

Effectiveness Trial of the Mathematical Reasoning in Year 2 Programme

2024-2025

Parent and Guardian's information sheet and withdrawal form

Dear Parent / Guardian,

We are writing to you because your child's school has agreed to be part of a research study. The study will look at the effects of the Mathematical Reasoning in Year 2 Programme (MR programme) developed by the University of Oxford to improve children's mathematical attainment. Previous research has found this programme can help improve children's numerical skills. Please see the enclosed programme flyer for more information.

The current study is being run by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and is funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). It aims to test if the programme can improve children's numerical skills at a larger scale. It is *not* an assessment of individual children.

About the research design

We will use a method called a 'randomised controlled trial'. This means we will randomly choose some schools to use the MR programme in the 2024-25 academic year, while others will continue with their usual maths lessons. By comparing these two groups, we can see if the MR programme makes a difference to children's learning. This method is considered a fair and effective way to test new educational programmes.

Your child's school will be one of 240 schools randomly allocated to one of the two following groups:

- 1) The intervention group, which will deliver the MR programme; or
- 2) The comparison group, which will continue with usual practice.

What will the research involve for my child?

To see if the MR programme has helped improve children's maths skills, schools will be asked to complete the following activities:

- Share your child's full name, date of birth, sex, unique pupil number (UPN) and Free School Meal (FSM) status with NFER.
- Provide information about which of the programme sessions your child attended, as well as the number of programme computer games they played, the scores they achieved and the times at which they played them.
- Complete a maths test in autumn 2024.
- Complete a maths test in summer 2025.

The maths tests we will use are often used by schools. This means there will not be anything unusual for your child. Your child's class teacher will carry it out in 2024 and a trained NFER Test Administrator will do it in 2025. We will also extract data about which of the games that are part of the programme your child played and when, from the programme website. Your child's name is not stored on the programme website, but your child will be given a unique project identification to login to the website.

In addition, NFER will also collect pupil sex, Special Educational Needs (SEN) status, English as an Additional Language (EAL) status and eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) from the Department for Education's (DfE) National Pupil Database (NPD).

Finally, a small number of classes will be visited by NFER research team to observe how the programme sessions work in practice. It is possible that your child will be in the classroom, but the observation is of the sessions and not of individual children. No personal data (e.g., names) will be collected. Following the observation, four children from the class will be invited to participate in a short, child-friendly group conversation with the teacher present. The children will be asked about how much they like mathematics and if they liked the MR programme. If your child is selected to participate in one of these conversations, we will be in touch to provide more information about this. We will also ask the children if they agree to participate. The children's names will not be recorded during these conversations.

Further information about the trial is available [here](#).

What are the benefits and risks of my child taking part?

We do not anticipate any risks or harm to the school, teachers or children participating in this study. This study has been approved by the University of Oxford's and NFER's research ethics committees. NFER has robust safeguarding protocols in place to protect children during the research activities and schools will know what these procedures are.

By participating in this study, your child will be helping us to:

- find out if the MR programme can help improve mathematical attainment for Year 2 pupils, and
- improve how the programme is delivered, which will benefit other children in the future.

How will the findings be used?

The evaluation report will be shared with schools and freely available on the NFER and EEF websites. In addition, the University of Oxford team will write a brief report to be shared with all participating schools. Schools will also receive the maths test scores for individual children from the tests taken in 2025. This is to help schools understand children's progress so they can provide any support needed.

How will NFER use and protect the data collected?

NFER have robust procedures in place to make sure that we comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which sets out how data can be collected and stored securely. We will use number codes to link the children's names with their maths test scores and with the information about the games they played. The children's names will not be kept in the same files as their test results. We have summarised how we will collect, use, and protect personal data collected during this study in the enclosed privacy notice (also available [here](#)). See also 'What will the research involve for my child?'

No schools, teachers or pupils will be named in the reporting, and we will not include any other information that may mean someone else could identify them. No identifiable pupil data will be made public or shared beyond the research teams other than the pupils' maths test scores in 2025, which will be shared with their school.

Does my child have to participate?

The MR programme will be used by the schools in the intervention group as part of their normal mathematics curriculum. The children in all schools participating in the research will be asked to

complete the maths tests as part of the school's activities. If you do not want your child's results to be used in the research, your child does not have to participate.

How can I withdraw my child from the study?

If you **are happy** for your child's data to be used for this research, **you do not need to do anything**.

However, if you would like **to withdraw** your child's data from the study, **please complete the form below** and return it to your child's school. You can withdraw your child from the data collection of the trial at any time before 1 September 2025. After that we will not be able to identify your child's results. If you withdraw your child from the project, we will use any data we have collected up to that point in our analysis unless you ask us to delete it.

If you choose to withdraw your child's data from the evaluation, this will not affect your child negatively nor impact their involvement in classroom activities around the project.

Who can I contact for further information?

If you have any queries, please contact us via email MR-Y2@nfer.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Hurd
Evaluation and Survey Operations Lead
National Foundation for Educational Research

Effectiveness trial of the Mathematical Reasoning in Y2 Programme Parent Withdrawal Form

You only need to complete this form IF YOU DO NOT WISH your child's data to be shared, stored, and used for this research.

I **DO NOT** give permission for data about my child that is collected as part of the **Mathematical Reasoning in Y2 Programme** trial to be shared, stored, or used for research purposes.

Your child's name.....Child's class:.....

Name of school.....

Your full name.....

Your telephone number (optional).....

Your signature..... Date.....