



The ONE Project: Orchestrating Numeracy and the Executive

REC R85139/RE007

The ONE Project

Information for Parents / Guardians of Children

This document is for parents of children who attend Early Years settings (many of which will be preschools) that are taking part in a study of the ONE (Orchestrating Numeracy and the Executive) programme. The ONE programme involves training for preschool staff, and guided play activities delivered by preschool staff. The aim of the ONE programme is to support children's numeracy and thinking skills. In this study, we want to find out if the ONE programme improves these skills.

What will happen if my child takes part?

Staff in your child's preschool will be trained to run 25 short and child-friendly games that aim to support children's numeracy and thinking skills, over a 12-week period. At the start of the study, and again at the end of the study, up to 15 children in each preschool will be asked to play some games to assess their maths and thinking skills. Some of the games are played on a tablet, some of the games involve objects and some games will be played as a group with other children. The games are designed to be fun, and child friendly. In total, the games will take around 30 minutes. The assessment will be led by a trained researcher from the University of Oxford. The researcher will hold a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate and will never be alone with your child. The assessment will take place in a quiet space within the preschool classroom, either during class time or break time. Children will not be pressured to take part if they do not want to.

Children's scores on the assessment games will be averaged together to look at how children's numeracy and thinking skills develop across a large group of children attending different preschools and compared to a previous cohort of children who did not receive the ONE programme. Scores will be compared across preschools. In order to see if there has been an improvement, assessment scores will be analysed alongside some personal data about your child. We will collect your child's name and date of birth; your child's eligibility for Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and whether they speak English as an additional language; the preschool postcode, and the days and times your child attends preschool.

This information will help us to understand the impact that preschool education has upon children's development, and who the ONE programme intervention works best for. All data for each child will be kept strictly confidential. We will never publish personal information about your child, and we will not be making assessments about individual children based on their scores. Your child's performance will not be used to make judgements about your or their education or access to services. While lower executive functions can be linked to special educational needs, the assessment games are not diagnostic. They have been chosen to assess change over time in preschoolers with a range of abilities, and cannot be used as an individual educational assessment or to identify a diagnosis. The data analysis will be carried out by researchers from Oxford and Sheffield Universities.

In addition, Oxford University will receive the personal data above to find out if there are longer-term benefits for children when they are in school.

You can find out more about how we will collect, use and safely store your child's data from the accompanying privacy notice [here](#).

What happens to the results of the study?

The research may be published in academic publications and websites. The ONE team will also share summary findings with preschools who have taken part in the study. Parents can sign up to find out about the results of the study by emailing theONE@psy.ox.ac.uk. Part of this work will be written up as a student's doctoral thesis. It will be deposited both in print and online in the Oxford University Research Archive, where it will be openly accessible.

Results from your child will be combined with the results from other children and will not be used in any way that would identify your child. We will not use your child's name or the name of the school in any report. We will not provide information that identifies your child to anyone outside the study team.

Does my child need to take part in the assessment games?

No. All children will be included in the new activities their preschool practitioners will play with them, unless they do not wish to play them. However, it is entirely up to you whether you want your child to take part in the numeracy and executive functions assessment games. If you or your child prefers that they do not take part in the assessment games described above, please complete the [opt-out form](#) your setting has given to you, and return by the date specified on that form. We use a parent opt-out form, rather than opt-in consent, to ensure that we include children from a range of backgrounds in our research, representative of the UK. It is important that we understand the impact of preschool education for children from all walks of life. There is evidence that requiring opt-in consent from parents can unduly lead to some parents and children being excluded, which would skew the research data such that it would not be usable.

Before the assessment games are started, the researcher will describe the project to your child and explain that they only have to play the games if they want to. If your child does not want to take part in those games, they do not have to.

If your child has already completed the assessment games and you decide afterwards that you no longer wish for your child's data to be included in our research, you can still withdraw your child's data using the data withdrawal form until September 2028. This will mean that the ONE team will delete their data and will not use them in any evaluation or analysis.

There are no disadvantages or risks to your child from taking part in the assessment games. Furthering our understanding of the impact of preschool education may help future children and preschool practitioners in the future. You are free to refuse or withdraw your child's involvement in the study until September 2028. Your decision will not affect your child's access to services or programmes at your child's preschool outside the research.



ORCHESTRATING
NUMERACY AND THE
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More about The ONE Project

The ONE is an Early Years programme involving guided play preschool activities to support the development of children's numeracy and thinking skills. The thinking skills we are aiming to support in the ONE are sometimes called executive functions. Executive functions, such as focusing attention, ignoring distractions and thinking flexibly, are important for Early Years numeracy skills even before going to school.

