

Millennium Cohort Study Fifth Sweep (MCS5) Dress rehearsal pilot – full report

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Kathryn Gallop, Emma Wallace, Nickie Rose, Angie Thompson, Kirsty Burston, Tom Frere-Smith, James Bill, Fiona Anderson

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Ipsos MORI has been commissioned by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) to carry out the fifth sweep of the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS5). The MCS is a longitudinal cohort study of people born in the UK in 2000/1 and sweep 5 takes place when the children are 11 years old. Fieldwork for MCS5 will begin in 2012.

This report documents the headline findings from the second (dress rehearsal) pilot for the fifth sweep of the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS5 pilot 2).

This pilot was conducted between 25th August and 27th September 2011 in 13 locations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and included all core elements that will be included in the main stage:

- Household grid CAPI questionnaire
- Main respondent CAPI and CASI questionnaires
- Partner CAPI and CASI questionnaires
- Child paper and audio self-completion questionnaire
- Child cognitive assessments
- Child physical measurements
- Cognitive observations
- Collection of cohort members' teacher's contact information
- Consents and assents

Most of these elements had been provisionally tested in the first pilot study. However, this pilot was the first time that the audio support for child self completion questionnaire had been tested, and so this was a priority focus for the pilot testing.

The pilot also tested the feasibility of a potential new element: collecting child contact details for the purpose of enabling communications to be sent directly to children in the future.

Subsequent to the data collection above, a mixed-mode postal and telephone survey took place with the cohort member's teachers. Details of the Teacher Survey appear in the Teacher Survey dress rehearsal report.

1.2 Pilot objectives

The main objective of the dress rehearsal was to test the entire survey process, at a stage when the data collection instruments were almost finalised. The dress rehearsal was designed to replicate what will actually be happening in the main stage as closely as possible. The following specific areas were tested:

- Contact procedures and approaches to gaining co-operation and consent
- Procedures for tracing movers
- Administration of all survey elements listed above
- Approaches for addressing ethical issues, such as those relating to achieving fully informed consent/assent, and supporting respondent and interviewer safety and wellbeing
- Consent forms, contact sheets and other administrative paperwork

- Any issues associated with implementing the study tasks collectively in the household, including time in household, respondent burden and issues relating to the ordering and co-ordination of the different tasks among different household members, and
- The interviewer briefing and training approach.
-

Note that although feedback from the pilot was intended to provide useful information about the content of the questionnaire, it was not designed, or able, to provide a thorough and complete assessment of the validity or reliability of specific modules of questions. The final choice of content will be guided by the research team at CLS in consultation with collaborators.

1.3 The elements of the CAI questionnaire

The full CAI questionnaire contained not only parent CAPI and CASI questionnaires, but a range of other modules important for managing and implementing the interview visit.

It comprised the following main sections:

- Household grid CAPI questionnaire
- Parent consent and child consent instruction and reminder screens
- Main respondent CAPI and CASI questionnaires
- Partner CAPI and CASI questionnaires
- Child cognitive assessments
- Child physical measurements
- Cognitive observations
- Other elements (interviewer reporting section)

1.4 About this report

This report is one of a number of outputs from the second pilot. Other outputs supplied to CLS are:

- SPSS datasets with CAI questionnaire data for all completed interviews
- an SPSS dataset with questionnaire data for the child self-completion questionnaire
- data for the CANTAB cognitive assessments
- paper questionnaire documentation of CAI data collection instruments
- list of sampled names, addresses and further contact information (such as telephone numbers and stable contacts), updated from interviewer fieldwork, plus outcome codes

The findings and recommendations of this report are primarily based on feedback from interviewers and respondents, as well as researchers' observations. Some analysis of the data is included, but this mainly focuses on fieldwork issues, for example timings. Further analysis of the pilot data will be carried out by CLS to identify questions that may not be working as intended. Broader considerations need to be given to the coverage of each module and the validity and reliability of the questions which are included in them.

Interviewers provided detailed feedback on the wording and format of many questions. However almost all of the tests and many of the questions under consideration derive from

pre-existing instruments. As a result it may not be possible to implement some of the recommendations.

2. Pilot fieldwork

This section of the report provides further information about the methodology and conduct of the pilot sampling and fieldwork, and of the study elements that were reviewed in the dress rehearsal.

2.1 Time period of briefings and pilot fieldwork

A group of 13 interviewers were briefed by Ipsos MORI researchers, with extensive contributions from members of the CLS research team. The briefing took place on 16th, 17th and 23rd August. Each interviewer was asked to carry out two practice sessions covering the cognitive assessments and physical measurements between the second and third day of the briefing, based on what was briefed on the first two days.

Interviewers were strongly encouraged to begin recruitment for their practice session before the briefing started, in order to make best use of the fieldwork period. They were given full written instructions to supplement the briefing (see Appendix A).

A two-day debrief took place on 28th and 29th September.

2.2 Sample and recruitment

2.2.1 Sample

The sample for the MCS5 pilot comprised two types. First, it included longitudinal sample previously recruited by CLS and used for the dress rehearsal piloting of previous waves of MCS. Secondly, it included new cases selected from within some of the same area locations as the longitudinal sample. This was a top-up sample designed to enhance the sample size available from the longitudinal cases. The top-up sample will be incorporated into the longitudinal sample for the purpose of dress rehearsals in potential future sweeps of the MCS.

The sample is spread across 13 areas:

- Preston
- Lincolnshire
- Crawley
- Bexleyheath
- Wembley
- Manchester
- Cheadle
- Rotherham
- Sunderland
- Bath
- Caerphilly
- Glasgow
- Belfast
-

In total, 236 addresses were issued. Of these, 132 were longitudinal sample and 104 were new families.

2.2.2 Recruitment approach for new sample

In England, potential new sample cases were sourced from the Department of Education's National Pupil Database (NPD) which is the governments' comprehensive database of all children attending maintained schools in England. Specifically, CLS recruited new sample in the following areas, where it was felt it might be difficult to achieve the required number of interviews:

- Bath
- Bexleyheath
- Cheadle
- Crawley
- Lincoln
- Preston
- Rotherham
- Sunderland
- Wembley
-

From within these locations, 103 children's households were selected from the NPD to be approached for the survey. Sampling focused on children born between 1/1/2000 and 31/2/2000 and residing in the postcode districts in the above areas originally sampled for the pilot.

Additionally, new sample was recruited in Caerphilly, Wales. This sample was recruited from the Welsh Government's record of pupils. Since the record does not have the children's addresses, CLS sent letters to potential new families via the school of the sampled pupils. The letters, which head teachers were requested to pass on to parents, informed them of the survey, and requested that families opt-in to the research through a reply slip to CLS, which provided their details. This yielded one additional piece of sample.

2.3 Parent and child consent

Parents were required to give the following written consents, as collected via paper consent forms:

- Consent to participation in the CASI/CAPI interviews (this was required from the main respondent, and also the partner where applicable)
- Consent to interviewers approaching the cohort child to invite their participation in the child elements (required from one of the parents, typically the main respondent)
- Consent to contact the child's class teacher to take part in the teacher survey (required from one of the parents, typically the main respondent)
- Oral consent was required from children for their own elements and to contact their class teacher for the teacher survey. To achieve this, interviewers administered a consent script provided on paper, and were asked to sign it to confirm that the child's oral consent had been obtained.
-

Confirmation of parent and child consents were also recorded in CAI.

Consent needed to be fully informed. Interviewers were instructed to talk through each element carefully with parents and children and ensure that they fully read (or had read to them) all supporting communication leaflets provided.

2.4 Main respondent CAPI and CASI questions

The main respondent was asked a series of CAPI questions, supplemented with showcards where appropriate. The CAPI modules covered the following areas:

- family context
- child's education and schooling
- child and family activities and child's behaviour
- parenting activities
- child health
- parent's health
- employment, education and income
- housing and local area
- other matters
-

In addition, there was a self-completion module, administered via CASI.

2.5 Partner CAPI and CASI questions

Similar to the main respondent questions, those for the partner were a series of CAPI questions, supplemented with showcards where appropriate. The questions for the partner were a subset of the questions for the main respondent, and they covered:

- family context
- child's education and schooling
- parenting activities
- parent's health
- employment, education and income
- other matters
-

In addition there was a self-completion module administered via CASI.

2.6 Proxy Partner CAPI questions

If the partner was not available during fieldwork, the main respondent was asked to answer questions about their partner. These questions are a subset of the questions asked in the partner interview, and exclude the self-completion element. They cover the following elements:

- family context
- parent's health
- employment, education and income.

2.7 Cohort child self-completion

Cohort children were asked to complete a paper self completion questionnaire. This questionnaire covered topics such as the child's family and friends, school, the activities they do outside school, how they feel and what they think about things.

Children believed to have potential reading difficulties were invited to complete the paper questionnaire with the support of an audio recording of the questions and response options.

Interviewer administration was offered for a small number of children who could not read or write sufficiently to complete the form unaided.

For longitudinal sample cases, interviewers were told which administration mode to offer to children based on information collected about children at previous sweeps. An additional set of “triggers” were also specified to interviewers to direct targeting of audio to other children who might benefit from this support where difficulties were not known from previous waves (this was especially relevant to “new” sample cases). Further information about criteria for targeting is included in section 3.4.5.

The child was instructed to complete the questionnaire on their own, but to ask the interviewer if they needed help. Children were also instructed to seal their completed questionnaires in an envelope for the interviewer to take away with them.

2.8 Cognitive assessments

Three cognitive assessments were tested at the dress rehearsal. These assessments are all educational assessment tools that are well respected and widely used. They are used to examine cognitive development and educational attainment and are normally employed by educational psychologists in a classroom or clinical setting.

The cognitive assessments used for the dress rehearsal pilot were:

- Verbal Similarities (taken from the British Ability Scales)
- Memory Task (taken from Cambridge Neuropsychological Test Automated Battery (CANTAB) and officially named Spatial Working Memory)
- Decision-making Task (taken from CANTAB and officially named Cambridge Gambling Task)

Verbal Similarities was adapted for use in a survey setting, and modified to be administered with a CAPI programme so that the interviewer did not need to memorise a complex set of rules for routing children through the assessments. The CANTAB assessments (Memory task and Decision-making task) are pre-programmed, touch screen administered assessments, and these assessments were carried out using the interviewer’s own touch screen CAPI machines or via a touch screen add-on to non-touch screen CAPI machines. A ‘headless’ version of the CANTAB software was loaded on to interviewers’ machines to capture data from the two assessments and to allow the software to load directly from the CAPI script.

Interviewers were told not to administer the assessments if the child:

- had a learning disability or serious behavioural problem (e.g. severe ADHD)
- was unable to respond to the stimuli in a typical fashion
- was not proficient in English
-

Interviewers were encouraged to carry out the assessment in a quiet, well-lit, and properly ventilated room, away from distractions and disruptions. It was preferable to administer the assessments on a table where possible. Interviewers were instructed to sit close to the child, so that they could easily administer the prompts and instructions for the assessments. For the two CANTAB assessments the child sat next to the interviewer and close enough to the laptop to be able to touch the screen. For Verbal Similarities the child sat opposite the interviewer in order that he/she could not see the laptop screen.

The general rule to interviewers was to be reassuring and encouraging but not to give any clues about how the child was performing, except on practice questions or training items designated for that purpose. If children refused to answer, or indicated that they did not know the answer, their answer was coded as incorrect.

During the briefings, training films were used to show an interviewer carrying out each assessment with a child, and also showing how to attach the touch screen add-on to their CAPI machines.

2.8.1 British Ability Scales II (BAS II): Verbal Similarities

This task assesses the child's verbal reasoning and verbal knowledge. The child is read three words by the interviewer and then asked to say how these things go together; for example, peas, cabbages, and carrots.

If the child gave an answer that indicated some understanding (e.g. food, as per the above example) they were given a second chance to give a correct answer (e.g. vegetables).

2.8.2 CANTAB: Memory task

This task measures the child's memory capacity and use of strategy. The child is shown a number of squares (boxes) on the screen. By touching (opening) the boxes and using a process of elimination, the child finds one 'token' in each box and uses them to fill up an empty column on the right hand side of the screen. The number of boxes is gradually increased, until it is necessary to search a total of eight boxes.

2.8.3 CANTAB: Decision-making task

This task measures the child's decision-making and risk-taking behaviour. The child is presented with a row of ten boxes across the top of the screen, some of which are red and some of which are blue. The child has to decide whether a 'token' is hidden in a red box or a blue box. The child starts with a number of points displayed on the screen, and must decide what proportion of their points they are willing to risk on their decision. The child must try to accumulate as many points as possible.

2.9 Child physical measurements

At the dress rehearsal, interviewers were required to measure every child's height, weight and body fat percentage. Height and weight are used to calculate the child's Body Mass Index (BMI) and body fat percentage is a measure of fat distribution in the body. BMI values can be compared with population reference data to identify children who are overweight or obese, and therefore at risk of a number of short and long term physical and psychological consequences.

After the readings were taken for each measurement, interviewers were able to offer the child a record of their measurements using the space provided on the 'measurements postcard'. The child was able to decide whether they wanted a record and if so, whether they wanted to share this information with anyone else. Interviewers did not offer the parent a copy of this.

During the briefings, training films were used to demonstrate to interviewers how to set up the measurement equipment, and how to carry out each measurement.

2.9.1 Height measurement

Children who were able to stand unaided were eligible for this measurement. The measurements were taken using a Leicester height measure stadiometer, a portable collapsible device with a sliding head plate, a base plate and four connecting rods marked with a measuring scale. Interviewers were also provided with a Frankfurt Plane card to assist with the measurements. Additionally, all interviewers were provided with detailed instructions on how to use both the stadiometer and the Frankfurt Plane card.

Interviewers were required to set up the equipment on a firm uncarpeted surface and to ensure that the stadiometer was resting against a wall in order that it remained rigid when the measurement was being taken. The child was asked to remove their shoes and socks and remove any hair ornaments or let down any hair-dos that could affect the accuracy of the measurement. Interviewers explained the procedure to the parent or guardian and the child, and took the measurement with the parent's help. Interviewers were advised to repeat the measurement if they were unhappy with the first. Once completed the measurement was recorded in CAPI in centimetres and, if requested by the child, on the measurement postcard provided.

2.9.2 Weight and body fat measurement

Children who were able to stand unaided were eligible for this measurement. If the parent/child refused consent for the body fat measurement, the scales could be set to record just the weight. The measurements were taken using Tanita scales (BF-522W), which have a hand-held console with a screen to display weight to the nearest 0.1kg, and body fat percentage to the nearest 0.1%. These scales are battery powered and were calibrated prior to issuing. As with the stadiometer, interviewers were required to place the scales on a firm uncarpeted surface. If this was not possible, interviewers were to record on CAPI whether only a soft surface was available. Interviewers were provided with detailed instructions on how to use the scales.

For this measurement, the child was asked to remove their shoes and socks and remove items in their pockets. Interviewers were also asked to ensure that the child was wearing light indoor clothing. The child's gender, age and height in centimetres as given in CAPI had to be entered into the scales prior to the child stepping on them in order for the body fat percentage to be correctly calculated. Interviewers were advised to repeat the measurement if they were unhappy with the first. Once completed the measurement was recorded in the CAPI (in kilograms for the weight) and, if requested by the child, on the measurement postcard provided. Interviewers were also given guidance on how to provide feedback to parents should they require it.

2.10 Cognitive Observations

On the day of the visit when the cognitive assessments were carried out, interviewers were instructed to complete a small section in CAPI as soon after leaving the household as possible. The aim of the questions was to allow interviewers to record their observations about the conditions under which the cognitive assessments were completed in order that anything relevant to the performance of the child was noted and could be taken into account at the data analysis stage. Questions included whether or not there was any background noise or disturbance during the assessments, or whether or not the child seemed tired. There was an opportunity for interviewers to record anything else that they felt was relevant to the child's performance.

2.11 Collecting child contact details

The dress rehearsal tested the feasibility of collecting child contact details during the household visit, for the purpose of future engagement with the child. Contact details and relevant consents were captured in the 'child elements' consent form and child consent form.

2.12 Consent for re-contact

Consent to recontact for future waves of pilot research was sought from all new sample households.

2.13 Further information leaflet and thank you mailing for respondents

At the end of the interview, the child was provided with a "further information leaflet." This thanked them for their help and explained what would happen next with their data. Importantly, it also provided guidance about seeking help or support if anything in the survey (or their life generally) was troubling them.

After the interviews, parents were sent a thank you letter in the post with which was enclosed a child participation certificate to give to their child in recognition and appreciation of their help.

2.14 Tracing procedures

As part of the assignment interviewers were required to make reasonable attempts to contact the cohort member's family should they have moved. The individual tracing actions interviewers were required to conduct involved attempting to contact the:

- cohort family by phone
- cohort family face to face
- current occupiers
- neighbours
- nominated stable contact
- school (if provided)

2.14.1 Contacting neighbours and stable contacts

Interviewers were required to ask the current residents of the issued address, or neighbours, if they were unable to contact the cohort's family if they were aware of the cohort family's whereabouts. The assumption was that although they may not know, they may be able to direct the interviewer to friends or relatives nearby who may be aware of how to contact the cohort child and their family.

If interviewers were unable to establish the whereabouts of the cohort child's family in this way, then they were required to contact the stable address either by telephone or face to face if the stable address was in their area. Interviewers were provided with contact details for up to two nominated stable address contacts. Interviewers were also provided with letters to give/post to stable contacts if they were unable to make contact by telephone or face to face.

2.14.2 The tracing letter

Interviewers were provided with a tracing letter to use in situations where someone potentially knew where the cohort child's family were, but was unwilling to pass on information to the interviewer. In these cases, interviewers asked the person aware of the cohort family's whereabouts if they would be willing to pass a letter on so that the family could get in contact with Ipsos MORI directly.

2.14.3 The occupier letter

If interviewers were unable to make contact with anyone at the last known address of the cohort family, and were unable to establish their whereabouts from neighbours or the stable contacts, then they were required to leave an occupier letter at the last known address of the cohort's family.

2.14.4 Contacting schools

If the cohort child and their family participated in either the Age 5 or Age 7 survey interviewers were provided with the name and address of the school they were attending when they were most recently interviewed. If the school was local to the interviewer then they were advised to make a visit to the school. There they would enquire as to whether the child was still attending the school and ask if they would be willing to pass on a 'schools tracing letter for parents' to the family which, like the standard tracing letter, invites the family to contact Ipsos MORI to provide new contact details.

If making a visit to the school was not practical, interviewers were also provided with a 'schools tracing letter' that could be sent to the head teacher of the school. This letter enclosed the 'schools tracing letter for parents', and the head teacher was asked to forward this on to the child's family.

2.14.5 Incomplete addresses

In addition, in the case of any incomplete addresses interviewers were required to check with local residents, maps, directories, the police, etc. in an attempt to find the correct address.

2.14.6 Unsuccessful Tracing

In cases where an interviewer was unable to trace the family to a new address, the family details were passed back to the CLS Tracing Team for further tracing.

2.15 Recording feedback

Feedback from the pilot was collected in a number of ways:

- By the interviewers completing:
 - an 'Interviewer feedback form';
 - an 'Interviewer feedback form (CAPI)';
- By a member of the research team accompanying interviewers to gain additional feedback and record observations.

Contact sheets and the electronic fieldwork progress update system (called iProgress) in which interviewers had to log progress for each address on each day

that they worked also detailed data helpful for understanding fieldwork processes and sample outcomes. These data are drawn on throughout this report.

2.15.1 The interviewer feedback form

This form was used by interviewers to record any observations that they felt may improve the procedures, and make the main stage of the survey more successful. Specifically it covered the following aspects of the survey:

- Interviewer reported timings of both survey and admin elements
- Overview of the survey
- Contact and appointment making
- Gaining co-operation at a household level
- Contact sheets and Sample Information Sheets
- Tracing procedures
- The iProgress fieldwork progress system
- Consents
- Collection of the child's contact details
- Child self completion questionnaire (including use of audio)
- Materials
- Child and parent wellbeing
- Household, main and partner questionnaire
- Cognitive assessments and physical measurements
- Cognitive observations
- CAPI
- Teacher survey
- Managing the household
- Any additional feedback

Interviewers were required to complete one form at the end of all appointments.

2.15.2 The interviewer feedback form (CAPI)

This form was used to record any difficulties interviewers encountered specifically with the CAPI script, including overall difficulties with individual sections as well as specific issues with question wording or routing at a question level. Interviewers completed one form once all appointments had been completed.

2.15.3 Research Executive accompaniments

A total of 5 appointments were accompanied by a member of the research team in order to record any observations and to gain additional feedback using a form specifically designed for this purpose. Accompaniments took place in Cheadle, Bexleyheath, Crawley and Wembley. Quotas were set to ensure that a mix of male and female interviewers and less experienced and experienced interviewers were accompanied. In addition, CLS accompanied one of the interviewers on a household visit.

2.15.4 Interviewer feedback on briefings

In addition to the feedback on the survey as a whole, interviewers were asked to provide specific feedback on the briefings using a form provided. The purpose of the form was to ascertain feedback on each element covered in the briefing to understand which elements required more or less coverage at the main stage.

Copies of all dress rehearsal materials can be found in Appendix A.

3. Findings

3.1 Sample Outcomes

The tables below show the outcomes from the dress rehearsal.

Table 1 shows the household level outcome data, broken down by longitudinal and new sample.

A total of 126 households were at least partially productive (one or more parent or child element completed) from an issued sample of 236 addresses. The survey response rate was 58% among longitudinal sample and 48% among the new sample.

