

August 2023

Invitation letter
Sleeping Well, Thinking Well

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to invite you to take part in a study investigating sleep and executive functions, led by Dr Anna Joyce, a chartered psychologist at Regent's University London.

For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities there is limited understanding of how sleep affects 'executive functions'. These are skills such as attention, inhibition and problem-solving, which are needed to control and regulate behaviour. The purpose of the study is to assess children's sleep and executive functions at two time-points, six months apart. We want to see whether there are changes in children's sleep over time, and whether these changes are associated with changes in their executive functions. We predict that better sleep will be associated with better executive function skills.

During the study we would ask your child to wear a movement-sensing watch for one week to measure their activity level, and a pulse oximeter overnight for three nights to measure their heart rate and oxygen saturation through an infrared sensor on their finger or toe. We will send these in the post and will ask you to return them in a pre-paid postage envelope. We will ask you to complete some questionnaires about your child's behaviour, which take around 30 minutes; and we will arrange an online video call with your child where they will spend 30-45 minutes doing some cognitive tasks. These are designed to be fun and most children enjoy doing them. Six months later, we will ask you to repeat the process.

As a thank you for taking part, your child will receive a certificate and a £5 voucher for each session that they take part in. After each session we will send you a detailed, personalised feedback report with your child's sleep results and performance on the cognitive tests. If there are any concerns with their sleep we will let you know. At the end of the study we will send you a summary of the overall findings.

We are looking for children to take part in the study who are aged 5 to 11 years and have special educational needs and/or disability. Children should not be taking stimulant drugs (e.g. Ritalin to control symptoms of ADHD), or hypnotic medication to help them sleep, but they may take Melatonin.

This study strictly adheres to the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). It has been approved by Regent's University London's Psychology Research Ethics Committee, which means that it conforms to UK standards for the protection of the participants, their confidentiality, the researchers and the University.

If this study sounds like something you want to take part in, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/sleepingwell1> for more information and to sign up to take part. If you have any questions about the study please feel free to contact me using the details below.

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You may also contact the lead researcher, Dr Anna Joyce, BSc MSc PhD CPsychol (she/her)
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Yours faithfully,
Noah Scott-Fielder