



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



Dear parent/guardian,

I am a PhD researcher from the **University of Birmingham**. This year, I will be coming into school to do a study with your child's class. We are interested in understanding why some children with reading difficulties struggle to make progress in reading interventions, and are asking **Year 3 and Year 4 children with and without reading difficulties** to take part in the project.

In **September/October 2019**, we will perform an initial reading assessment with all participating children. We will see how children perform on a range of reading-related games, including word-reading, decoding, vocabulary and memory games. We will also investigate whether the brain response to words is different in children who benefit from a reading intervention compared to those who don't. This is done by recording brain activity (EEG) while children play a simple computerised word-reading game. EEG is completely safe and only records naturally-occurring brain activity (for more information on EEG, please see the attached information sheet).

If our assessment indicates that your child may have a reading difficulty, we will offer them a reading intervention specifically designed to help children with reading problems. Children will be **randomly** assigned to either the **first intervention group**, who will receive their intervention from **October 2019 – January 2020**, or the **second intervention group**, who will receive their intervention from **February 2020 – May 2020**. Children taking part in the reading intervention will be taught in small groups by trained Psychology students from the **University of Birmingham**. They will receive three, 30-minute intervention sessions per week for 4-months, and their progress will be regularly monitored so that we can tailor the intervention to their needs.

Once the intervention sessions have finished, the children's reading skills will be re-assessed to see how much their reading has improved. We are interested in understanding the differences between children who make a lot of progress in intervention sessions, and the children who make less progress. By doing this, we hope to understand how to improve provision for children who struggle to make progress in established reading intervention programmes.

We will also re-assess children who showed no evidence of reading difficulties in the initial reading assessment. While these children will not receive a reading intervention (as it will not benefit them), their participation is important so we can see how their reading ability progresses over time, and how this compares to the progress of the children receiving the reading interventions.

We will share our findings with participating schools and families via a written report at the end of the study. If you would like more information regarding your child's progress in the reading intervention, you are welcome to contact the school or the researchers directly. Please note that while our study may measure your child's reading ability, this does not constitute an official reading assessment, and will not result in any formal diagnosis (e.g. dyslexia) being made. The assessment is for research purposes only.

I have enclosed an information sheet which describes the study in more detail. If you are happy for your child to participate in the project, please complete the enclosed 'informed consent sheet' and return it to your child's school by the relevant date. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me or either of my supervisors. We will be more than happy to answer your questions.

Yours sincerely,

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