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# An Exploratory Study examining the Inclusion of Children with Autism in Primary Schools in Ireland

A thesis written in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy (PhD.)

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A- CHILDREN INFORMATION FORM AND CHILDREN ASSENT  
FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**CHILDREN'S INFORMATION FORM**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum  
disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case  
study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

**My name is Eva García Albarrán, I am studying in college, and I would like to  
know how you are learning at school, if you like reading and mathematics, if you like  
other children playing with you and if you like school in general.**



**Your mum and Dad (guardian) know about me and they are happy for you to talk to me. However, I would like to tell you what this project is about and ask you if you are happy to talk to me about school. If you will be happy for me to talk to you.**

**What I would like to do?**

**I am going to talk to you for about half an hour,**



**I will talk to you during your break when you teacher tells me and when you feel it is okay.**

**I will ask you questions about what you like and what you don't like at school.**



**School**

**I am going to ask you about your homework.**



**Homework**

**I am going to ask you about the children in your classroom and yard.**





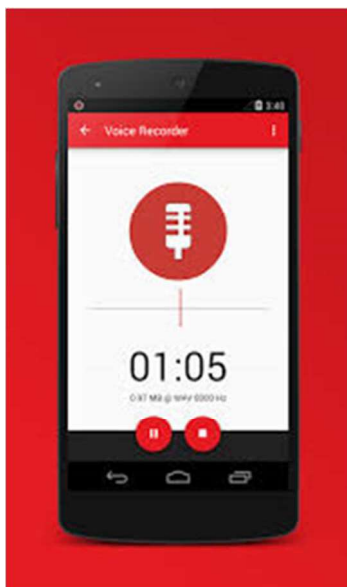
## Friends

We are going to do different things when we talk, looking at pictures [show pictures], and drawing, if you like;



## Drawing, symbols and pictures

I would like to record what you say with this. [show recorder and how it works]



Do you know what this is? [show test recording]

**Are you okay for me to use this to record what we say?**

**If you are not happy with me using the recorder, I will write down what you tell me.**

**Are you okay for me to do that?**

**Thank you.**

**I am going to be in your classroom and yard some times to see what you do at school.**



**Classroom**



**Yard**

**What will it happen if you do not want to talk to me anymore?**

**You can stop the interview at any time and it will be okay.**

**Here is a stop card [show card] you can use it when you want to.**

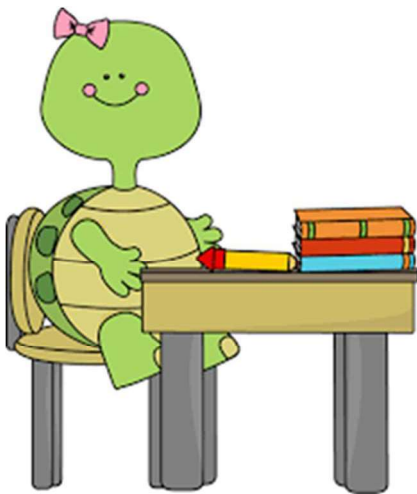


I won't tell anyone you are the person I was talking with.

I will write another name when I tell about what you tell me.

I will do this because what you tell me is private.

BUT, if you tell me something that others do to you or your friends that may be bad for you, I will have to tell someone that will be able to help you.



If you would like your SNA to be with you when you talk to me that will be okay with me.

Do you have any questions for me?

You can ask me now or you can ask me any other time.

Your mum and dad have my number and they can call me if you need to ask me any question about this.

Are you happy for me to ask you some questions and be around in your classroom and yard?



If your answer is Yes , we need to complete a form [show assent form].

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY

CHILDREN'S ASSENT FORM

Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.

Researcher: Eva García Albarrán

Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte

I \_\_\_\_\_ want to talk to Eva about school and yard.

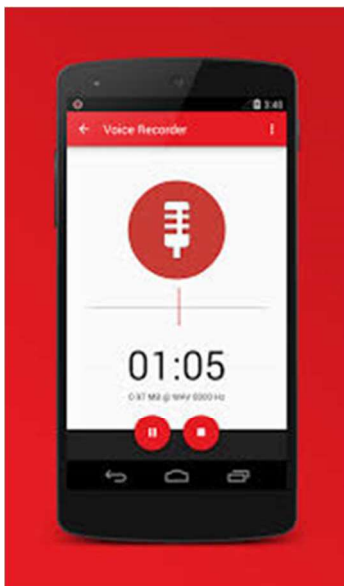
Eva can be around in my classroom and yard.



