

**The *when* of word learning: a SleepSmart study**

SleepSmart is a project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and carried out by researchers at the University of York. It is being conducted within xxx to explore the role that sleep plays in learning new words in childhood.

Our research has already shown that time asleep leads to greater improvements in word learning than an equivalent time awake. However, an important question is: when in the day is it best to learn? Is it best to learn just before going to bed or earlier in the day?

This study is an exciting opportunity to address this question and explore the links between sleep and learning in more detail.

**What does the study involve?**

For any child taking part there will be four sessions in total, all of which will be run at school by our research team. Session one will take place one day after school, where your child will complete some tests of verbal and nonverbal ability and will then learn some new words via a computerized game-like task. Session two will take place the next morning and will just involve a very short memory test. Sessions 3 and 4 will take place a week later and will follow the same format.

**What are the benefits and risks of participating in the study?**

You would be helping to gain new insights into the mechanisms of sleep, memory and learning in children, and provide practical knowledge on when in the day it is optimal for children to learn. Hopefully participation in the study will be interesting for children, and will help with their understanding of the assembly we will be conducting within the school.

The SleepSmart project is planned and conducted in such a way that the children will be at no risk of harm. All studies run by the Psychology department receive ethical approval by the University of York. Each member of our research team has received an up-to-date enhanced police check (DBS), are rigorously trained and experienced in carrying out educational and cognitive assessments with children, and all have worked with schools and families. On the day of sessions one and three, children may be exempt from homework. However, we are hoping this study will provide educational benefits for the children who take part.

**What will happen to the data?**

All the information about the children who participate in this study will be anonymised and kept strictly confidential. Our procedures for the handling, processing, storage, and destruction of all data are compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be kept for 10 years and then destroyed securely.

**Consenting to your child taking part**

The school is happy for us to come in and complete our research project with as many children as are interested in taking part. For consent purposes please can you click on the following link if you DO NOT wish for your child to take part in this study. If you do not respond via this link we will assume you are happy for your child to participate:

<https://york.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5avIergI78m2UU5>

**Contact details of the researchers:**

Dr. Sarah Walker, Dr. Fay Fletcher & Dr. Victoria Knowland. **Email:** [sleepsmart@york.ac.uk](mailto:sleepsmart@york.ac.uk) **Tel:** (01904) 324359

Hopefully, you should feel at sufficient ease to let the experimenter know if you have any ethical concerns about the work, but if not then please contact the Chair of Departmental Ethics Committee, Dr. Philip Quinlan, email: [philip.quinlan@york.ac.uk](mailto:philip.quinlan@york.ac.uk)

*Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.*