

Effectiveness Trial of 1stClass@Number 1

Pupil Selection Guidance to the trial

Purpose of this guidance

Thank you for participating in this evaluation of 1stClass@Number 1 (1CN1). This is a randomised controlled trial (RCT), where eligible pupils within each school will be randomly allocated to either the intervention group (receives 1CN1 in addition to normal maths lessons) or the control group (receives only normal maths lessons).

In order to identify pupils eligible to participate in this trial, we are following a two-step process. In step 1, schools nominated pupils that they felt were working around 12 months below expected levels in maths and therefore eligible to receive 1CN1. In step 2, these nominated pupils will be screened using the Sandwell Early Numeracy Test -Revised (SENT-R) to identify the final 8 pupils who will be selected to participate in this trial. For the purpose of this document and the evaluation we will refer to the SENT-R as the Sandwell assessment.

This document will provide schools with guidance on step 2 of the process i.e., selecting the final 8 pupils who will participate in the trial. This final selection into the trial will take place in autumn 2023/24 once the Sandwell assessment has been completed and returned to NFER for processing.

What will happen after schools nominate pupils for screening for the trial?

After your school has nominated pupils for screening and shared the relevant data for these nominated pupils with NFER, we will have been in touch with you about the administration of the QRT and the Sandwell in September 2023. The Sandwell will be used to objectively assess the suitability of the nominated pupils for participation in the trial.

NFER will purchase the Sandwell assessment packs and send them to schools, the packs will include pupil response booklets and scoring booklets labelled with the details of each nominated pupil. The Sandwell Handbook and addendum contained in the assessment pack and NFER's teacher administration guidance will provide teachers with all the information required to administer and score the Sandwell. Schools will then be asked to send the completed pupil response booklets and scoring booklets back to NFER so that we can calculate the total raw score for each pupil and share a report back with schools with the Sandwell scores of all nominated pupils and our recommendations for which 8 pupils should be selected to go forward into the trial.

How will NFER recommend pupils for selection to the trial?

Based on the instructions in the Sandwell assessment pack, NFER will calculate the total raw score for each nominated pupil. NFER will then create customised reports for each school rank ordering pupils on the basis of their raw Sandwell scores, highlighting pupils that are recommended for selection. NFER's recommendations of which pupils are to be selected to the trial will take into account two factors – pupils' raw Sandwell score and their FSM-eligibility status.

There are three categories of Sandwell raw scores for schools to be aware of:

1. **Category 1 (Raw score of 40 and below):** Pupils whose raw score is 40 or below are objectively assessed as being around 12 months behind age-related expectations and are eligible to participate in the trial.
2. **Category 2 (Raw score between 41 – 49):** Pupils whose raw score is above 40 but at or below 49 are objectively assessed as being behind age-related expectations but are not as far behind as 12 months. A raw score of 49 on the Sandwell corresponds to a number age of 6:10. Pupils with a category 2 Sandwell score can be selected to participate in the trial if a school has fewer than 8 pupils with a category 1 score.
3. **Category 3 (Raw score of 50 and above):** Pupils with a raw score of 50 and above are objectively assessed as not requiring the 1CN1 intervention. We recommend the inclusion of pupils with a category 3 score in the trial only if a school has a combined total of less than 8 pupils with category 1 or category 2 scores.

In addition to a consideration of the Sandwell raw scores, NFER's recommendation of which pupils are to be selected will also take into account pupils' **FSM-eligibility status**. This trial has a focus on the impact of the 1CN1 intervention on maths attainment outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Therefore, where possible, our recommendations will seek to maximise the participation of FSM-eligible pupils in the trial.

What should schools do after receiving the Sandwell score report?

The customised Sandwell score report sent to your school will indicate which 8 pupils NFER recommends for selection to go forward to the trial. We will ask all schools to briefly confirm the final 8 pupils who will be selected to the trial. Because of this trial's focus on FSM pupils, eligible FSM pupils recommended by NFER will automatically be selected to the trial.

However, your school will have the option of either accepting the recommended non-FSM pupils or replacing them with other eligible non-FSM pupils with Sandwell scores below 50. Please note that each school should confirm 8 pupils to go forwards to the trial. Further instructions on how you should confirm the final 8 pupils will be provided when the Sandwell report is shared with your school.

What will happen after pupils are selected into the trial?

After pupils have been selected into the trial, the NFER project statistician will randomly assign the pupils to either the intervention or control group. NFER will share with schools a randomisation report which indicates the group assignment of each pupil. This will help schools plan for intervention delivery with the pupils assigned to the intervention group. Pupils in the control group should not receive 1CN1 during the trial period (they can receive it after the trial if the school wishes to

deliver it again.) Once pupils have been assigned to a particular group, they should not be swapped to the other group during the trial period. Pupils must not be replaced with other pupils. We will share a document with your school via the portal to provide guidance on dos and don'ts during the trial period.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the pupil selection and confirmation process, please contact the evaluation team at 1CN1trial@nfer.ac.uk