I know I can stop at any time and it will be okay.



It is okay for Eva to record what I say.



Yes  No

It is okay for Eva to take notes



Yes  No

It is okay for Eva to ask others for help, if I tell her about others hurting or upsetting me.

Yes  No

Would it be okay for you to talk to me?

If you are okay for us to talk, I will tick the box here

Yes  No

If you are okay with us talking, you can tell me and we will tick the box here and I will write your name;

\_\_\_\_\_ Verbal assent given Yes

Child's print name

If you prefer, you can put your name, your age and what day is today here;

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Age

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness's signature      Role      Date

Witness's statement

I confirm that the researcher and myself have explained the study to the participant to the extent compatible with the participants understanding and that the participant has agreed to be in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness signature      Role      Date



## Researcher Statement

I confirm that I have explained the study to the participant to the extent compatible with the participants understanding and that the participant has agreed to be in the study.

---

Name

---

Signature

---

Date

**APPENDIX B - INFORMATION FORM PARENTS AND CHILDREN AND  
CONSENT FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**INFORMATION FORM FOR PARENTS ABOUT CHILDREN PARTICIPATION**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum  
disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to do so, you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on the \_\_\_\_\_

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to enjoy adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study looks to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academically). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study aims to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

The study's pupil selection will be based on the following inclusion criteria:

For the purpose of this research this inclusion criterion considers any child diagnosed with ASD independently of their category, level of severity, level of ability to communicate, or the type of co-occurring problems (Battle, 2013),

Children with ASD who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class in junior primary school,

Children aged 5 to 9 years old, and

Children with ASD who have the support of a SNA.

## **2. What will taking part involve?**

If you agree for your child to participate in this study, your child will be involved in the following tasks:

Your child will be interviewed once. The duration of the interview will be approximately 30 minutes and it will take place within the school premises.

The interview will be structured in four sections, (a) Home and school, (b) classroom, (c) yard and (d) relationships. The interview will consist of generally structured questions for all children, however, the researcher will use different methods to help the child to answer the questions, such as pictures, drawings and symbols, following your child's preferred method.

The researcher is interested to know your child's views and opinion on the following:

- Reading and mathematics,
- How does he/she likes/dislikes school and learning,
- Their participation in school activities (classroom and yard),
- How does he/she like/dislikes homework,
- Does he/she like school in general, the teachers, the subjects, their classmates,
- How does he/she like other children, what do they play at in yard, what do they do together.

Your child will be informed by his/her teacher about the interview beforehand and he/she will be asked again about his/her voluntary participation in this research. Before the interview the researcher will inform your child about the research and the reasons for doing an interview with him/her. If your child is happy to continue, he/she will sign again the research's assent. During the interview your child will be informed of the content and duration of the interview with pictures, the stop card will be introduced to allow him/her to stop the interview at any time. The presence of your child's SNA will be allowed during the interview, if your child prefers that option.

The researcher will observe your child in his/her classroom and yard. The aim of this observation is to gain insight into the child's interaction and reactions in the classroom during literacy and numeracy, as well as in the yard.

The researcher will need to review your child's individual educational plan (IEP) and your child's school assessment records. Your permission to review your child's IEP and assessment records are sought in the consent form.

### **3. Why have you been invited to take part?**

Your child has been asked to take part in the study because this research is looking to know what children's with ASD are learning and how they are taught in junior primary school. Listening to children and their experience, provides an important insight on how they are learning and how do they perceive this learning.

### **4. Do you have to take part?**

Your child's participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences if your child decides not to take part in this research. He/she may omit individual responses; for example, if he/she is unhappy with some questions and for any reason he/she doesn't want to answer them, he/she is not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, your child can withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, including the withdrawal of his/her data after participation. This means that your child can stop his/her participation or the use of his/her data at any time. All information collected from your child participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

### **5. What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks relating to your child's involvement in this research and he/she may not benefit directly from this research. However, the results from this study may

provide some insight on how children with ASD are learning in junior primary mainstream schools. These results could lead to informed changes in policy and practice.

## **6. Will taking part be confidential?**

During the study the researcher will interview your child. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, school, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances will the identities of the participant be disclosed. Your child has the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access his/her data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.

