

## Children's University EEF Evaluation 2020-23:

### Memorandum of Understanding

This document is to clarify understanding around expectations and responsibilities of schools taking part in the 2020-23 trial of Children's University funded by The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and evaluated by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). This document must be signed by the persons named as follows:

<b>Name of School</b>	
<b>School address</b>	
<b>Head Teacher<sup>1</sup></b>	
<i>Name</i>	
<i>Phone number</i>	
<i>Email</i>	
<b>Children's University Trial Coordinator in the school<sup>2</sup></b>	
<i>Name</i>	
<i>Phone number</i>	
<i>Email</i>	

#### 1. EEF, NFER and Children's University – an introduction

In 2017, the [EEF published an evaluation of Children's University](#) which showed a direct link between participation in Children's University and increased achievement in reading and maths. The programme was evaluated via a randomised controlled trial (RCT) and showed that children in Children's University schools made two additional months' progress in reading and maths compared to children in the other schools (the control group).

Having gone on to name Children's University a 'Promising Project' in 2018, the EEF are now funding a trial of Children's University to be independently evaluated by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to see if positive results are evident at scale.

Children's University along with their local Children's University partners is responsible for the delivery of the programme, and for the training and support involved in the programme implementation in schools. The NFER is the independent evaluator for the trial. NFER is responsible for the collection and analysis of data, including evaluation, administrative and assessment data required for the evaluation of the programme.

The results of this trial will be used to inform future guidance for school leaders. This study is the subject of this MOU.

<sup>1</sup> This MOU must be signed by a Head Teacher.

<sup>2</sup> This will be the main contact for this project who will co-ordinate the delivery of this programme in the school

## 2. Overview of the study

This effectiveness trial of Children's University is set to run from September 2020 to July 2022. School recruitment and data collection will start in January 2020 with the final report being published in 2023. It will be a randomised controlled trial (RCT) involving 150 primary schools; 75 schools will be randomly allocated to the control group (i.e. not receiving any intervention) and the other 75 will be the intervention group, receiving Children's University.

Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) is a research design where research participants (schools in this case) are allocated to the intervention and control groups at random, to ensure that, as far as possible, there are no systematic differences between the two groups for factors that may affect pupil outcomes. This design enables us to determine cause and effect relationships between the programme and pupil outcomes. It is essential that schools adhere to their roles, assigned through the random allocation and participate in all evaluation activities, in order to maintain the comparability of the two groups throughout the evaluation.

Intervention schools will run Children's University for 2 years for one cohort. Pupils who will be in Year 5 in the academic year 2020-21 will volunteer from each school for the full duration of the programme. Pupils will have the opportunity to volunteer towards the end of the summer term when they are in Year 4 and, if their school is allocated to the intervention group, their participation in Children's University will be monitored during their time in Years 5 and 6.

## 3. Children's University delivery partners & NFER

Children's University Trust is working with local Children's University delivery partners which are well-established, sustainable, see benefit from being engaged in this form of evaluation and are looking to reach new schools or into new areas.

For the purposes of this trial, your school will be working with (insert name and org of local CU). They will be your primary contact for the delivery. For evaluation activities, NFER will be the primary contact. This way, NFER will be the primary contact for all control schools. All information shared with your local Children's University will also be shared with the NFER.

## 4. Expectations on schools

**All schools** taking part will be expected to:

- Allocate a member of staff as the key contact for the trial with NFER and Children's University Trust.
- Share a letter with parents/carers (provided by NFER) sharing with them full information about the evaluation and their right to withdraw their child from the data sharing.
- Provide pupil data once signed up to the study for all children in Year 4 for the 2019/2020 academic year (pupil's first name, surname, date of birth and UPN).
- Share and collect parents' Expressions of Interest forms, in Summer 2020.
- Administer the Baseline Pupil Questionnaire to all Y4 pupils in Summer 2020, before randomisation. Encourage children eligible to receive free school meals (FSM) to volunteer to take part in Children's University (should their school get randomly allocated to receive the intervention). The administrations of the questionnaires will be a condition for the school to be randomised and take part in the trial.

- Complete a School Baseline Pro-forma; a short online survey about usual practice in relation to extra-curricular activities.
- Allow NFER Test Administrators to come into school and administer the Endpoint Pupil Questionnaire to all Y6 pupils in Summer 2022.

Additionally, schools that are **randomly allocated to the intervention group** (i.e. receiving Children's University) will be expected to:

- Make a £300 contribution to the cost of the programme.
- allocate a school-coordinator to manage Children's University for 2 years (named above in the MOU).
- participate in initial local staff training with Children's University Trust.
- participate in in-school staff training from their local Children's University Manager each year.
- allow the Children's University Manager to promote Children's University via an in-school assembly/information session each year.
- ensure all participating volunteers are able to access in-school activities, by:
  - supporting participating pupils to attend the Children's University graduation event at the end of each year;
  - encouraging pupils to log activity on Children's University Online and in their passports;
  - encouraging variety and quantity of participation, including in-school time e.g. lunchtime, and supporting students to attend validated external activities.
- ensure FSM children are able to access in-school activities and/or activities that do not require personal transport costs.
- validate all relevant school activities.
- ensure Children's University Online is kept up to date - we would like school coordinator to upload a list of pupils who are taking part in CU activities and after this encouraging pupils and parents to log each activity.
- provide information about extra-curricular activities to participating pupils and their parents
- complete a staff survey in Summer 2022– to be completed by the school co-ordinator for Children's University.
- some schools will be invited to take part in case studies involving interviews with staff and discussion groups with pupils, and/or telephone interviews with staff.

