

Letter for Senior Management

Subject: Information for SLT: TWITCH EEF-funded early years trial

Dear Senior Management

I'm writing to share information about language development training for early years staff at no cost to settings.

Talk With Tales for Children (TWITCH) Efficacy Trial, an Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)-funded research project that may be of interest to your setting.

TWITCH is a year-long early years programme designed to strengthen children's **language, narrative skills and self-expression** through story time. The programme has been developed by **Sheffield Hallam University** and will be **independently evaluated by Durham University**.

The trial is closely aligned with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**, with a particular focus on supporting children to reach a **Good Level of Development (GLD) in Communication and Language**. By taking part, settings contribute to a large-scale, high-quality evaluation that will strengthen the national evidence base on effective early years practice. The final evaluation report will be published by the EEF in 2028.

What participation involves

- The programme runs from **September 2026 to July 2027**
 - Settings are randomly allocated to either an **intervention group** or a **control group**
 - Intervention settings receive full **TWITCH training and coaching support**
 - Control settings will their **usual story time practice and complete the evaluation activities**
 - All settings take part in evaluation activities (e.g. short child assessments and staff questionnaires)
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Benefits and incentives for settings

Participation offers settings the opportunity to:

- **Access high-quality professional development at no cost** (intervention group), supported by ongoing coaching
- **Contribute to important EEF-funded research** as a control setting
- Receive a **thank you payment** to recognise staff time and involvement:
 - **£575 per setting** (intervention group)
 - **£1,000 per setting** (control group)

There is **no financial cost** to settings to take part.

Access our [TWiTCHEEF Efficacy Trial Settings Information Sheet](#), which provides full details about eligibility, programme delivery, evaluation activities, and timelines. If this is something you'd like to explore further, the next step would simply be to [register interest](#) — there is no obligation at that stage.

We would be very happy to answer any questions or talk through what participation would look like in practice for your setting. Contact us @twitch@shu.ac.uk

“TWiTCHEEF strengthened our approach to story time and supported children’s language development in a way that fitted well with everyday practice.”
(Headteacher, former TWiTCHEEF Pilot setting)

Click the links or scan the QR codes to watch our short films to learn more:



[TWiTCHEEF in 90 seconds - TWiTCHEEF \(EEF\) Efficacy Trial](#)

[TWiTCHEEF Testimonials - Through a Headteacher's lens](#)



With best wishes,
The TWiTCHEEF Team

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