

## Elklan Training Ltd

Address	Key contacts
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### Experience in Educational Data Collection

Elklan has experience undertaking data collection at baseline, interim and endline for impact evaluations in schools and early years settings, and with children from 2 years to 19 years.

Data has been collected for internal evaluations of our own programmes and for evaluators working on behalf of the EEF and others. We have worked with evaluators from Rand, the IES, the Universities of Oxford, Sheffield, Leeds and York.

Data has included:

- Academic attainment levels
- Cognitive skills
- Language development (expressive and receptive language and vocabulary)
- Mathematical ability
- Literacy
- Socio-emotional development
- Practitioner knowledge, skills, confidence and behaviour.
- Classroom/setting environment.

Specific measures used have included:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Outcomes
- Pre-School Language Scales (PLS)
- Clinical evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF)
- LanguageScreen

- British Picture Vocabulary Scales (BPVS)
- Renfrew action picture Test (RAPT)
- Early Years Toolbox
- The Woodcock Reading Master Tests (WRMT III)
- Sections of the Speech, Language and Communication Framework (practitioners)
- Structured interviews with parents and practitioners
- Rated observations of children and practitioners
- Elklan's own scales for observations of communication friendly environments.

Our data collectors also have experience of assessment and observation of children and young people 0-19 years using numerous other assessment batteries as all are skilled and experienced clinicians/educators.

Elklan has a network of over 2,000 trained Tutors. Elklan draws on this network of Tutors to act as our field force for data collection. All Elklan Tutors:

- Are qualified, registered and experienced speech and language therapists or highly specialist teachers or educational psychologists.
- Have current or recent (within 2 years) experience of working in educational establishments.
- Are trained and experienced in supporting children with and without additional needs aged 0-25.
- Are experienced in undertaking standardised assessments.

We are therefore able to supply data collectors experienced with specific age groups and all educational phases.

As an organisation Elklan is specialist in children and young people's speech, language and communication and associated areas including social and emotional development and literacy, working with children and young people, parents and practitioners.

Our data collection experience is chiefly:

- One to one, face to face assessment of children and young people
- One to one interviews with practitioners and parents
- Focus groups for young people, practitioners and parents

- Observations of practice and classroom/setting environments
- Online/virtual interviews and focus groups (practitioners)
- Online surveys

Recent examples of data collection (2023-24):

<b>Trial</b>	<b>Age range of children</b>	<b>No of schools/settings</b>	<b>Children assessed per school/setting</b>	<b>Available weeks for assessment</b>	<b>Assessments used</b>
Concept CAT (2023/24)	3-4yrs	90	Up to 15	Max 4 at baseline and endline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CELF Preschool (2)</li> <li>• Early Years Toolbox</li> </ul>
Lexia (2 cohorts) (2023-24)	6-7 yrs	224	12	4 weeks baseline, 7 weeks endline	WRMT III

### **Field Force Capacity and Expertise**

Elklan has a network of over 2,000 trained Tutors, approximately 250 of whom are actively engaged in working with Elklan on projects across England, including data collection. Elklan draws on this network of Tutors to act as our field force for data collection.

All Elklan Tutors:

- Are qualified, registered and experienced speech and language therapists or highly specialist teachers or educational psychologists.
- Have current or recent (within 2 years) experience of working in educational establishments.
- Are trained and experienced in supporting children with and without additional needs aged 0-25.
- Are experienced in undertaking standardised assessments.
- All tutors have appropriate DBS checks for their roles and are trained in GDPR requirements.

Elklan subcontracts, from its pool of tutors, for individual pieces of work, according to geography, capacity and availability, and the project specific requirements for skills and experience. This model allows for rapid mobilisation, low overhead costs and geographic proximity of the data collectors to the educational establishments in which they will be working.

Tutors used for data collection (approximately 250) are spread across the UK enabling us to undertake such work in specific regions or nationally.

Elklan is able to work with evaluators to train its workforce in the project specific requirements of data collection and data entry to ensure consistency and reliability in data collection. As an organisation whose core business is training delivery we can design and deliver efficient, effective training supported by quality materials to embed learning, either face to face or through on-line training.

An external 'expert' is usually contracted to provide training in the specific assessments to be used, produce written guidance and be available to offer support throughout the period of data collection and analysis. The data collectors comprising the field force are provided with access to a live document which acts as a refresher for their training and is added to as data collection progresses with FAQ. The expert who delivers assessment specific training is available to support as necessary.

