

Early Talk Boost research study – common questions

Questions about sign-up

- 1. Is the study assessing us as practitioners or our settings?**
No, the study is to evaluate the impact of Early Talk Boost on children's oral language skills , it is not assessing practitioners or settings.
- 2. Can settings from all over the country take part in the evaluation?**
All settings in England (apart from those in the North East, Cumbria and North Yorkshire) can take part in the study: both Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) and maintained nurseries (either stand alone or as part of a Primary School).
- 3. If we are already running interventions to support children's talking and understanding in our setting, does this mean we can't take part in the study?**
If you meet all the eligibility criteria please do go ahead and sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and let us know any programmes you use as part of your 'business as usual' practice. Please note though that you can't take part if you are running NELI Preschool, Talking Time or ETB.
- 4. Our setting is currently using Wellcomm for assessment and intervention activities. Would it be ok to run alongside?**
It is fine for settings to screen using Wellcomm . Settings delivering ETB would be asked not to use the intervention activities . Control settings can use them as part of 'business as usual' . The evaluation team will be asking settings what activities they do as part of 'business usual'.
- 5. I don't know if I will have enough children in order to meet your criteria as I don't know the needs of all the children joining me in September as yet.**
We are looking for settings who have at least 20 children, aged 3 to 4 years, who do not have SEND concerns and can attend the setting for at least 3 different days (or half-days) in a week. The number of children you have this academic year will provide you with an estimate of how many you will have academic year 2025-2026.
- 6. We have high levels of children with speech and language challenges but many would be too complex for the programme, can we still take part?**
See answer 5 above.
- 7. We are a small setting and children have different patterns of attendance – what happens after screening if we don't have 16 children to run 3 sessions a week?**
Once your setting is eligible and you have signed the MoU you will continue with the evaluation regardless of your cohort size. The minimum cohort size for a setting to deliver Early Talk Boost after the screening is two groups of 6 children each, totaling 12 children.

Questions about control settings

8. What interventions can be used if we are chosen to be in the control group as these children may need some support with their talking and understanding?

It is fine to continue with any 'business as usual' strategies and interventions, this will be captured as part of the study. You should though not deliver Early Talk Boost, NELI or Talking Time during the duration of the study.

9. Would we receive the resources, even if we're in the control group?

The control settings will receive an additional £1000 at the end of the study which can either be financial payment or be used to purchase the Early Talk Boost programme to deliver after the trial.

10. Could you confirm what a control group and intervention group are?

The study is designed to have settings who deliver Early Talk Boost (active groups) and settings who continue with business as usual (control groups). This allows the evaluation team to compare the impact of Early Talk Boost against what would have happened if we had changed nothing.

11. When will we know which group we are in?

The active and control groups will be confirmed in December 2025.

Questions about training

12. How is the training delivered?

The training is delivered live by a Speech and Language UK Advisor. It is online over 5 hours, in 2 sessions.

13. Do the 2 practitioners need to attend the training at the same time?

No, the 2 practitioners can attend training sessions at different times. The sessions are online and we will offer a range of days and times.

14. Will there be a chance to network with other settings?

Yes, there will be opportunities to share practice with other settings, details will be confirmed in the Spring term of 2026.