



Newcastle University

HvdL
THE HEATHER VAN DER LELEY FOUNDATION
RESEARCHING LANGUAGE
DISORDERS IN CHILDREN

MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester

The LIVELY Study: Language intervention in the early years



Cristina McKean, Christine Jack, Emily Preston, Kate Benson

Why are we here?

We would like to:

- Let you know about a research study we will be conducting over the next 3 years, examining the effectiveness of language interventions in the early years.
- Explain the benefits of joining the study.
- Answer your questions about what participating in the study would involve.
- Give you an opportunity to express your interest in joining the project.

What is the study?

In a nutshell we will...

Compare 3 interventions for children aged between 3.5 and 4.5 years old with language difficulties

- Adapted Derbyshire Language Scheme – DLS
- Building Early Sentences Therapy – BEST
- Continued Classroom Support – CCS

To find out:

- Which approach works best
- Whether different children benefit more from one intervention or another

When and where will it happen?

- Recruit schools in Autumn 2019
- Data collection and interventions will run from January/ February 2020 to September 2021
- 24 schools across 2 geographical clusters – 2 or more Local Authorities
- Schools will be randomised to different treatment ‘arms’

The interventions

Adapted Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS)

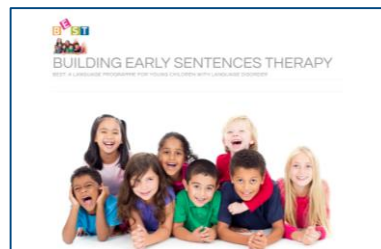
- one of the most widely used intervention approaches in the UK
- moves children through stages, increasing their understanding and use of sentences with 1, 2, 3 and 4 Information Carrying Words
- one research study has shown it is effective in improving understanding of sentences
- we want to test an adapted version of it further and compare it to other approaches



The interventions

Building Early Sentences Therapy (BEST)

- a new intervention
- aims to improve children's use and understanding of sentences with 2, 3 and 4 clause elements
- aims to change children's underlying linguistic representations of the elements of a sentence so they can use sentences more flexibly
- this could then increase their rate of language progress
- pilot study comparing BEST to CCS just completed – data yet to be fully analysed but promising first results for improving children's expressive language



The interventions

Continued Classroom Support (CSS)

- this is the support schools are already putting in place to help children who have been identified as not meeting expectations in their language development
- schools will carry on as usual and we will ask them what support the children are receiving
- schools are already offering high quality support – it is possible that BEST and DLS are not needed
- we want to check this and describe the good work schools are doing



Some detail

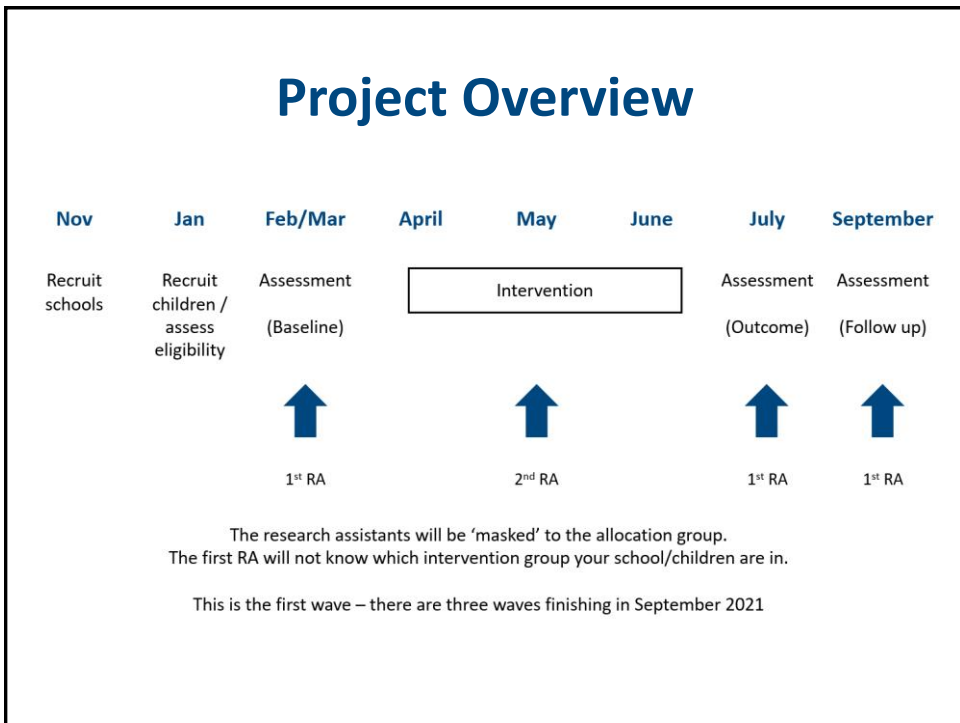
- 288 children aged 3.5 – 4.5 years with language difficulties from 24 schools will be randomised to BEST, DLS or CCS.
- We will deliver BEST and DLS interventions in partnership with schools for 3 waves. A school will either be in the BEST, DLS or CCS arm of the study.
- The children's language and functional communication will be assessed pre and post-intervention and at follow-up.
- At the end of the study we will deliver either BEST or DLS into the CCS schools, at their request.

Treatment arms

Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4

CCS = Continued Classroom Support
 T = school can select either BEST or DLS, this wave will not participate in data collection / analysis

Number = indicates number of schools
 Outline indicates which Research Assistant will deliver their intervention (RA1 / RA2)



Eligible children

- Most children benefit from a language enriching pre-school environment.
- A small subgroup need a more structured input to progress.
- This study is looking at this subgroup of children and deciding what that structured input should be.

