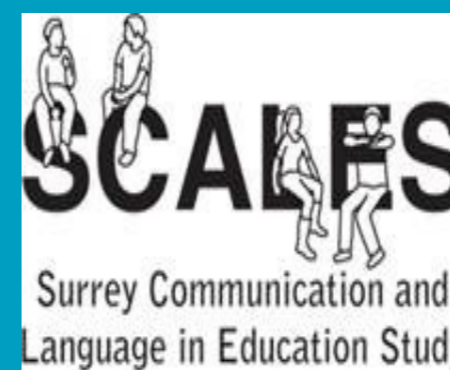


Funded by:



Collaborating partners:



Stage 4: Parent information sheet and parent consent form  
ETHICS REF: 9733/002  
CONTACT: Professor Courtenay Norbury  
c.norbury@ucl.ac.uk; Tel: 020 7679 4228  
[www.lilac-lab.org](http://www.lilac-lab.org)

**Why have I been contacted?**

We are contacting you because your child took part in SCALES when he or she was in Year 1 and Year 3. We would like to follow up all of the children who previously took part in SCALES now they are in Year 6 and then again in Year 8. This is a critical time for the children as it covers their transition to secondary school and the onset of adolescence.

**Do I have to take part?**

You do not have to take part—please read this information sheet carefully with your child and contact the research team with any questions you may have (see box above). Even if you say yes, you can withdraw from the study later without giving a reason and without any disadvantage to you or your child.

**What is SCALES?**

The Surrey Communication and Language in Education Study (SCALES) is the first population study of language development from school entry in the UK. It is a longitudinal study, tracing children’s language, behavioural, and educational development from school entry through primary school and into adolescence. In 2012 all Surrey schools with Reception classes were invited to take part in SCALES. In **Stage 1**, reception class teachers completed questionnaires for over 7,200 children in 188 schools.



**In Stages 2 and 3** 600 children were randomly selected to take part in the follow-up study. You kindly agreed for your child to take part in SCALES when they were in Year 1 (2012/13) and Year 3 (2014/15) for an in-depth assessment of language, reading, learning, behaviour and social abilities. The assessment took place at your child's school by a trained member of our research team (see photo below). Teachers and parents were asked to complete questionnaires about the child's language and behaviour skills.



SCALES research team (2014/2015)

You can get full details of our findings so far on our website: [www.lilac-lab.org](http://www.lilac-lab.org).

#### What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of the study is to understand why there is so much variation in children's language (or speaking and listening skills), and how variation in language is related to school and social success over time. To do this, we are tracking the language development of a large and diverse group of children over a long time.

In this Stage 4 we are also interested in how children use self-talk to help regulate their own feelings and behaviours and use language to understand the feelings and behaviours of others.

#### Who is organising this study?

This study is organised by Professor Courtenay Norbury and has been funded by a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The study is sponsored by University College London. The study also involves collaborators at the University of Surrey and King's College London.

#### Has this study been granted ethics approval?

The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at University College London (REC 9733/002). This independent committee has a duty to protect the safety, rights, and well-being of participants in this study.

#### What will happen if my child takes part?

Children taking part in Stage 4 will be seen individually in their own schools by a member of our research team. All of our researchers are fully trained, have experience of working with children in school settings, and all have received enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We would like to see children twice; once in Year 6 and then again in Year 8.

When your child is seen at school, they will complete a detailed assessment of language, problem-solving, behaviour, social and emotional abilities. Assessments that involve lots of talking will be audio-recorded to ensure accurate and consistent scoring. All assessment records and audio-recordings are identified by a code number that is unique to each child. This ensures that the information we collect remains anonymous and that your child cannot easily be identified. The entire assessment will take approximately 2 hours, but this will be broken down into much smaller sessions, with lots of time for breaks. We will work with teachers to fit our assessments in to the busy school day.

We will also ask parents to complete a few short questionnaires about how their child listens, communicates and behaves at home. This should take parents about 20 minutes to complete. A member of the research team will phone to assist parents with these questions if necessary.

Finally, we will ask schools to provide SATS results at the end of Year 6 for our participants. This allows us to link our assessments to real-life education outcomes.

#### What information will be shared with families and schools?

It is important to remember that the measures we choose are based on our research questions and this is not the same as a clinical assessment (e.g. one conducted by a speech-language therapist or educational psychologist). It is therefore inappropriate to provide information about individual children. The size of the study also means that it is impractical to routinely provide information to parents or school staff about individual children.

We will provide all families and schools with an annual newsletter detailing summary results and key findings from the study. You can also find out more about the study on our website [www.lilac-lab.org](http://www.lilac-lab.org).

#### What happens to the information collected?

The study involves two types of information. *Personal information* includes name, date of birth, post-codes and diagnostic information, which identifies individual children. This is information we use to contact you, calculate age, and link with school records. These details are treated in strict confidentiality in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. *Personal information* is held in a secure, password protected database at University College London to which only the research team will have access. *Anonymised information* includes responses to our assessments and questionnaires. These are assigned a unique code number and it would be very difficult to identify individual children from this information. Research findings are published in scientific journals, and used in lectures to other scientists, students and the general public. We take great care to ensure individual children are not identified in lectures or publications.

#### Open science and data sharing

Our research is publicly funded. A requirement of our funders is that all of the *anonymised* assessment data we have collected (from reception through to Year 8) is stored at the UK Data Archive and made available to other research teams. We would also like to deposit language samples (e.g. transcripts of stories the children tell in relation to picture prompts) on the CHILDES database of children's language. This enables other researchers to make use of our data to ask additional questions beyond those we originally posed. Open data practices may also require making our anonymised data available to anyone who wants to repeat our analyses or combine our work with other datasets. This allows others to ensure accuracy of our findings and avoids research duplication. It also increases the value for money of funded research. We take great care to ensure that individual children and families cannot be identified from the data that is shared. However, once data are deposited or shared we have no control over how that data is used and it can be more difficult to withdraw individual data from future study.

#### What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no risks from the assessments. Your child will miss some school lessons, but we work with teachers to ensure this is not disruptive. Our team are trained to notice signs of fatigue or discomfort and will allow children to take a break when necessary. We strive to maintain confidentiality of individual results.

#### What should I do if I have a complaint about the study?

Our experience is that children have enjoyed taking part in SCALES. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the study, please contact Courtenay Norbury in the first instance ([c.norbury@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:c.norbury@ucl.ac.uk)) or the Head of the Language and Cognition Research Department ([r.varley@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:r.varley@ucl.ac.uk))

#### Consent Form

Please tick each box as appropriate and return this slip to your child's class teacher.

- I have read the attached information sheet and have had an opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers to those questions.
- I understand that participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason.
- I AGREE that my child can be seen in school for assessment for one session in Year 6 and one session in Year 8.
- I am assured that my son's or daughter's right to privacy and confidentiality will be respected at all times.
- I agree that anonymised research data may be stored for the long term and used by others without further permission given by me.
- I am happy to be contacted about additional studies.

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's school: \_\_\_\_\_

Carer-name: \_\_\_\_\_

Carer signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_