

Evaluating the effectiveness of the RILL literacy with language intervention for primary-aged children in English and Welsh

Submission date 20/01/2026	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	☒ Prospectively registered ☐ Protocol
Registration date 22/01/2026	Overall study status Ongoing	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☐ Results
Last Edited 22/01/2026	Condition category Other	☐ Individual participant data ☒ Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Many children find learning to read difficult, particularly if they have weaker language skills. The Research-Informed Literacy with Language (RILL) programme is a structured literacy intervention designed to support children aged 7–9 years who are struggling with reading. Previous studies (efficacy study <https://www.isrctn.com/ISRCTN14821945>) have shown that RILL can improve children's vocabulary and reading skills. This study will evaluate an updated version of the programme, which is delivered over a longer period and uses online lesson materials.

Who can participate?

Children aged between 7 and 9 years old who have the lowest ReadingScreen scores at participating primary schools

What does the study involve?

The study will take place in primary schools across Wales and will be run separately in English and Welsh. All children in participating classrooms will complete a short reading screening assessment in the language of their education. Children with the lowest reading scores will be invited to take part in the study.

Children who take part will be randomly allocated to one of two groups. One group will receive the RILL programme, delivered in small groups by trained teaching assistants during the school day for 20 weeks. The other group will continue with their usual classroom teaching during this time. This group will be offered access to the RILL programme after the study assessments are completed.

Children's reading skills will be assessed before the programme begins and again at the end of the 20 weeks. The study will examine whether children who receive the RILL programme make greater improvements in reading skills than those who receive usual classroom teaching.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The researchers expect children receiving the RILL intervention to improve their language skills

and possibly also improve their reading skills. The findings will help determine whether the RILL programme should be made more widely available in schools across Wales. The researchers do not expect any risks from taking part in this study. All activities are educational, age-appropriate, and carried out within the normal school environment.

Where is the study run from?
Bangor University, Wales

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
January 2026 to July 2026

Who is funding the study?
Llywodraeth Cymru (Welsh Government)

Who is the main contact?
Prof Manon Jones, manon.jones@bangor.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific, Principal investigator, Public

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Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
An evaluation of the efficacy of the RILL literacy with language programme for primary-aged children: two randomised controlled trials in English and Welsh

Acronym
RILL

Study objectives

The primary objective is to evaluate whether the RILL literacy with language programme leads to improvements in reading ability in children aged 7–9 years compared with business-as-usual classroom teaching.

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 03/12/2025, School of Psychology & Sport Science AREC (Brigantia Building Bangor University, Bangor, LL572AS, United Kingdom; -; seniorresearchgovofficer@bangor.ac.uk), ref: 1211

Primary study design

Interventional

Allocation

Randomized controlled trial

Masking

Blinded (masking used)

Control

Uncontrolled

Assignment

Parallel

Purpose

Treatment

Study type(s)

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Lower reading performance

Interventions

This is an interventional effectiveness study - children are randomly allocated using stratified random sampling to one of two arms (intervention/business as usual). There is one two-arm RCT in Welsh and one two-arm RCT in English.

This effectiveness study is very similar to a previous efficacy study (<https://www.isrctn.com/ISRCTN14821945>), but is at a much larger scale to see how the programme fares when rolled out across Wales.

The RILL programme is a 20-week literacy and language intervention delivered by trained teaching assistants in small groups. The programme consists of 40 structured lessons targeting vocabulary, oral language, decoding, and reading comprehension skills.

Eligible children are identified using ReadingScreen and randomly allocated within classrooms to either the intervention or control group, with allocation minimised by age and baseline reading performance.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

1. Reading ability measured using the ReadingScreen assessment score (word reading and nonword reading subtests) at baseline (pre-intervention) and post-intervention

Key secondary outcome(s)**Completion date**

24/07/2026

Eligibility**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Children aged 7–9 years attending participating primary schools
2. Identified as having the lowest reading scores within their classroom on ReadingScreen
3. Assessment conducted in the language of school instruction (English or Welsh)

Healthy volunteers allowed

Yes

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

7 Years

Upper age limit

9 Years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

1440

Key exclusion criteria

Children who do not meet the inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment

26/01/2026

Date of final enrolment

17/02/2026

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

Wales

Study participating centre

Bangor University

College Road

Bangor

Wales

LL57 2DG

Sponsor information

Organisation

Welsh Government

ROR

<https://ror.org/000wh6t45>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Funder Name

Llywodraeth Cymru

Alternative Name(s)

Welsh Government, The Welsh Government

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Local government

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available