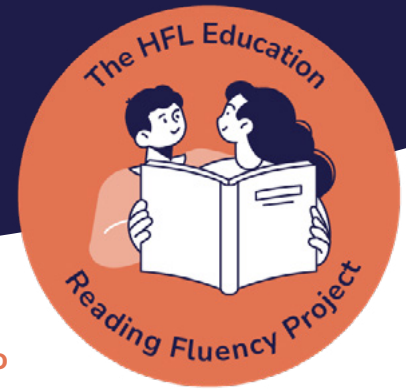


HFL Education's KS2 Reading Fluency Project Frequently Asked Questions.



How much release time will I need to allow for my teachers to take part in the trial?

All schools will need to allow time in summer 2024 to select 6-8 target pupils. HFL Education will supply additional supportive guidance on which pupils to select in due course. The selection process should be led by the Year 5 teacher, plus the English Subject Leader/Reading Lead, in collaboration with the Year 6 teacher who will be responsible for attending the CPD and delivering the intervention in autumn 2024. Schools should consider allowing approximately two hours for pupil selection.

Treatment Group Schools:

Schools allocated to the Treatment Group will need to allow time for the Year 6 teacher and English Subject Leader/Reading Lead to attend the CPD sessions; the CPD equates to approximately 1½ days per participant.

In addition, Year 6 teachers will need to conduct initial assessment (including a YARC assessment) with each project pupil before beginning the intervention; schools should allow approximately twenty minutes per pupil to conduct the YARC assessment.

A small selection of case study schools will also be approached to participate in the Implementation and Process Evaluation, which would include an visit by a Verian researcher for half a day (to include observation of a Project session, a 45-minute interview with the Year 6 teacher, and an interview with 2-3 pupils). We estimate that this would equate to approximately half a day for the Year 6 teacher and Subject Leader.

Treatment and Control Group Schools:

All schools will be required to undertake the evaluation activities, which will primarily involve allowing an ACER UK assessor into your school for a day in February 2025 and facilitating the assessor conducting one-on-one assessments with the 6-8 pupils selected for the Project.

Year 6 teachers at all schools will also be asked to respond to a short questionnaire at three points in the year, in September 2024, February 2025, and July 2025. This questionnaire will take about 10-15 minutes to complete each time.

How will we know which pupils to select?

The HFL Education project team will provide clear guidance on selection criteria in advance of the pupil selection period (June 2024).

As a guide in the interim, schools will be asked to select 6-8 pupils who demonstrate a weakness in reading comprehension; pupils will be working below age-related expectations in reading and

are deemed to be not on track to meet the Expected Standard (EXS) in reading by the end of Year 6; in addition, pupils should have passed the Phonics Screening Check in either Year 1 or Year 2 and/or are now able to decode individual words in a similar assessment. Further detail to support selection will be provided to schools when they have secured a place on the trial.

When in the school day should we deliver the intervention?

The intervention involves teachers working with the identified pupils for twenty minutes, twice a week, for eight consecutive weeks.

Ultimately, it is up to the school to decide when best to deliver the intervention sessions, but most primary schools choose to deliver the sessions during daily reading time, often called Guided Reading time.

Pupils who are selected for the intervention and are still working through the school's Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme **must** continue to receive this teaching and therefore, the intervention should not be scheduled at the same time as this input.

The DfE acknowledges the challenge of finding a suitable time and space to deliver interventions within the school day and offers some useful guidance in **The Reading Framework**: Organising and teaching catch up, p.75:

'Although, ideally, in primary and secondary schools, reading interventions would be timetabled outside lesson time, this is not always possible. But since good reading is essential if pupils are to access the full curriculum, schools will need to make difficult choices about what activities pupils have to miss.'

If we are allocated to the control group, can we continue to use fluency strategies as part of our pedagogy?

Yes – the intention is that schools allocated to the control group will continue operating 'business as usual' (BAU). If the school/teacher is already using fluency strategies as part of their teaching, this should continue. The evaluation team will be conducting activities to determine what 'BAU' looks like in these schools.

However, the eligibility criteria must be adhered to, meaning that schools who have taken part in HFL Education's KS1 or KS2 Reading Fluency Project within the last three years cannot apply. It is unlikely therefore that a school in the control group will be running a targeted fluency intervention for pupils working below age-related expectations.

How can I find out if my school has taken part in HFL Education's Reading Fluency Project in the last three years?

The HFL Education project team keeps records of past participants; please get in touch via readingfluency.eef@hfleducation.org and we will help you.

Can we stop/remove our school from the trial at any time?

In order to ensure the validity of this trial, it is important that each participating school delivers the Project (if allocated to the treatment group)



and facilitates the evaluation activities (schools allocated to both the treatment and control groups). Schools will be asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which clearly outlines their commitment to the evaluation; school leaders must read this document carefully before signing to ensure they understand the Project requirements.

If a school decides not to continue delivering the intervention (if allocated to the treatment group), this will dilute the effect of the intervention and may mean we fail to confirm if and how well the Project works. This would disadvantage all schools and pupils who would benefit from the Project, and similar approaches, in the future. Schools will therefore be encouraged to continue with delivering the intervention for the specified period, if possible. If a situation arises whereby a school believes they can no longer continue to participate in the Project delivery, they must contact their allocated project adviser who will be able to offer support with any delivery challenges.

A refund of the school contribution cannot be provided if a school decides to not continue with the delivery of Project.

If a school in the treatment group withdraws from the Project delivery, they will still be expected to take part in the evaluation activities outlined in this document.

Why don't the Control Group Schools do a baseline YARC assessment? How will progress from pre to post assessment be measured if the control group do not undertake baseline assessments?

This is a comparative evaluation whereby the end point of the control group pupils will be compared with the end point of the pupils in the treatment group. This is a more robust approach than comparing a baseline and an endline assessment, as such a comparison would not allow us to distinguish between the effect of the project and the effect of other changes that happened to occur during the Project period.

The baseline YARC assessment is administered by schools in the treatment group as part of the standard Project design and is intended to help the Year 6 teacher deliver the Project, and not as part of the evaluation. For this reason, schools in the control group will not administer a baseline YARC assessment.

Can parents/guardians request removal of their child from the Project?

Schools should follow their usual protocols in regard to informing parents about their child's involvement in the Project and why they have been selected to take part in this intervention; however, in addition, schools must inform parents about the trial of the Project, including outlining the evaluation activities that will take place, and the data that will be collected about their child. This information is included in the Parent Information Sheet, which will be provided for schools.

Parents may choose to opt their child out of being part of the evaluation of the Project, meaning that no personal data would be collected by ACER UK or Verian in relation to that pupil. Parents will be given the opportunity to opt their child out of the study when they receive the Parent Information Sheet in July 2024, and will be provided with contact information to opt out of the evaluation at any stage if they so wish.