTrials.gov number

Secondary identifying numbers

TGT 4/TGT39

# Study information

## Scientific Title

## Study objectives

Training in PECS will result in significant increases in rate of use of PECS symbols, rate of social initiations, and scores on language tests.

## Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

## Ethics approval(s)

Not provided at time of registration

## Study design

Randomised controlled trial

## Primary study design

Interventional

## Secondary study design

Randomised controlled trial

## Study setting(s)

Other

## Study type(s)

Treatment

## Participant information sheet

## Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Autism

## Interventions

Intervention: Training children to use the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) in schools.

It is a randomized group trial of immediate intervention, versus delayed intervention, versus no intervention (assessment only).

## Intervention Type

Other

## Phase

Not Specified

## Primary outcome measure

Increase in use of PECS symbols; increase in rates of social initiations

**Secondary outcome measures**

Increase in scores on tests of language expression and comprehension (Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test, & British Picture Vocabulary Scale)

**Overall study start date**

01/01/2003

**Completion date**

31/12/2005

**Eligibility****Key inclusion criteria**

Children meeting diagnostic criteria for autism; aged 5-9 years; enrolled in full-time, specialist education; either no spoken language or expressive language limited to single words; not using PECS beyond Stage 1.

**Participant type(s)**

Patient

**Age group**

Child

**Lower age limit**

5 Years

**Upper age limit**

9 Years

**Sex**

Both

**Target number of participants**

90

**Key exclusion criteria**

No exclusion criteria with regard to IQ, social class, ethnicity etc.

**Date of first enrolment**

01/01/2003

**Date of final enrolment**

31/12/2005

**Locations****Countries of recruitment**

England

United Kingdom

**Study participating centre**  
**Dept of Community Health Sciences**  
London  
United Kingdom  
SW17 0RE

## Sponsor information

**Organisation**  
St George's University of London (UK)

**Sponsor details**  
Tooting  
London  
England  
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**Sponsor type**  
University/education

**ROR**  
<https://ror.org/040f08y74>

## Funder(s)

**Funder type**  
Charity

**Funder Name**  
Three Guineas Trust (UK)

## Results and Publications

**Publication and dissemination plan**  
Not provided at time of registration

**Intention to publish date**

**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? |
|---------------------------------|---------|--------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <a href="#">Results article</a> | results | 01/05/2007   |            | Yes            | No              |