

Evaluation of Unitas: TextNow Transition Programme

Submission date 09/04/2013	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	☒ Prospectively registered ☐ Protocol
Registration date 25/04/2013	Overall study status Completed	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☒ Results
Last Edited 18/03/2019	Condition category Other	☐ Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims?

Generally, there is significant international activity in relation to reading for pleasure support and book gifting programmes, utilising substantial amounts of financial and human resources. There are limited rigorous evaluations of these programmes. Some have been subjected to a high standard of evaluation including: the Reach out and Read programme which provides a suite of reading support and education services, and includes the provision of free age-appropriate books; the Little Books programme which combines book gifting and literacy support between home and school; and several Booktrust book gifting interventions (Bookstart, Bookstart+, Booktime, and the Letterbox Club).

This proposed study will use rigorous evaluation to investigate a programme called TextNow which combines book gifting and reading support for children in their transitional summer in which they move between primary and secondary schools.

Who can participate?

Approximately 30 secondary schools in England, each working with one or more of their feeder primary schools, will take part in the evaluation. For each participating secondary school, approximately 20 children currently in Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) of their feeder primaries will be invited to take part. Informed consent will be requested from the participants parents. Parents will also be prompted to discuss the research with their child before they provide consent. A total of 600 children will be recruited.

What does the study involve?

Unitas will deliver their TextNow Transition Programme to 300 of the 600 pupils between May and December 2013 (the intervention group). The remaining 300 children will receive no intervention during the time period (the control group).

Children in the intervention group will receive the TextNow Transition Programme, which includes the following two elements:

1. A literacy programme with mentor led 1:1 coaching sessions occurring 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week. This will occur at two time points: year six of primary school (for five weeks); and at the beginning of the first year of secondary school (for ten weeks). Mentors usually are: teachers; teaching assistants; non-teaching staff such as technicians or admin staff; parents; university students; community volunteers; or older year group pupils (usually Years 10-13).

Schools are free to timetable the sessions whenever suits them best. This could be achieved through withdrawal from lessons, during registration/tutor periods or in break/lunchtime/after school.

2. Access to the online resource MyChoice will be made available to the intervention group pupils during the transition summer holidays. MyChoice aims to support the pupils independent reading. The website has news, quizzes, competitions etc., to engage the young people in fun activities to do with reading, as well as giving them access to a book store. They will have been given credits to choose books for summer holiday reading at the beginning of the pilot and will earn credits during the five week programme in Year 6 and the ten week programme in Year 7 through their attendance. These credits can be used to buy books for reading at home and to build their own personal library.

Children in the control group will receive no intervention during the summer period but will be given vouchers to buy books on completion of the evaluation.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

There are potential benefits on literacy outcomes for intervention group. All participants (control and intervention) will receive vouchers for free books.

There are no anticipated risks of participating in the study.

Where is the study run from?

The study will take place in 30 secondary schools located across England and will be coordinated by the partners in the research team who are based at the Centre for Effective Education in Queens University Belfast and the Centre for Education and Inclusion Research in Sheffield Hallam University (UK).

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

The study will start in February 2013 and will be finished in April 2014.

Who is funding the study?

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) are funding the cost of programme delivery and evaluation.

Who is the main contact?

Dr Liam OHare (Trial Manager)
l.ohare@qub.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

Prof Paul Connolly

Contact details

69-71 University Street
Queen's University Belfast
Belfast
United Kingdom

Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title

A randomised controlled trial evaluation of the Unitas: TextNow Transition Programme for improving reading outcomes among children in transition between Primary and Secondary school

Acronym

UTNTP

Study objectives

1. What is the impact of the programme, at post-test, and following the delivery of the programme, on reading outcomes for participating children?
2. Is the programme having a differential impact on children depending on:
 - 2.1. Their gender?
 - 2.2. Their socio-economic status?
3. Does the impact of the programme vary significantly with any variations in implementation found?

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

School of Education Research Ethics Committee, Queens University Belfast and Sheffield Hallam University Ethics Committee, 25/03/2013, ref: AM/SW/13

Primary study design

Interventional

Study design

Randomised controlled trial

Study type(s)

Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Improving reading outcomes

Interventions

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The role of the mentor is to support the three TextNow core principals of 'choose, enjoy and understand'. This could include discussion about what the child has been reading, what they enjoy reading as well as what the mentor has read. It would also involve shared reading, questioning for comprehension, practice of strategies such as skimming and scanning. Other suggested activities are visual and kinesthetic activities such as storyboarding or role-playing.

Schools delivering the programme will designate a member of staff as the programme coordinator (usually a teacher/senior leader/librarian/HLTA) and select the volunteer coaches. These might include teachers, teaching assistants, non-teaching staff such as technicians or admin staff, parents, university students or community volunteers.

It is intended that access to MyChoice consolidates the pupils 'choosing' skills as they browse the books, read the associated information, look inside at font, layout and images and read a few pages. They can add books to their wish list/basket and purchase some of these using their earned credits.

Children in the control group will receive no intervention during the summer period but will receive vouchers to buy books on completion of the evaluation.

Intervention Type

Other

Phase

Not Applicable

Primary outcome(s)

1. Increases in assessed literacy ability. The New Group reading test will be used as a post-test reading ability measure. <http://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/new-group-reading-test>
2. KS2 results (standardised national school literacy assessment) will act as a pre-test measure.

Key secondary outcome(s)

Improvement in reading attitudes - Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS Readers and Reading: the National Report for England 2006 see appendix 7) will be used as a post-test literacy attitudes measure (reading for pleasure). KS2 results (standardised national school literacy assessment) will act as a pre-test measure.

Completion date

30/04/2014

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Year 6 primary pupils making the transition to the 30 secondary schools
2. Only pupils identified not likely to achieve level 4, or likely to achieve a fragile level (4b or 4c), in English by the end of KS2 (by teacher assessment), as KS2 data will not be available before the project is implemented.

Participant type(s)

Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

Pupils with assessed difficulty likely to achieve at or lower than level 2

Date of first enrolment

01/05/2013

Date of final enrolment

30/04/2014

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

Northern Ireland

Study participating centre

69-71 University Street

Belfast

United Kingdom

BT7 1HL

Sponsor information

Organisation

Queen's University Belfast (UK)

ROR

<https://ror.org/00hswnk62>

Funder(s)**Funder type**

Charity

Funder Name

Education Endowment Foundation

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?
Funder report results	results	01/10/2014		No	No