

Dear parent/carer,

RE: Independent evaluation of the Emotion Coaching programme

We are writing to let you know that your child's nursery is participating in an exciting research study about children's personal, social and emotional development.

Nurseries across England will engage in a training programme called Emotion Coaching (EC). This training programme is designed to help nursery workers support young children's emotions, behaviour and their relationships with other children and adults, including self-regulation. Emotion Coaching UK (ECUK), in partnership with Norland College, will support the delivery of the training programme in early years settings and schools in different regions of England. The training programme will run from November 2024 to May 2025.

The programme will be evaluated in a research study carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen). The evaluation will look at whether the Emotion Coaching training programme has an impact on children's self-regulation and other outcomes. In order to do this, half of the nurseries taking part in the study will participate in the Emotion Coaching training programme and the other half will be in the comparison group. Your child's nursery has been selected to take part in this study. This study is being funded as part of the [Department for Education's Early Years Recovery Programme](#) in collaboration with Stronger Practice Hubs (SPH) and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

What is Emotion Coaching (EC)?

- The Emotion Coaching training programme is a professional development programme that was developed by ECUK.
- Emotion Coaching is an approach that helps teachers and early years staff to better support children in understanding the different emotions they experience, why they occur and how to handle them.
- Nominated teachers and early years staff will take part in a 2-day online training and three follow-up workshops.
- Trained staff will be encouraged to share their learning with other staff members at their nursery.
- All staff working with 3-4 year olds will be encouraged to use Emotion Coaching in the nursery as part of their everyday interactions with children
- Emotion Coaching will take place this school year.

What does the evaluation involve for my child's nursery and my child?

- The evaluation is a randomised control trial. This means that some nurseries will take part in Emotion Coaching training, and others will not. By looking at the results for both groups at the end, we can see if the Emotion Coaching training programme has an impact on the practitioners and children in the nurseries..
- Staff in all nurseries will be asked to complete questionnaires about 3-4 year old children at the nursery in June-July 2025. These questionnaires will ask about the child's emotions, behaviour and their relationships with other children and adults at the nursery. Staff will also be asked to provide personal details about the children

including their first name, last name, sex, date of birth, home postcode, Unique Pupil Number if available, eligibility for Early Years Pupil Premium and the number of hours the child attends the setting per week.

- Staff members will be invited to complete surveys about the way they work with children, and some staff will be asked to participate in telephone interviews, although those will not be about individual children.
- A small proportion of nurseries will be invited to take part in observation-based assessments. Independent practitioners will visit the selected nurseries in June-July 2025 and carry out short 10-15-minute activities with the child.
- NatCen will link the data that we collect to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data from the National Pupil Database.

What will taking part in the evaluation involve for me?

- You will be invited to complete one short paper questionnaire at the end of the programme in June-July 2025.
- The questionnaire will ask about your child's behaviour and emotions at home.
- Only one parent or carer per family will be invited to take part in this survey.
- Nursery staff will share the questionnaire with you in June-July 2025.
- You will be offered a £10 gift e-voucher for completing the survey, to be sent to you via email.
- Participation is voluntary.

How will my child's data be used?

During the study

If you agree for your child to take part in the study, NatCen will keep a record of your responses to the surveys and your child's assessment scores. Looking at these responses and scores will help the research team understand the impact of the Emotion Coaching programme. NatCen will not share this information with anyone, not even your child's nursery.

At NatCen, all data will be stored on a secure server. Access to information relating to your child will be restricted to those individuals working on this evaluation.

Longer-term child outcomes will be analysed by linking data collected as a part of the evaluation to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data from the National Pupil Database. The process of linking NPD data is detailed in the next section.

After the study

NatCen will only use information they collect for the purpose of this evaluation and will delete all personal data from NatCen systems after the results have been published. Names of children, parents/carers or nurseries will not be used in any report about this research.

The evaluation is funded by the EEF. Data will be shared with the Department for Education (DfE) in order that it can be linked to the National Pupil Database (NPD). To do this, NatCen

will send DfE children's personal data collected from education settings, including first name, surname, date of birth, home postcode, UPN and school identifiers like URN and LAESTAB.

Impact evaluation data collected as part of all EEF evaluations are archived for research purposes and the EEF will be the data controller of the archived data. At the end of evaluation, NatCen will prepare data so that it can be archived in the Office for National Statistics' Secure Research Service (SRS), which will be managed by [FFT Education](#) on behalf of the EEF. The SRS team will then transfer files from the project space to the FFT space within the SRS.

The archived data will not contain direct identifiers like child name, contact details and date of birth, but does hold a Pupil Matching Reference (PMR). PMR is a meaningless identifier that will enable potential further matching to the NPD and other administrative datasets without accessing direct identifiers of the child. Once the archiving process is completed, the archive will be open to the research community for analysis within the SRS. The archived data will be potentially shared with other parties, relinked to the NPD, and/or linked to other datasets. For further information, see the [EEF's archive privacy notice](#).

You can read more about how your and your child's data will be used in NatCen's Privacy Notice: natcen.ac.uk/EmotionCoaching-Privacy

What next?

If you are happy for your child to take part, you do not need to do anything.

If you **do not** want your child to take part in NatCen's evaluation of the Emotion Coaching training programme, please let your child's nursery know as soon as possible by signing the form below and returning it to the person who gave you this letter. Your child's information will not be shared with NatCen and your child will not take part in any assessments. You can withdraw your child from the evaluation at any point before the data analysis process is started.

How can I get more information?

If you would like more information about the evaluation of Emotion Coaching, please contact NatCen by email at EmotionCoaching@natcen.ac.uk or by calling 0808 281 9513. You can also find out more at natcen.ac.uk/EmotionCoaching.

Tick the box below and fill in the details to confirm you **do not** want your child to take part in the evaluation of the Emotion Coaching training programme.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Name of your child: _____

Date: _____