

A Winning Start: A Teacher Choices Trial

Parent Information Sheet

What is the Teacher Choices project?

The Teacher Choices project is exploring the feasibility of running robust evaluations of the everyday choices teachers make in the classroom. In every lesson, teachers choose how to approach teaching and learning (such as how to start a lesson, how to engage pupils, or how to manage behaviour). The Teacher Choices project aims to find out how everyday teacher choices are implemented and affect outcomes in the classroom, exploring if a randomised controlled trial (RCT) methodology and teacher tests can be used to do this.

Who is conducting the study?

The Education Endowment Foundation has commissioned and funded this study. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) is conducting the evaluation.

What is 'A Winning Start'?

'A Winning Start' is the first trial in the Teacher Choices project. It will evaluate two different approaches to starting science lessons in order to examine how the choices teachers make impact pupils' learning in science via an RCT. The study will compare two popular forms of lesson starters: quizzes and discussions.

Year 8 Science teachers will run the approaches in science classes in the Autumn term (November-December 2021) and Spring term (January-February 2022). Teachers will carry out their normal end of topic tests and NFER will collect the scores from these to assess whether quiz or discussion approaches are more effective. Pupils will then also be required to sit another commercial science test to help assess the robustness of the analysis.

What will the evaluation involve for my child?

Initially, your child's teacher will provide NFER, via a secure school portal, with your child's:

name, date of birth, and free school meals eligibility (FSM)

Your child will then be taught one of two science topics where the teachers will start lessons with either quizzes or discussions in the last half of the Autumn term. In the first half of the Spring term, your child will be taught a second science topic where the teacher will switch to using the other lesson starter approach (quiz or discussion).

At the end of each topic, your child's teacher will administer their usual end of topic test. Your child's results will be provided securely to NFER. Your child will then sit a commercial science test to help assess the robustness of the analysis which will be administered by DBS checked NFER Test Administrators.

What are the benefits of my child taking part?

The trial aims to provide evidence that will be useful for teachers when they are planning their lessons. Your child's participation will help to strengthen the evidence on the impact teacher choices can have on pupils' attainment and how to robustly evaluate teacher choices.

How will the findings be used?

A summary of the findings will be shared with participating schools and this will also be freely available on the NFER and EEF websites. The findings will also be used to provide a report to EEF on the feasibility of running Teacher Choices trials in future.

What happens if my child wants to withdraw from the trial?

You may withdraw your child's data from being used in the trial at any time. To do this, you must complete the opt-out form for your child and give this to the school.

How will NFER use and protect the data collected?

All data gathered during the trial will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and GDPR, and will be treated in the strictest confidence by the NFER.

All pupil-level data shared by schools with NFER will be done so via a secure school portal. For the purposes of the trial, all pupils will have an ID number.

No school, teacher or pupil will be named in any report arising from this work.

A Privacy Notice for the study is available

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/4169/eetd_privacy_notice.pdf

Who can I contact for more information?

For further information, please contact Priscilla Antwi, NFER Researcher on teacherchoices@nfer.ac.uk or on 01753 637429.