Non-productive addresses included 22% refusals, 12% non-contacts, 6% where eligibility was uncertain because the household had moved and tracing not completed during fieldwork, and 5% where appointments were made but not kept. The proportion of refusals was much lower among longitudinal sample (16%) than new sample (29%).

3.1.1 Household level outcome data

Table 1: Household level outcome data

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Total sample issued	132	100%	104	100%	236	100%
Total productive households (full and partially)	76	58%	50	48%	126	53%
Fully productive households	61	46%	39	38%	100	42%
Partially productive households	15	11%	11	11%	26	11%
Total unproductive	56	42%	54	52%	110	47%
Eligible unproductive	45	34%	50	48%	95	40%
Non-contact	17	13%	8	9%	25	11%
Office refusal	2	1%	10	10%	12	5%
Broken appt, no re-contact	5	4%	7	7%	12	5%
Refusal	17	13%	21	29%	38	16%
Ill at home during fieldwork period	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
Away / in hospital during fieldwork period	1	1%	0	0%	1	0%
Language difficulties	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
Other reason	1	1%	3	3%	4	2%

Ineligible	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
Emigrated / moved overseas	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
Uncertain eligibility - untraced movers/ other	11	8%	3	3%	14	6%
Movers - with Ipsos/ CLS for tracing	8	6%	3	3%	11	%
Movers returned by CLS untraced/Other unknown eligibility	3	2%	0	0%	3	1%
Interviewer response rate*	63%		50%		57%	
Survey response rate**	58%		48%		53%	

3.1.2 Main respondent and partner outcome data

The tables below show outcome data for main and partner interviews. Percentages are based on productive households only (not all sample cases issued).

As the tables show, almost all main respondents participated in CAPI interviews, including 100% of main respondents at longitudinal sample address. There were just two “new sample” main respondents who were not interviewed, one due to language difficulties, and one due to difficulties making contact.

Interviews were achieved in 77% of households with eligible partners. The main reasons for unproductive households were refusals (11%) and non-contact (7%).

Table 2: Main respondent outcome data

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Base: Total HH sample productive	76	100%	50	100%	126	100%
Total main respondent productive (full and partially)	76	100%	48	96%	124	98%
Fully productive	75	99%	48	96%	123	98%
Partially productive	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Total unproductive	0	0%	2	4%	2	2%
Non-contact	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Language difficulties	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Interviewer response rate*	100%		96%		98%	

* Interviewer response rate = productive/ (productive + unproductive)

Table 3: Partner outcome data

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Base: Total HH sample productive containing an eligible partner	54	100%	30	100%	84	100%
Total productive (partner and proxy partner)	43	80%	22	73%	65	77%
Fully productive	41	76%	22	73%	63	75%
Partially productive	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Proxy partner interviews	2	4%	0	0%	2	2%
Total unproductive	11	20%	8	27%	19	23%
Non-contact	5	9%	1	3%	6	7%
Broken appointment - no re-contact	1	2%	1	3%	2	2%
Refusal BEFORE individual interview	4	7%	4	13%	8	10%
Refusal DURING individual interview	0	0%	1	3%	1	1%
Language difficulties	0	0%	1	3%	1	1%
Other	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Interviewer response rate*	80%		73%		77%	

* Interviewer response rate = productive/ (productive + unproductive)

3.1.3 Child outcome data

Table 4 shows the outcomes for the child elements among productive households, i.e. self-completion, cognitive assessments and physical measurements. Table 5 shows outcomes of child contact detail collection among productive households. Note there are 127 outcomes arising from the 126 productive households, because one household contained eligible twins.

As Table 4 shows, 94% of children in productive households completed at least one child element. The self completion questionnaire and at least one physical measurement were each completed by 94% of children, and 93% completed at least one assessment.

Table 5 shows that some kind of child contact details were collected for 60% of children. However, 27% of parents refused this element and 8% of children also refused. This is discussed further in section 3.9 below.

Table 4: Child outcome data

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
TOTAL HH SAMPLE PRODUCTIVE	77	100%	50	100%	127	100%
Total productive (full and partially)	71	92%	49	98%	120	94%
Fully productive	70	91%	49	98%	119	94%
Partially productive	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Total unproductive	6	8%	1	2%	7	6%
CHILD SELF-COMPLETION						
Total productive	71	92%	49	98%	120	94%
Fully productive	70	91%	49	98%	119	94%
Partially productive	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Total unproductive	6	8%	1	2%	7	6%
Refusal by child	2	3%	1	2%	3	2%
Refusal by parent	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Broken appointment - no re-contact	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Refusal because physically or mentally unable/incompetent	2	3%	0	0%	2	2%
CHILD COGNITIVE ASSESSMENTS						
Total productive	70	91%	47	94%	118	93%
Fully productive	68	88%	45	90%	114	90%
Partially productive	2	3%	2	4%	4	3%
Total unproductive	7	9%	3	6%	9	7%
Refusal by child	1	1%	2	4%	3	2%
Refusal by parent	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Broken appointment - no re-contact	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Refusal because physically or mentally unable/incompetent	2	3%	0	0%	1	1%
Language difficulties	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Other	2	3%	1	2%	1	1%

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
CHILD PHYSICAL MEASUREMENTS						
Total productive	71	92%	49	98%	120	94%
Fully productive	70	91%	44	88%	113	90%
Partially productive	1	1%	5	10%	7	5%
Total unproductive	6	8%	1	2%	7	5%
Refusal by child	1	1%	1	2%	1	1%
Refusal by parent	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Broken appointment - no re-contact	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Refusal because physically or mentally unable/incompetent	2	3%	0	0%	2	2%
Other	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%

Table 5: Collection of Child Contact Information

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Total sample issued	77	100%	50	100%	127	100%
Total productive (Collection of Child Contact Details)	47	61%	29	58%	76	60%
Total unproductive (Collection of Child Contact Details)	30	39%	21	42%	51	40%
Refusal by child	5	6%	5	10%	10	8%
Refusal by parent	20	26%	14	28%	34	27%
Not known	5	6%	2	4%	7	6%
Interviewer response rate*	61%		58%		60%	

3.2 Timings data

The timings in Table 6 are based on the automatic computer timings for time in and out of computer blocks. Interviewer reported times are also listed in final columns where applicable.

Table 6: Mean and median times of interview blocks, for new and longitudinal samples

Interview block	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal
Household questionnaire, including contacts	11m 50s	8m 44s	49	16m 37s*	7m 43s	76
Main respondent total	1h13m5s	1h9m13s	48	1h7m49s	1h6m39s	76
FC – Family Context	3m 02s	2m 27s	48	2m 12s	1m 26s	75
FCIN - OLAW	44s	29s	48	1m 01s	31s	75
ETHE - XNOP	16s	10s	48	20s	26s	6
TWIN - TWAL	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0
FCRE - NRQR	55s	1m 09s	21	1m 13s	1m 14s	27
FOLO - WHFS	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	0
PAIN - DAOL	31s	25s	48	14s	10s	61
PASD - CASC	28s	21s	48	30s	30s	2
REBO - REWN	12s	04s	48	19s	19s	2
RCPL - RPRM	N/A	N/A	0	14s	8s	74
ES – Education, schooling	13m 20s	12m 39s	48	13m 25s	12m 43s	75
ESIN - LNNI	1m 52s	1m 06s	48	1m 55s	38s	75
ADEN - ADTL	44s	40s	48	45s	36s	75
TSUS - SENX	58s	45s	48	54s	46s	75
ASMI - XASU	49s	33s	48	49s	34s	75
INEV - INHX	48s	44s	39	51s	43s	56
HWKM - TUPY	1m 49s	1m 35s	48	1m 42s	1m 30s	75
TRSC - TRWO	39s	36s	48	42s	39s	75
EVBC - ASND	23s	18s	47	24s	20s	75

Interview block	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal
CCSW - CCHX	1m 06s	59s	48	1m 09s	1m 03s	75
MVCK – SSCP	4m 23s	4m 13s	48	4m 27s	4m 09s	75
AB	8m 12s	7m 54s	48	8m 16s	7m 16s	75
ABIN - VIFR	2m 49s	2m 43s	48	2m 58s	2m 41s	75
LCIN - PLOW	1m 47s	1m 37s	48	1m 44s	1m 32s	75
TVIN - OMPO	2m 15s	1m 57s	48	2m 13s	2m 02s	75
BERE – LOOK2	1m 21s	1m 18s	48	1m 21s	1m 10s	75
PA	43s	39s	48	42s	37s	75
CH	6m 14s	5m 43s	48	5m 54s	5m 14s	76
CHIN - HERS	1m 23s	1m 08s	48	1m 19s	1m 07s	75
DENY - LNPR	45s	37s	48	35s	30s	75
DRYN – AUTS	1m 26s	1m 19s	48	1m 15s	1m 06s	76
ACCA - ADMA	43s	33s	48	47s	34s	76
MEDS - MPNM	22s	07s	48	17s	07s	76
DTIN - APPF	1m 36s	1m 31s	48	1m 42s	1m 28s	76
PH	2m 52s	2m 10s	48	2m 08s	1m 59s	76
EI	12m 37s	11m 54s	47	12m 02s	11m 47s	76
WKWK – SRTM	2m 41s	3m 32s	47*	2m 46s	3m 01s	76
NWRK - WPBA	58s	32s	47	48s	32s	76
PAYS - PUSA	1m 26s	1m	47	1m 15s	1m 09s	76
BENT - BAOB	2m 01s	1m 35s	47	1m 48	1m 43s	76
REPA - NTLP	1m 11s	1m 01s	47	1m 14s	1m 09s	76
SAVI - INVB	53s	39s	47	1m 17s	1m 03s	76
MAFI – COUR	3m 27s	3m 20s	47	2m 48s	2m 29	76
JHIS - STJX	N/A	N/A	0	1m 28s	1m 37	5

Interview block	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal
HA	3m 07s	3m	46	3m 41s	3m 05s	74
MOAD - ROOW	1m 03s	48s	46	1m 30s	57s	74
RENT - MOGP	44s	41s	46	49s	44s	70
MOWH - GDAC	N/A	N/A	0	2m 51s	2m 51s	1
DAMP - CHTN	1m 20s	1m 15s	46	1m 23s	1m 12s	74
OM	1m 29s	1m 21s	46	1m 30s	1m 14s	74
SC	15m 19s	14m 31s	46	15m 18s	13m 56s	74
SCAC - SDTE	5m 10s	4m 28s	46	5m 12s	4m 36s	74
CLSE - CHWL	2m 33s	2m 22s	44	2m 33s	2m 13s	74
SVEN - ATOE	55s	50s	44	50s	43s	74
PUIN - AGMN	1m 20s	1m 07s	45	1m 15s	1m 06s	74
BULS - BULB	48s	47s	45	46s	40s	74
REAF	17s	12s	45	13s	10s	74
ATFT - ATDL	45s	39s	45	42s	35s	74
MTBP - MTBS	39s	33s	45	38s	32s	74
PHDE - TRDE	1m 04s	1m	45	59s	51s	74
ALDR - AUCD	35s	38s	45	34s	36s	74
REGN – SCFI	1m 42s	1m 07s	44	1m 37	1m 19s	72
Partner respondent total	29m 32s	29m 31s	22	28m 39s	27m 08s	41
FC – Family Context	2m 07s	1m 58s	22	3m+	56s	41
FCIN - OLAW	31s	25s	22	2m 09s++	34s	41
ETHE - XNOP	11s	6s	22	8s	9s	3
PAIN - DAOL	29s	23s	22	14s	10s	31
PASD - CASC	22s	18s	22	12s	12s	2

Interview block	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal
REBO - REWN	12s	04s	22	02s	02s	1
ES – Education, schooling	1m 21s	1m 20s	22	1m 24s	1m 16s	41
ESIN - LNNI	11s	09s	22	10s	06s	41
ASMI - XASU	40s	31s	22	48s	34s	41
INEV - INHX	32s	26s	20	30s	23s	36
PA	49s	47s	22	59s	54s	41
PH	2m 34s	2m 27s	22	2m 14s	2m 14s	41
EI	10m 08s	10m 07s	22	9m 01s	8m 25s	41
WKWK – SRTM	3m 50s	3m 36s	22	3m 33s	3m 46s	41
NWRK - WPBA	16s	17s	22	31s	20s	41
PAYS - PUSA	1m 12s	1m 04s	22	1m 11s	1m	41
BENT - BAOB	1m 17s	1m 16s	22	1m 07s	1m	41
REPA - NTLP	54s	50s	22	52s	45s	41
SAVI - INVB	2m 38s	2m 54s	22	1m 30s	1m 09s	41
JHIS - STJX	N/A	N/A	0	1m 43s	1m 13s	7
OM	1m 17s	1m 02s	22	1m 02s	56s	41
SC	7m 34s	7m 49s	22	8m 41s	8m 08s	41
SCAC - SDTE	2m 09s	2m	22	2m 38s	2m 08s	41
SVEN - ATOE	48s	46s	21	57s	49s	41
ATFT - ATDL	41s	39s	21	44s	38s	41
MTBP - MTBS	38s	37s	21	41s	36s	41
PHDE - TRDE	1m 06s	1m 01s	21	1m 04s	57s	41
ALDR - AUCD	35s	42s	21	46s	47s	41
REGN – SCFI	1m 52s	1m 38s	21	1m 54s	1m 32s	40
Proxy Partner	0s	0s	0	3m 33s	3m 33s	2

Interview block	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal
Child physical measurements	5m 15s	3m 38s	47	4m 57s	3m 41s	71
Child cognitive assessments total	32m 59s	26m 44s	45/46	29m 53s	29m 17s	70
Verbal similarities	7m 08s	6m 03s	45	7m 23s	6m 47s	70
Decision-making and memory assessments	25m 51s	20m 41s	46	22m 30s	22m 30s	70
Cognitive Observations	1m 24s	57s	46	4m 42s	53s	69
Child consents from parents	7m 31s	5m	47	6m 03s	5m	71
Child consents from children	7m 15s	5m	47	6m 11s	5m	71
Contact information						
Contact information (Main)	5m 49s	4m 13s	47	2m 35s	1m 45s	74
Contact information (Partner)	3m 42s	3m 02s	22	2m 18s	2m 05s	41
Child self-completion	28m	30m	46	29m 3s	30m	66
Other elements	4m 43s	4m 04s	48	6m 28s+++	3m 30s	70

* Taking out 2 outliers where the Household questionnaire exceeded 1 hour and 2 where it was longer than 2 hours, reduced this to 9m 51s, which is in-keeping with the other timings.

+ There is one outlier – with this removed, the timings are a mean of 1m 37s and the median of 53s.

++ The outlier took 58 minutes (according to the CAPI timestamps) to complete FCIN – OLAW. With this removed, the mean is 45s and the median is 31s.

+++ One outlier took over 3 hours. Once removed, the mean is 3m 46s and the median is 3m 29s.

Table 7: Mean and median times of interview blocks, for new and longitudinal samples, with interviewer estimated times	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal	Inter- viewer mean time (minutes)	Inter- viewer base
Main respondent total	1h13m5s	1h9m13s	48	1h7m49s	1h6m39s	76	1h10m34s	13
Partner respondent total	29m 32s	29m 31s	22	28m 39s	27m 08s	41	29m 05s	13
Child physical measurements	5m 15s	3m 38s	47	4m 57s	3m 41s	71	12m 52s	13
Child cognitive assessments total	32m 59s	26m 44s	45/46	29m 53s	29m 17s	70	29m 30s	13
Cognitive Observations	1m 24s	57s	46	4m 42s	53s	69	7m 32s	11
Child consents from parents	7m 31s	5m	47	6m 03s	5m	71	8m 22s	11
Child consents from children	7m 15s	5m	47	6m 11s	5m	71	9m 2s	11
Contact information (Main)	5m 49s	4m 13s	47	2m 35s	1m 45s	74	7m 32s	10
Contact information (Partner)	3m 42s	3m 02s	22	2m 18s	2m 05s	41	4m 56s	9

Table 7: Mean and median times of interview blocks, for new and longitudinal samples, with interviewer estimated times	New CAPI Mean time (minutes)	New CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base New	Longi- tudinal CAPI Mean time (minutes)	Longi- tudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)	Base Longi- tudinal	Inter- viewer mean time (minutes)	Inter- viewer base
Child self-completion	28m	30m	46	29m 3s	30m	66	28m 5s	13
Other elements	4m 43s	4m 04s	48	6m 28s+++	3m 30s	70		

Notes:

One household interview contains partial timing data (though full household data) and has been excluded from the timings.

Three main interviews are partial interviews, and thus do not have timings throughout. One stops after module PH and two stop after module EI.

Timings for child self-completion are interviewer estimates given in the Other Elements module. The interviewer mean time is based on interviewer estimates given in the feedback forms.

3.3 CAPI and CASI

3.3.1 General issues

Improvements since the first pilot were noticeable and the script worked well. However, some administrative changes could be made to make management of the scripts easier for the interviewers.

The full complement of survey elements is currently spread over six separate scripts; this is unlikely to change for the main stage survey because of data map restrictions. This does not present any data or quality issues in itself, but does pose two issues for consideration: a) ensuring interviewers are comfortable with where each element is located among the scripts, and b) ensuring elements are grouped within each script in the most logical and convenient way. Each of these helps to minimise the time interviewers spend accessing scripts to find the element they need.

Another issue is to ensure that the scripts are grouped together, in a consistent order, in the interviewers' list of projects. Interviewers also requested that the briefing scripts are deleted once fieldwork starts to avoid any confusion or errors in which script they enter (although interviews would not be possible in the briefing scripts).

No interviewers had problems with going in and out of the scripts, though some reported that going in and out of the individual scripts could take some time, whereas others reported that it was a good marker of progress. At the first pilot, interviewers proposed a sheet detailing which element is in which script. However, this suggestion was not made at the dress rehearsal and renaming the scripts seemed to be the most frequently mentioned suggestion.

Interviewers mentioned that assessing what elements have been done with a family is difficult. They requested that their administration screen includes the child's or family's name. A similar issue was mentioned at the Pilot, and as a result, the contact sheet was amended to include a tick list for each element in order to track progress. However, only a few of the interviewers reported using this during the dress rehearsal.

Interviewers found the consents reminder screens helpful, and interviewers who had also worked on the Pilot reported that the dress rehearsal format was a great improvement. However, a number of interviewers reported that they obtained consent before completing the Household questionnaire, and therefore did not wait for the CAPI screen which tells them who to ask for consent for each element. They said they felt this was required by the logistics of making appointments and explaining the survey, which tended to establish who they would be interviewing. They also felt that consent should be given at the start of the household visit before they started asking personal details (such as relationships) in the Household questionnaire. All interviewers confirmed that their assumption on who to ask was confirmed by the CAPI script and that no changes were needed.

While the above issues form the main concerns with the CAPI script, other issues did arise. A few interviewers noted that the school look up function did not find schools in certain areas, with London and Glasgow particularly affected. This will have an impact on the teacher survey, as the interviewers will then go on to manually enter the school's name and address. Data for manually-entered schools generally need more cleaning before we are able to send out letters to teachers.

There were suggestions for improvements to a number of questions, either where interviewers noted errors, or where they reported that they or the respondents did not know how the question should be answered. Duplication of questions between the main and partner interviews for the finance section was reported as a noticeable issue which respondents reacted negatively to.

Interviewers reported that respondents consulted others in order to answer their questions, e.g. the parent would ask the child, or the main/partner would ask the other adult what the answers were, especially for finance questions. Interviewers said they were unsure whether this was ok, or whether they should code 'don't know' – they queried whether the objective was to gather as much information as possible or to record how much knowledge a respondent had about a particular matter.

Recommendations:

- Ensure scripts appear consistently in the same order within the interviewers' lists of projects.
- Rename the scripts with more detail about content (e.g. add 'HH', 'main/part', 'child' etc. to the end of each name).

- Provide family or child names on the interviewers' administration lists, which will help show which family has outstanding interviews.
- Improve briefings on the contact sheet list for tracking progress within a household.
- Review and improve briefings on gaining consent and the order in which this should be done.
- Investigate issues on the school look-up. The list of schools may need updating, but the programming also needs to be reviewed, especially for large towns or cities such as London and Glasgow. Ensure that the school look-up is demonstrated at all briefings.
- Improve the briefings and protocols on how the interviewer should control the interview regarding respondents consulting others for answers.

3.3.2 CASI

There were 124 main and 63 partner interviews completed during the dress rehearsal. Of the main interviews, 3 were partial and did not reach the CASI section. For the rest of the 121 main interviews, the options chosen at the beginning of the CASI section were as follows:

- 116 respondents accepted the CASI as self-completion;
- 2 asked for the interviewer to help due to sight, health or disability problems;
- 1 person requested help for language reasons;
- 1 person refused to complete it; and
- 1 person was unable to complete it.

However, of the 116 respondents who accepted the CASI as self-completion, interviewers reported that 108 completed it on their own, but 7 needed some help from the interviewer and 1 needed the interviewer to complete it all.

All 63 partner interviews were complete, with the following options chosen at the start:

- 61 respondents accepted the CASI as self-completion;
- 1 asked for the interviewer to help due to sight, health or disability problems; and
- 1 person was unable to complete it.

Of the 61 cases where respondents accepted the CASI, 59 of them completed it with no help, but 1 person needed the interviewer to help with some of it and 1 person needed the interviewer to complete it all with them.

