

Dear parent/carer,

RE: Independent evaluation of the Positive Early Childhood Education 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.

What is Positive Early Childhood Education (PECE)?

Settings across England are taking part in a training programme called the Positive Early Childhood Education (PECE) programme for practitioners working with children aged 3-4 years. PECE draws on the same approaches as the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program®, developed by experts at the University of Queensland, Australia, which has been extensively evaluated with positive effects found for children's social, emotional, and behavioural outcomes. PECE is designed to help early years practitioners to **support children's social skills, emotional development, behaviour and self-regulation** (the ability to manage their own emotions, behaviour and attention). Staff learn evidence-based strategies which they use in everyday interactions with children.

The programme is being independently evaluated by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). The evaluation will assess whether PECE improves children's self-regulation and related outcomes and provide useful insights for Early Years practitioners working with young children

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

This study is a randomised controlled trial. This means some settings will receive PECE training this year and others will continue with their usual practice. By looking at the results for both groups at the end, we can see if the PECE programme has an impact for practitioners and children in the nurseries that receive training.

As part of the evaluation:

- Practitioners will share some **personal information** about each child with NatCen in September 2026 so that NatCen can administer the study. This includes: 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.
- Practitioners will complete **short questionnaires about children aged 3-4 years** in June-July 2027. These questionnaires will ask about children's behaviour, emotions, interactions and self-regulation.

- Nurseries will be invited to take part in **observation-based assessments**. Independent test administrators from AlphaPlus will visit nurseries in June-July 2027 and carry out 10-15-minute activities with each child who has not been opted out. The assessments will take place with a practitioner present and will involve a memory card-matching game and a curiosity box guessing game, designed to measure aspects of children's self-regulation.
- A small number of nurseries receiving PECE training will take part in **setting visits** where a NatCen researcher will observe a PECE coaching session. This involves setting managers observing practitioners' interactions with children and providing feedback. No data will be collected about individual children.
- Staff members will also be invited to complete **staff 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.

How will my child's data be used?

If you agree for your child to take part in the study, NatCen will securely store data about your child (as described above). This data will be used only for research purposes to understand the impact of the PECE programme. NatCen will not share this information with anyone, not even your child's nursery. Your child's survey and assessment data will be pseudonymised, meaning that personal data will be replaced with artificial identifiers.

NatCen will also link the information collected in the study to your child's Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data from the National Pupil Database (NPD) to investigate the longer-term outcomes of the programme. EYFSP data is submitted by schools to the NPD at the end of reception year. The linking of data for this evaluation will take place in autumn 2028.

All information will be stored on NatCen's secure systems. Access to information relating to your child will be restricted to the individuals working on this evaluation.

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

You can read more about how your and your child's data will be used in [NatCen's Privacy Notice](#).

What next?

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

If you **do not** want your child to take part in NatCen's evaluation of the Positive Early Childhood Education training programme, please let your child's nursery know as soon as possible by signing the form on the next page 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 PECE, please contact NatCen by email at PECE@natcen.ac.uk or by calling 0808 281 9513. You can also find out more at <https://natcen.ac.uk/participant-contents/evaluation-positive-early-childhood-education>

If you would like to learn more about the PECE program, please visit www.peceprogram.net/global/home

PECE evaluation opt-out form

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 Positive Early Childhood Education programme.

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Signature: _____

Name: _____

Name of your child: _____

Date: _____