

Our school is taking part in ...



Surrey Communication and
Language in Education Study

Funded by:

Collaborating partners:



UNIVERSITY OF
SURREY

For more information visit our website
www.lilac-lab.org

To contact the SCALES team:

E-mail: c.norbury@ucl.ac.uk

Phone: 02076724228



What is SCALES?

The Surrey Communication and Language in Education Study (SCALES) is the first population study of language ability at school entry in the UK. It is a longitudinal study tracing children's language, behavioural and educational development from school entry through the school years and into adolescence.

What is the purpose of the study?

There is considerable variation in children's language development and how children use language to learn and communicate with others. We want to understand why these variations occur, and how language skills are related to school and social success over time. To do this we sampled the language and communication skills of a large and diverse group of children. We then traced the development of some of these children in more detail and over a longer period of time.

What has happened so far?

In 2012 all Surrey schools (mainstream, special, and independent) with Reception classes were invited to take part in the study.

Stage 1: Reception teachers completed a questionnaire for over 7,500 children in 188 schools across Surrey in Summer 2012.

Stage 2: 600 children were then randomly selected to take part in the longitudinal follow-up study. Children were seen once in Year 1 (2012/13) and once in Year 3 (2014/15) for an in-depth assessment of language, reading, learning and social abilities. The research assessment took place at the child's school and was conducted by a trained member of our research team. Teachers and parents were asked to complete a few questionnaires about the child's language and behaviour skills.

What's next?

We would like to follow up the SCALES cohort 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. We are particularly keen to further our understanding of the links between children's language skills and their future social, emotional, and mental health. In particular we are interested in how children use their language skills to help regulate their own feelings and behaviours and understand the feelings and behaviours of others.

Why has our school been contacted about this study?

Some of the children in the SCALES cohort are currently attending your school.

What does the next stage involve?

Children will take part in a research assessment which will be similar to one they completed when they were in Year 3. The session will take place at your school and will involve detailed assessments of the child's language, behaviour, learning and social and emotional functioning. Some assessments will be audio-recorded for scoring purposes. All record forms and audio recordings are identified by a code number to ensure that the child's identity remains anonymous. The researcher who will work with the child will be fully trained, have experience of working with children in school and have received clearance from the UK Disclosure and Barring Service.

The entire assessment will take about 2 hours but will be broken down into much smaller sessions with lots of time for breaks. We will work with teachers to fit our assessments into the busy school day.

We will also ask teachers and parents to complete a few short questionnaires about the child's abilities - we will send parent questionnaires home after seeing the child in school.

What happens to the information collected?

Information is stored anonymously and is strictly confidential. Information is identified by code number, not by the child's name. Anonymous data will be stored at the UK Data Archive and may be used in future research studies under strict conditions for genuine researchers.

Where can we find out more information?

Please visit our website www.lilac-lab.org or contact the SCALES team directly using the details below.

Contact the SCALES team

c.norbury@ucl.ac.uk

Phone: 020 7672 4228

Website: www.lilac-lab.org