

Dear Parent/Carer,

**RE: Evaluation of English Mastery Programme**

I am writing to tell you that your child’s school is participating in a study evaluating the English Mastery programme. English Mastery is a comprehensive programme which aims to improve progress and skills in English. The evaluation study is being funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and is being carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent research agency.

As part of this evaluation, half of the schools participating in the study have been randomly chosen to follow the English Mastery curriculum. The other half will continue with usual English teaching. NatCen will conduct research to compare Year 8 achievement in both groups to understand whether English Mastery improves students’ progress in English.

In order to compare students’ progress across the schools, NatCen will conduct the following activities:

| Research activity         | Details  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Recording progress        | Schools will share student level information with NatCen. This includes the Unique Pupil Number (UPN), date of birth, first name and surname, and name or number of English class. Schools will share data with NatCen via a secure upload. We collect this information so that we can record the students’ progress from Key Stage 2 and to enable us to administer tests to students at the end of Year 8. |
| School visits and surveys | Teachers are invited to complete surveys at three points during the two-year study. A NatCen researcher will visit some selected schools to interview teachers and observe teachers’ delivery of English lessons. Names and personal details of students will not be recorded during these visits.   |
| Student testing           | At the end of Year 8 NatCen will randomly select a group of students to participate in a standardised English test. Your child may be asked to sit this test which will be invigilated and collected by NatCen staff. NatCen will use the test scores to evaluate what impact the lessons have had upon students’ academic performance.  |

The data will be kept confidential, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Information provided will be shared securely with a small group of researchers at NatCen. NatCen will publish a report at the end of the evaluation. Only group-level results of the programme evaluation will be discussed in the report - your child’s name and the name of the school will not be used.

For this study, NatCen is the data controller and the legal basis for this research is “legitimate interest”. All personal information, and any other data held on the project, will be securely deleted within six months of the project’s completion in 2024. Once your child’s information is included in the data set, the data will be anonymised, and it will not be possible to identify them.

At the end of the project, data will be submitted to the EEF's Data Archive which is managed by the Fisher Family Trust (FFT). At this point, EEF will be data controller and FFT will be data processors. The evaluation data will also be linked with information about the students from the National Pupil Database (NPD), Department for Education, the EEF's archive manager and, in an anonymised form, with the Office for National Statistics, the UK Data Archive, and potentially other research teams.

Please see the Privacy Notice for more information about how we will hold your child's data: <http://www.natcen.ac.uk/taking-part/studies-in-field/evaluation-of-english-mastery/privacy-notice/>

If you would like more information about this project, you can contact the research team at NatCen using the email address below.



**Email:** [englishmasteryteam@natcen.ac.uk](mailto:englishmasteryteam@natcen.ac.uk)  
**Website:** [www.natcen.ac.uk/englishmastery](http://www.natcen.ac.uk/englishmastery)

You have the right to express the wish for NatCen not to obtain information about your child from the school, including their name, date of birth and Unique Pupil Number. If you do not want your child's school to share your child's information with the evaluators and do not wish for your child to take part in the project evaluation, please complete the slip at the end of this page.

**If you are happy with everything in this letter you do not need to do anything.**

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Priya Khambhaita**  
Research Director  
NatCen Social Research

### English Mastery PARENTAL WITHDRAWAL SLIP

I do **not** want my child to take part in the evaluation of the English Mastery programme, including all the research activities described above:

Your child's name.....

Your full name.....

**Your signature**.....

**Date**.....

Please return this slip to a member of staff at the English Department at your child's school within **two weeks** of receipt of this letter if you do not wish for your child to take part in the English Mastery evaluation activities.