

Gaelic Reading Project. Teacher/School Information Sheet

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

This project is led by Dr Sarah MacQuarrie (University of Manchester) and Dr Fiona Lyon (Chartered teacher and independent education consultant). We aim to work with teachers to conduct the research in schools across Scotland.

Title of the Research

A study of children's reading skills in Gaelic medium education.

What is the aim of the research?

Our aim is to investigate children's reading skills during primary school. Although, Gaelic medium education has been in place since the mid 1980s as yet there are no standardised forms of reading assessment and we hope our research will contribute to this in the long term. We aim to recruit as many teachers and schools as possible and include pupils in primary 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 so that we can develop a robust, standardised test of Gaelic reading skills.

Why have I been chosen?

All schools offering Gaelic medium education are eligible for this study and as you teach in such a school we are offering you the opportunity to be involved in this research. Your participation will make a difference. The information gathered should allow Gaelic-medium teachers to improve practice by identifying difficulties with reading at an early stage.

What does this mean for my class?

We will offer training to teachers interested in participating. These sessions offer a chance to develop your knowledge of reading assessments and get to know the project materials. We aim to hold these training sessions in early 2015.

Beginning in 2015 Children in primary 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 will be tested. Parents of children in your class will be sent a letter (through school) giving them information about the project. This letter must be returned to the school indicating if parents are or are not willing for their child to participate before they are tested.

You will administer the test to each child individually. Each assessment per child will take at most 50 minutes (usually closer to 30 minutes) to complete and can take place in a quiet area in your school. We have found that pupils enjoy this process, they gain one to one time with their teacher and can show off their reading skills. Any child who appears distressed at any time should be thanked and praised for their efforts and the session brought to an end. We will have in place in 2015 two regional coordinators who can offer support and provide rapid answers to questions.

What happens to the data collected?

We ask that schools collate reading test data from the different teaching years and coordinate its return with their regional coordinator. This data will be valuable for use in relation to the main aim of this investigation. We intend to retain the data and may use it in the future, undertaking additional analyses.

How is confidentiality maintained?

We will need to keep records of children's names while we are conducting the assessment, names will be removed from our files before analysis. This means that participants are free to withdraw up until the end of data collection, when analysis is intended to begin. The information will be securely stored electronically on encrypted devices. Individual names will not be included in reports. We will not release information about individual children to anyone. Parents may wish to know how their child performed on the test but we advise that such information is not shared as the assessment is in an early stage of development and it would be inappropriate to offer specific feedback.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw without giving a reason, up until letters are sent to parents to request consent for their child's participation. In rare instances where a teacher can no longer participate (for example ill-health) we would seek to continue working with the school and recruit another teacher so that the data collection can continue.

What will I get in return for taking part?

We will provide an overview of the study that summarises the main outcomes of the study and gives an insight into pupils' performance based on all of the data collected across each of the teaching years being investigated. Teachers who volunteer their participation are offered two free training sessions and will directly contribute to the development of a standardised assessment of reading for pupils of Gaelic medium education.

This research will help develop assessments for use by teachers from which they can assess pupils reading abilities and help identify children who may be struggling with reading. This will help schools to provide suitable support for children as early as possible.

What does this mean for my school?

Working with schools we will develop a plan for the research at each school. This means that in some schools one teacher can undertake the training and assessment of participating children and in other schools having multiple teachers trained would be more suitable. This approach makes this project realistic for Gaelic medium settings and avoids creating a burden for schools wishing to participate.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

We anticipate the outcomes of the research will contribute to peer reviewed academic publications, conference presentations and be developed into a published assessment for use by schools

Has the research been reviewed?

The research has been granted ethical approval by the University of Manchester. Approval to contact schools in your region has also been sourced from your local authority. All researchers will have PVG membership from Disclosure Scotland (or equivalent).

What if I have a query or concern?

Please contact Dr MacQuarrie in the first instance.

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If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093