



Dear Parent/ Carer,

## RE: Evaluation of English Mastery Programme

I am writing to tell you that your child's school is taking part in a study evaluating English Mastery, an English curriculum programme which aims to improve English attainment for pupils in Years 7 and 8.

The study is funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the Accelerator Fund programme. The evaluation is being carried out by Sheffield Hallam University (SHU).

Half of the schools in the study have been randomly selected to follow the English Mastery curriculum in 2022-23 and 2023-24. The other half will continue with their usual English teaching.

Your pupil's school is in the **intervention** group. They are delivering English Mastery over the next two years. English teachers in the school will receive special training and support during this time with the aim of improving attainment for all pupils in your child's year group. English teaching takes place during normal lesson time and includes all pupils.

To learn how well the English Mastery programme works, SHU will:

Research activity	Details
Collect pupil data from schools	<p>Schools will share pupil data (Unique Pupil Number, date of birth, first name and surname) with SHU via secure transfer.</p> <p>We collect this information so that we can record the pupil's attainment from Key Stage 2 and to enable us to set tests for students in Year 8.</p> <p>Information on pupil characteristics (Free Schools Meals, English as a Second Language and Special Educational Needs status) will also be obtained from the government National Pupil Database. This will help us understand how well the English Mastery programme works for these pupils.</p>
Conduct school visits and surveys	<p>Teachers will complete surveys twice during the evaluation. A SHU researcher will visit some schools to interview teachers and observe English lessons. Names and personal details of students will not be recorded during these visits.</p>
Conduct a pupil English assessment	<p>At the end of Year 8, SHU will randomly select a group of pupils to sit a standardised English test. Your child may be asked to sit this test. The results will be analysed with data from the National Pupil Database to measure progress against prior attainment. SHU will use the test scores to evaluate the impact of English Mastery on students' academic performance.</p>

All personal data will be kept confidential and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (Article 6 (1e) and Article 9 (j)). Information provided will be shared securely with researchers at SHU. SHU will publish a report at the end of the evaluation. No individual pupils, teachers or schools will be mentioned in the report.



English  
Mastery

Sheffield  
Hallam  
University

Sheffield  
Institute  
of Education



Education  
Endowment  
Foundation

Please see the SHU Privacy Notice for research participants for more information about how your child's data will be treated: <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-this-website/privacy-policy/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-research>

The DfE and EEF are joint data controllers. They have responsibility for the wider Accelerator Fund programme, which English Mastery is part of. They make decisions about how and what personal data is used in accordance with the purposes set by the DfE and EEF. SHU will be the independent data controller for the duration of the English Mastery project. All personal information will be securely deleted when the project is completed after being shared with the EEF and DfE for archiving purposes. Data held in the EEF archive will be anonymised, and it will not be possible to identify participating pupils or schools.

At the end of the project, anonymised data will be submitted to the EEF's Data Archive. At this point, EEF and DfE will be data controllers. Contractors appointed to manage the Data Archive 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 with the Office for National Statistics in an anonymised form, the UK Data Archive, and potentially other approved researchers.

If you would like more information about this project, you can contact the research team at SHU using the email address below or visit the websites for EEF or English Mastery.

**SHU Email:** [EnglishMastery@shu.ac.uk](mailto:EnglishMastery@shu.ac.uk)  
**EEF Website:** <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>  
**English Mastery:** <https://www.arkcurriculumplus.org.uk/our-programmes/secondary/english-mastery>

**You have the right to ask SHU 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 wish for your child to opt-out of the project evaluation, please complete the slip below. Please note that if you wish to opt your child out of the evaluation, they can still take part in the English Mastery lessons, but not the evaluation.

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

**Dr Martin Culliney**  
Senior Research Fellow  
Sheffield Hallam University

**English Mastery evaluation 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 your school within **two weeks** of receipt of this letter if you wish to **withdraw** from the English Mastery evaluation activities.