

Evaluation of Grammar for Writing

Submission date 13/07/2017	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 11/08/2017	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 21/11/2022	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

The aim of this study is to assess how effective the Grammar for Writing programme is at improving the writing skills of Year 6 pupils. Grammar for Writing is a way of teaching writing that assumes that rather than teaching grammatical rules in the abstract, teachers should help pupils to understand how linguistic structures convey meaning. The programme is designed to be delivered by teachers as standalone units of work or as a series of units within a whole class setting. Each unit is around 4 weeks' worth of work. A previous study looked at whole-class and small-group delivery of one unit adapted for Year 6 after Key Stage 2 SATs assessments. However, this found only limited effects. This evaluation of Grammar for Writing focuses on whole-class delivery of two units of Grammar for Writing during Year 6.

Who can participate?

Year 6 teachers and pupils at schools that have not have taken part in the previous Grammar for Writing study or introduced the programme previously

What does the study involve?

Participating schools are randomly allocated to one of two groups: either the intervention group or the control group. Year 6 teachers in the intervention group schools receive 4 days of training and deliver two units of work to their Year 6 classes. Teachers in the control group schools teach Year 6 writing using 'business as usual' methods. The pupils in both groups undertake two writing assessments from past Key Stage 2 (KS2) SATs (pre-2013) at the end of the Summer term 2017. Their KS2 scores for reading, writing and spelling, punctuation and grammar from the Summer 2017 assessments are also collected from the National Pupil Database (NPD). Key Stage 1 English results are also collected from the NPD. Teachers undertake a short online survey and grammar quiz at the beginning and end of the study.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Pupils may benefit from an improvement in their writing skills. There are no anticipated risks as the programme has been tested previously.

Where is the study run from?

The programme is delivered by the University of Exeter and Babcock LDP (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2016 to October 2017

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

Who is the main contact?
Dr Louise Tracey

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Dr Louise Tracey

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Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
Evaluation of the Grammar for Writing programme – a school-level randomised controlled trial

Study objectives
The aim of this study is to independently assess whether the Grammar for Writing programme, delivered to Year 6 pupils leads to improvements in children's writing skills.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
The Education Ethics Committee, University of York, 04/04/2016, ref: 16/18

Study design
Two-armed effectiveness randomised controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Teaching writing

Interventions

Schools are randomly allocated to intervention or control conditions. Randomization will be at the school-level to reduce the possibilities of diffusion which could occur with an in-school design. Schools were stratified by region (North-East/not-North-East) and then randomised using minimisation on a 1:1 allocation within region. Randomisation was conducted and recorded using MinimPy software (Saghaei & Saghaei, 2011).

1. Year 6 teachers in intervention schools receive 4 days of CPD and deliver two units of the Grammar for Writing programme to their Year 6 classes
2. Teachers in control schools teach Year 6 writing using 'business as usual' methods

The children (control and intervention) will undertake two writing assessments from past Key Stage 2 (KS2) SATs (pre-2013) at the end of the Summer term 2017. Their KS2 scores for reading, writing and spelling, punctuation and grammar from the Summer 2017 assessments will also be collected from the National Pupil Database. Key Stage 1 English results will also be collected from the National Pupil Database to act as a baseline measure. Teachers will undertake a short online survey and grammar quiz at the beginning and end of the study.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

Combined results of two tasks from past Key Stage 2 (KS2) writing assessments (pre-2013) independently administered to children in Year 6 classes in evaluation schools by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) in June 2017

Key secondary outcome(s)

Year 6 children's Key Stage 2 assessment scores on each element of literacy (writing; reading; grammar, punctuation and spelling) in Summer 2017. This data is collected nationally and will be accessed through the National Pupil Database

Completion date

20/10/2017

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Eligible schools will not have taken part in the previous Grammar for Writing trial or have implemented the programme previously
2. All Year 6 teachers and Year 6 pupils in eligible schools
3. Half of schools will be from the North East and the other half will come from across the rest of

England

4. There will be a high proportion of disadvantaged schools (on average 29% EverFSM as defined in the National Pupil Database)

Participant type(s)

Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

7239

Key exclusion criteria

1. Although they do not have to be two-form entry, very small schools (fewer than 20 Year 6 pupils) will be kept to a minimum
2. Schools who have implemented the programme previously
3. Parental opt-out for use of pupil data

Date of first enrolment

04/04/2016

Date of final enrolment

05/10/2016

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

University of Exeter

Knightley

Streatham Drive

Exeter

United Kingdom

EX4 4PD

Study participating centre

University of York
Berrick Saul Building
University of York
United Kingdom
YO10 5DD

Sponsor information

Organisation

Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

ROR

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

Funder(s)

Funder type

Government

Funder Name

Education Endowment Foundation

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be stored in the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) data archive subject to the agreement of the Department for Education. The EEF intends to have an open data policy whereby this data will be accessible for research purposes.

IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in repository

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Funder report results		01/02/2019	29/03/2021	No	No
Protocol (other)			21/11/2022	No	No