



Life at School for Bilingual Children with Autism

INTRODUCTION AND FAQs

What is the purpose of this project? The aim of this project is to find out more about how bilingual children with autism experience school and to consider strategies and policies that may improve their school lives. The project will take place from February to May 2018 and will involve school children across the UK.

Why have I been chosen? As this is a study concerning bilingual children with an autism diagnosis, we are very interested to know more about your child's daily experiences of school. In order to paint an accurate picture, we feel that it is important to consider a range of different perspectives, and will therefore be interviewing a number of teachers, teaching assistants, parents and pupils.

What will taking part involve for my child? If you are willing for your child to participate in this study, the school will be contacted to arrange a brief 10 minute pre-interview meeting in school with your child. You would be very welcome to attend this meeting, if you wish and are available. The purpose of this meeting will be for your child to meet with the interviewer and discuss how the interview will work. Your child will have a chance to ask any questions about the interview and it will be a good opportunity to build a rapport between your child and the interviewer.

After this meeting, we will then arrange a date and time for the main interview (between February and April), which will also take place in school. The main interview with your child will last between 15 and 25 minutes and we will discuss five

topics in relation to their experiences of school. These topics will include:

- ❖ The languages they speak
- ❖ Their interaction with classmates
- ❖ How they experience success
- ❖ Which subjects they prefer
- ❖ The resources and support available to them at school

How will the interview be adapted to meet my child's needs? We understand that communication can sometimes be difficult, particularly for children with autism. Accordingly, the interviewer will show your child 5 pictures of different aspects of school life on a computer to help facilitate the discussion. Children will also be given the option as to whether they

would prefer to participate in the interview by themselves or with another adult present.

Will the interview be recorded? The interview will be audio-recorded so that the interviewer can fully engage in the conversation and listen back to it later. However, if you or your child do not want the interview to be recorded that is fine too. Recordings will be identified only by a code, and will not be used or made available for any purposes other than the research project. These recordings will be destroyed at the end of the study.

What about the results of the project? The interviewer will meet with your child up to 6 weeks after the interview to discuss the results and check that he/she is happy with how their opinions and experiences have been represented. During this short meeting, the researcher will give your child the opportunity to provide any further information that they wish to be included in the study.

Results of the study may be presented at conferences and written up in journals. The findings are normally presented in terms of groups of individuals. However, if any individual data are presented, it will be completely anonymous, without any means of identifying the individuals involved. As is typical for this type of study, the data collected during the course of the project might be used for additional or subsequent research.



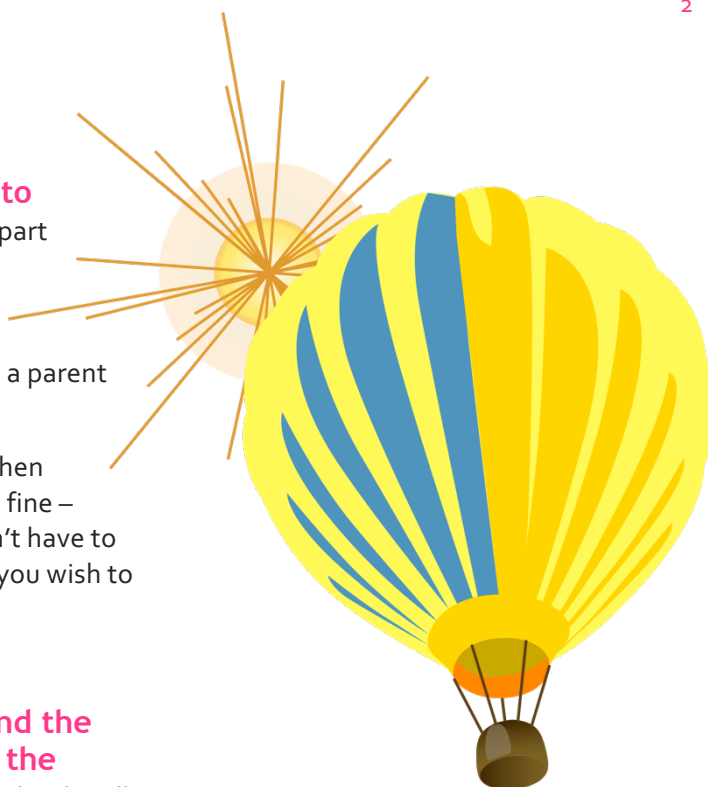
Does my child have to take part? No. Taking part in the project is entirely voluntary. We won't involve any child without permission from a parent or legal guardian.

If you begin the project then change your mind that is fine – just let us know. You don't have to tell us the reason unless you wish to do so.

How will my child and the school benefit from the project? Children and schools will benefit from being involved in a project led one of the UK's top Universities. They will have the opportunity to discuss their experiences of school and give their voice to what changes they feel would improve their experience of school. Your child will also be given a bookmark as a token of thanks for taking part in the study.

What are the risks involved? Sometimes reflecting on past experiences can be sensitive and difficult. As such, precautions have been put in place to ensure that your child can stop the interview at any point if they should not wish to continue. It may also be important to note that the interviewer is a former teacher, and so has ample experience working with children and young people.

Does the project have ethical approval? The project has received ethical approval from the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of Cambridge and has undergone ethical scrutiny. The interviewer has an enhanced DBS check and is a former teacher.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Please return the enclosed consent form to your child's class teacher if you are willing for your child to take part in this study



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Department of Theoretical
and Applied Linguistics

Who can I contact for further information? If you have any questions, you can contact Katie Howard, the project leader:

Email: kbh30@cam.ac.uk