Feedback from interviewers about why main and partner respondents needed help were varied. They included not understanding a question (two mentions – and in fact the interviewer just explained to the respondent and did not help with inputting any answers), language difficulties (one mention), health issues (two mentions) or being unfamiliar or uncomfortable with computers (one mention). The two types of CAPI machines used for the pilot did not seem to matter; of the 10 respondents who needed help, five used one type of machine and five used the other.

Regarding the content of the CASI, the majority of interviewers reported that there were no particular issues with the topic and that the only person who refused (new sample) did so due to the length of time the interview had already taken. One interviewer reported that

there were “a few raised eyebrows” and queries on what age it was ‘normal’ to start puberty. One respondent was helped by their partner, due to difficulties with using the laptop.

Interviewers did query how they should help respondents though, with the main problem being that people did not realise they needed help until they had already started the CASI section. Some interviewers mentioned that on their Panasonic laptops respondents could navigate through using the touch screen facility, and for the other laptops some interviewers reported that they left the touch screen add-on attached for respondents to use. A few interviewers mentioned that F2 can be used to progress to the next screen, but most interviewers did not know about this.

We have explored the option of using the F2 key and think this may be a possible alternative to ‘shift + enter’. It is simple to understand and carry out. However, it is also easy to accidentally press the F1 or F3 key. If respondents press the F1 key, the previous screen will appear (but no data entered at that screen will be lost). Nothing will happen if they press the F3 key. The F4 key terminates the interview, but before doing so asks if respondents want to terminate. If ‘yes’, it then goes on to ask if they would like to save the interview and come back to it later.

CLS suggested that ‘Can’t say’ and ‘Don’t want to answer’ codes in the CASI section are separated from the main response categories, though still on-screen, by putting a line across the screen and having the ‘Can’t say’ and ‘Don’t want to answer’ codes underneath. Having reviewed this option, we do not think it is feasible within the project’s timescales. Additionally, this work takes a disproportionate amount of time as it is labour-intensive, and the codes will need to be reviewed at each question if any change to the question affects the layout of it. For these reasons, we do not recommend implementing this change.

Recommendations:

- Brief interviewers that other household members must not help respondents in cases where the respondent has said they will complete the section themselves. Where this answer has been chosen, the most sensitive questions will still be routed to.
- Interviewers should not be told about the F2 option, as F1 is used to abort the interview and increasing the risk of this happening in error should be avoided.
- Brief interviewers that the touch screen add-ons are only to be used for the cognitive assessments and must not be given as an option for use during the CASI. This is to prevent wear and tear on the equipment.
- Amend the instructions at the beginning of SC to be applicable depending on the type of laptop. For Panasonics, the touch screen can be used and should be given as an option. For other laptops, it should continue to instruct respondents to use the shift and enter key.
- Brief interviewers that in situations where the respondent has said they can complete the CASI on their own and then finds they need help, the interviewer can help respondents by pressing the shift and enter keys for them but must not be able to see the screen. Dress rehearsal interviewers were asked if this was practical and all confirmed that it was.
- Do not move ‘Can’t say’ and ‘Don’t want to answer’ codes below other codes (with a space in between codes)

3.3.3 School look-up

As mentioned above, most interviewers did not have an issue with the school look-up. However, a number of cases did have problems with returning an address from the look-up.

Details are below, but for most of these cases, there was a problem with the Quancept programme retaining the data in the main output files. In summary, the variables were not outputting correctly following interviewers returning to questions already answered to change answers or stopping and restarting interviews, resulting in the 2 export files being blank. This has now been resolved and will not be a problem in the Main Stage. The information for these schools has been obtained from the information supplied by the interviewers (for use in the Teacher Survey), so it could be matched into the Dress Rehearsal dataset for completeness.

This means that in total, for the primary schools 56 cases (out of 79), and for the high schools 24 (out of 24) did not return full details from the look-up. Many of these can be explained by interviewers 'snapping back' or the programming issue, described in the paragraph above. However, 10 primary schools and 7 high schools need further investigation and were caused by problems with the database or look-up match procedure.

Details for the primary schools are as follows:

There are 56 cases where the interviewer gave a name but we do not have a matched name or postcode.

Of these, using the algorithm, 43 seem to be good matches:

- 22 match a single record and seem correct
- 18 match a record at the top of a list, so again, this seems correct
- 3 match the second record in a list
-

Results for the remaining cases are:

- 2 match a fifth record in a list of 25
- 1 matches a seventh record in a list of 25
-

Of these, there are a couple of spelling errors and a locality that is not on our list, so these did not help with the positioning in the lists.

This leaves 10 cases which did not match at all. Of these, using the postcode would have matched 2 and put them at the top of the list. For the remaining 8 cases, it seems to be an issue with the code frame. For example, Church of England schools are sometimes listed as "C of E" and for others as "Church of England". One school was the name of an Autism unit within a school.

Details for the high schools are as follows:

There are 24 cases where the data is blank but the school name provided.

Of these, using the algorithm, 17 seem to be good matches:

- 9 cases match a single school
- In 5 cases the match routine returns a number of schools, with the top one looking like the correct one
- For 3 cases the match routine returns a number of schools, with the correct one within the list. For one of these, the postcode was included and would have helped with the selection.
-

Results for the remaining cases are:

- 7 cases where the match routine returned a number of schools but the one required is not listed. If the postcode had been included, it would have returned a good match (unique or top of a short list) for 3 cases.
- 4 cases seem problematic. Of these 4 cases:
 -
 - **Case 1:** the school is listed on the Ofsted reports site with the name reported by the respondent and gives an id number. This id number is listed in our schools lookup with a completely different name but with the same address and postcode. Either it has had a name change or is generally known under two very different names.
 - **Case 2:** As above.
 - **Case 3:** This is a locality issue. However, even recording the city does not resolve it. The locality name is 'Greenfield' and this matches many bad records. We do not have a solution for this.
 - **Case 4:** The school's website has the same address details as reported by the interviewer, but with a different name. Ofsted lists this as closed and under a new name.

Interviewers in London and Glasgow reported the most problems with schools information not returning a match. Adding the postcode to the look-up matching process would have helped a number of these cases (see above). The database, and therefore the look-up function, also does not include locality; only the city is noted. So, for instance, if a respondent replies that the school is in Alperton instead of London, the look-up may not list the school as the top address (though assuming the name is accurate, it should find the school).

Recommendations:

- If locality can be included in the database, this will help with the flexibility put into the look-up function.
- Add postcodes to the look-up as a third input to match on.

3.3.4 Interviewer Comments / Notes In CAPI

Interviewers wrote comments for 31 of the interviews. Of these, two comments were written about the gifts, and 20 were comments on context or circumstances of the interview with four of them also describing issues that showed possible errors in the data collection or misunderstandings by the interviewer. In addition to these four cases, there were a further six interviews where interviewers recorded errors. In total, the errors were:

- Case 1: interviewer made a mistake at the beginning of the interview and reported that they should have swapped around the main and partner interviews
- Case 2: parents said child lived continuously at home address, but boards at school
- Case 3: interviewer unable to enter year that mother started staying at home (CAPI rejected all dates)
- Case 4: question NSTM scale only starts at 1980 which was not early enough for this new sample family
- Case 5: parents insisted their 19 year old daughter sign the consent forms (due to language difficulties)
- Case 6: junior school details incorrectly entered

- Case 7: interviewer's comments indicated they did not understand when a proxy interview was eligible. CAPI correctly did not allow them to carry this out
- Case 8: CAPI problem recorded with swapping between main and partner interviews during incomplete main interview
- Case 9: interviewer had a problem with a looped section of the questionnaire but resolved it
- Case 10: interviewer entered name of current school (secondary school) rather than old primary school

Of these errors, cases 1, 2, 5 and 7 are briefing issues, and cases 6 and 10 should not be issues for the main stage. Cases 3, 4 and 8 appear to be CAPI related and need further investigation. (Case 9 can be ignored).

Interviewers wrote three comments reporting technical difficulties during the cognitive assessments: There was a problem with a touch screen, a problem with the software key (but resolved on a separate visit) and a problem with the calibration resolved by rebooting the laptop.

All of these comments have been taken from the question at the end of Other Elements, a module filled in by interviewers after they have completed all work with a household. During the dress rehearsal debrief, a few interviewers reported that pressing F12 allowed a notes screen to pop up and data to be entered. Most interviewers did not know about this functionality, and in fact, this function is not supported within the software and any data entered is not saved.

Recommendations:

- Keep the comments question at the end of Other Elements and review regularly throughout fieldwork. Comments should be coded into broad categories with follow-up actions taken with the interviewer where there are clear misunderstandings, and with the data to correct clear errors.
- The F12 function should not be mentioned in briefings. However, interviewers should be told that they can write comments in this specific question only, and that if they attempt to write comments elsewhere within the script these will not be saved and cannot be viewed.

3.3.5 Partially completed cognitive assessments

Currently the three cognitive assessments are carried out one after the other (unless one is refused by either the parent or child). However, this method has implications for those who wish to pause between assessments. If children decide they want to stop an assessment, interviewers are able to do so. When interviewers re-enter the script to continue the assessments, they must choose whether to carry on where they left off or start afresh. If they choose to start afresh, children will end up re-doing the assessments they had started or completed, continuing until all assessments consented to are completed.

To prevent interviewers mistakenly choosing to begin again, it would be worthwhile splitting Verbal Similarities from the CANTAB assessments in the introductory screen of the script, where the interviewer chooses which module they would like to complete next. This will enable interviewers to pause after either the CANTAB assessments or Verbal Similarities

are completed, in case children would like to take a break or need to stop temporarily. It seems probable that children will want to break at the end of one assessment (instead of in the middle), thus splitting the CANTAB assessments from Verbal Similarities may reduce the need to stop in the middle of the script.

Recommendations:

- Review the current structure of the cognitive assessments. It may be better to separate Verbal Similarities from the CANTAB assessments in the introductory screen.

3.3.6 Question-specific or section-specific issues

Table 8 highlights issues with specific sections or questions in the CAPI script.

Two routing errors were noted during the dress rehearsal: one at FCRE and one at LIOT, both questions in module FC. At FCRE, one interviewer reported that the main respondent’s name appeared in the question when it should have been the mother’s name, since she has left the household since the previous interview. This problem occurred because the routing for the textfill (but not the question) is incorrect, substituting the partner from the previous interview instead of the main or partner respondent who has left the household.

The other routing error concerns LIOT. The correct routing should be that if a respondent codes ‘other’ at LINI, the next question should be LIOT. However, LIOT is currently skipped if a respondent answers ‘other’.

Both errors will be addressed in the main stage script.

Table 8: Section / question Issues in the dress rehearsal CAPI script

Module name	Question name	Comments
HH Qre	Relationships	<p>Interviewers reported this took a long time to complete for large families, and that for longitudinal sample it could be more efficient. They also reported that some relationships were regarded as sensitive for some families (e.g. if children did not know a parent was actually a step-parent). They also wanted the gender of the individuals to be shown next to their names.</p> <p>Suggest adding introductory text explaining that the following information is to confirm Household composition. Suggest asking respondents to read out the number that applies on the relationships showcard (currently showcard A1).</p> <p>There is no ‘not answered / refused’ option – consider whether this should be possible, or a briefing note (we recommend the latter).</p>
	Address	<p>Initial screen with address currently does not allow amendments – amend confirmation text / delete address / put interviewer note that amendments can be made later in the script.</p>

Module name	Question name	Comments
	Pels	Interviewers wanted guidance on what to do if they incorrectly said another person was in the household.
HH Qre contact		No issues reported.
FC	FCIN	Interviewers and respondents did not understand this question (need to emphasise legal status and how this differs from general living arrangements) – explain in briefings and add interviewer note to script.
	FCRE	In one interview, the respondent's name appeared but it should have been the partner's name. It was suggested that the answer 'Affair' needs to be added to the list of pre-codes.
	COPA-NRQR	These questions about the absent parent are extremely sensitive for cases where the child does not realise the parent is absent (e.g. where they think their step parent is their real parent). Suggest having a warning screen before these questions so that the interviewer can prepare (e.g. ask child to leave the room / ask parent to read the screen etc).
	MUAL	Have don't know option and skip age question.
	DAAL	Have don't know option and skip age question.
	LIOT	Does not route from LINI (when LINI=7).
ES	General	Review and improve protocols/briefing on how questions (throughout) should be answered where child is at boarding school (e.g. some questions may not be applicable because parent does not see child each week).
	Scotland	This section is still not suitable for Scottish schools (e.g. asks about applying to several schools – n/a for Scotland).
	Schools look-up	This seemed to be fine for most areas, except London. Glasgow was a problem unless the city was typed in, rather than the area of the city. It seemed to work well for secondary schools and less so for primary schools. Need to investigate at what stage the problem occurs (list of schools, algorithm lookup, interviewer use, etc).
	ASMI	Add interviewer note explaining that children do not have to stay on in school but can do vocational training etc instead.
	TSUS-NEXC	Sensitive questions. Consider having on a showcard or moving to the CASI section.

Module name	Question name	Comments
	HLPC	Consider rewording or changing to number of hours. Interviewers reported respondents felt this was a criticism of them (e.g. child may not want help with homework or may only get home once or twice a week).
	ENEX	Make clear that entrance exams do not include SATS. Many people mentioned these.
	EVBC-EVAS	A lot of confusion here about what should / should not be included in the clubs. E.g. are Breakfast Clubs just for parents who need to work, or do they include activity clubs?
	CCSW-CCWE	Respondents concerned that question was asking about childcare – number of cases where children stay with grandparents because they want to rather than for childcare reasons. Add interviewer note explaining.
	OTNU	Interviewer note or extra code needed – respondents reported they had to apply for 3 schools even if they only wanted to apply to 1.
	TYSC	Some parents were not sure what the definitions are of academy, independent etc. Put 'help' screen here.
	FCSC	'child wanted to go there' is currently not an option here.
	FMSC (FCSM)	'reputation' is only an option if 'academic reputation' – have additional code for general good reputation?
	CCHA	Number of hours a week looked after – add interviewer note clarifying whether hours asleep / overnight are included.
AB	INSU	Add a spontaneous code for 'child helps me (parent)'?
	OMPO	Interviewer note or extra code for whether does not access internet on phone due to cost (access deliberately disabled?)
PA	ACTI-GAME	ACTI says 'games outdoors or indoors' and GAME says 'games indoors' – emphasise ACTI is 'physically active' and suggest changing GAME to 'indoor games'. No option here to say parent is infirm/unable to take part in activities. No option to say that child does not want parent to do activities with them.
CH	General	CLSM asks about vision and hearing (and 'other'), and then EYEPHERS asks about vision and hearing again. Doesn't flow well – consider changing around.
	ACWT	Add 'sprains' to list of answers.
	ACCH	Add walk-in-centre to options or interviewer note.

Module name	Question name	Comments
PH	CUPR	Potentially sensitive question if others are in the room. Consider moving answers / whole question onto a showcard.
	NWRK	Screen switches to wide mode and requires scrolling. IM to amend.
	NGTW	Possibly need an interviewer instruction for respondents who have shifts starting within this time, e.g. 6 a.m. Currently question can be interpreted as all night / additional hours.
	NETA	Interviewer instruction needed confirming whether SAYE should be included or excluded.
HA	PETH	Briefing point (or interviewer note) – clarify whether chickens are considered to be pets.
EI	Partner	Income questions didn't state whether 'gross' or 'net'. Respondents reacted negatively to questions repeated in Main interview. Reword or brief (and add interviewer instruction).
	Unfolding brackets	Some start at high amounts which were thought to be unrealistic.
	CHJB-CHEM	If don't have same job title but still with same employer, currently routes to STJY and STJM. This does not flow well. Consider amending routing / question wording.
	SAVI	Code 1 'Account at a bank' – is this current or savings? If current, then the questions that follow don't really make sense.
	SAWH	Some had both, i.e. a response at SAVI, with one in their name and another jointly with someone else.
	SAVA	Need option to have negative amounts.
	DEBT	Add overdraft to list of codes.
	BECH	Add 'other' option to list of codes.
	Benefits	Interviewers would have found it helpful to have a help screen stating how frequently each type of benefit is usually paid.
	BENA	Some respondents were not able to split the amounts received – they only knew a total. Consider having another option to record this.
OM	RELE	Consider adding 'Islam' to text at 'Muslim' code.
	RDPL	Does this include newspapers, magazines, internet etc?
SC	General	Review and improve protocols on how interviewers should help respondents to complete this if they are having difficulties with this section.

Module name	Question name	Comments
	PRAC2	Clarify whether we want them to answer as 'parent generally' or 'parent to cohort child'?
	CHTI-CHTN	Consider option that child does not want to spend time with parent – add code to CHTN?
	HARE/WALI	Some respondents struggled with this format.
PX	General	Improve briefing – make clear when interviewer to expect to conduct proxy interview.
Physical measurements		No issues reported.
Contact		<p>Respondents were willing to give information.</p> <p>Some respondents thought one stable contact address was more than enough. Perhaps add explanation? Some also were happy to give details but wanted to check with the individuals first – consider update process for collecting this information after the interview (update postcard etc).</p> <p>Explain at briefings what 'known as' name means – give examples.</p> <p>Parents generally not happy to give child's contact details.</p>
Cognitive Observations		Add question confirming whether assessments were done with laptop on a table.
Other elements		<p>When suspended, module started from the beginning. IM to investigate.</p> <p>Reword child self-completion question – interviewers cannot tell if it has been fully completed.</p> <p>Reword the audio question – asks why it was offered – we know if we have told the interviewers to offer this.</p> <p>Writing Teacher name was repetitive – review. Many did not know the teacher's first name.</p>

3.4 Child self-completion

The children in the sample (longitudinal and new) were asked to complete a paper self completion questionnaire. This questionnaire covered topics such as the child's family and friends, school, the activities they do outside school, the area they live in, growing up, how they feel and what they think about things.

The findings from the dress rehearsal on this aspect are reported in five sections below.

- Engagement and respondent experience
- Timing and location of completion
- Introduction and instructions for taking part

- Questionnaire content, ease of completion and help required
- Audio support completion

Note that because the questionnaire was in self completion format and the interviewer was often involved in other study elements whilst the child was filling it in, and the child was sometimes in a different room, dress rehearsal feedback from interviewers does not provide a full assessment of the detail of the questionnaire, and issues relating to accurate completion. However, such issues can be explored more fully via analysis of the substantive data from the dress rehearsal questionnaires.

We have carried out some initial (relatively rough) basic analysis of raw data to help shed light on some key issues (especially questionnaire length and questionnaire routing). Findings are appended.

3.4.1 Engagement and experience

Co-operation

Out of the productive household interviews, 123 parents (1 had twins) gave the interviewer consent to approach the child and 3 did not. The interviewers suggested that possible reasons for this were over protective parents.

Out of the 124 children (taking into account the twins) for whom parental consent was received, 120 children verbally consented to complete the child self-completion questionnaire and 3 did not. In one case the child said no because she said she was not informed beforehand about this aspect of the survey and another because the child was extremely shy/isolated so he/she refused to take part. A reason was not provided for the third child.

However on the whole, the interviewers felt that the parents and the children had engaged well with this aspect of the survey. Longitudinal cases were already comfortable and familiar with this type of element.

Children's experience

The majority of the children enjoyed doing this element of the survey and some interviewers felt that they did not need to 'do any selling' for this aspect of the survey.

This was the one section that was about them (the children) which they could do without anyone else being involved (a feeling positively enhanced via use of the sealed envelope to keep the completed questionnaire private). There was a sense that the children saw this as their main contribution to the whole study. Some interviewers also felt that the children were familiar with the concept of self-completion surveys and were used to doing similar surveys in school, hence it made it easier for the child to engage with this.

There were no sections of the questionnaire that the children or parents identified as inappropriate or upsetting. A number of children, including some Asian children, commented that they felt the alcohol questions were not relevant to them, but this did not create any problems.

Recommendations:

- The interviewers will need to be briefed on how to deal with children that are extremely shy/isolated. There is not a 'one size fits all' approach to being friendly

and building up a rapport with a child. We need to help interviewers identify different ways of gaining a child's trust and how to build their confidence to take part in the various child elements of the survey.

- To support the engagement process, highlight to interviewers that some children regard this as the central element and like it because it involves them telling us about themselves and giving their opinions (and we are showing a detailed interest in them).

3.4.2 Timing and location of completion

Timing

Most interviewers felt the approach of encouraging the child to complete the self-completion questionnaire whilst they were administering the main/partner CAPI interview, including the CASI section in particular, worked well. This was the most efficient approach.

The following table shows time taken to administer the audio version of the questionnaire.

Table 9: Length of time to administer audio supported Child Self Completion Questionnaire

Child	Length of Time (minutes)
Child 1	22
Child 2	30
Child 3	30
Child 4	35
Child 5	37
Child 6	43
Child 7	45
Child 8	45
AVERAGE	36

The average time taken was 36 minutes and the range is 22-45 minutes.

This compares with an average of 28 minutes among children completing the questionnaire on paper (mainly ranging from 17 to 40 minutes after two outliers are excluded).

The audio mode seems associated with a small amount of additional completion time (8 minutes) although the sample size is relatively small to generalise accurately.

Based on this, we have given careful consideration about whether or not this is likely to result in significant extra time in the household (and possible extra respondent burden and/or fieldwork resource required). We feel this is very unlikely, given the low proportion of

children using the audio mode and given that many children will complete the questionnaire concurrently with the parents CAPI interview.