Eligible children

- Monolingual speakers of English not reaching age-related expectations
- Score \leq 16th centile on the New Reynell Developmental Language Scales (NRDLS) expressive and/or receptive subscales
- Have no reported sensorineural hearing impairment, severe visual impairment or diagnosed learning disability.

Some detail

- We anticipate between 2 and 6 children will receive the intervention in each school each term
- Schools from socially disadvantaged areas are likely to have more children who would benefit
- Children with low language abilities whose families consent will be seen 2x per week by our research speech and language therapists
- Children will be seen in small groups which last up to 30 minutes
- We will ask a TA to support the groups and work with the SLT for some of these sessions
- Simple homework activities (talking about pictures) will be sent home to parents

Benefits

- Identified children will be assessed by a speech and language therapist who will discuss the assessments with the children's class teacher. Parents will be able to request a meeting with the therapist to discuss their child's assessment.
- All participating schools will benefit from receiving a language intervention. 'Continued Classroom Support' schools will be offered the intervention at the end of the study.
- All schools will have access to a series of CPD sessions focused on supporting children with language difficulties.
- All schools will receive a certificate in recognition of their work as a research participant and their engagement with the speech and language CPD.

CPD offering



- Cristina McKean – **Promoting robust language development for all children**



- Helen Stringer – **Phonological awareness**



- Sean Pert / Carolyn Letts – **Supporting bilingual children**



- Christine Jack – **Using educational technology to support language and communication**



Sessions will also provide opportunities to share best practice and to learn about the interventions and the outcomes of the research

Expectations

If your school agrees to take part you will need to:

- Sign a consent form
- Identify children who are falling behind age related expectations in their language development and who are likely to be eligible for the intervention
- Provide these children's parents and carers with information about the study and collect consent forms from those who want to participate
- Provide the researchers with information about your usual provision to support children's language development

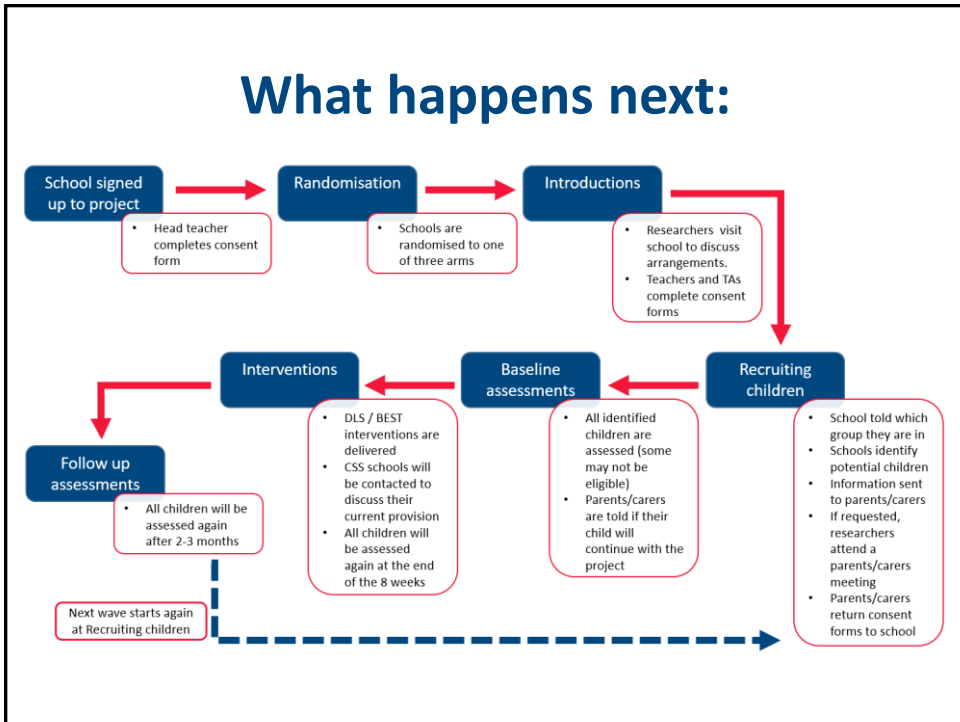
Expectations

If your school agrees to take part you will need to:

- Ensure class teachers / teaching assistants complete a short questionnaire about each identified child
- Provide a quiet space for the intervention to be delivered and assessments to be completed
- Release a teaching assistant to work alongside the researcher, for two of the 30 minutes sessions and to video record at least one session during the eight weeks
- Provide parents with information about homework activities and send them a short questionnaire for them to complete

A final stage of the study

- We are also testing whether we can successfully adapt BEST for use in Languages other than English (LOTE)
- We will conduct 8 single case studies with children with language difficulties in a LOTE
- We will adapt BEST to their home language and they will receive BEST delivered in partnership with parents and/or bilingual co-workers.



What happens next:

Language Intervention in the Early Years
Expression of Interest

Your School:

School name:	
Postcode:	
Local authority:	
% pupil premium	
% EAL	
Main languages /heritages your children come from	
Do any of your staff speak these languages?	
Number of children in EYES	
Estimated number of children eligible for project	
Reason for interest in LIVELY study	

Key contact:

Name:	
Role:	
Email:	

What happens next:

Fill in the expression of interest form and return it to a member of the LIVELY team – or take it back to your school to discuss and email it to christine.jack@newcastle.ac.uk

Please return the form by **Friday 6th December**

Any questions?

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/lively>