

Evaluation of Early Talk Boost (2025-26): Parent and carers privacy notice

1 Why are we collecting this data?

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to carry out an evaluation of Early Talk Boost, using a randomised controlled trial (RCT). Early Talk Boost is a language intervention designed for 3 to 4-year-old children with speech and language challenges to boost their language skills. This trial aims to ascertain the impact of the programme on the participating children's language skills and development, and will take place over the course of the 2025-26 academic year.

This document outlines how children's personal data will be collected and processed for the purposes of this trial.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) has funded this research. NFER is the data controller for the trial and Speech and Language UK is the data processor. This means that NFER will determine the purposes of data processing and Speech and Language UK will process this data on behalf of NFER.

Speech and Language UK will also process data to deliver Early Talk Boost. For this process, they are the data controllers and are responsible for making decisions about how data is processed. Their privacy notice can be found here: <https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/privacy-policy/> As part of the Early Talk Boost programme delivery, settings will be asked to use Early Talk Boost Tracker. The privacy notice for the Talk Boost tracker can be found here: <https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/privacy-policy/privacy-notices/tracker-privacy-notice/>.

We will use other data processors to provide specific services; details are provided in section 5.

None of the data collected will be used for any purpose other than those stated in this privacy notice.

2 What is the legal basis for processing activities?

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.

A legitimate interest assessment has been undertaken. Our legitimate interest in processing personal data for this trial is to evaluate the Early Talk Boost intervention. The evaluation fulfils one of NFER's core business purposes (undertaking research, evaluation and information activities) and

is therefore in our legitimate interest. It has broader societal benefits and will contribute to improving the lives of learners by providing evidence around improving children's lives by providing evidence about how early years settings can boost children's language skills and can best support their development. Research cannot be done without processing personal data, but NFER will ensure your children's rights are respected at all times.

3 How will personal data be obtained?

NFER will collect children's personal data from all settings participating in the project. The data will be collected via a child data form completed by nursery practitioners and shared with NFER via NFER's secure online portal.

Children's LanguageScreen scores will be collected via OxEd & Assessment's [LanguageScreen](#) software. The assessment will be administered online by practitioners at the start of the trial (September/October 2025) and by NFER's Test Administrators at the end (June/July 2026). NFER's Test Administrators will also administer Renfrew Action Picture Test (RAPT) paper-based assessments alongside the LanguageScreen. Children's audio responses to RAPT will be recorded for transcription purposes only. They **will be deleted** once the marking is complete.

Nursery staff in all settings will complete the FOCUS-34 measure, which focuses on the child's social interactions, for each selected child at the end of the trial (June/July 2026) using the Tivian survey platform.

For those in the intervention settings, NFER will collect attendance at Early Talk Boost sessions via attendance registers completed by nursery practitioners and shared with NFER via NFER's secure online portal.

A small number of settings will receive a visit from an NFER researcher to observe delivery of the Early Talk Boost sessions. Children will be observed as part of this, but no further personal data will be collected.

4 What personal data is being collected by this project?

Data will be collected for eligible 3- to 4-year-old children in the setting.

The following personal data will be collected for each eligible child in participating settings:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Class name (in settings with more than one class)
- Gender
- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) status
- Attendance patterns at the setting
- LanguageScreen assessment scores (at the start and end of the trial)
- RAPT - children's audio responses to RAPT (for transcription purposes only), transcribed responses and scores (at the end of the trial)
- Focus-34 measures scores (at the end of the trial)

For those children in the intervention settings, their attendance at each Early Talk Boost session will be collected in an excel attendance form.

5 Who will personal data be shared with?

No individual will be named in any report for this project.

Personal data collected by NFER via the child data form will be shared with OxEd and Assessment using LanguageScreen software to facilitate the administration of LanguageScreen assessment. Personal data collected by LanguageScreen will be shared with NFER using OxEd's LanguageScreen software. OxEd and Assessment's privacy notice is available here: <https://media.oxedandassessment.com/assets/OxEdPrivStatement.pdf>.