To work through an example scenario, if 15% of children use audio and 25% of children complete the questionnaire when the parent is not completing CAPI (i.e. not concurrently with other elements) this would only result in an additional 20 seconds per household on average across the sample.

Recommendations:

- The audio element can be incorporated without significant impact on time in the household/additional respondent and fieldwork burden.
- However we suggest this should be double checked after a month of fieldwork based on real life figures.

Location of completion

In most cases the interviewers did not have any problems in ensuring the child completed the questionnaire in a suitable location, somewhere that had a table that was private and was away from distractions, but also relatively near to the interviewer so that the child can easily ask for advice if and when needed.

91 interviews were completed in the same room as the interviewer and 23 interviews were completed in a different room. This is in line with an observation made by one interviewer who said that some parents wanted to make sure that they could see the child so were reluctant to send them off to another room. There were six cases where the interviewer did not log this information on iProgress.

In the first pilot, the interviewers were not instructed to have much input into where the child completed the self-completion questionnaire which resulted in a half/half split, where approximately 50% took it to their room and 50% did it in the same room as the interviewer and parent. This new approach seems to have worked better in ensuring interviewers have more oversight of the completion process and are more available to answer queries.

In many cases where the child did take the questionnaire to another room, they did still come to the interviewer and ask for some help if they needed clarification or didn't understand a particular word, indicating that this option is still viable.

There was one case where the interviewer found it difficult to stop an older sibling interfering with the child who was completing the questionnaire. The interviewer felt uncomfortable as an outsider in interfering with the sibling relationship. However, most interviewers did not have any problems in dealing with this type of interference.

There weren't any reports of parents proactively interfering with the child(ren) when they were completing the child self-completion questionnaire in the same room. However, some children did ask the parent questions which meant potential for parental influence biasing the answers.

Recommendations:

- Continue with the approach of the interviewer guiding location of completion and encourage interviewers to ensure this is in easy reach of the interviewer (possibly in the same room).

3.4.3 Introduction and instructions for taking part

The interviewers were asked to take the child through the details of what is involved and to ensure that they were personally happy that the child(ren) knew what to do, including those children that were deemed to be of 'high ability'.

None of the interviewers reported any challenges in explaining how to complete the questionnaire, or in explaining the purpose and confidentiality to the children. There were no queries regarding the language used in the introduction page or the example page. The suggested approach worked very well and, in the main, interviewers said that they found these approaches sufficient for ensuring that children understood what they needed to do.

However, it is notable that the majority of interviewers administered the self-completion at the same time as the parent CAPI and CASI. Whilst it was felt by interviewers that this saved time in the household and was the most efficient way to approach this element, the exec accompaniments highlighted that in isolated cases it seemed that the interviewers did not always go through the child self-completion instructions as fully with the child in this situation.

There were few instances where the children wanted to read the instructions on pages 2 and 3 themselves, rather than have the interviewer read the instructions to them. In these cases the interviewers let the children do the reading themselves, but sat with the child to ensure that they understood things fully.

In practice, it was not possible for the interviewer to know if the child fully understood the instructions and completed the questionnaire accurately, because they did not have access to and were unable to check the completed questionnaires. However, the questions that children asked interviewers did not give the impression that they had misunderstood anything significant.

As mentioned earlier, some children had done similar surveys at school, and this helped them to grasp what they needed to do.

Most questionnaires were received in the private envelope but around seven were not and interviewers reported that this was because the child was not bothered about placing it in there.

Recommendations:

- Retain the current approach whereby the interviewer guides the child through the instructions (rather than the child taking them away to read themselves) but encourage flexibility for the child to be more involved in reading them themselves (but always sitting with the interviewer).
- If interviewers are administering the child self-completion at the same time as the parent CAPI interview, ensure that interviewers are briefed that these elements can be conducted concurrently as long as the interviewer has explained the instructions to the child fully beforehand.
- In cases where the child does not use the private envelope, instruct interviewers to put questionnaires in the envelopes and seal them - and to show this to the child to emphasise confidentiality.

3.4.4 Questionnaire content, ease of completion and help required

The majority of the children found the questionnaire sufficiently easy to complete. Just under two-thirds (65%) of children completed the survey without asking any questions about it;

another 30% of the other children had a small number of minor queries. The remaining 5% of children needed help with many of the questions.

Wording and routing issues

Many interviewers felt that the words 'Ethnic' and 'Value' are not understood by a considerable number of the children, and they received many queries about these.

Another question that many children needed help with was Q21, which asks if the child's family is richer, poorer or about the same as their friends' families. The children did not know what to answer and had to ask their parents. This could potentially affect the answer which the child gives.

A few children asked the interviewers about the routing, this may be due to the fact that the routing example has been taken out of the example page. One interviewer who did not have any children who had any queries about the routing said that she had highlighted this question to the child beforehand as part of the introduction.

Our analysis of the survey data indicates that instructions seem clear and that no one is missing the detailed alcohol consumption questions. However, as our data analysis note indicates some are failing to answer questions on attitudes to alcohol that follow straight after (see separate note on data analysis for more information on this).

There was another case where the child kept on asking many questions, but the interviewer felt that this was not due to poor reading ability or lack of understanding, but more to do with the fact that the child wanted attention.

Parental involvement

There was one case where the child sought reassurance from the parents for some of the questions, however this was also an isolated case. Clear guidance should be given to interviewers about this.

Interviewer and parent assisted completion

There were seven children who needed significant help in completing the questionnaire for varying reasons, but mainly due to autism, dyslexia and/or low reading ability.

There was one case of a child from the new sample, where the mother had informed the interviewer that her child had poor reading ability. The interviewer had offered this child the option to use the audio version but he refused. The child proceeded to do the questionnaire alone but it was clear that this was too difficult and eventually the interviewer helped the child to complete the questionnaire as an interviewer-assisted completion.

Although isolated, one interviewer reported a case where the child had special needs and the interviewer involved the mother in rephrasing many questions for the child in order for the child to understand what the question was asking of him/her. The interviewer felt that the child could not have understood without this approach being taken.

Recommendations:

- Consider again whether further explanation of the terms 'ethnic' and 'values' is beneficial.

- For Q21, consider making the “don’t know” option more prominent – e.g. expand the wording to “I don’t know how rich or poor my family is compared with others” or similar.
- We suggest asking interviewers to explain during introductions to the questionnaire about the alcohol routing and stressing to children that we want them to complete the section “More about what you think” even if they were routed out of the preceding questions. (It may also be worth considering alcohol attitude questions so they do not follow the alcohol consumption questions, i.e. including them earlier, but the benefits of this may be outweighed by disadvantages in terms of flow and/or order effects).
- Stress more fully to interviewers that they should discourage children from seeking advice from parents about the “correct” answers, or parents giving it if they are asked.
- Provide guidance about whether, if a child cannot understand questions without rephrasing by the mother, this element should be proceeded with. We suggest it should if the child wants to, for reasons of inclusiveness and engagement (avoiding disappointment and perceptions of lack of inclusiveness). However, the other element script questions should be reviewed to allow this to be captured.

3.4.5 Audio supported completion

Introduction

This approach was offered with the aim of helping children with reading and writing difficulties to participate and complete the questionnaire accurately.

Specifically it was required for interviewers to offer this to children known from the previous sweep (MCS4 dress rehearsal) to have dyslexia, a low reading score or a special educational need. For those not interviewed at MCS4, this was also indicated if they needed help due to disability at MCS3. These children were identified on the sample information sheet.

There were also some additional triggers that were given to the interviewers to help identify further cases, that were not originally specified in the sample information sheets, where children could benefit from the use of the audio method. The triggers were based on parent and child feedback and interviewer observation.

Overall sample outcomes

- 22 children were offered the audio method. This comprised:
 - 18 of the 23 indicated on the sample information sheet for audio
 - Three who were identified as needing it due to additional triggers – one due to the suggestion of parents, two because the interviewer saw the child struggling
 - One child offered audio just to boost numbers testing the audio
- 5 of the 23 children identified for audio on the sample information sheet were not offered it.
-

This meant that in total

- 8 children used the audio method, comprising
- Four indicated for it
- Three subsequently identified
- One additional child to boost numbers testing it

Benefits, purpose and targeting

In this section we have discussed what benefits (or disadvantages) this element was found to provide in the pilot and to whom, and implications for its use and targeting in the main stage.

Eight children used the audio as follows:

- Two children with literacy issues were helped to take part who couldn't have participated otherwise
- One child with literacy issues was helped and it made participation easier, although this child might have participated without
- One child participated because he wanted to (liked MP3 players), but did not need to
- Four children who had been targeted for audio in the sample info sheet used it but did not need to. They were happy to use the audio and did not report finding it a frustrating or a negative experience.

Overall, the audio provided tangible benefit in terms of assisting 3% of the sample with literacy problems to take part/take part more easily.

An interviewer highlighted it had an unanticipated benefit of helping a child concentrate in noisy surroundings and could therefore be used more widely for this purpose.

Around three – four children needed help due to literacy issues, but had other difficulties that prevented the audio being viable: two – three had autism and one had an additional disability.

Among the five children identified for audio that were not offered it:

- One interviewer felt it was adding too much complexity and burden;
- One found there was too much interference from siblings;
- The reasons for the other three were not specified.
-

Interviewers felt that there were no children who needed literacy support for audio who were not identified on the sample information sheet or by the additional “triggers” and as such felt that methods used to identify children who need audio are effective.

However, given that interviewers did not see the completed questionnaires, it may be that some children struggled with it without interviewers being aware. However, interviewers were present in the room in most cases and many children asked questions: interviewers did not feel that the questions asked indicated any major problems which needed to be addressed by audio.

Recommendations:

- The audio provides clear benefits and no (obvious) disadvantages and seems a beneficial enhancement to retain for the main stage.
- Retain targeting among children with literacy problems.
- Consider encouraging interviewers to offer this to help children's concentration/accuracy in noisy/chaotic households.
- Consider allowing interviewers the flexibility to judge if the household context makes it inappropriate (this should not be encouraged but the possibility of this occurring should be acknowledged and accepted)
- Given the numbers of children targeted who did not need it, we suggest reviewing the reading ability thresholds for sample-information base targeting. It is important to note that we intentionally targeted a wider band of children to receive the audio

option than we anticipated would actually need it, in order to provide sufficient numbers for testing. This was never intended to be the level of targeting for the mainstage. However, given that using this approach was not a negative experience for children who did not need it, there would be advantages in casting the net reasonably wide to ensure no children are missed.

- Ensure use is restricted to a minority of the sample because the audio option takes longer, adding to burden and potentially length of time in the household (and this may have potential cost implications).
- Retain the current “triggers” for offering it to children who may benefit.

Administration and ease of use of audio

Feedback on administration of audio is largely based on the five interviewers who completed at least one interview using the audio method. However, all interviewers fed back on ease of use of the equipment, and effectiveness of briefing.

The actual administration seemed to run smoothly. Once the child had agreed to use the audio, or at least to try it out, the interviewers didn't have any problems in explaining how to use the equipment, setting the volume, supporting the child in carrying out the practice questions and then finally carrying out the main questionnaire.

Explaining to the child how to use the equipment

In order for the child to use the MP4 player they will need to know how to; pause the track, resume the track, skip to the next track and skip back to the previous track. The interviewers did not report any problems with this. It was suggested that the children were probably more confident in using the MP4 device than the interviewers themselves.

Setting the volume at the level that is right for the child

The volume setting section was straightforward and no interviewers reported a problem with this. Some interviewers set the volume to a level that they thought was suitable before giving it to the child to check, and this seemed to work fine. We suggest asking interviewers to do this as standard.

Administering the practice questions

The interviewers and the children did not report any problems with the practice questions. One interviewer did report a grammatical error on the practice questions which had not been spotted by the exec team.

The interviewers felt that this was useful for some of the children but not for all: the more able children did not need to go through the practice questions.

Starting the main questionnaire

Some interviewers were actually surprised at how quickly the children grasped the instructions on how to use the MP4 device. The majority of the children completed the questionnaire with minimal help from the interviewers.

Problems

Charging the equipment

A couple of the interviewers reported problems with the charging of the MP4 device. They felt that at times even though they had charged the device the battery went flat very quickly. It could be that the interviewers had not understood fully how to charge the device. One interviewer was not aware that the device was charged by connecting the device to his laptop/CAPI machine, and that the laptop/CAPI machine as well as the MP4 device both need to be on to charge the device correctly.

We carried out some testing on the devices after the dress rehearsal and found that it takes approximately 2 hours to charge the device fully from an empty battery. We also found that one interview with no pauses and/or repeats uses up about a quarter of the battery life.

Recommendations:

- Need to ensure all the interviewers are fully briefed on how to charge the MP4 devices in the correct manner. These instructions also need to be added to the instructions booklet.
- Given that one interview would use up a minimum of a quarter of the battery life, we propose that interviewers should be instructed to charge the device fully before each interview.

Machines hibernating/cutting out

Several interviewers said that they had issues with the MP4 device going into hibernation very quickly, this dims the light on the MP4 device and the user is unable to see what is displayed on the screen.

A couple of interviewers reported that their MP4 device kept on cutting out. One clearly mentioned that the device had to be turned on again from the main power button before the child could resume using the device. It is difficult to know why this was the case as this was not a universal problem reported by all the interviewers. However, we suspect that the MP4 devices might not have been charged correctly because when they are low on battery they switch off automatically. One of the interviewers who reported this problem was the same interviewer who was unaware that the CAPI machine/laptop had to be switched on to charge the MP4 device correctly, so it could be that he had tried to charge the MP4 device with his CAPI machine/laptop switched off.

Following the debrief, we have reviewed the machines to check if there are technical faults that might explain problems, or they are solvable via more effective briefing on how to use them.

We have tested the machines that were allocated to the interviewers for the dress rehearsal – including the two where interviewers reported problems with them cutting out – and have found that they were all working without any issues.

Based on this, we are confident that with fuller briefing, the machines should be effective for the main stage of the study.

Recommendations:

- The hibernation problem can be easily solved. The devices are set to go into hibernation after 9 seconds. However, the “power off” can be set to ‘0’ which means it will never go into hibernation. We will ensure that this setting is applied to all machines before released into field with interviewers. Note, with this setting on, the screen light will still turn off after a few seconds of no use, but it can be easily turned back on at the press of any button.

- Clear instructions should be given about what to do if interviewers find equipment to be faulty, and measures put in place to ensure it can be replaced quickly.

Briefing and training

On the whole, it seems as if the interviewers had not left the briefing with huge confidence on how to use the MP4 device and this seemed to be or could have been a contributing factor in the problems mentioned above.

The interviewers felt the instructions in the 'project instructions' on how to use the device were fine, but they needed a practical session in the briefings in which they can use the device in small groups. They felt that this would be of great benefit and make it easier for those who are not so confident with using the device to get more focused help.

Recommendations:

- Include a practical session as part of the main briefing where the interviewers can practice using the device step-by-step in small groups.
- The practical session mentioned above should be done on either day 1 or day 2 of the briefing allowing scope for interviewers to ask further questions on day 3 if required.

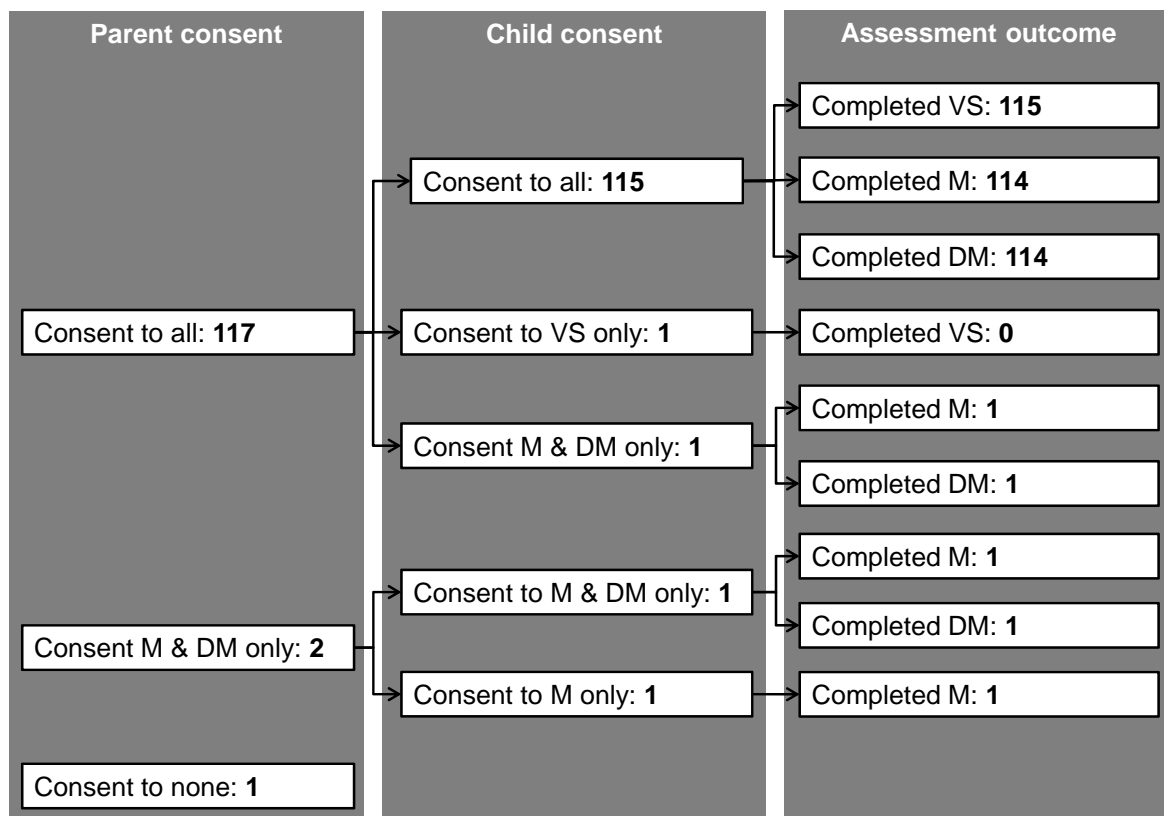
3.5 Cognitive Assessments Findings

3.5.1 General reactions

Consent was given to all three assessments by 117 of the 120 parents; two parents consented to the Memory Task and Decision-making Task only, and one parent refused to give consent to any of the assessments. Of the children, 115 consented to all three assessments, two consented to the Memory Task and Decision-making Task only, one child consented to Verbal Similarities only, and one child consented to the Memory Task only.

The vast majority of children completed all three cognitive assessments. One child refused to complete the Verbal Similarities assessment and one child refused to complete both the Memory Task and the Decision-making Task.

Figure 1: Parental and child consent to cognitive assessments and assessment outcome



The cognitive assessments took on average 29 minutes to complete. Verbal Similarities typically took interviewers around seven minutes to administer, while the two CANTAB assessments took 22 minutes between them.

Interviewers generally found the assessments easy to sell to the children. It was reported that children, for the most part, enjoyed the assessments. Reflecting the findings from the first Pilot, it was universally reported by interviewers that Verbal Similarities was found to be the most difficult for children to complete. This led to some of the interviewers feeling uncomfortable, particularly when the children were clearly struggling and looking for some reassurance. Children generally enjoyed the Memory Task and the Decision-making Task and interviewers felt they were helpful in building the child's confidence following Verbal

Similarities. However, some interviewers felt the Memory Task and Decision-making Task went on too long and, in some instances, this resulted in the child becoming bored.

3.5.2 Environment and parental/sibling interference

It was recommended to interviewers that they try and conduct the assessments at a table. However, a number of interviewers reported that this was not possible as there either wasn't a table in the house, or the table was covered with belongings, and on several occasions they had to administer the assessments with the laptop on their knees. Using a table where possible is advised as it is a more comfortable environment in which to conduct the assessments, particularly the CANTAB assessments. Not being able to use a table could put children at a slight disadvantage, and as such it was recommended that an option to code whether or not the interviewer used a table to administer the assessments should be added to the cognitive observations for the main stage. It was also recommended that interviewers make every effort to encourage parents to clear space on a table, where present, and that they should not feel awkward about doing this, as they would be doing it to try to ensure that the environment was as ideal as possible for the child to carry out their assessments.

Most interviewers reported that in at least one of their interviews a parent had spoken to the child during the Verbal Similarities assessment. In some cases, this was to try and help the child give the correct response, but in others the parent was simply urging the child to give an answer. In the majority of cases, however, the parents did not interject. This was far less of a problem during the Memory task and Decision-making task, where interviewers reported very few instances where parents interfered with the child's performance.

Interviewers understood their role in preventing parental involvement in the assessments. Many interviewers said that when parents did try to affect the child's performance, they politely asked the parents to refrain from interjecting. To limit the parent's temptation to give advice to their child during Verbal Similarities, interviewers also said it was easier if the parent sat or stood out of the line of sight of the child. Interviewers did feel, however, that more emphasis should be placed at the briefings on the need to set boundaries with the parents and to explain up front the importance of respecting the assessment protocols. Given that all the households to be visited for the main stage will be longitudinal sample, interviewers were told that main stage respondents are likely understand the nature of the assessments and will be amenable to being set boundaries and told not to interfere.

With regards the interference of siblings, a handful of interviewers reported problems during the Memory Task and Decision-making Task where siblings wanted to touch the screen. Interviewers, again, seemed to recognise that it was their responsibility to prevent distractions by siblings and were happy to ask siblings not to interfere with the assessment.

