

The Focus4TAPS Programme

Information sheet for parents/carers

Dear parent/carers,

Over the coming school year, your school is taking part in a research project called 'Focus for Teacher Assessment in Primary Science' (*Focus4TAPS*). This letter contains information about the project and what it means for your child. Please read it carefully.

What is Focus4TAPS?

- Focus4TAPS is a programme that provides training and resources for teachers to improve their teaching and assessment of science in primary schools.
- Focus4TAPS aims to support the teaching of a key part of the science curriculum, known as 'Working Scientifically'.
- Focus4TAPS lessons will be delivered by teachers throughout the 2024-2025 school year.
- In [previous research](#), Focus4TAPS was found to increase pupils' attainment in science (+2 months of progress).

Who is running the study?

This is a major study and several different organisations are collaborating on it. They are:

- **The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)** - *Responsible for evaluating the programme.* NatCen is Britain's largest and oldest social research organisation. They have delivered several school-based studies for charities and the government about what works in education, and are experts at research that involves pupils, young people and teachers.
- **Bath Spa University (BSU)** – *Responsible for developing the programme, recruitment for the evaluation, and development and delivery of the training.* Bath Spa University is the largest Initial Teacher Education provider in the South West, working with over 600 school partners. It is the home of Focus4TAPS and currently the Sunday Times University of the Year for Social Inclusion.
- **Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)** – *Responsible for funding the study and overall management of programme delivery and evaluation.* The EEF is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. They run projects to test the effectiveness of education programmes to improve outcomes for children across the UK.

How the study will work

- It will run between Autumn 2024 and Summer 2025.
- The project involves one Year 5 class per school. Some schools will be randomly selected to receive the programme while others will continue teaching science as usual
- To understand if the programme is effective, pupils in a selected Year 5 class will complete a short, age-appropriate survey about their attitudes towards science and their experiences of

science teaching and learning in September 2024 and again in June 2025. Pupils will also complete a science test covering the Year 5 science curriculum in June 2025.

- Some pupils taking part in the study might also be invited to a focus group to understand what they think of the programme. You would be contacted separately to provide consent for this closer to the time.

Your child's data

- To run the programme, your school will be required to securely share information about pupils taking part in the study (e.g. name, gender, date of birth, and whether pupils receive free school meals) with NatCen who will conduct analysis to find out if the programme was effective. Schools will also provide school-level average Key Stage 1 maths and reading scores from the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Please read the [Privacy Notice](#) for full details.
- We take data security very seriously, and the study will comply fully with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- A report about the study will be published in early 2026. No individual pupil or school will be identifiable in this report - all details will be fully anonymised.
- If you have any questions about your school sharing data with the organisations running the study, please contact your school's data manager.

How can I withdraw my child from this study?

If you are happy for your child to participate, **you do not need to do anything** but please keep this form for your information.

If you **DO NOT** want your child's information to be used in the research, please complete the online form that you have been sent by Friday 23rd February 2024. They may still be taught using the Focus4TAPS resources and activities, but they will NOT have to take any tests and their information will NOT be used in the study results.

Some schools will also be invited to participate in classroom observations. Opting out now does NOT include opting out of any classroom observations, however, the focus of the classroom observations will not be on your child but instead on the delivery of the Focus4TAPS programme.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact:

- focus4taps@natcen.ac.uk for questions about the evaluation, the way we will use data, or if you decide at any time that you don't want your child's data to be used.
- primary.science@bathspa.ac.uk for questions about the Focus4TAPS programme or how it will work in your child's school.

Complete the online form to confirm you DO NOT want to participate in this project.