The identified Elklan project manager provides on-going support for, and communication with, the field force. This communication takes place through webinars, video calls, telephone calls, emails and confidential areas of the Elklan website, as well as face to face meetings where necessary. The project manager maintains availability, during and out of hours, over critical data collection periods.

## **Communication Systems**

### Schools and settings

- The project manager assigns all schools/settings where data collection will take place to data collectors. A designated Elklan administrator shares contact details for their schools/settings and details of children to be assessed with data collectors using a secure platform.
- The Elklan administrator emails all schools and settings providing a reminder of their commitment to the evaluation and details of the testing to be carried out, the testing window, contact details for their data collector, advance notice that the data collector will be contacting the school or setting to arrange dates and an email contact for any queries or concerns. Further information is included at the request of the evaluators.
- The data collectors contact schools assigned to them and agree dates and accommodation requirements. Initial contact is attempted through up to 2 emails and 2 phone calls. Should all 4 attempts at communication fail to yield a response then the Elklan administrator will make further attempts as required on behalf of the data collector.

- All communications between data collectors/ schools/settings and administrator are logged on a live spread sheet. This includes confirmed appointments.
- Data collectors confirm appointments with schools between 5 and 8 working days in advance.
- Further appointments, including any required ‘mop up’ testing, with individual schools/settings are confirmed whilst the data collector is in the setting.

#### Evaluators

- The project manager updates the commissioners on progress of data collection in a format and at a frequency agreed in advance (usually weekly). Typically, this includes information about appointments made with settings and schools and repeat visits planned as well as numbers who have been tested and children who have left school.
- Data can be collected onto an online platform provided by Elklan and accessed live by commissioners.
- All data collection, storage and processing is fully GDPR compliant.
- The project manager monitors activity daily over the testing period using live data supplied by data collectors. Any issues are flagged to evaluators the same working day.

#### Quality Assurance Strategies

- Dependent on the requirements of the evaluation Elklan is able to provide peer review, observation, moderation of assessment scoring and inter tester reliability measures.
- Data quality and missing data are monitored daily by the project manager. Any inadequacies are addressed with data collectors within a working day. Data collectors are required to keep paper records when testing as well as entering data on dedicated, secure databases on line. This enables missing data to be rectified. The paper records are stored securely and then destroyed once the project manager has confirmed the electronic entries.
- Where data collection plans allow for a specific number/proportion of repeat visits to be made, to test children unavailable on initial testing days, then the project manager, through daily monitoring, identifies where these are necessary and instructs the relevant data collectors. (Availability to undertake these is secured during recruitment of data collectors.
- In recent data collection work (Lexi trial) Elklan assessed 98% of baseline children at endline.

## Project Leadership

Data collection is managed by Elklan's Project Manager, Alex Hall. Or, in Alex's absence by Elklan's Director, Henrietta McLachlan.

### Alex Hall, Project Manager

Alex is a qualified speech and language therapist with an MSc in management. She has over a decade's experience of delivering and managing services in each of the statutory (NHS), voluntary and commercial sectors. Alex has particular interests in:

- Innovative service delivery models which meet the needs of children and families;
- Working in collaboration with other organisations,

Whilst working as a Director at the children's communication charity I CAN (to 2009) Alex's responsibilities included the I CAN *Early Years Programme, Primary Talk*, I CAN's nationwide training offer; The DCSF's *Inclusion Development Programme for SLCN*, materials for the *Early Support Programme* and *Every Child a Talker*, the *Joint Professional Development Framework* (forerunner of the SLCF) and a number of nationwide training cascades.

Alex project managed and delivered, for *Symbol UK Ltd, School Talk* and, *Communicating Phonics* (guidance for completing the phonics screening test to children with speech, language and communication needs) commissioned by The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, The Communication Trust and The Department of Education.

Within Elklan Training Ltd Alex has project managed *Talking Matters* (a Department of Education funded programme to develop the capacity of early years settings to support speech, language and communication), a London Schools Excellence Fund Project to address communication needs in primary and secondary schools, two EEF funded research projects and all of Elklan's data collection work.

### Henrietta McLachlan (Director)

Henrietta qualified as a Speech and Language Therapist in 1982 and has worked within the NHS in a wide variety of settings and continues to support a broad range of children and young people.