Recommendations

- Include a question in cognitive observations that allows interviewers to code whether or not the interviewer used a table to administer the cognitive assessments.
- Emphasise at the briefings the right of the interviewer to take control of the household and to set boundaries with the parents prior to beginning the assessment to ensure they do not interfere with their child's performance. This should include encouraging them to ensure that the environmental conditions are as ideal as possible, e.g. by asking parents to clear tables.
- Recommend to parents that they sit or stand out of the child's line of sight during the Verbal Similarities assessment so the child cannot look to their parent(s) for advice.

3.5.3 Verbal Similarities

Of the three assessments, Verbal Similarities was the assessment interviewers found most challenging.

Interviewers, as a rule, are used to encouraging and reassuring respondents and, as such, found abiding by the protocols to remain neutral very difficult. A number of interviewers admitted to encouraging children by saying, for example, “well-done” or “good” when the child gave a correct answer, or “hard luck, that was a difficult one” when the child gave an answer that was incorrect. It was generally felt that this was a difficult habit for interviewers to overcome, particularly following the practice item and two teaching items when the CAPI script no longer asks interviewers to read out “That’s right; now try another one”, or an explanation of the correct answer. This temptation to provide encouragement was exacerbated when children struggled to give an answer and started to look uncomfortable or, as occurred on a handful of occasions, upset. Interviewers appeared to underestimate the importance of abiding by the assessment protocols and felt this needed to be emphasised to a greater degree during the briefings.

A number of interviewers reported saying, “Let’s move on” if a child could not give an answer. These interviewers were under the impression they had been briefed to respond in this way, although it is a breach of the assessment protocols.

To try and limit the temptation of interviewers to provide encouragement, often driven by the difficulties the child is experiencing when trying to give an answer, interviewers recommended inserting an instruction to read out at the start of the assessment explaining that after the third item they would no longer be giving the child feedback on their answer. It was felt that doing this would help the child to be prepared for the interviewer remaining neutral after the first few teaching items.

In the same vein, interviewers also felt they needed more information about the neutral phrases that can be said to the child. They also asked if it is possible to develop a training video that, as well as showing best practice, also shows common errors so they know what things to avoid doing.

In terms of coding the child’s responses, a number of interviewers reported finding it difficult on occasions to code the answer as correct or requiring probing when the answer was not listed. One interviewer could not understand why ‘Bad things’ was not deemed a correct answer to a particular item when ‘False things’ was considered correct. More coaching on how to discern the accuracy of an answer and to categorise it was requested by interviewers.

As mentioned above, some children were uncomfortable and one child visibly upset by the verbal similarities task, because they perceived they were increasingly “failing” as the task progressed. Children often felt that the verbal similarities task was more like a test than the other cognitive assessments.

Recommendations

- Stress at the briefings the need to, at all times, abide by the protocols of the assessment. Emphasis needs to be placed on the requirement for uniformity when administering the assessment to ensure some children are not receiving an unfair advantage over others, and vice versa.
- Consider inserting an instruction in the CAPI script at the beginning of the assessment telling the child that they will only receive feedback on the first few items, after which the interviewer is not allowed to say anything.

- Greater attention should be placed at the briefings upon the various neutral phrases that interviewers are allowed to use.
- Consider filming a training video of the assessment showing common errors to give interviewers an example of the things they should avoid.
- Spend more time at the briefings explaining how to discern the accuracy of an answer that is not listed in one of the columns.
- Brief interviewers to explain the challenging nature of the verbal similarities task and the increasing level of difficulty before the child commences and ensure that interviewers emphasise to children that it is not a test.

3.5.4 Cantab assessments

Setting up and calibrating the touch screen add-on

On the whole there were few reported problems using the touch screen add-on with no interviewers reporting problems calibrating the screen, which is an encouraging finding.

A number of interviewers thought it would take some time to set up and calibrate the add-on and the child would get restless while they were doing it. In practice, however, the children were quite intrigued by the process of calibrating the add-on and interviewers seemed to find it a good way of introducing the assessments. One interviewer allowed the child to calibrate the screen for him.

Interviewers did not really use the DVD training film but simply practiced themselves to become comfortable setting up. On the whole, interviewers felt that after practicing a few times they quickly became used to it. However, they did recommend that more time be spent at the briefing practicing setting up. Given that time is limited at the briefing, it was suggested that interviewers be sent the add-on, instructions and DVD prior to day one of the briefing so they can practice at home and then discuss any problems they are experiencing during day one. Interviewers generally felt this was a good idea.

Recommendations

- Consider briefing the interviewers to involve the child in calibrating the touch screen if the child is looking uninterested.
- Send interviewers the touch screen add-on, instructions and DVD prior to briefing day one so they can practice at home, become familiar with the process, and discuss any problems they are having on day one.

Using the touch screen add-on for cantab assessments

In a handful of instances, however, interviewers did have difficulties after the screen had been calibrated.

One interviewer reported a problem with the add-on freezing and no longer being touch sensitive. The interviewer said she went home and cleaned it using the wipe provided and then calibrated it the next time using a different USB port. From that point on, the interviewer had no further problems. In the future, it was felt that interviewers need to be briefed more thoroughly about the need to clean the screen between visits.

Another interviewer reported a problem with the screen freezing during the Memory Task but reported that it was then working correctly for the Decision-making Task. This was a technical issue that will be followed up with the interviewer in question.

Another issue for consideration is whether using the touch screen add-on impacts on the child's reaction times. An interviewer who worked on the MCS5 Pilot using a touch screen Panasonic laptop worked on the dress rehearsal using a Dell laptop with a touch screen add-on. She felt that the greater sensitivity of the Panasonic touch screen meant children who completed the CANTAB assessments using a Panasonic were able to make their choices more quickly, whereas children using the add-on had to concentrate more on touching the screen correctly, thereby taking longer. Clarification is needed as to whether the scores for the children during the Memory Task and Decision-making Task are dependent upon the speed with which they make their selections. If so, it is possible that children using a touch screen add-on will be put at a small disadvantage compared with children using a touch screen Panasonic. The CAPI script already contains a question asking whether a touch screen add-on is used for the CANTAB assessments, which can be used to see if there is, on average, any difference in the length of time taken to complete the assessments between children using an add-on and children using a Panasonic. If so, this variable could be used as a weight to correct for any potential bias.

One interviewer said he was able to adjust the settings on his computer to make the touch screen add-on more sensitive. This is an option that will be explored further ahead of the briefing, but it needs to be ensured that the settings for each laptop are the same for each of the children who complete the assessments.

During the assessments, it was found that the laptop screen moved backwards as the child repeatedly touched it. Some interviewers tried putting a bag behind the screen but this had little effect. A number of the interviewers recommended asking the child to support the back of the laptop with his/her free hand. One interviewer felt this was a good idea as it prevented the child from wanting to use both hands to alternately touch the screen.

A couple of interviewers reported that one or two of their children did not press the touch screen add-on hard enough at first and it took them a while to get used to pressing it firmly. It was recommended that interviewers should be briefed to ensure the child is pressing the screen firmly during the first practice phase of the Memory Task.

Recommendations

- At the briefing, the need to clean the touch screen add-on between visits using the wipe provided should be emphasised, explaining that failure to do this may stop the screen from working properly.
- Consider changing the laptop settings for all interviewers using Dell machines to make them more sensitive when using the touch screen add-on.
- Recommend to interviewers at the briefing that children hold the back of the laptop screen using their spare hand, to prevent them from using both hands to touch the screen.
- At the briefing, highlight to interviewers the need for them to ensure the child is pressing hard enough on the screen. Use the practice items at the start of the Memory Task to instruct the child if they are having difficulties.

Using the software key

Interviewers did not report any problems using the software key. None of the interviewers reported failing to insert the software key prior to the software loading.

Interviewers felt the lanyard chain was a very good idea, although one interviewer said he experienced difficulties closing his laptop as a result of having the lanyard chain attached.

Administering the CANTAB assessments

While interviewers reported finding the CANTAB assessments easier to administer than Verbal Similarities, there remain some doubts over the extent to which interviewers are following the laminated script to read out the instructions to the child.

Some interviewers fed back that they followed the scripts word-for-word whereas other interviewers admitted finding it difficult to use the laminated scripts and only read out the introductory instructions. One interviewer reported reading the introductory text out to the child while the CANTAB software was loading. The exec accompaniments also revealed a degree of variability between interviewers, with some interviewers following the scripts very closely and others reading out only some of the instructions.

The interviewers who followed the scripts accurately felt they were useful in slowing down the pace of the assessment and for controlling the exercise. A number of children were reportedly very eager to begin the assessment, so having the script to slow the child down and ensure he/she understood what was being asked was seen to be helpful.

Among the interviewers who struggled to follow the laminated scripts word-for-word, suggestions were made about how to make the scripts easier to follow and a number of interviewers felt improvements could be made to the layout and design of the scripts. Changing the text that needs to be read out to bold and black, deleting some of the instructions, and putting arrows on the pictures to show which boxes the interviewer needs to point to, were some of the suggested improvements made by interviewers.

One interviewer raised a query about what should be done if the child takes a break midway through one of the assessments. The interviewer said that one of her children stopped in the middle of the Decision-making Task to eat their dinner. The interviewer left the CAPI machine and returned to it when the child had finished. To be able to record such occurrences, the CAPI script needs to be updated to include a text box for interviewers to record anything out of the ordinary within the household that may have affected the child's performance.

Most interviewers also reported allowing the child to press the space bar between items during the CANTAB assessments, in spite of being briefed to do so themselves. As a result, interviewers felt the importance of strictly following the protocols should be given greater emphasis during the briefing.

Recommendations

- Emphasise during the briefing the need for interviewers to follow the laminated CANTAB scripts word-for-word and to read out the instructions at the appropriate moments, thereby ensuring the instructions given to each child are uniformly the same.
- Make changes to the laminated CANTAB scripts to make them easier for interviewers to follow. Take on board interviewers' suggestions and trial a few prototype scripts with interviewers in order for a more user-friendly version to be prepared for the main stage.
- Insert a text box in the CAPI script at the end of the CANTAB assessments for interviewers to record anything out of the ordinary within the household that may have affected the child's performance.
- At the briefings, emphasise the need for interviewers to press the space bar between items, not the child.

Memory Task

Interviewers reported that, for the most part, children enjoyed the Memory Task and that it helped build their confidence if they had found the Verbal Similarities assessment difficult.

A couple of interviewers felt the assessment was too long and reported that one or two children sighed or commented “how many more”, suggesting they were getting bored by the assessment. Other interviewers, however, said some of the children they interviewed were disappointed when the assessment ended because they were enjoying it so much.

Decision-making Task

Generally, interviewers felt the children also enjoyed the Decision-making Task, although again a handful of children were reported to have become a bit bored by the length of the assessment.

One interviewer reported that one of the children she interviewed did not attempt to engage with the task and pressed the points box as soon as it appeared on the screen so that they could “go out and play” as soon as possible. The rest of the interviewers said all their children did their best to engage with the assessment.

Despite the task being officially named the Cambridge Gambling Task, there were no concerns raised by parents about the nature of the task the children were being asked to perform.

Findings from analysis conducted by Cambridge Cognition on the two CANTAB assessments using the pilot data can be found in Appendix B.

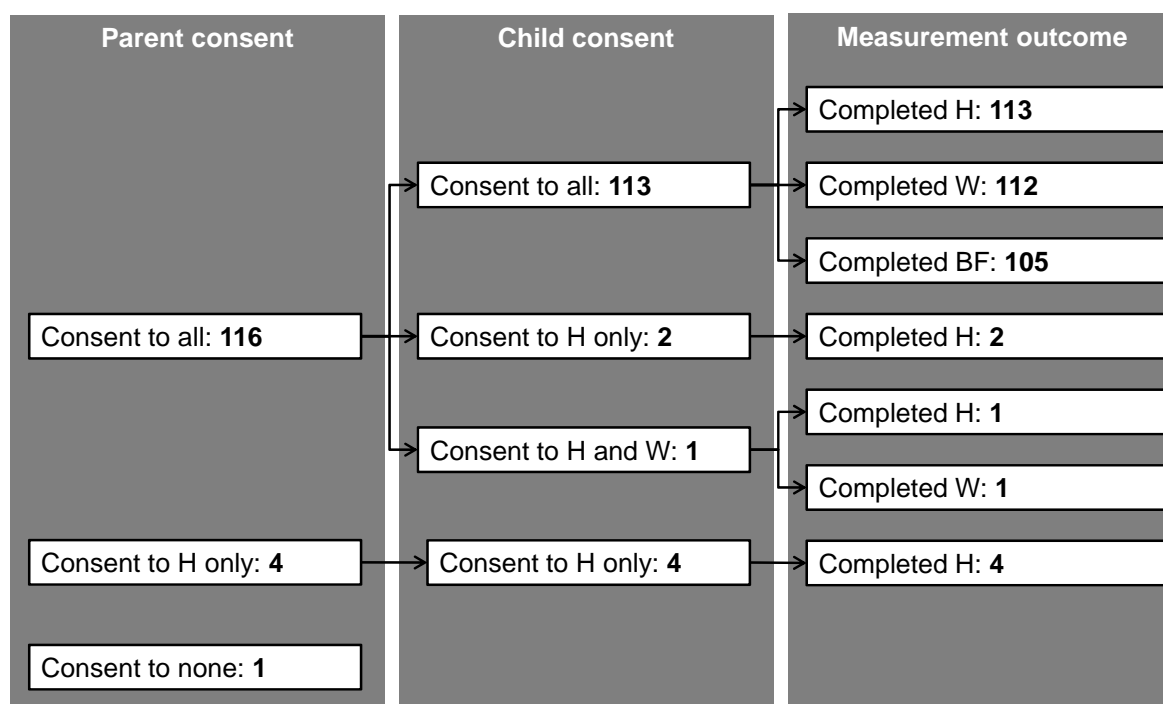
3.6 Physical Measurements Findings

3.6.1 General reactions

Overall, interviewers reported few problems with taking the child physical measurements and parents and children were happy with them taking these measurements.

The following figure shows the consent achieved from parents and children for each of the measurements:

Figure 2: Parental and child consent to physical measurements



It must be noted, however, that there were some instances, particularly in relation to the body fat measurement, where consent was given by the parent and the child yet the measurement was still not taken (see Table 10). This will need to be investigated further with interviewers but it is likely that a minority of children changed their minds in between giving consent and being asked to take part in the measurement(s).

Table 10: Consent given compared with measurement recorded to physical measurements

Measurement	Parental and child consent given	Measurement recorded
Height	120	120
Weight	114	113
Body fat %	113	105

Interviewers' feedback and observations during the exec accompaniments revealed there were a few issues with the protocols not being followed correctly. Most significantly in this respect, most of the interviewers took the measurements while the main parent was doing his/her self-completion section on the CAPI machine, resulting in interviewers being unable to input the measurements into the CAPI script as they were recorded. Whilst the rationale for doing this was to save time and shorten the overall length of the visit, it did mean that a number of interviewers missed out the question about whether the child uses a pacemaker prior to taking the body fat measurement. In future briefings, it will be important to stress the need for interviewers to enter the measurements into the CAPI script at the moment they've been taken.

Some interviewers took the measurements twice, while others took them just once. All interviewers practiced taking the measurements at home before their first visit, and did not tend to make much use of the training films. It was felt that not enough time was allowed during the briefings for the interviewers to practice the measurements, and they requested that more time is dedicated to this at the main stage.

Interviewers reported that the physical measurements took on average 12-15 minutes to complete, excluding time for setting up.

Regarding the measurement postcard, most children were happy to have a record of their measurements, although some did not want it.

Interviewers who used the trolleys generally seemed to feel they were an unnecessary hindrance and only served to take up more space in the household. It was often difficult to fit the stadiometer in the trolley. Most interviewers used their cars during fieldwork and so had very little use for the trolley. One interviewer working in London, however, felt they might come in useful in certain circumstances such as having to travel long distances on public transport.

Recommendations:

- Emphasise at the briefing the importance of recording the measurements in CAPI at the moment they are taken to ensure the range checks fulfil their purpose and other important questions, notably about the pacemaker, are not missed out.
- Allow more time at the main stage briefings for interviewers to practice the measurements.
- As soon as possible, investigate with interviewers the reasons for not recording measurement after consent had been given.

3.6.2 Height measurement

Interviewers generally had no problems taking the height measurement, and no children refused to have their height measured. In total, 120 measurements were taken.

Interviewers said it was helpful to show the Frankfurt plane card to the parent and child so the child knew roughly how they should be standing. Interviewers also reported finding it useful to talk through the process to the parent and child so they both understood the reasons for adjusting the child's head and for stretching the child.

Interviewers did not have any problems setting up the stadiometer or finding a suitable surface on which to take the measurement, but one or two interviewers did stress that they nearly always carried out the height measurement up against a door, due to the proliferation of skirting boards in respondent's houses. It was suggested that this is emphasised at the briefings.

Recommendations

- Encourage interviewers to talk through the reasons for adjusting the child's head and for stretching the child to ensure both parent and child understand and feel comfortable with the process.
- Emphasise the suggestion that a door will probably be the most suitable place to carry out the measurement in most households.

Table 11: Height measurements

Height in centimetres	N	Valid %
129.0 - 135.9	9	7.5%
136.0 - 140.9	15	12.5%
141.0 - 145.9	27	22.5%
146.0 - 150.9	34	28.3%
151.0 - 155.9	27	22.5%
156.0 - 160.9	6	5%
161.0 - 165.9	2	1.7%
TOTAL	120	100%

The CAPI automatically brings up a soft check if the height is below 125cm or above 165cm. The CAPI automatically brings up a hard check if the height is below 110cm or above 180cm. No problems were encountered with these check ranges.

3.6.3 Weight and body fat percentage measurements

Interviewers again had no problems taking the weight and body fat measurements.

In relation to weight measurement, consent was obtained from 116 parents and 114 children. A successful measurement was recorded in 113 cases. On the body fat percentage measurement, 116 parents and 113 children consented. Levels of refusal were higher for the body fat measurement after consent was given, with eight children refusing just prior to the measurement being taken. These children refused for reasons ranging from a perception of being too fat or too thin, to a reluctance for friends or siblings to know their measurements. One interviewer felt that the word “fat” in “body fat measurement” had negative connotations for a few of the children and, in some cases, may have contributed to a refusal. To try and reassure children who have these concerns, it will need to be emphasised at the briefing that interviewers can tell children that their measurements will not be read out and that they do not need to know them if they do not want to.

Interviewers felt they did not have enough information about what the body fat percentage measurement was needed for. More detailed information in the interviewer instructions was recommended for the main stage.

Interviewers did not report any problems using the scales, although one interviewer said there was no serial number on her set and another said that her scales didn’t beep. All equipment will need to be checked prior to the main stage to ensure all scales are correctly labelled with a serial number.

Recommendations

- Emphasise at the briefing the importance of interviewers telling children that their measurements will not be read out and will not be written down if they do not want them to be. This may help encourage children who have concerns about their body weight to still take part.

- Include in the interviewer instructions more detailed information about what the body fat percentage measurement is, and what it is needed for.
- Check all scales have a serial number and beep correctly.

Table 12: Weight measurements

Weight in kilograms	N	Valid %
25.0 – 29.9	10	8.8%
30.0 – 34.9	17	15.0%
35.0 – 39.9	33	29.2%
40.0 – 44.9	12	10.6%
45.0 – 49.9	21	18.6%
50.0 – 54.9	11	9.7%
55.0 – 59.9	3	2.7%
60.0 – 64.9	4	3.5%
65.0 – 65.9	2	1.8%
TOTAL	113	100%

The CAPI automatically brings up a soft check if the weight is below 23kg or above 62kg. The CAPI automatically brings up a strong check if the weight is below 15kg or above 115kg. No problems were encountered with these check ranges.

Table 13: Body fat measurements

Body fat in %	N	Valid %
0.5 – 9.9	1	1.0%
10.0 – 14.9	18	17.1%
15.0 – 19.9	20	19.0%
20.0 – 24.9	27	25.7%
25.0 – 29.9	17	16.2%
30.0 – 34.9	14	13.3%
35.0 – 39.9	8	7.6%
TOTAL	105	100%

The CAPI automatically brings up a soft check if the body fat percentage is below 10% or above 45%. No problems were encountered with these check ranges.

3.7 Cognitive Observations Findings

Cognitive Observations were recorded for every visit where the cognitive assessments were carried out. Interviewers did not report any problems completing this section in CAPI. There was a suggestion that a question is included to allow interviewers to record whether or not the assessments were carried out sitting at a table, or with the laptop on the child's knee (or elsewhere), as it was felt that this could potentially affect the child's performance.

Recommendations

- Include a question in the script to allow interviewers to record whether or not the assessments were completed at a table, or elsewhere.

3.8 Teachers' Survey

3.8.1 Parent and child co-operation with the teacher survey

Most parents and children were happy to agree to the child's class teacher being contacted for the teacher survey: consent was provided by a parent and child in 105 out of 115 households (91.3%). Interviewers reported that the teacher survey consent process was very straightforward and they experienced no challenges to gaining informed consent. In general, interviewers did not have to persuade or reassure in order to gain consent.

Of the 10 households that did not consent, in eight cases the parents withheld consent and in two cases the parents gave consent but the child refused. There were no identifiable patterns among those who did not consent. One interviewer said the reason for the child's refusal in one interview was because they simply 'didn't want to'.

As the consent process is working well, we have no recommendations to make here.

