

Effectiveness study of Read Write Inc. Phonics and Fresh Start programmes

Submission date 17/06/2016	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	☐ Prospectively registered ☒ Protocol
Registration date 17/06/2016	Overall study status Completed	☒ Statistical analysis plan ☒ Results
Last Edited 05/01/2023	Condition category Other	☐ Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

According to the National Curriculum Assessment (2015) about 20 percent of pupils leave primary schools without achieving the expected attainment level in reading. Read Write Inc. Phonics and Fresh Start are phonics-based comprehensive literacy programmes rooted in phonics using decodable texts to teach children learning to read and write and those who need to catch up quickly. The study aims to determine whether the programmes are effective at increasing pupil reading outcomes.

Who can participate?

Read Write Inc. Phonics: male and female children from Reception to Year 4 learning to read; however, the evaluation will focus on pupils from Reception – Year 2 only.

Fresh Start: male and female pupils in Years 5 – 8 below appropriate reading age; however, the evaluation will focus on eligible pupils from Years 5 and 6 only.

What does the study involve?

Participating schools are randomly allocated to the waiting list group or the intervention group. Staff in the waiting list schools continue ‘business-as-usual’ for the teaching of phonics, reading and writing for 2 years. Staff in the intervention group schools receive two days training, including knowledge of the alphabetic code and training on how to teach both programmes. The children are assessed to ensure that they are taught at the correct level and that the slowest progress children receive daily tutoring. A consultant trainer works with the leaders in school to ensure successful implementation and provide continuing professional development. Children are taught daily in homogeneous groups: phonic lessons for reading and spelling; reading activities – from decoding to comprehension; spelling and compositional writing; and children work with a partner and articulate their thinking throughout the lesson. Read Write Inc. Phonics starts with 20 minutes daily in term 1 of Reception, building to 40 minutes by the end of the year, and one hour a day for children in Year 1 and above. Many children complete the programme by the end of Year 1 or the beginning of Year 2. Fresh Start lasts for up to 33 weeks for eligible pupils in Years 5 and 6 in place of regular English lessons. Slower progress children are identified immediately and given daily one-to-one tuition to ensure they keep up with their peers.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Teachers receiving the training may benefit from becoming more capable of teaching phonics to their pupils. Pupils may benefit from improved reading outcomes. There are no notable risks involved with taking part in this study.

Where is the study run from?

The study is run from Queens University, Belfast and takes place in around 120 primary schools (UK)

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

December 2015 to September 2018

Who is funding the study?

Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

Who is the main contact?

1. Dr Pooja Nakamura
2. Dr Adria Molotsky

Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

Dr Pooja Nakamura

Contact details

American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson St NW
Washington, DC
United States of America
20007

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

Dr Adria Molotsky

Contact details

American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson St NW
Washington, DC
United States of America
20007

Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title

Clustered-randomized control trial of Read Write Inc. Phonics (using New Group Reading Test collected at end of second year for pupils from Reception – Year 2) and Fresh Start (using KS2 reading fine points score for eligible pupils from Years 5 and 6) Programmes

Study objectives

Read Write Inc. Phonics and Fresh Start will improve pupil reading outcomes.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

American Institutes for Research Institutional Review Board 12/05/2016

Primary study design

Interventional

Study design

Cluster randomised controlled trial

Study type(s)

Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Reading outcomes

Interventions

Staff in treatment schools attend two days training in primary schools including knowledge of the alphabetic code and training on how to teach both programmes. Assessment processes to ensure children are taught at the correct level and that slowest progress children receive daily tutoring. Ongoing, regular development days – a consultant trainer works with the leaders in school to ensure successful implementation and provide continuing professional development.

After training, children are taught daily in homogeneous groups:

1. Phonic lessons for reading and spelling
2. Reading activities – from decoding to comprehension
3. Spelling and compositional writing
4. Children work with a partner and articulate their thinking throughout the lesson

Teachers in the two-year wait-list control will continue 'business-as-usual' for the teaching of phonics, reading and writing.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

1. Read Write Inc. Phonics: New Group Reading Test at the end of the second year (independently collected by Queens University Belfast)
2. Fresh Start: KS2 reading fine points score for Year 6 eligible students at the end of the first year of programme implementation and Year 5 eligible students at the end of the second year of

programme implementation (i.e., the end of Year 6 for students who began programme in Year 5)

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Read Write Inc. Phonics: teacher assessed KS1 writing at Year 2 and the teacher assessed Year 1 phonics screening check for both years of the programme aggregated
2. Fresh Start: combined KS2 writing results for Years 5 and 6

Completion date

31/10/2019

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

Schools: All schools are eligible, but the mean FSMEver of the sample should be greater than the national mean for England. The schools must be state funded, and a large (but no more than 50%) share of schools must come from the North East region of the UK.

Pupils: While Read Write Inc. Phonics is delivered to all children in Reception and Year 1 and those who are assessed as needing it in Years 2 – 4, the evaluation will focus on pupils from Reception – Year 2 only. While Fresh Start targets eligible pupils in Years 5 – 8 who are below appropriate reading age, the evaluation will focus on eligible pupils from Years 5 and 6 only. The eligibility criteria for the Fresh Start programme is a school progress measure, through which the children are selected according to their reading levels. Children reading below a reading age of 9.5 years are taught Fresh Start.

Participant type(s)

Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

Schools: non-stated funded schools

Pupils: Fresh Start: Children reading above a reading age of 9.5 years

Date of first enrolment

01/04/2016

Date of final enrolment

31/08/2016

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

Northern Ireland

Study participating centre

Queen's University Belfast

69/71 University Street

Belfast

United Kingdom

BT7 1HL

Sponsor information

Organisation

Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

ROR

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

Funder(s)

Funder type

Charity

Funder Name

Education Endowment Foundation

Alternative Name(s)

EducEndowFoundn, The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), Education Endowment Foundation | London, EEF

Funding Body Type

Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype

Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The data repository that the trialists will submit to is FFT. They will be submitting anonymized project data, a copy of the final evaluation report, do files, and a standardized dataset including pupil identifiers. They will be submitting the data within one month of completing the final report (approximately April 2019). Access to that data will be controlled by approval from the EEF and the DfE. Opt-out consent was obtained by their assessment partner, Queen's University Belfast.

IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in repository

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Basic results			05/01/2023	No	No
Protocol file			26/08/2022	No	No
Statistical Analysis Plan		17/01/2018	26/08/2022	No	No