*Department of*

*Psychology*

Craik Marshall Building, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3EB, UK

Language and Rhythm in Children 2020

Dear Parent

We are researchers at the University of Cambridge and we are carrying out a new study to find out more about how listening skills are related to language development and about how to help improve listening skills for children who find language difficult.

We have already found that rhythm skills seem to be linked to developmental language difficulties and we want to find out more about this. To find out more, we are hoping to work with children with a wide range of language skills – from those who find language easy, to those who find language more difficult.

We are asking for your permission for your child to take part in our study.

If you agree that your child can take part, an experienced researcher will visit them in school to give some short game-like activities to find out about their listening, language and memory skills, for example listening to sounds on a computer or deciding about rhythm patterns in words. Each visit would last for about 30 minutes and we expect to need 4 – 6 visits per child. We will agree with your child’s teachers a suitable time to carry out these activity sessions. For some of the activities we will also make recordings of your child’s responses (e.g. audio transcriptions or screenshot recordings of response choices. No recordings will be made of your child’s face). If you prefer, we could arrange to visit your child at home instead. The study will run for 3 years. If there are further Covid 19 lockdowns during this period, we would aim to facilitate remote participation via Zoom.

All tasks will be administered by developmental researchers experienced in working with local children and schools. Although this research project may not bring any immediate benefits to your child, in due course the information that we obtain will help to improve children’s educational experiences and quality of life.

We also hope that some children will agree to come to Cambridge to take part in brain imaging. We would like to record their electrical brain rhythms while they listen to speech (EEG) and also to take a picture of their brain and record the brain’s magnetic patterns while they listen to speech (MEG). You do not have to take part in the brain imaging sessions and we will ask you later if you would like to get involved. There is more information about this in the Information Sheet.

This study has been reviewed by the Cambridge Psychology Research Ethics Committee. There is an Information Sheet and a Consent Form attached to this letter. If you agree to your child taking part, then please complete the Consent Form and return it to your child’s teacher.

If you have any questions or would like any further information, you can phone us on 01223 767510 or email us at sr486@cam.ac.uk and we will be happy to talk to you.

You can decide to stop taking part at any time and you do not have to give a reason.

Dr Susan Richards
Professor Usha Goswami