3.8.2 Provision of information by parent and/or child for the teacher survey

Data from CAPI shows that there were:

- Three cases where the teacher's name was not given at all;
- 21 responses which did not have the teacher's first name (not including cases where only an initial was given);
- Two responses which did not have the teacher's surname;
- Nine responses which were entered incorrectly at the prompt for 'Teacher's title', with the teacher's name being entered instead (usually the name was then given again at the correct prompt).

Interviewer feedback stated that it was not always straightforward to collect the teacher's contact details. There were cases where it was not obvious to the parent which teacher's details to provide, and not all interviewers were absolutely sure about what advice to give in this situation. For example, one child's class teacher had left the school, one parent said their child had two 'equal' form tutors, another child had had a supply teacher during the Summer 2011 term, and one parent felt that a different teacher (other than their child's main class teacher) knew their child best and wanted to provide those details. We suggest that we should review the interviewer instructions for this aspect and add more detail.

When interviewers were probed about the mistakes entering the teacher's name in the title field on CAPI, interviewers explained that they were all used to entering this sort of information all together on one screen. It was felt that this error could be resolved by having

one field to enter the teacher's title, forename and surname, instead of the current three separate fields. However, just having one field to record details could lead to more work on sample cleaning for mail-merged documents, as it might not always be appropriate to use all the details recorded by the interviewer – for example, if a teacher's middle name has been recorded. In addition, the number of mistakes made during the DR was relatively small and we feel that it will be even less during the Main Stage as interviewers become more familiar with the survey. We suggest that instead the process for entering teacher details on CAPI is amended slightly, so that a drop down list of titles (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Miss) appears at the 'Teacher's title' field, making this information easier to complete for the interviewer and also to indicate that names will have to follow in separate fields. We will also review the interviewer instructions and briefing information to ensure that interviewers are as clear as possible about the process.

In line with the CAPI data above, interviewers reported that sometimes the class teacher's first name was not known by parents or children. In these cases, the interviewer has to state within the first name field in CAPI that no name is known, as the open field requires a response before the interviewer can move to the next question. Dress rehearsal data showed that interviewers used several different terms to indicate a name was not known, such as "Null", "Don't know" and "DK". It would be preferable to have more consistency in these responses to help reduce the sample cleaning process, so we recommend that interviewers are instructed to use the term "Null" when a teacher's name is not known. We also recommend changing the interviewer instruction at the teacher name fields within CAPI to reflect this.

Even when a teacher's name is known, different spellings of the same name can be recorded (e.g. Johnson, Jonson), because the space to enter a teacher's name is an open field. For the Pilot and the dress rehearsal, we went through the sample to clean it manually and identify teachers which were potentially the same but had different spellings of their name entered, and we will ensure that enough time is allocated during the Main Stage to continue doing this.

Recommendations:

- Review the interviewer instructions and briefing information about collecting class teacher details from parents to ensure they are as clear and unambiguous as possible in terms of which teacher is most appropriate. Consider including some more examples to illustrate possible scenarios and what to do if they occur;
- Review the interviewer instructions and briefing information to ensure details about how to record teacher's details on CAPI is made as clear as possible;
- Amend the CAPI script to include a drop down list for teacher title, to come just before the fields for forename and surname;
- Amend the CAPI instruction about what to do when a teacher's name is not known, i.e. record a response of "Null";
- Brief interviewers to ask parents to prepare for this element by having a letter or other documentation from their child's school available during the household visit, so that accurate information can be referenced.

3.8.3 Information given about the Teacher Survey within in-home materials

Interviewers said that they were not asked for any additional information on the Teacher Survey from parents or children. As there was no need for any clarification on the Teacher Survey, this led interviewers to believe the detail on this aspect in the information leaflet for parents and child leaflet is sufficient.

If consent was given for the Teacher Survey, interviewers were asked to leave a letter and stamped envelope with the parent to be posted to the study child's class teacher giving them advance notice about the teacher survey. In practice, there were differences in the approach to this by interviewers during the dress rehearsal. Some interviewers followed the instructions exactly and left a stamped envelope with the household to post the letter once it had been completed. Interviewers commented that some parents were going to take the letter and give it to the teacher in person (or via a younger sibling still at the school). Alternatively, other interviewers said that the parent completed the letter to the teacher whilst they were in the household and interviewers were either asked to post it on behalf of the family, or took responsibility for posting it to the school in the stamped envelope themselves. Some interviewers commented that they felt more confident that the teacher would receive the letter if they posted it, rather than leaving it to the household. However, for the Main Stage, the study children will not be at a different school from the teacher we want to participate, so there is no need to continue to provide a stamped envelope during the main survey. Therefore, no further discussion is necessary about the approach for this aspect, as the household will have to take responsibility for giving this to the teacher.

Apart from minor amendments to remove references to the dress rehearsal pilot, we have no recommendations to make about the materials for households and those used by in-home interviewers for the Main Stage, as all are working well.

3.9 Collecting child contact details

3.9.1 Introduction

The dress rehearsal tested the feasibility of collecting child contact details during the household visit, for the purpose of future engagement with the child. Contact details and relevant consents were captured in the 'child elements' consent form and child consent form.

3.9.2 Outcomes

Contact details were obtained for 76 of the 127 children in productive households (60%)

- Phone numbers were obtained for 40 cases (c.32%);
- Email addresses were obtained for 51 cases (c.40%).

Interviewers reported finding this element the most controversial part of the study pilot. Although many parents were happy to provide contact details for their child or at least ask their child if they were happy to provide them, a significant number of respondents did not feel that it was appropriate to be asking children of this age to give their contact details. Many interviewers and respondents felt that at age eleven, contact with the child should still be done via the parents. It was felt that collection of child contact details for direct communication with the child would be more appropriate at the next study sweep when the children are older.

Some parents also had concerns about confidentiality. In these cases parents often gave their own number as a point of contact, rather than their child's.

Children seemed either keen to provide their details or nonchalant about it. However, many children had to ask their parent what number they should give or simply did not know their own number.

Interviewers felt that the explanation provided in the consent form and leaflet that it would be used to 'stay in touch' did not explain the purpose of gaining these details adequately

enough. They felt that it would be better to say that it would be used to keep them 'updated'. Additionally, interviewers would have liked to know the specifics of when and what would be sent to the child as this may have reassured parents and children when providing this information.

Some interviewers also found the approach whereby the parent writes down the child details on the parent 'child elements' consent form and then the child refuses uncomfortable. Although it states on the consent form that the details would not be used if the child refuses there was concern that the fact that this has already been written down could pose a problem among some respondents.

3.9.3 Process of contact information collection and data accuracy

Given that there was some uncertainty about whether the parent or child would be able to provide details most accurately, an attempt was made to obtain the child's contact details from both children and parents.

In the majority of cases, parents and children gave identical contact details: this applied to 80% of email addresses (40/50 cases) and 67% of telephone numbers (27/40 cases).

However, there were small numbers of cases where the parent did not provide details but the child did (3 email addresses and 2 phone numbers), and where the child did not provide details but the parent did (1 email address and 5 phone numbers). There were also six cases where email addresses were either different (3) or inaccurate because they had part of the email address missing (3) and six cases where phone numbers were either different (3) or inaccurate with the wrong number of digits (3). In some cases it appeared that parents gave their own phone number.

Based on the above, it appears that asking both parents and children is likely to result in the most comprehensive data, but there are inaccuracies and mismatched data that would need to be addressed.

Recommendations:

- At this age it may be more appropriate to stay in touch with the child via the parent (by post to the child but contained within the parent letter as with the advance mailing may be the best way of doing so as it still allows the child to feel grown up). Therefore a suggestion would be to remove the phone number and email address from the consent forms and reference in the leaflets. The child could consent to be contacted via post instead.
- If it is decided that contact details are to remain, review how details are captured on the parent 'child elements' form so that parents do not provide the details and then the child refuses.
- If contact details are to remain, the most comprehensive data would be obtained by asking both parents and children for the child's contact information.

3.10 Making contact and household engagement

This section discusses key aspects of the fieldwork process relating to engagement with respondents, and associated respondent communication materials, including:

- Advance mailing, letters and leaflets
- Making contact
- Mode of contact

- Approaches to securing contact
- Securing household co-operation
- Household co-operation generally
- Addressing refusals
- Making appointments
- Consent
-

The tracing of movers, and also fieldwork administration materials such as contact sheets and sample information sheets are discussed later in sections 3.13 and 3.17 respectively.

3.10.1 Advance mailing, letters and leaflets

Advance mailing process

Interviewers were happy with the general approach of posting all of the leaflets prior to setting up appointments and were also happy with the way in which the advance mailing was batched and fulfilled.

Some of the interviewers reported that it took a fairly substantial amount of time to ensure that all information contained within the advance mailing was correct; however they also acknowledged the importance of ensuring that the mailing was accurate and contained interviewer contact details prior to sending.

The majority of interviewers did not receive any proactive contact from respondents as a result of writing their contact details on the advance mailing; just a couple of respondents got in touch with the interviewer directly. However, interviewers felt that there was no harm, and only benefit in adding this information to the leaflets. Some did find that it was a time intensive process to fill in all their contact details on the letters and one suggestion was for pre-printed stickers with interviewers contact details to be provided in order to alleviate some of the administration time.

It was established at the debrief that not all interviewers had been aware that they needed to write their contact details on the advance letter to the child as well as the advance parent letter. As a result some interviewers' details were left blank on the child letter.

One female interviewer suggested that "lady" would be a preferable term to "woman" in describing who will be visiting and we agree that this seems a more child-friendly term.

A number of interviewers found that they had insufficient spare copies of letters and leaflets to use in the household and to leave with respondents.

Recommendations:

- Continue with the approach of encouraging interviewers to hand write their contact details on to the advance letter and child letter. Whilst interviewers mentioned the option of pre-printed stickers, this would have cost implications and on the whole interviewers seemed happy to write their details in manually. Furthermore we feel that handwritten details will provide a more personal touch which may help with engagement.
- The interviewer instructions and briefings should stress more explicitly that it is necessary to write interviewer details on both the child and parent letter.
- Consider further whether the term "lady" or "woman" is most appropriate for when adding information to describe the interviewer who will be attending the interview.

- Ensure spare copies of letters and leaflets are available to give or to show respondents in the household in cases where these have been mislaid, or respondents do not recall receiving them.

3.10.2 Content and design of advance letters and parent/child leaflets

In general, interviewers were happy with the content and design of the advance letters and information leaflets. They felt that they were successful in engaging the household and useful in explaining exactly what the study involves; it was felt that they provide enough information to encourage participation and to gain fully informed consent.

Parents and children also seemed to like the leaflets, although it was acknowledged that not all parents had read them in advance.

Children who were asked about the design of the leaflets said that they liked the colours and images and found the layout of the different survey elements easy to follow.

Interviewers felt that having official looking documentation was essential in encouraging and ensuring participation. However, some interviewers felt that some respondents may find the scale of information contained in the advance mailing a little intimidating, for example, those with literacy problems, who are vulnerable or facing challenging home circumstances. They questioned whether some people may be put off by the sheer volume of text and the scale of study requirements and worry about their ability to meet requirements, and be put off from participating due to this.

One interviewer fed back that the leaflets were hard to understand for those who did not speak English as a first language.

During discussions around child engagement, interviewers highlighted a couple of key communication messages important for engaging the child. The notion of 'being special' seemed to appeal to children of this age, as did the idea that by taking part they would be representing children of their age either in the country or in the local area. Interviewers also highlighted the importance of reassuring children that the survey was not a test.

The interviewer in Wales highlighted that having the advance letter on two pages was slightly burdensome and they would have found the materials easier to manage if the text of the English and Welsh version letters each fit on one page.

Some interviewers felt that the information included in the advance leaflet to explain what child contact details would be used for, if provided, was insufficient to give parents a sufficient understanding of this potential element. For example it was highlighted that 'we would like to stay in touch' may be too vague to explain the purpose to which contact details would be put.

Additionally, it was highlighted by one respondent in the briefing that the image of the father and son on the 'child elements' leaflets directly under the section on child completion was a bit misleading; they felt it might be misinterpreted that the child would be given help to complete the booklet which is not the case.

Recommendations:

- Translation of the advance letter and parent leaflets into multiple languages, as already agreed, will help to ensure that challenges relating to language interpretation for non-English speakers are addressed.

- To help encourage participation, make more emphasis of the key selling point that the child is “special” by interviewers and/or in the child letter and/or leaflet.
- Amend the advance letter to parents so that it fits on one page (even with versioning). This will also reduce print costs.
- If child contact details are still to be captured, provide more information to both respondents and interviewers with regards to what they will be used for and when.
- Review the image of the father and son on the ‘child elements’ leaflet to ensure it does not give the impression that the child is being assisted with the questionnaire.
- Consider further if tailored approaches to materials provision would be helpful for more vulnerable/less literate respondents. This type of tailoring would be most easily implemented at the reissue stage based on feedback from first issue interviewers. However, the damage of sending materials that intimidate the respondents may have already been done. It may be worth considering shorter summary documentation that interviewers could present on first contact with these types of households. However this would have cost implications and timings for developing this may be unrealistically tight.

3.10.3 Making contact

Mode of contact

For each sample case, interviewers were instructed on the Sample Information Sheet with regards to which mode of contact they should use when making first contact: either face to face or by telephone.

Sample cases identified as needing first contact by telephone had taken part in MCS4, and during recent panel maintenance activities had been confirmed as having a valid phone number and as still living at the existing address held for them. It was expected that the majority of MCS4 participants would be keen to take part in MCS5 and would need little persuasion. For these cases, interviewers were only required to make contact face to face if they were unable to make contact by telephone or if the family was not eligible for phone contact.

It was expected that the remainder of the longitudinal sample (mainly those who had not been interviewed at MCS4) might be potentially harder to engage. For these sample cases, along with all “new” sample cases, interviewers were instructed to make first contact face to face.

Analysis of data from electronic progress recording found that at 68% of addresses, the mode of first contact recorded for the first visit matched the mode specified in the sample information sheet, but that in 32% of cases it did not. Specifically

- 13 cases were specified as “in home” but phone was recorded for first contact
- 64 cases were specified as “phone” but in home was recorded for first contact

Based on discussions at the interview debrief, the mismatch seemed to be partly caused by inaccurate recording, and partly caused by interviewers making first contact via a different approach to that which had been specified.

Feedback from interviewers on the prescribed targeting of different modes of contact was mixed. Many were comfortable with using both approaches as indicated, and felt they were appropriate and effective modes for the sample cases allocated for them. However, a number of interviewers felt restricted by having to make first contact by telephone for some sample cases, and did not feel that they were able to engage as well as they would have been able to if they had made a personal visit. It was felt by a couple of the interviewers that

making appointments via telephone enables respondents to back out more easily as it is harder to persuade people when they are unable to see you face to face. In some cases interviewers felt that they would have been able to convert the refusal if they were able to speak to the respondent face to face. Although interviewers were aware that previous feedback highlighted that respondents who are engaged with the study already would prefer to be contacted by telephone, some interviewers felt it would be a good idea to ask respondents at the end of the interview whether they would rather be contacted by phone or face to face next time.

One issue raised in relation to appointment making by telephone was the areas in which interviewers were working and the need for regional flexibility. For example, one Scottish interviewer felt that, due to his accent, making contact by telephone to households in Belfast was not the best way to engage families; he felt that respondents may have been more engaged if the interviewer had a more relevant regional accent. In these types of situations there may be some benefit in allowing the flexibility of a face to face visit.

It was also clear from interviewer feedback that interviewers have different levels of comfort and effectiveness in respondent engagement for different modes of contact: some perform better face to face, whilst some are more effective on the telephone.

A review of sample outcomes for longitudinal sample cases split by the mode of first contact that was specified identifies that response rates for “telephone cases” were higher than those for “face to face” cases (65% compared with 41%). This provides some reassurance that despite interviewer misgivings, the telephone mode is not resulting in unexpectedly high levels of refusals. However, it may be the case that some telephone refusals could have been avoided by a face to face visit.

Table 14: Longitudinal Household level outcome data, by prescribed mode of contact

	Face to face*		Telephone*		Total Longitudinal Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Total sample issued	41	100%	91	100%	132	100%
Total productive households (full and partially)	17	41%	59	65%	76	58%
Fully productive households	14	34%	47	52%	61	46%
Partially productive households	3	7%	12	13%	15	11%
Total unproductive	25	59%	32	35%	57	43%
Eligible unproductive	17	41%	29	32%	45	34%
Non-contact	5	12%	12	15%	17	13%
Office refusal	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%
Broken appt, no re-contact	1	2%	4	4%	5	4%
Refusal	9	22%	8	9%	17	13%
Ill at home during fieldwork period	1	2%	1	1%	2	1%
Away / in hospital during fieldwork	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%

period						
Language difficulties	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other reason	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
Ineligible	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Emigrated / moved overseas	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Uncertain eligibility - untraced movers/ other	8	20%	3	3%	11	8%
Movers - with Ipsos/ CLS for tracing	5	12%	3	3%	8	6%
Movers returned by CLS untraced/Other unknown eligibility	3	7%	0	0%	3	2%
Interviewer response rate**	50%		67%		63%	
Survey response rate***	41%		65%		58%	

* These figures are based on longitudinal sample only.

** Interviewer response rate = productive/ (productive + unproductive)

*** Survey response rate = productive / (productive + unproductive + uncertain eligibility)

Recommendations:

- The pilot findings raise the important issue of whether interviewer characteristics as well as just respondent characteristics should be considered in determining mode of first contact.
- In general, given that an evidence based approach to allocate respondents to telephone vs face to face contact is being taken, we do not recommend that many changes are made in light of interviewer feedback (interviewer feedback is as likely to reflect individual preference as it is evidence of what is most effective).
- However, it is clear that current briefing approaches have not necessarily been sufficient to give all interviewers full confidence in the efficacy of telephone vs face to face contact. To help with this, we propose supplementing the briefing process with interactive sessions that enable interviewers to practice effective telephone engagement methods.
- We also recommend giving stronger emphasis to briefing interviewers on how to avoid soft refusals on the telephone.
- However, we also suggest that regional accents are considered in the allocation of sample between interviewers. Furthermore, we propose to brief field managers to alert head office if they have concerns about the mode of contact in individual cases. These would be discussed on a case by case basis, and in consultation with CLS.
- We also propose that fieldwork monitoring exception reporting incorporates checks to identify the extent to which interviewers are making contact using the correct mode and also sample outcomes according to mode of first contact, to identify any issues with effectiveness in a particular mode. This could trigger early discussions with the interviewer, for example, during early accompaniments.
- Another option we could consider is to link this data to sample information held about household type and use this to support review of approaches for different types of household during fieldwork. However, further consideration would be needed with regards to whether this would be likely to generate insights that could be acted on in an effective way in practice (i.e. it is not clear the extent to which changes of approach during fieldwork for specific types of household would be realistic or appropriate).

- We have considered whether it could be helpful to ask respondents at the end of the MCS5 visit about their preferred mode of next contact. However, their preferred mode might not be most effective for securing their co-operation; asking them about this could set inappropriate expectations about mode of contact at MCS6. As such we do not recommend this.

3.10.4 Effectiveness in making contact

As shown in section 3.10.3 above, there were just 12% of sample cases known to be eligible where contact with the household was not successfully made (15% among longitudinal sample and 9% among the new sample). This is a good outcome given the short fieldwork period. Within longitudinal sample cases, success in making contact was identical for both the sample indicated for telephone contact and indicated for face to face contact (15% non-contacts in each case).

Interviewers felt that the most productive time to make contact was after children had finished school in the case of face to face contact, or early evening for telephone contact.

There was consensus among interviewers that optimum use of the telephone mode depended on taking a flexible approach to call times, and varying the days and times that they made calls to try and reach people when they are in.

Some interviewers were unaware of the minimum number of calls they had to make by telephone. Many felt that eight calls were unnecessary or unproductive and some reported changing to a face to face approach if they had not been able to make contact by telephone after between three and six phone calls. For example, some found that specific contact numbers went straight to answer phone every time they called. In these cases they felt that provided they had called on different days and times, it was unnecessary to call more than five times to conclude that a face to face visit would be required.

Recommendations:

- Include recommendations about the best times to call in the interviewer instructions (although stress the importance of tailoring to individual households)
- Review the number of phone calls interviewers are expected to make by telephone before they are allowed to make a personal visit and ensure that interviewers are briefed on this fully. We recommend the minimum number of calls should be specified as five.

3.10.5 Securing household co-operation

Household level engagement (first contact)

Interviewers reported that the majority of respondents were engaged with the study. Most respondents seemed reassured by the advance mailing, and this was especially helpful for new sample cases. In addition, interviewers found that for longitudinal households, previous knowledge and engagement with the study engagement meant that in many cases, less persuasion was required to achieve co-operation. This is reflected in the sample outcomes: as shown in section 3.1 at longitudinal sample households there was just 16% refusals to interviewers, compared with 29% at new sample households.

However, debrief feedback findings also highlighted how cohort families seemed to be relatively polarised between those who are very sure that they wanted to be part of MCS5 right away (for these families interviewers struggled to get them to even read the materials

because they were happy to take part without doing is) and those who immediately didn't want to take part. The latter group included respondents who said they had been put off by their experience of previous survey waves (this feedback was given by around one in ten families who refused). There is a sense that views on whether or not to take part are already relatively fixed based on previous knowledge and experience of the study. This means interviewers do not need to work as hard as on cross-sectional studies to engage families who are already positive about the study, but also means that it is probably harder than on cross-sectional studies to convert active refusals in some cases. Further advice to interviewers on this may be helpful.