The ONE was co-designed by a team of researchers from the University of Oxford, University of Sheffield, Ulster University, collaborators in Australia and Canada, and Early Years colleagues in UK preschools. The ONE involves training educators to run 25 short and child-friendly games that support children's numeracy and thinking skills for 12 weeks. The activities are embedded into preschool routines such as small group activities, outdoor play, and free play. The activities are delivered in preschools by the preschool staff. Children will take part in three activities a week as part of a group, and these games will include key early maths skills including numbers, counting, ordering, patterns, and spatial awareness. The ONE was recently tested in a small-scale study that showed that educators and children liked the activities and that they also improved children's maths, but we do not yet know if this will work on a large scale.

Staff based at the University of Oxford and Sheffield University will provide the training to educators in each preschool. Educators and children will take part in activities embedded in their weekly routines. The intervention activities will be carried out by setting staff, so children will not be interacting with researchers at this point of the study (although researchers might observe a lesson).

Data

What happens to the data provided?

The information you or your child provide during the study is the **research data**. Any research data from which you or your child can be identified (such as your name, your child's name, contact details and demographic information etc.), is known as **personal data**.

Personal data will be stored in our departmental computer server at the University of Oxford and only our research group will have access to the data. Such data will be assigned a numerical code and will no longer be identifiable to anyone outside of the research team. There will be a password protected sheet with this participant code which connects personal data and information from parent questionnaires to research data. This will be securely stored in our departmental server, separate from all other data, and only our researchers will have access to it. The personal data and the research data will be stored on a secure Oxford University server and any data in transit (e.g., research laptops) will be on encrypted devices. Personal data held by the researchers and the linkage key will be deleted three years after publication and dissemination of information. We keep these data in case reviewers or readers of publications ask researchers to re-analyse data in a different way.

Opt-out forms will be kept by the preschool for the duration of the study, and for as long as they determine appropriate after research activities have concluded at the preschool.

Other research data will be stored for 10 years after publication or public release of the work of the research. Anonymised research data alone will be posted on research platforms such as the Open Science Framework for research transparency. Regular summaries of our findings carrying no identifying information will be given to your preschool and will be available to interested families.

Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your child's personal data and, as such, will determine how your and your child's personal data are used in the study. The University will process your and your child's personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest. Further information about your rights with respect to your and your child's personal data is available from <https://compliance.web.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights>.

Publishing

Will the research be published?

The research may be published in academic publications and websites. Part of this work will be written up as a student's doctoral thesis. It will be deposited both in print and online in the [Oxford University Research Archive](#), where it will be openly accessible.

In the future, researchers might link the data collected to information held in the Department for Education's (DfE) National Pupil Database and other datasets. To do so, the research team would use the direct identifiers of children (names and date of birth) to request Pupil Matching References (PMR) from the DfE, who would transfer PMRs directly to the Office for National Statistics' Secure Research Space (SRS). The SRS would then be used to match the data from the evaluation (i.e., child assessment scores) with the PMRs. This process ensures that future researchers will be able to link data from the evaluation to the National Pupil Database and other datasets without accessing direct identifiers of the children.

Data will be stored securely on a University approved server. Access to personal data will be restricted to the ONE Team Oxford University staff. Access may also be granted to authorised members of the University of Oxford for the purposes of monitoring and/or audit. Data will be held until September 2028 to allow for doctoral thesis completion and publication of research reports.

What should I do next?

It is your preschool's decision to deliver the ONE intervention, but it is your decision whether we can include your child in this research. If you **do not** wish your child to take part in this study, please fill in the [opt-out form](#) and return it to your child's preschool as soon as possible (and by the date indicated on the form). If you are happy for your child to take part, you do not need to do anything. You are free to withdraw your child at any time until September 2028, without penalty and without giving a reason, by notifying your child's preschool, or the University of Oxford researchers via our [withdrawal form](#).

Any questions?

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact: **Principal Investigator:** Professor Gaia Scerif, University of Oxford; Email: gaia.scerif@psy.ox.ac.uk or theONE@psy.ox.ac.uk. For further information, please see the project website [here](#).

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the University of Oxford Research Governance, Ethics & Assurance (RGEA) team at rgea.complaints@admin.ox.ac.uk or on 01865 616480.

Please keep this information sheet for your record.