



Saint Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant School

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Dear Parent or Carer,

Invitation to participate in an international study of early learning

St Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant School has been invited to participate in the International Early Learning and Child Wellbeing Study (IELS) by AlphaPlus on behalf of the Department for Education.

IELS will act as a basis for learning from international best practice to ensure all children are given a strong start in their early years, as well as to:

- Lift overall educational outcomes.
- Mitigate disadvantages.
- Enhance child well-being and later life outcomes.
- Observe the implications of Covid for early childhood education and development.

Further information about the study available on the IELS England website <https://alphaplus.co.uk/case-studies/iels/>.

Why is the school taking part?

Our participation is vital to ensure that children attending our school and other children with similar backgrounds are proportionally represented in the national sample for England. This is so that any findings used to influence future policies and practices for early learning are informative and representative.

What does participation involve?

As part of this study, children will be observed while they complete a play-based activity on an interactive tablet. Specially trained study administrators (all of whom have enhanced DBS checks), will bring the tablets to your school and conduct the one-to-one administration with the children. Each child will take part in two 60-minute sessions over two days. The study instruments will include different games/riddles reflecting the areas of interest: emergent literacy, emergent numeracy, self-regulation, and empathy.

For every sampled child, the parents/main caregivers and the staff member who knows the child best will be asked to complete online questionnaires about them (these should take no more than 20 minutes each). The parent questionnaire is also available in a paper version.

Confidentiality and data protection

IELS is an ethical study conducted in strict adherence with GDPR principles. IELS sessions with individual children will be informal and care will be taken to ensure they don't put stress on participants. The outcome of children's study results will not impact their progress in any way and are solely intended for research to promote children's early development. The IELS publications will never refer to individual children, parents, staff members or schools. Names of individual children, parents, staff members and the schools themselves will not be reported at any time. If you require further information, AlphaPlus's privacy policy is available upon request.

Next steps

We value your support highly and appreciate your co-operation in this important study. If you **do not wish** for your child/children to participate, please inform us by **Friday 14th February** by completing and returning the short opt-out form.

If you have any questions concerning the project, please do not hesitate to contact 0161 249 9264 or via e-mail at iels@alphaplus.co.uk.



Yours sincerely,
L.Maddocks

Mrs Maddocks
(Deputy Headteacher)

IELS

OPT-OUT Form: Parent or Carer Research and Innovation

If you do not wish for your child or children to take part in the International Early Learning and Child Wellbeing Study (IELS), please fill in the box below.

I have read and understood the information sheet about the research study.

Please tick the box to confirm: ☐

I _____ (parent/carers name) from _____ (your school)
do not give consent for my child or children _____ (name/s) to take part in
IELS.

Signature _____

Date _____