Interviewers felt that a key selling point when securing co-operation was the value of the study, and felt that it would be helpful for them to be given more information to help them communicate about this. One suggestion was to provide interviewers with a sheet of facts about how MCS data had previously been used, which could be used as a selling point when engaging and ensuring cooperation at a household level. However, some interviewers raised concerns that in doing so it would increase the amount of materials interviewers needed to carry/implement.

When trying to engage families at a household and individual level, interviewers found that an effective engagement approach was to communicate that being a participant in the study made them special. Another hook to parents was the idea that the study was offering an opportunity to give the child new/interesting experiences, the opportunity to make a contribution to society, and to feel part of something special themselves. It was felt that more emphasis could be made of these benefits of participation in the advance mailing and when engaging households.

Recommendations

- Consider providing interviewers with a bullet list of facts on a laminated card that can be used on the doorstep to communicate about the value of the study. This list would need to outline the key selling points which are written in a way that is easy to understand for both respondents and interviewers.
- Highlight the importance to interviewers at briefings and in instructions of making families feel they and their child have a unique chance to be part of something "special" and use this as a key way to engage them in the study.
- Provide interviewers with more guidance on how to ensure cooperation with respondents who immediately say they don't want to participate in the study (discussed further below). If time permits, we recommend developing the engagement section of the briefing to include breakout discussion groups to help interviewers generate ideas about how to engage these groups.
- We also recommend adding a section to the interviewer instructions on how to tackle and convert specific types of refusal response.

Addressing refusals

Types and reasons for refusal

As shown in Table 15 below, across the sample as a whole, the 53 "refusal" cases were made up of 12 refusals via phone calls to the office, 38 refusals to the interviewer on the doorstep and 3 that refused because they were ill at home or away during fieldwork. There were also 12 cases where appointments were broken (but which might have been possible to rearrange had the fieldwork period been longer).

The reasons for refusal recorded by interviewers are shown in the table below (note that all percentages are given as a proportion of known eligible unproductive cases).

Table 15: Eligible unproductive & reasons for refusals

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Eligible unproductive	45	100%	50	100%	95	100%
Non-contact	17	38%	8	16%	25	30%
Language difficulties	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Other reason	1	2%	3	6%	4	4%
Broken appt, no re-contact	5	11%	7	14%	12	13%
Office refusal	2	4%	10	16%	12	13%
Ill at home during fieldwork	2	4%	0	0%	2	2%
Away / in hospital during fieldwork period	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Refusal to interviewer	17	38%	21	42%	38	40%
Reason for refusal:						
Not Interested In General	8	18%	11	22%	19	20%
Child Does Not Want To Take Part	4	9%	9	18%	13	14%
Too Busy	8	18%	5	10%	13	14%
Can't Be Bothered	1	2%	6	12%	7	7%
Previous Bad Experience - Interview Took Too Long Last Time*	3	7%	2	4%	5	5%
Bad Time For Personal Reasons	3	7%	1	2%	4	4%
Previous Bad Experience - Asked Too Many Personal Questions Last Time*	2	4%	1	2%	3	3%
Worried About Child's Participation	0	0%	3	6%	3	3%
Worried About Confidentiality	0	0%	3	6%		3%
Survey Is A Waste Of Time	0	0%	2	4%	2	2%
Worried About Misuse Of Information	0	0%	2	4%	2	2%
Hostile Or Threatening Behaviour Including Hanging Up Or Slamming Door	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%

	Longitudinal Sample		New Sample		Total Sample	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
No Reason Given	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
There are too many surveys	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Previous Bad Experience - Other*	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
Other Specify	5	11%	2	4%	7	7%

*Although these reasons seem illogical for new sample, data have been checked and the figures reflect what was recorded as what the family said.

At the debrief interviewers also fed back on key reasons for refusal that might be challenging to address:

- Lack of time (genuine lack of time rather than lack of sufficient interest to dedicate time)
- 'Too busy' (cases where it is hard to establish if this is really the case)
- The study is regarded as too intrusive or burdensome based on experience from the previous sweep
- Not viewed as a high enough priority (particularly if life is busy/chaotic)
- Respondent incapable or the child has had too much assessment in the recent past (particularly the case with autistic children)
- Adamant 'No' with no reason given (often difficult to establish reason with a hard refusal)
- Difficult domestic/family circumstances (but if had longer f/w period could have gone back at a later date)
- Parent refusal on behalf of child (even if child willing)
- Child reluctance driving household refusal
- Silent refusals (i.e. no reasons given, or respondents not answering the door)
- A dominant household member refusing on other household members behalf

It is notable that around one in ten refusals from cohort families was due to a reported negative experience of the study at the last wave (i.e. when they last participated). Respondents reported being unhappy with the length of the time in the household last time and in one case in Scotland there also appeared to be some issues with the interviewer. It is clear from this that the perceived "cost" to their household of participating again outweighs perceptions of benefits for a significant minority of families.

In addition to the reasons for refusals mentioned above some interviewers suspected that some respondents may have felt a bit intimidated by the study. This was something that was raised when discussing the letters and leaflets as it was felt that these looked very official and contained a lot of information that gave a sense of scale and complexity of the study which they suspected may discourage some people from participating. Interviewers also described encountering refusals from chaotic households and households in chaotic neighbourhoods (one interviewer referred to households likely to be in contact with social services). They suspected that these types of households may perceive the study as too much for them to take on or of relatively low priority, given the other issues they face in their daily lives.

Non-response literature emphasises how co-operation depends on ensuring perceptions of benefits outweigh perceptions of costs of participating. In this context we would suggest that the scale and complexity of the study may also be off-putting for those who are simply not interested by the benefits offered by the study. Furthermore, given the focus on informed consent, the communication materials are very detailed and we would suggest that this does not help to minimise perception of burden and “cost”.

In some cases, interviewers felt that it was important to acknowledge that due to time constraints or difficult family circumstances some families may not be able to help at that specific time. In these cases it was vital that interviewers did not push too hard in order to ensure that they are not put off from taking part in future years.

Recommendations

- As mentioned above, develop top tips in interviewer instructions for how to deal with the different types of, and reasons for, refusals.
- As part of this, provide interviewers with more guidance on how to convert refusals from respondents who were dissatisfied with their experience in the study at a previous sweep.
- In the case mentioned above, where the MCS5 interviewer in Scotland discovered that a few respondents were unhappy with the MCS4 interviewer, it may also be worth trying to identify the number of respondents interviewed by this interviewer at MCS4 in order to identify whether there is a substantial number of main stage cases which could be impacted by this issue.
- We recommend that a focus is given on how to minimise perceptions of costs when briefing interviewers about how to convert refusals.
- For households where the study feels too much for them to take on, we suggest considering the option of offering a reduced survey option at the reissue stage. For example, there are likely to be households who have not taken part in recent sweeps and who refuse MCS5 at first issue, and whom it is probably realistic to assume are not going to be persuaded to take part in the whole study. For this group, we could instruct interviewers to ask for help with just one or two study elements to start with, to help ensure a minimum level of participation among the maximum number of sample cases possible. There is likely to be little risk that we lose anything by trying to engage them through this approach, if they are a group that are highly likely to have refused the full study in any case.

3.10.6 Making appointments

Interviewers reported finding it fairly easy to contact and make appointments with families. There was some feedback that families often did not want interviewers there at the weekend. Interviewers highlighted the importance of being flexible and arranging appointments around the family circumstances and stressed that interviewers should be made aware of this from the outset.

One barrier faced by interviewers when making appointments was when they were presented with a difficult household situation such as illness in the family, a change in family circumstance, etc. In these circumstances interviewers had to ensure that they left enough time before returning to the household and felt it was important to judge this effectively to maximise chances of securing participation at a later date. One interviewer gave an example of a household where a family member had been taken seriously ill on that day but the family still participated a few weeks later. This indicates that in some cases families will participate despite difficult family circumstances if enough time is given between visits.

Recommendations

- Brief interviewers on how to deal sensitively with difficult household circumstances and ensure that they leave enough time between visits to ensure that respondents remain engaged in the long term.

3.10.7 Consent

Consent forms

Feedback from interviewers about the consent process was positive and the vast majority of the interviewers found the process easy to administer. Interviewers who had worked on both the pilot and dress rehearsal reported that the consent process worked much more effectively on paper than it had done when tested in CAPI during the first pilot. Interviewers also found the remaining CAPI reminders and checks that consent had been gained to be helpful.

Interviewers reported finding all consent forms user friendly and easy to administer and were happy with both the content and layout. They felt that the content was effective in stressing the importance of the survey and felt that the design helped to reinforce the professionalism of the study. Being able to give duplicate copies of parent forms to respondents also helped with this.

Interviewers also fed back that in general respondents seemed happy with the process and there were no issues gaining fully informed consent from either parents or children.

Parent/partner consent

Interviewers reported that the majority of “cohort” respondents (both parents and partners) did not want to refer to the advance leaflets when filling out the consent forms because they felt informed enough about the study already without reading them. As a result, a suggestion was made that the consent forms for both the main respondent and partner includes something that the interviewer can tick to say that they have encouraged the respondent to read the leaflet but they have declined to do so.

Interviewers also reported that given the large number of households who had discarded the leaflet without reading it, they did not have enough spare copies to ensure that all households were left with a copy. They then found it problematic to sign the consent form which included confirming that they had ensured that the household was left with a reference copy.

Interviewers reported that some respondents (parents and partners) ticked rather than initialed boxes when giving consent.

A number of interviewers gained consent from the person they believed to be the eligible main respondent prior to administering the household grid. Some interviewers did so as they felt that they should not start working on the CAPI interview until they had consent to do so, especially given that some of the questions in the household grid are of a personal nature (for example, whether or not parents are birth parents).

Recommendations:

- Review whether it would be worthwhile amending the interviewer declaration on the consent forms to allow for the scenario where the interviewer has encouraged the

respondent to read the leaflet but they have declined to do so and/or the scenario where copies have not been left with the household.

- Consider whether initials rather than ticks are essential in addition to signatures (some interviewers worried that this felt like duplication and reported that some parents simply ticked in any case).
- Consider whether there would be benefit in encouraging interviewers to administer main respondent consent prior to the household grid. This would mean that if the household grid identifies someone else as the main respondent, this would need to be explained and further consent obtained from that person. However, in practice, in the majority of households the main parent will be the same as they were at MCS4 and this may not be a major problem. Either way, the reasons for the prescribed order of processes should be more clearly explained.

Consent from child

Interviewers reported finding that the process of gaining consent from children worked effectively. It was felt that the consent process ensured that nothing was unexpected and that children were fully informed as to what the process would involve.

There was variation in how interviewers approached gaining consent from the child. Some interviewers achieved full consent upfront from the child to do all elements while others obtained consent for each element just shortly prior to starting each one. Furthermore it is unclear whether all interviewers were gaining the overall consent from the child at the start which is what they should have done (i.e. completing consent form Section A), although it was apparent during executive accompaniments that not all interviewers were reading this section upfront.

Almost all interviewers ensured that child consent was only achieved after written parental consent had been given to approach the child. However, one interviewer reported administering the child consent with all household members together, so that all household members heard the same information simultaneously. They sought only verbal consent from the parent beforehand and then obtained parents fully written consent afterwards. This interviewer suggested that allowing interviewers the flexibility to communicate with both parent and child about child elements simultaneously in one go could save time in the household and support a sense of family participation and involvement. However, we have considered this and do not recommend allowing interviewers this option. In order to take this approach it would be necessary to build in at the very least an additional mechanism to check with parents whether they would be happy for this approach. There is also a risk that parents might have concerns that they want to raise that would be better dealt with prior to speaking to the child. Offering this option could create confusion and a lack of clarity around procedures. We therefore feel that it would not be sensible to present this option to interviewers.

Some interviewers reported that they did not use the child leaflet in conjunction with the child consent form because they felt that reading the form word for word provided all the information required. However, we feel that the leaflet is useful in providing advance information and as a child-friendly visual document that can be drawn upon where helpful.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that it is made clear in briefings and the instructions that overall consent from the child (Section A) must be completed before the child's consent for individual elements is obtained.

- Emphasise more strongly at the briefings and in the instructions that child consent can only be achieved after parental consent has been achieved. It may also be worth making the instruction “parental consent must be gained prior to asking the child’s consent for any aspect” on the child consent form clearer by using bold text or highlighting it.

3.11 Respondent experience of individual elements

3.11.1 Children

General experience and wellbeing issues

As discussed in section 3.1 Sample Outcomes, there were no substantive engagement issues emerging from the pilot relating to the child elements: participation with the child completion questionnaire and physical measurements was achieved with 94% of children, whilst 92% of children participated in the child assessments.

When asked how the children found participating in the study, interviewers felt that on the whole children seemed to ‘love it’. Although some of the children enjoyed some of the elements less than other elements, feedback provided by interviewers was that on the whole they really enjoyed taking part.

It was noted that children in the longitudinal sample had already bought into the study as a whole so knew what to expect and were happy to help. In some cases the children were so eager to participate that they were waiting at the window for the interviewer to arrive.

Some feedback provided by interviewers was that a few of the children seemed a bit apprehensive to begin with but once everything had been explained to them fully and they had started to take part in each of the elements they really enjoyed them.

As mentioned previously, the idea of the children ‘being special’ seemed to be a key selling point for many of the children and being able to take part in fun activities using a touch screen was also appealing. Children also particularly liked completing the question booklet because it was about their lives and they were able to keep their answers confidential. Interviewers also felt that they enjoyed this element because it enabled them to give their views which they regarded as the most central part of their contribution, more so than the other study elements.

Most children seemed to have a positive experience of the whole study.

A couple of children seemed concerned about their weight when they were asked if they would be willing to have their measurements taken. However, these children declined to participate in this measurement and interviewers judged it sensible to not push children to encourage them further in these cases so no negative impact on the children’s wellbeing resulted.

The verbal similarities cognitive assessment was the only element of the survey that caused actual discomfort or distress for some children who participated. Some children looked quite distressed particularly if they were having difficulties completing the assessment and one child was visibly upset. It was felt that children often found this assessment frustrating and that more needed to be done to ensure that children realised that it wasn’t a test (see section 3.5.3 verbal similarities findings for further discussion of this). Interviewers reported that if a child had lost confidence at this stage of the process it could have a knock on effect on their cooperation and engagement for the remaining study elements, although some interviewers

reported that some of their children picked up again after doing the subsequent assessments.

None of the parents reported to interviewers that their child had got upset between the first and second household visits, which provides reassurance that nothing in the survey was resulting in obvious negative impact on children.

A small number of interviewers had come across households where they suspected that there may be some issues regarding child wellbeing. In most cases, interviewers were confident they knew the procedures to follow and of the need to contact their supervisor to discuss next steps where necessary.

Further information leaflet

All interviewers left the children with a 'further information' leaflet at the end of the visit. Interviewers explained to parents and children what the leaflet was for and interviewers found it a useful way of providing children with contact details should they require them. Interviewers seemed to find this leaflet reassuring as it was felt to address any concerns the child may have after the interviewer has left the household. Feedback from parents was also positive, with some children spontaneously saying that they thought the leaflet was a good idea.

A small number of interviewers reported that they had insufficient copies of this leaflet to leave with all households. We will ensure that this problem does not arise again and that all interviewers have sufficient copies at the main stage. We will do this by reviewing the ratio of leaflets:sample addresses necessary for each interviewer.

Recommendations:

- Highlight to interviewers in the briefings the key selling points of the study for children so that they can use this as a tool when looking to engage them (i.e. the notion of 'being special').
- Given that children seemed to particularly like the self-completion aspect and see it as the most central part of their contribution, ensure that interviewers are aware of this so that it can be used as an engagement tool.
- Ensure that it is made clearer to children in the materials and by interviewers that the assessments are not tests (also see recommendation in section 3.5.3).
- Ensure sufficient copies of further information leaflets are provided.

Feedback on the child gift and younger sibling gift

Feedback on the child gift (Top Trumps) was largely positive. The majority of interviewers said that the children were pleased with them and were happy to receive a gift, but a couple of interviewers fed back that the children did not seem concerned about receiving it. In cases where the children liked them they tended to open them straight away and were eager to play with them. Some interviewers felt that the Olympic theme was particularly relevant.

The debrief highlighted that the majority of interviewers gave the younger sibling gifts (stickers) in any households where there were younger siblings around, and not just in situations where they felt they were necessary to distract younger siblings, and therefore avoid disruption to the study implementation. Feedback from interviewers was that providing stickers to the younger children helped more generally to engage the family as a whole, and helped alleviate distractions. All interviewers reported that the children 'loved them'.

In terms of the number of stickers given out by interviewers, out of the 126 Households 74 had younger siblings (59%) of which 49 households (39%/66%) were given stickers:

- 52 households had 1 younger sibling (of which stickers were given to 32 children – 34 sheets)
- 20 households had 2 younger siblings (of which stickers were given to 32 children – 30 sheets)
- 2 households had 3 younger siblings (of which stickers were given to 3 children – 2 sheets)

Stickers were provided in sheets and in total 66 sticker sheets were given to younger siblings in the household.

During the executive accompaniments, researchers also observed that providing younger siblings with stickers reduced their isolation from the study process. In one case, a younger sibling had been told to play in her room so that she did not distract the cohort child. The sibling was very obliging in this, and being able to give her something to thank her for helping in this way was much appreciated. The stickers were gratefully received by both the parents and the child in this context.

Recommendations

- Continue to provide cohort children with Top Trumps.
- If budget allows, provide stickers to all younger siblings to help engage the family as a whole and ensure cooperation for future sweeps. Giving stickers to all younger siblings would have cost implications so this would need to be reviewed more closely.

3.11.2 Main respondent

General engagement, experience and wellbeing issues

As discussed in section 3.1 Sample Outcomes, there were no substantive engagement issues emerging from the pilot relating to this element: all potential main respondents except for two participated in this element.

Feedback from interviewers was that on the whole main respondents tended to enjoy the survey and were willing and happy to participate in the study. However, a number of respondents reported back to interviewers that the whole process took longer than they had anticipated (particularly the CAPI and CASI) and feedback from interviewers was that some respondents found it quite exhausting.

As discussed earlier in relation to household engagement, interviewers found it harder to engage the new sample than the cohort sample. These families had less understanding and buy-in to the study initially.

Interviewers did not encounter any parents who were upset by any aspect of the CAPI or CASI interviews. However, during executive accompaniments, researchers observed that there was a potential for the very early questions about whether the parents are the child's natural parents to be uncomfortable if parents were not the natural parent. Interviewers also felt that more of the potentially sensitive questions should be on CASI (e.g. the pregnancy question). They also observed some discomfort by respondents when they were asked financial questions, including some cases where partners were unhappy about the questions being asked: this was exacerbated by these questions being asked twice in some cases (i.e. asked of both the main respondent and the partner).

Recommendations:

- Ensure that respondents are aware of how long the process will take and reassure them of interviewer flexibility.
- Provide further clarification to interviewers of how they can explain the necessity of collecting the financial information, and collecting it twice from both parents.

3.11.3 Partner

General engagement, experience and wellbeing issues

Feedback provided by interviewers was that partners who participated also enjoyed taking part in the study and were happy to cooperate. It was felt that this was partly due to the interview being shorter in length in comparison to the main respondent interview. Some partners were particularly engaged from the beginning and needed little persuasion. For example, in a number of cases the partner was already prepared and waiting for the interviewer when they arrived for the first household visit.

However, as highlighted in section 3.1 Sample outcomes earlier, the partner CAPI and CASI was the core study element with the lowest response rate: just 77% of eligible partners participated.

Interviewers reported that the main reason for not being able to obtain partner interviews was due to time constraints (mainly due to work patterns or just a general lack of availability) rather than lack of willingness. In many cases the partner simply did not have the time to be involved in the study. Interviewers felt that flexibility was required most for this respondent type and highlighted the importance of finding a suitable time for the partner to do their interview given that they tend to be busier. However, it was acknowledged that the longer fieldwork period available would make it easier to overcome these issues in the main stage.

Interviewers found that communication materials were effective in explaining why partners' role in the study was important but they did feel it was necessary to explain why their participation was invaluable to the study in order to engage them. In some cases partners felt that the information would already be provided in the main interview which highlights the importance of explaining the purpose of their role in the study. As mentioned in the discussion of CAI findings earlier, some partners who did participate were also reluctant to answer the financial questions (predominantly because it was felt that they duplicated answers given by the main respondent).

Most interviewers felt that the partner letter helped to ensure cooperation and that it acted as a good first impression to the study but it was established that not all interviewers used them. There was only one case where the interviewer left a letter and the partner actually called back to arrange an interview. A couple of interviewers did not feel that the letter made a huge difference in regard to engagement, although all felt that there was no harm providing it.

Interviewers also mentioned that there were some households where the main respondent claimed that there was no partner resident, when it seemed as if there was. They suspected that this was motivated by concerns about being in breach of benefit rules. They felt that respondents might be more willing to disclose the presence of a partner towards the end of the visit after trust and rapport had been built, but that because this is ascertained via the household grid at the start of the interview process, that levels of disclosure may not be as full as they could be. They asked whether a repeat check about partners present might be

added later in the survey process, to allow the partner CAPI/CASI element to be completed in cases where families become more forthcoming about the presence of the partner.

