

In 2017, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) published an efficacy study of Children's University which showed a direct link between participation in Children's University and increased achievement in reading and Maths. Children's University are now looking for 150 primary schools to take part in a new study to see if these results are evident at scale.

What is Children's University?

- Children's University is a programme that aims to improve the aspirations and attainment of pupils by encouraging, tracking and celebrating participation in learning activities beyond the normal school day.
- Local Children's University partners support schools to provide a range of learning opportunities, such as after-school clubs, projects and enrichment activities, and work with local destinations and learning providers such as libraries, sports clubs, historic centres, museums, or anywhere that offers structured learning activities for children. There are also a wide range of online activities.
- Pupils use a 'Passport to Learning' and an online platform to record participation in these activities and these are rewarded by the collection of credits, certificates and graduations.

Background to this study

- In 2017, the [EEF published an efficacy study](#) of Children's University which showed a direct link between participation in Children's University and increased achievement in reading and maths. Children in Children's University schools made two additional months' progress in reading and maths compared to children in the other schools (control group).
- Having gone on to name Children's University a 'Promising Project' in 2018, the EEF is now committed to running a larger scale effectiveness trial of Children's University to see if such positive results are evident at scale.
- Working with the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) and EEF, Children's University is now looking to recruit 150 new primary schools to this new EEF study.

How will the study work?

- This new effectiveness study of Children's University is set to run from September 2021 to July 2023, with the research report to be published in 2024. Having gone on to name Children's University a 'Promising Project' in 2018, the EEF are now committed to running a larger scale effectiveness trial of Children's University to see if such positive results are evident at scale.
- It will be a randomised controlled trial involving 150 new schools; 75 schools will be randomly allocated to the control group (i.e. normal teaching and learning practice, not receiving any intervention) and the other 75 will be the intervention group, receiving Children's University.
- Intervention schools will run Children's University for 2 years. The study will focus on one cohort of volunteer students from each school for two years. Pupils will have the opportunity to volunteer towards the end of the summer term 2021 while still 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.

Is my school eligible?

We are looking for schools that:

- have not run Children's University in their schools in the past 3 years
- are keen to be part of an EEF study and understand that they may be allocated to either the intervention group (to receive Children's University) or the control group (and not receive Children's University)
- are in areas covered by existing local Children's Universities. These local Children's Universities and the areas they will be working in are:

- **Bexley Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Bexley and some schools in Bromley*

- **Devon and Cornwall Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Devon and Cornwall*

- **East London Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Newham*

- **Essex**

- *Covering schools in Suffolk, Essex, Southend and Thurrock*

- **Elevate EBP**

- *Covering schools in Sefton, Liverpool, Warrington and Lancashire*

- **Peterborough Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire*

- **Rotherham Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Rotherham only*

- **Westminster Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Westminster, Kensington and Camden*

- **University of Wolverhampton Children's University**

- *Covering schools in Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Telford*

- **Enrich Education**

- *Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Wirral, Trafford and Thameside*

What will be measured?

- The study's primary outcomes will be attainment in maths and reading, as measured by Key Stage (KS) 2 SATs results.
- There will also be secondary outcomes measured by a pupil survey produced by the NFER. Pupils will fill in this survey twice - Summer term 2021 and Summer term 2023. This will be looking at pupils':
 - increased motivation to learn in and beyond the classroom;
 - development of a broad range of essential skills, and;
 - growth in confidence and self-belief.

If we sign up, will our school receive Children's University for our pupils?

- This study is a randomised controlled trial – this means that of the 150 schools that sign up, only 75 will receive Children's University and the other 75 will not. A financial contribution of £500 will be made to schools in the control group on completion of evaluation activities.
- Schools signing up to this trial must be willing to be allocated to either group. Once schools are signed up, they will be 'randomised' before September 2021.

What is expected of schools?

All schools:

- will need to sign up by end of March 2021.
- will be expected to encourage children receiving FSM to volunteer to take part
- will be expected to complete evaluation activities such as sharing pupil administrative data, completing evaluation proformas and pupil and staff surveys.

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
- 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 (starting September 2021)
- allow the Children's University Manager to promote Children's University via an in-school assembly/information session each year for volunteer pupils
- encourage FSM children to volunteer for the intervention and ensure all children taking part are encouraged and 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
 - ensuring Children's University Online is kept up to date
 - encouraging variety and quantity of participation, including in school time e.g. lunchtime, and supporting students to attend validated external activities
- validate all relevant school activities (support and training will be provided)
- provide information about extra-curricular activities to participating pupils and their parents

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

- receive £500 gesture of appreciation payable on completion of all evaluation activities
- not be able to sign up to Children's University outside of the study until after July 2023

What will happen to my school's information?

All data gathered during the trial will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679 and will be treated in the strictest confidence by NFER and Children's University Trust. All personal data will be shared via an online secure data portal. The evaluation report will be published on the EEF website and the findings may also be disseminated at educational research conferences and in academic or professional journals. No school, teacher or pupil will be named in any report arising from this work.

A Privacy Notice for the study is available at the link below:

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/eecu_schools_and_CU_privacy_notice

I want to hear more

To speak to Children's University about participating or find out more about what could be involved, email eef@childrensuniversity.co.uk