Schools that are **randomly allocated to the control group** (i.e. not receiving Children's University) will:

- receive £500 gesture of appreciation payable at the end of the study.
- not be able to sign up to Children's University outside of the study until after June 2022
- complete a school pro-forma in Summer 2022 about their extra-curricular activities during the trial period.

**Expectations on NFER and Children's University Trust** NFER and Children's University Trust will ensure the following:

- That a key project contact is available to support schools with the project.

- That each school has access to its own secure school portal to allow for the transfer of any data.
- A template will be provided to schools for all requested data.
- Researchers undertaking interviews/visits are DBS checked.
- That control schools receive a payment of £500, upon completion of trial requirements, by autumn 2022.
- That all data is analysed using secure systems.
- That graduation ceremonies will be organised at the end of each year for qualifying children.
- That schools are provided with a link to a summary report in spring 2023

## 5. Use of data

The data collected by the NFER and Children's University Trust will be stored confidentially and securely on password protected computers and will be held in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines. NFER and Children's University Trust will be joint Data controllers. The local Children's University centres will be the data processors. NFER and Children's University Trust have identified the legal basis for gathering and using personal data as the legitimate interest to administer the randomised controlled trial and analyse its data. The legal basis for processing personal data is covered by GDPR Article 6 (1) (f):

*Legitimate interests: the processing is necessary for your (or a third party's) legitimate interests unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests.*

The evaluation fulfils one of NFER's core business purposes (undertaking research, evaluation and information activities) and it has broader societal benefits. It is therefore in our legitimate interest to process and analyse personal data for the administration of this trial.

Further information is available in our privacy notices for schools, parents and local CU centres (details below).

The data will be treated in the strictest confidence by NFER and Children's University Trust, and personal data will only be used for the purposes of this research. No school, teacher or pupil will be named in any report arising from this work. The overall findings from this research will be included in a report published by the EEF and used to influence practice nationally. Findings may be disseminated at educational research conferences and in academic or professional journals.

For the purpose of research, the responses will be linked with information about the pupils from the National Pupil Database (NPD) and shared with the Department for Education, the EEF's archive manager and, in an anonymised form, with the Office for National Statistics and potentially other research teams. Further matching to NPD and other administrative data may take place during subsequent research. For further information see our privacy notices here:

All data shared on Children's University Online will be subject to the privacy policy available at [www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/privacy-policy/](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/privacy-policy/)

## 6. Timeline for evaluation

<b>January – April 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools register interest, receive detailed information from local Children’s Universities and, if they choose to go ahead, sign a memorandum of understanding to commit to the trial</li> </ul>
<b>March – May 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent letters are distributed by schools; with data withdrawal slips</li> <li>Schools complete a baseline pro-forma</li> <li>Pupil information is collected from schools by the NFER</li> </ul>
<b>June 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressions of Interest from parents are collected by NFER</li> <li>All Year 4 pupils (excluding any withdrawn pupils) complete a baseline questionnaire, through which they express their interest in taking part in the programme</li> </ul>
<b>July 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools are randomly allocated to control or intervention group by NFER</li> <li>NFER informs schools of their group allocation</li> </ul>
<b>September 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in schools allocated to the Intervention group start participating in Children’s University activities</li> <li>Schools co-ordinators register eligible intervention pupils on <i>Children’s University Online</i> and encourage pupils and parents to record activity there on an ongoing basis</li> <li>Schools allocated to the Control group continue with business as usual</li> </ul>
<b>October 2021 – February 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some schools may be selected for case-study visits and telephone interviews with selected schools- NFER</li> </ul>
<b>June 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Year 6 pupils complete an endpoint questionnaire</li> <li>Control schools complete an endpoint pro-forma</li> <li>Intervention school coordinator completes a staff survey</li> </ul>
<b>October 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payments made to control schools on completion of post-test survey and all data requirements</li> </ul>
<b>February 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final report published and circulated</li> </ul>

## 7. Payment terms

Schools allocated to the intervention group will be expected to make a payment of £300 to the co-ordinating Children’s University by October 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

Schools allocated to the control group will receive a £500 gesture of appreciation at the end of the study. This will be on completion of a post-test survey and all data requirements and is likely to be November 2022.

## 8. Signatures

I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided about this evaluation and am satisfied with the expectations outlined.

As per the above, I confirm that I will co-operate with both Children’s University and the NFER for the duration of this trial, regardless of whether my school is allocated to the control or intervention groups.

Head Teacher Signature (as named above): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

EXAMPLE MOU