Recommendations:

- Interviewers need to be briefed fully to ensure that they understand the importance of being flexible when arranging appointments, especially for partners who are working long hours, for example.
- More briefing could be provided to interviewers to explain the importance of the role of the partner in the study in a way that interviewers can explain easily when trying to engage and secure partner cooperation.
- Interviewers need to be advised on what they should say if a partner questions the relevance and purpose of the financial questions. More guidance needs to be provided so interviewers feel equipped to be able to engage partners if they are reluctant to answer these questions.
- Continue to provide partners with their own letter to acknowledge their importance in the study and to help secure their cooperation and buy in to the study as a whole.

3.12 Interviewer Safety

Interviewers did not report any concerns regarding their safety arising from the pilot. However, in the initial briefing some raised questions about interviewer safety protocols that may benefit from further clarification. In particular, whilst the instructions make clear that an adult must be present during physical measurements, they indicate that assessments can take place with no one else in the room. However, some interviewers, especially male interviewers felt it important to ensure that an adult was in the room for all child elements.

- Review the protocols with regards to whether an adult should be required to be present for all child elements. It should be made clear to interviewers that not having a 'requirement' for an adult to be present does not mean that they cannot ask for an adult to be present if they so choose.

3.13 Tracing Procedures Findings

3.13.1 General reactions

A number of interviewers did not need to trace families at the dress rehearsal stage. However, feedback from interviewers who did need to follow the tracing procedures was largely positive. Most of the interviewers found the process clear and easy to follow and felt that the process worked effectively.

3.13.2 Feedback on the tracing process as a whole

The majority of the interviewers found the tracing process easy to implement, and even interviewers who had not needed to trace reported finding the procedures clear to understand.

Feedback provided was that the interviewer instructions and briefing notes were fully detailed and clear. Interviewers also found that putting into practice using the letters helped to aid understanding of the procedures. In addition, interviewers also said that the contact sheet was helpful in terms of explaining how to trace and reminding them of all of the necessary steps to go through.

Some feedback provided by interviewers was that although the process was clear, in some cases it was nevertheless challenging and time consuming to try to track down the family (for example, where a family had not been resident at an address for a long period of time).

One suggestion raised by interviewers to improve the process was to provide additional packs of the advance materials so that interviewers can provide these immediately if they are able to trace a family.

Feedback on contacting the stable contact was largely positive. Those who had used this tracing method reported that people were generally fine with being approached and happy to provide contact details.

There was some uncertainty as to what interviewers should do if the office provides information that the family have moved after initial letters are sent. Interviewers were unclear as to whether they should still go to the address. Additionally, interviewers were unclear as to how many times they should leave messages with stable contacts, neighbours, etc.

Recommendations:

- Review whether to provide interviewers with spare packs that can be used if a family have moved.
- Ensure that interviewers are briefed fully and advice is given on what they should do if head office receives information that a family has relocated (e.g. should they go to the address and leave occupier letter, ask neighbour, etc).
- Provide interviewers with more guidance on frequency of contact with neighbours and stable contacts and ensure that this is made clear in the briefings.

3.13.3 Feedback on the tracing letters

Feedback from interviewers in relation to the tracing letters was on the whole positive with the vast majority finding them a helpful tool when attempting to locate families. Most interviewers felt that the letters were easy to use and were fairly self-explanatory.

None of the interviewers raised any concerns with the content of the letters and feedback provided was that the letters were suitably detailed.

One issue raised was that although the letters were helpful they were not labelled clearly enough which made them hard to distinguish from each other. Some interviewers also felt that having envelopes labelled with the corresponding letters would be beneficial.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that all tracing letters are clearly labelled with document references in order to make it easier for interviewers to distinguish them.
- Review whether to add document references to envelopes.

3.13.4 Feedback on any difficulties encountered when following the tracing procedures

Most of the interviewers who needed to trace families did not encounter difficulties when following the procedures. One interviewer was even able to trace a family who had changed their name and another reported that contact with the child's school worked much more

effectively than they could have imagined (the interviewer contacted the school and the parent then contacted the interviewer almost immediately).

However, a couple of interviewers found that they encountered some difficulties due to the area in which they were working. For example, one white interviewer found it hard to ascertain information from people in an almost 100% Asian/Somali area. Another interviewer reported finding communication with neighbours as problematic due to the area being very hostile and un-cooperative with strangers. Interviewers acknowledged that more information would not have helped to overcome these types of difficulties.

3.13.5 Feedback on recording tracing efforts

This feedback is based on executive observations of interviewers recording their tracing attempts on iProgress, and mostly where interviewers recorded that they were unable to trace the cohort child.

In some cases, despite the fact that interviewers said that they found the procedures easy to follow, observations from executives indicate that they weren't always following the procedures correctly. For example, an interviewer may record in iProgress that they are unable to trace the child but have not recorded that they have made contact with stable contacts. However, this mostly reflected issues with misunderstanding iProgress and not misunderstanding tracing procedures. Interviewers had traced properly but had insufficiently documented this in iProgress.

Recommendations

- Review iProgress briefing to ensure covers how to record tracing attempts.

3.13.6 Tracing outcomes

Over the course of the dress rehearsal fieldwork, six addresses were sent to CLS for further tracing after Ipsos MORI interviewers could not find a new address for the cohort's family. The table below shows the outcome of these addresses.

Table 16: Tracing outcomes

Field serial number	CLS outcome after they attempted tracing	IM outcome after returned from CLS
01266001	Returned from CLS as untraced	Returned from CLS as untraced
01266008	Returned from CLS for reissue	Cohort child has moved and unable to find follow up address
01266014	Returned from CLS for reissue	Fully productive
98240002	Returned from CLS for reissue	Returned from CLS for reissue
98811015	Returned from CLS as untraced	Returned from CLS as untraced
98176010	Returned from CLS as untraced	Returned from CLS as untraced

Of the six that were sent to CLS, three were returned with new prospective information. However, only one address yielded an interview, with one not being re-issued in time for

fieldwork and another where the interviewer confirmed that the cohort's family were not at the new address.

Overall, the process for sending CLS untraced addresses and for CLS returning the outcome of their tracing efforts worked well. However, the process for passing information between Ipsos MORI's field team and research team will improve for the main stage. During the dress rehearsal information about CLS' tracing outcomes were passed via email, which can be easy to overlook and result in re-issuing delays. During the main stage this process will be managed through Ipsos MORI's GSMS, making the flow of information smoother.

3.14 Overall administration and management of the survey process at household level

The dress rehearsal experience confirmed how important it was for the interviewers to remain calm and be flexible when managing the interview process. Whilst interviewers reported finding the first couple of interviews as fairly difficult to manage, all felt that their confidence improved after completing their first couple of interviews.

One of the reasons cited for their lack of confidence initially was the amount of time it took to become familiar with all the materials needed. Interviewers recommended that as part of the preparation required in order to ensure that all processes ran smoothly they should pre-pack the materials needed for an interview beforehand, and organise the pack in such a way that they can find any material quickly and easily. This preparation forces them to consider each element of the survey and ensures all the materials needed are taken to the interview. It was felt that the list of materials needed was particularly useful in achieving this. Interviewers also found it helpful to have a copy of all the materials kept in their car as back-up in case anything is forgotten.

Interviewers felt it was particularly important to be well equipped with advice and guidelines about how to manage the process most effectively. They mentioned how useful it was to have interviewers from the pilot in the briefing available to answer questions and provide advice. Some interviewers suggested that it may be helpful to have a 'mentoring approach' whereby interviewers who have worked on the study are on hand to help answer interviewer queries (predominantly queries about paperwork and managing the household visit).

Given the level of preparation and organisation needed it was felt important to highlight to the interviewers in the briefings how different this was to a normal study. Some interviewers felt that the survey should be treated as appointment work rather than expecting to conduct the interviews at first contact and there was some feedback that this should be made clearer to interviewers at the briefings.

Recommendations:

- Interviewers recommended booking an interview with a fully productive household from the previous wave as their first appointment if possible in order to build their confidence levels. Review whether this approach is something that could be mentioned to interviewers at the briefing stage.
- Continue to provide interviewers with a list of all materials they will need for each visit.
- Provide interviewers with more guidance/tips on how best to organise and manage their materials in both the interviewer instructions and briefing slides.
- If a 'mentoring' approach is implemented (as mentioned above), this could act as an additional way of sharing best practice in terms of managing the materials and

helping to equip interviewers with advice and guidelines to ensure that managing the household runs as smoothly as possible.

- Ensure that it is made clear at the briefing stage that interviewers shouldn't expect to conduct the interview on first contact and in most cases will need to book an appointment.

3.14.1 Dealing with other household members

Although in most households other family members were present, interviewers reported that in the majority of cases parents managed the household and made sure siblings were kept out of the way.

However, interviewers highlighted a number of difficulties in situations where other members of the household were present during the interviewing process that may have led to distractions. Some interviewers reported that partners often remained in the room and in some cases influenced the children's answers when they were completing their cognitive assessments or main respondents' answers when completing their CAPI interview. There were cases where the partner helped the main respondent answer the financial questions for example. Interviewers fed back that these challenges remained even in cases where they had emphasised the importance of confidentiality and the need for the child/main respondent to be able to give their own opinion independently.

As highlighted previously (see 3.5 Cognitive Assessment Findings section), a number of parents were eager to help their child when completing the cognitive assessments and this was particularly the case for the verbal similarities assessment.

It was reported that in some cases siblings were a cause of distraction during the interviewing process. Interviewers reported that on occasions siblings wanted to be involved in the cognitive and physical measurements and tried to help the cohort child complete the cognitive assessments. Other feedback from interviewers was that siblings sometimes tried to get attention by behaving badly which led to disruptions during the process. Some feedback provided by interviewers was that engaging siblings by allowing them to be involved in the process (e.g. by also measuring them) helped to alleviate distractions.

In large, often noisy, households interviewers reported finding it difficult to find a quiet place in which to carry out the interview despite looking for the most suitable (quietest) room.

Recommendations

- As with the pilot, continue to forewarn interviewers of the types of disruptions that could occur, give advice on how such issues might be handled, and provide interviewers with an opportunity to practice how to deal with common scenarios via, for example, role play exercises during briefings.
- Provide interviewers with more guidance on how to deal with siblings who are causing distractions that does not require involving them in the process. In addition, review whether to actively discourage interviewers from allowing siblings to be weighed, measured, etc in the briefings and interviewer instructions.
- Consider whether to provide all younger siblings with stickers in order to engage them and alleviate distractions in the household.

3.14.2 Managing the survey elements and ordering of tasks

Interviewers reported that the ordering and structuring of tasks within the household visit was often dependant in part on the circumstances in the household, for example who is available at what times, and so on.

Most interviewers found that after the first few interviews they worked out the most effective way in which to order the tasks and manage the household, but they also acknowledged the importance of flexibility as what may work in one household may not work in another household.

Interviewers were mindful of respondent burden and the time spent in the household, and tried to manage the elements efficiently by overlapping tasks where they could. Despite this, household visits generally took a lot longer than anticipated, even though individual elements were not much longer than planned. This was mainly due to the limited options for overlapping various tasks and to obtaining consent from the new sample; but there is also indicative feedback from interviewers that they took longer on visits as they were seeking to provide thorough feedback for the dress rehearsal review. The following table shows how long each element took individually:

Table 17: Time taken for each element

Survey element	Longitudinal CAPI Median time (minutes)
Household questionnaire, including contacts	7m 43s
Main respondent total	1h 6m 39s
Partner respondent total	27m 08s
Proxy Partner	3m 33s
Child physical measurements	3m 41s
Child cognitive assessments total	29m 17s
Cognitive Observations	53s
Contact information	3m50s
Child consents from parents	5m
Child consents from children	5m
Other elements	3m 30s
Child self-completion	30m

Interviewers were required to carry out the household grid before they conducted any of the elements. However, it was established at the debrief that not all interviewers were following this approach. Some were achieving the consents first as they felt that consent should be given prior to asking personal questions (see section 3.3: CAPI and CASI).

Recommendations

- In briefings and interviewer instructions explain the importance of flexibility but ensure that interviewers are aware of which elements cannot be done in conjunction with other elements and the reasons why this is the case. Likewise, the briefings should be more instructive about what elements to overlap and how to be efficient with the visit.
- Provide interviewers with tips and guidance on how best to manage their materials to ensure that they are able to use them efficiently in the household.
- Consider whether there would be benefit in encouraging interviewers to administer main respondent consent prior to the household grid (See section 3.10.7 Consent for further discussion of this)
- If interviewers are administering the child self-completion at the same time as the parent CAPI interview, ensure that interviewers are briefed that these elements can be conducted concurrently as long as the interviewer has explained the instructions to the child fully beforehand.
- As mentioned previously (see section 3.6 physical measurements findings), emphasise in the briefings that although the physical measurement equipment can be set up while the parent is doing their CASI interview the measurements cannot be taken without using CAPI as it will impact on the quality of the data.
- Brief interviewers to remind respondents to read the materials (letters and leaflets) in advance of the interview at the appointment making stage (the appointment card also specifies that it would be useful if respondents have read the materials prior to the appointment). This, in addition to the sample all being longitudinal at the Main Stage, should mean the consent process is quicker.

3.15 Respondent engagement for the future

3.15.1 Consent to re-contact

Fifty new families agreed to take part in the pilot. Ipsos MORI gained consent for the current wave from eligible individuals, but also asked main respondents if they would be willing to be asked to take part in future pilots. Of the 50, 46 (or 92%) agreed to be re-contacted. These 46 will be added to the current longitudinal sample that is used for MCS dress rehearsal pilots.

Because at the main stage all families interviewed will be longitudinal families, consent for re-contact will have been established. For new main and partner respondents, respondent materials and interviewers will explain the longitudinal nature of the research, ensuring these new respondents understand that they will be contacted again.

3.15.2 Thank you mailing

In total, 126 families were sent a thank you mailing at the end of the fieldwork period. The thank you mailing consisted of a letter to the main respondent with any partner details merged (if applicable) and a certificate for the cohort child.

For those who had agreed to be recontacted a sentence was included in the letter to acknowledge this and to thank respondents.

Addresses used to send the mailing were based on information recorded in the CAPI interview, as were other key details (such as the main respondents and partners names). Checks were made against the CAPI data to ensure that thank you mailings were only sent to those who completed the interview, not just the household grid.

Recommendations

- Continue to provide a thank you mailing for all families that contains both a letter for the parent and partner (if applicable) and a certificate for the child.
- Before the main stage, review at what stage to send the mailing and the frequency in which the mailings are sent.

3.16 Interviewer Briefings

Interviewers reported that the briefing process generally worked well in instructing them about the background to the study, explaining how to engage respondents and achieve informed consent and assent, and in how to administer each individual study element. They also reported that they enjoyed it. It was clear from interviewer comments at the briefing that they had fully grasped the key requirements, and the theory and practice of most approaches and protocols required in most cases. Both interviewers who had previously worked on the pilot, and the Ipsos MORI team, felt that changes that had been implemented as a result of recommendations after the pilot were worthwhile, and that certain elements of the briefings had benefited considerably from these changes (specifically the briefing of the cognitive assessments).

However, it will of course be helpful to incorporate a considerable number of learning points arising in relation to many aspects of implementation reported on in earlier sections, as well as feedback from the interviewers themselves about the briefings, to optimise the effectiveness of briefings in equipping interviewers to carry out their role effectively.

Three days of classroom briefing were found to be sufficient, although interviewers found there was a lot of information to take in. As a result of feedback received after the pilot, the time spent on how to implement the CAI elements was cut down, but new elements introduced since the pilot, such as the Contact Sheet, the Sample Information Sheet and iProgress meant that there was still a great deal to cover over the course of the three days. Interviewers commented that some of the session times were too long, and that it became hard to stay focussed at times. This was largely due to the fact that timings changed as some of the sessions over-ran.

Interviewers reported that, after the briefings, they had felt rather overwhelmed and anxious about going out to complete their first household visits. However, they all agreed that once they had a few visits “under their belts”, they greatly enjoyed the experience and were no longer anxious. Interviewers who were new to the study reported that they found the reassurance that the pilot interviewers were able to provide was invaluable.

Interviewers were particularly positive about the information that they were given about the background of the study. They found this very useful when engaging respondents, particularly those in the new sample.

Acting on feedback gained from interviewers at the pilot, a chart was designed to illustrate how all of the survey elements linked together. This was referred to at relevant points during the three days of the briefing, and interviewers reported that they found this very useful indeed. However, many of the interviewers also expressed a wish to be able to see the entire survey process from start to finish, and suggested that a film could be used to show an interviewer working on the job. Whilst it recognised that this could be very helpful, there will not be enough time available during the mainstage briefings to do this.

The practice day was deemed essential. Furthermore, some interviewers said they would find it helpful to have more chance to practice/affirm their ability to implement the

practicalities of measurements and assessments. It may be hard in practice to increase the time available for practising these elements at the briefing, although this is being considered, but interviewers were positive about the idea of being encouraged to practise on their family and friends before going out into the Field.

As interviewers found administering the Verbal Similarities assessment quite hard, due to the need to only use neutral praise, it was felt that more attention should be paid to this during the briefings, and that more examples should be provided for them to use.

Some interviewers reported that they hadn't appreciated the importance of standardised testing, despite time being spent on this during the briefing.

Certain practical elements of the survey elements weren't straightforward to brief. Interviewers found the briefing of the audio equipment to be too fast, and confusing, and although the section of the briefing where the touch screens were demonstrated ran more smoothly than at the pilot, there was still considerable disruption at that point.

There was a view from some interviewers that it would be beneficial to do more group work/exercises and tasks to break up the day, and so that they could learn by 'doing' rather than by 'listening'.

Some interviewers requested that the elements that require a great deal of concentration, such as the revised iProgress system and the Contact Sheet, are covered earlier rather than later in the day.

It is clear that more time needs to be spent at the briefing on certain administrative elements, such as completing the Contact Sheet and using the redeveloped iProgress system. These were briefed on Day 3, when interviewers were tired, and we were short of time due to other sections over-running. As a result there was some confusion with both elements, but interviewers were confident that this could be limited if more time is devoted to them, and if they are able to spend time practising the administration of both in between Days 2 and 3 of the briefing.

Recommendations

- A representative from Field – usually the Region Manager – will be responsible for 'chairing' the briefings and ensuring that breaks happen at appropriate times and things don't over-run.
- Revisit briefing plan to assess if more time can be made available for practising the assessment and measurements during the briefing. Interviewers were particularly keen to practice the measurements in pairs if at all possible. If more time isn't available during the briefing, ensure interviewers are encouraged to spend time practising on friends and family at home.
- Spend time at the briefings reassuring interviewers that their concerns are to be expected, but that interviewers who have worked on the pilot exercises soon got into their stride. Use the tips provided by the interviewers at the debrief on what they would say to reassure interviewers new to MCS in the mainstage briefings. As far as possible, try to ensure that one of the pilot interviewers is present at every briefing to provide reassurances.
- More examples of neutral praise, and the concept of standardised testing, should be provided to help interviewers to administer the Verbal Similarities in particular.
- Consideration should be given to whether the touchscreens and audio equipment should be sent to interviewer's homes in advance of the first day of the briefings, in order that they can familiarise themselves with the technological side of things, and

therefore focus on the survey process side at the briefings. Interviewers were very positive about this suggestion.

- More exercises and group work should be built into the briefings in order that the sessions can be broken up a bit, and that interviewers can learn by 'doing'.
- Move the sections on the Contact Sheet and iProgress to Day 2, in order that interviewers can practice both elements prior to Day 3, and any queries or concerns can be addressed before they go out into the Field. This would also provide some scope to include an exercise or quiz on these elements on Day 3.
- Attempt to cover certain more complicated elements, such as the Contact Sheet and iProgress, earlier in the day rather than later.

3.17 Interviewer Materials

3.17.1 Interviewer Instructions

Interviewers reported that they found the instructions that they were given to be useful, but as a reference document that they could use when needed, rather than as a document that they read from start to finish.

3.17.2 Contact Sheet

Feelings towards the contact sheets were mixed. Some interviewers found them easy to understand and to complete, whereas others found them unwieldy and confusing. Overall most were happy with the format; only 3 said that they would prefer it to be changed, but all interviewers agreed that it needed some development work.

There was considerable discussion and debate about the overall layout of the document, with some interviewers saying that it would have been easier to manage if it was in portrait format rather than landscape. The current format means that call information is spread over a number of pages, which interviewers felt wasn't helpful when it came to entering it into iProgress, or referring to the contact sheet between calls – they argued that it would be far more helpful to them to have all of the important information on the front page.

3.17.3 Contact Information Update Sheet

Although they had been provided with a Contact Information Update sheet, they didn't find this helpful, and said that they would prefer a space on the contact sheet to record a new address. In fact, some interviewers were writing the new address on the contact sheet as they found this useful.

3.17.4 Sample Information Sheet

In general, feedback on the Sample Information Sheet was positive, and interviewers reported finding this a useful tool. They found it particularly helpful in terms of the background information that it provided, giving them useful information to draw on both prior to making appointments, and once they'd made contact with the household.

There was some confusion as to what 'confirmed' means in relation to the address, although those whose information showed that the address had been confirmed relatively recently did find this reassuring.

A review of many of the interviewer materials (such as the CANTAB admin scripts, and the tracing materials) is contained within the relevant section of this report.

Recommendations

- As discussed in section 3.10, we propose that the interviewer instructions should include an additional section of information with tips on how to address challenging engagement issues.
- Redesign the Contact Sheet, taking specific interviewer comments in to account.
- Allow space on the Contact Sheet for interviewers to record updated address information, as a substitute for the Contact Information Update Sheet.
- Review the Sample Information Sheet in light of specific interviewer comments.