The FOCUS-34 data is collected via Tivian which stores names and the measures responses in Azure and AWS data centre infrastructure in the European Union (EU). Tivian's privacy notice is available here: <https://www.tivian.com/uk/privacy-policy-2/>

Archiving at the end of evaluation

To provide maximum value to taxpayers, school leaders, policy makers and the wider education and research communities, EEF archives impact evaluation data. Data is archived with a view to tracking the long-term effect of the interventions they fund. This means that at the end of the evaluation, NFER will link all of the child-level personal data described in section 4 with details of the setting and practitioners. This will include the setting's name, address, postcode, setting identifier, setting Local Authority, summary data for practitioners' Early Talk Boost training attendance, specific variables from the practitioner surveys covering self-reported confidence and practitioner motivation in supporting early language development. Three months after the evaluation report is published, NFER will submit this linked dataset to the EEF archive. At this point, the EEF will become the data controller. The EEF archive is managed by the FFT Education (FFT) on behalf of the EEF. FFT will hold children's personal data until participating children would be expected to appear in Department for Education's (DfE) National Pupil Database (NPD), then match with NPD and replace these identifiers with the Pupil Matching Reference (PMR).

The dataset containing the PMR (but no direct identifiers) will then be archived in the EEF Archive. The EEF data archive is hosted in the Secure Research Service (SRS) (transitioning to the Integrated Data System, IDS) at the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Further matching to NPD and other administrative data may take place during later research. This will enable the EEF and other research teams to use the pseudonymised data as part of subsequent research through the ONS Approved Researcher Scheme.

FFT and the designated EEF archive evaluator will act as data processors for the archive.

Further information about the EEF archive is available here:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/evaluation/evaluation-guidance-and-resources/evaluation-data-archive> and the privacy notice can be found here: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/privacy-notice/privacy-notice-for-the-eeef-data-archive>

6 Is personal data being transferred outside of the UK?

When NFER uses Tivian to administer the Focus-34, data is stored in the EU. This transfer is protected by UK adequacy arrangements. Only personal data required for, and collected as part of, the Focus-34 (child name, class and practitioner responses), will be stored outside of the UK.

7 How long will personal data be retained?

NFER will delete any personal data after one year from the publication of the final report. The deletion process is currently planned for May 2028. Recordings and digitalised transcriptions of interviews and assessments will be deleted as soon as notes and responses are finalised. OxEd and Assessment will delete personal data by December 2026. As described in their privacy notice, they may anonymise personal data and use it for research or statistical purposes.

Speech and Language UK will delete any personal data collected as part of their role as data processors on this project after one year from the publication of the final report. The deletion process is currently planned for May 2028. As noted above, Speech and Language UK will also process data to deliver Early Talk Boost. For this processing, they are the data controllers. Any personal data for which Speech and Language UK are controllers will be deleted within their normal data retention policy (no more than 5 years after the end of the project).

Once NFER deletes the data, EEF will retain sole data controller responsibility for the archived data. Their retention schedule is detailed in their privacy notice.

8 What are my rights with respect to personal data?

NFER handles personal data in accordance with the rights given to individual under data protection legislation. Under certain circumstances data subjects have the right:

- to request access to information that is held about them (a data subject access request).
- to have personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete.
- to request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing.
- to restrict processing of personal data (for example, permitting its storage but no further processing).
- to object to processing
- to data portability
- not to be subject to decisions based purely on automated processing where it produces a legal or similarly significant effect.

We may need to request specific information from you to help us confirm your identity and ensure your right to access the information (or to exercise any of your other rights). This helps us ensure that personal information is not disclosed to any person who has no right to receive it.

Although we value your child's participation in this evaluation and their contribution to important findings, you can withdraw their data from the evaluation activities at any time. If you withdraw your child, unless otherwise instructed, we will use any data we have collected up to that point in our analysis. Please note that withdrawing your child's data will not be possible once data analysis has commenced (from September 2026). Withdrawing your child's data will not impact the participation of your child's nursery setting in the Early Talk Boost programme. If at any time you wish to withdraw your child from the evaluation activities, or withdraw your data or correct errors in it, please contact the project team at ETBTrial@nfer.ac.uk.

9 Who can I contact about this project?

Any queries about the day-to-day management of the data processing outlined in this privacy notice, please contact the project team at ETBTrial@nfer.ac.uk.

If you have concerns about the way NFER processes personal data, please raise your concern by contacting the Compliance Officer: compliance@nfer.ac.uk.

If you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office, the body responsible for enforcing data protection legislation in the UK, at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

10 Updates

We keep our privacy notice under regular review to make sure it is up to date and accurate; any changes will be recorded. We recommend that you revisit this information from time to time. The date when this privacy notice was last updated is shown in the footer at the bottom of this document.

This version was last updated on 27th August 2025 to reflect a change in the EEF logo.