

Gaelic Reading Project. Parent Information Sheet

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Gaelic Reading Project is led by Dr Sarah MacQuarrie (University of Manchester) and Dr Fiona Lyon (Chartered teacher and independent education consultant).

What is the purpose of this study?

Our aim is to investigate children's reading skills during primary school. We wish to include pupils in primary 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. It is up to you and your child whether or not he/she takes part. Each child will be asked whether they want to take part before each session.

The information gathered should allow Gaelic-medium teachers to improve practice as they will have an accurate method of identifying difficulties with reading at an early stage. 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 and would benefit from suitable support.

What does this mean for my child?

Children in primary 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 will be tested. In most cases this will be by a teacher from their school, on a few occasions this may involve one of the research team. Great care has been taken to ensure the content of the assessments are appropriate and engaging for children. Your child's assessment will take up to 50 minutes to complete and can take place in a quiet area in their school. No child will be included unless they clearly indicate that they wish to participate and continue to be enjoying themselves. Each task will be explained to the child using appropriate verbal instructions. The researchers will not give corrective feedback and instead praise the child for their efforts. The test materials are initially easy and then progress to more difficult material and tests are discontinued once the child makes a certain number of errors. We have found that pupils enjoy this process, they gain one to one time with their teacher and can show off their reading skills.

What does this mean for me?

It is assumed that parents/guardians give consent unless they say otherwise. We ask that you return the consent form only if you are not willing to give consent for your child to be involved.

We ask that you complete a short questionnaire about your use of Gaelic and the presence of Gaelic in your home. The questionnaire is a key part of the research and will gather background details that theory suggests are helpful in understanding children's language learning. This questionnaire will be distributed to parents who give consent for their child to be involved and should be returned to the school.

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 you are free to withdraw your child up until the end of data collection at your school. 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. As the assessment is in an early stage of development it would be inappropriate to offer feedback regarding individual pupils performance on the test.

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 and your school has agreed to participate in the project. All researchers will have PVG membership from Disclosure Scotland.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results as a whole will contribute to publications in academic journals, and conference presentations. We also anticipate that the results in the long term will support the development of a standardised reading assessment for primary pupils in Gaelic medium education. This data collected in this investigation will be valuable for use in relation the main aim of this research. We intend to retain the data and may use it in the future, undertaking additional analyses that involve children's reading skills in Gaelic.

What if I have a query or concern?

Please feel free to contact Sarah or Fiona using the contact details below if you have any questions or would like more information.

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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