Dear Parents and Children

We have now completed the third phase of our VEPS research project. We first saw the children when they were 2-3, then again at 4-5. After a gap of five years, we are delighted that 116 children participated in our recent follow-up – surpassing our target of 100. Many, many thanks to all of you and to our researchers who made this possible. Every child is individual, and every child has made an important contribution to our project and the insights we have gained.

No previous study has followed up children referred to speech and language therapy services at 2-3 years; investigated their speech and social skills at this early age; and investigated how these early processing skills relate to language and communication in the late primary school years, as children approach the crucial transition to secondary school.

Our follow-up at 4-5 years already gave us new insights into outcomes for clinically referred children – whether or not they continue to have difficulties, and the nature of those difficulties.

Thanks to our further follow-up at 10-11 years, we can provide more information about the VEPS assessments we created for the first phase of our study, and what they tell us about children’s strengths and difficulties. This will be valuable for speech and language therapists in evaluating whether young clinically-referred children are likely to have long-term problems and in planning intervention to support their needs.

As part of our follow-up, we created a new set of language assessments for primary school children, presented on a touch screen laptop. Children enjoyed doing these, and their responses are informative about specific language skills. Our new assessments are now available for speech and language therapists to download from our project website.

If you would like to contact us about the project for any reason, please see our contact details below.

Thank you again for your generous cooperation.

With best wishes

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