As a Director of Elklan, Henrietta supports the tutors who are part of Elklan's expanding team. She has specific responsibility for coordinating the accreditation and quality assurance of over 5,000 learners a year working closely with an Ofqual regulated Awarding Organisation. She is particularly skilled at making complex information accessible to all and helps to keep the business focused on its core aim which is to equip those supporting children with speech and language difficulties with the best possible tools to the benefit of all.

In addition to writing the Elklan training courses and materials, Henrietta has been involved in a range of other projects including: Writing materials for ECAT, TCT DofE funded project on Creating Communication Friendly primary schools (2012), ELDP, writing training materials and coordinating the training for the NELI intervention.

#### Samantha Channing (Administrator)

Sam is a qualified teacher with over 20 years experience in early years, and primary settings including managing a pre-school. This gives her insight into the difficulties settings and schools may have in co-operating with data collection requirements and equips her well for acting as their contact point during field trails.

#### **Additional Data Services Offered**

- Elklan would be pleased to discuss any further services required.
- We can undertake transcriptions, observations and interviews.
- We typically develop a shared live data base for all testing results which commissioners can access.

#### **Cost Model and Pricing Structure**

In order to determine pricing Elklan requires the following information:

- Number of schools /settings
- Number of children or young people to be tested in each school/setting
- Tests to be administered and test administration time.
- Whether testing will be nationwide or confined to regions.
- Length of testing period.
- Notice to be given of schools/settings contact details.
- Number of mop up visits required.
- VAT is charged at 20% unless Elklan is receipt of information (in writing) confirming that the work is outside the scope of VAT.

#### **Data Protection**

- Elklan has a data protection policy which applies to data collectors. Data collectors' adherence to the policy is a requirement of their contracts.

- Elklan's Data Protection policy can be supplied upon request it includes:
  - Elklan's commitment to the GDPR regulations and principles.
  - The documentation required whenever new data collection, storage or processing is planned.
  - Requirements of privacy notices.
  - Definitions and requirements for all confidential data and for high-risk data.
  - Safeguards for information held electronically.
  - Safeguards for information held in hard copy.
  - Protocols for information sharing.
  - Specific considerations for data collectors.
  - Details for ensuring compliance and identifying and acting on any breaches.
  - Details of the data Compliance Officer.
- All Elklan Tutors, including those assigned to data collection, are required to have annual training in data security and governance.
- Data collectors are provided with a specific online training session in our own procedures and any specific requirements of the project.

## **Safeguarding**

- Elklan has a safeguarding policy which applies to data collectors. Data collectors' adherence to the policy is a requirement of their contracts.
- Elklan's safeguarding policy can be supplied upon request it includes:
  - Elklan's commitment to promoting the wellbeing of the children and young people who the organisation is in direct and indirect contact with through the services we provide.
  - An outline of types of abuse.
  - Clear details of each member of staff's responsibilities with regard to identifying and reporting concerns.
  - The process to be followed if concerns are noted or reported.
  - Contact details for the organisational safeguarding lead.
  - Details about how Elklan works with other organisation where there are safeguarding concerns.

- All data collectors are required to have enhanced DBS checks, unless agreed otherwise with the evaluators.
- Evidence of DBS checks and identity are taken to all settings/schools by data collectors.
- All data collectors are required to have had safeguarding training within the previous year.
- Data collectors are provided with live training on specific safeguarding requirements for the evaluation they are involved with.

## Project Examples

<b>Project</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Phase/Year Group</b>	<b>Data Collection (test name/s and type/s)</b>	<b>Description (including number of learners tested)</b>
Neli	Oxford University, Queens University Belfast	Reception and year 1	LanguageScreen, CELF	Pre and post testing of children one to one in schools for 5 children in each of 233 schools
Early Years Information Carrying Words	Sheffield University	Early Years	LanguageScreen, Teddy Talk Specifically designed surveys for practitioners and parents Child feedback scale	Pre and post testing of children one to one in settings for 225 children across 42 early years settings
Concept CAT	Rand (EEF SPH trial)	Early Years	CELF 2 Early Numeracy	Pre and post testing of children one to one for up to 15 children in each of 90 settings
Lexia	Rand	Year 2	Woodcock Reading test	Pre and post testing of children one to one for up to 12 children in each of 224 schools (2 cohorts)
Early Talk Boost (trial abandoned)	IES (EEF SPH trial)	Early Years	PLS-5	Baseline for up to 8 children each in 132 settings.