## **7. The limits of confidentiality**

Children with ASD are considered a vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. The limit of confidentiality applies in this research with regards to any issues concerning children's protection and wellbeing. The researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related to any type of concern or risk of harm that may be disclosed during the interview to the relevant authorities. The researcher will discuss this with you first but may be required to report with or without your permission.

## **8. How will information you provide be recorded, stored and protected?**

During the interview, the information your child provides will be audio recorded or notes will be taken. Your child could confirm if he/she would like his/her interview to be audio recorded or not by ticking the appropriate box in the Consent Form. If your child agrees for the interview to be audio recorded, his/her name will be anonymised on the transcripts to guarantee his/her anonymity. If you do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded, you

will be asked for permission to allow the researcher to take notes. Your child's name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the research's written report. All of your child's information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Any information and data collected about your child during the study will be anonymised. The information will be stored in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher has access, in the Children research centre at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. Any electronic files that may be stored in any devices within or outside of Trinity College Dublin, will be password protected and anonymised to protect participants' information. Any data stored in the personal computer of the researcher will be password protected. Only the researcher and supervisor, if needed, will have access to the data. The data storage and the grounds for continued storage will be reviewed within 12 months of compilation of the data, with a maximum storage duration of 5 years. Any data that will no longer be required during the course of the study or after compilation of data will be destroyed or erased in a safe and secure way.

### **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal articles written as a result of this project, but under no circumstances will third parties, school, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session, at the school, at the end of the data analysis. You and your child have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014) to access your child's data at any time during the debriefing session. The researcher will present you and your child with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session will provide you and your child with the opportunity to examine how your child's contribution to the study has been used and interpreted.

The researcher is unaware of any conflicts of interest regarding this research.

**10. Who should you contact for further information?**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 8962200.



**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS ABOUT CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán // Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I/We..... voluntarily agree for my/our child to participate in this research study.

I/we understand that even if we agree for our child to participate now, I/we can withdraw consent at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I/we understand that I/we can withdraw my/our permission to use data from my/our child interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I/we have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to in writing and I/we have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I/we understand that my/our child participation involves an interview that will not be longer than 45 to 60 minutes.

I/we understand that I/we give permission to the researcher to review the following school documents;

Child Individual Educational Plan

Child assessment records

I/we understand that my/our child will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I/we agree to my/our child interview being audio-recorded.

Yes       No

If I/we do not give permission for my/our child interview to be recorded, I/we give permission for the researcher to take notes,

Yes       No

I/we understand that all information my/our child provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I/we understand that in any report on the results of this research my/our child's identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my/our child's name and disguising any details of my/our child's interview which may reveal my/our child's identity or the identity of people my/our child speaks about.

I/we understand that disguised extracts from my/our child's interview may be quoted in the dissertation, journals and conferences.

I/we understand that if my/our child informs the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with us first but may be required to report with or without my/our permission.

I/we understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing.

I/we understand that my child's signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Children's research centre, secured until the exam board confirms the results of the dissertation.

I/we understand that a transcript of my/our child's interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained in the Children's Research Centre for two years from the date of the exam board.

I/we understand that under the freedom of information legislation my/our child is entitled to access the information he/she has provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I/we understand that my/our child is free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

I/we understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

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Mother's name	Signature	Date
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Father's name                      Signature                      Date

Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

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Researcher's name                      Signature                      Date

**APPENDIX C - PARENTS INFORMATION FORM AND CONSENT FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION FORM (PARENTS)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to do so, you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on the \_\_\_\_\_.

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to enjoy adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study looks to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academically). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study aims to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

The study's pupil selection will be based on the following inclusion criteria:

For the purpose of this research this inclusion criterion considers any child diagnosed with ASD independently of their category, level of severity, level of ability to communicate, or the type of co-occurring problems (Battle, 2013),

Children with ASD who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class in junior primary school,

Children aged 5 to 9 years old, and

Children with ASD who have the support of a SNA.

## **2. What will taking part involve?**

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be interviewed once. The interview will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and will take place within the school premises or at another public location convenient for you.

The researcher is interested to know your opinion in the following areas:

1) Experience on the inclusion of your child in a mainstream primary school.

The type of support your child is getting at school.

The type of resource allocation your child is receiving (eg. SNA, resource teachers and other resources).

2) Relationship with the school, teachers, SNA and principal.

What type of relationship do you have with school staff?

What areas would you like to improve?

3) What improvements would you like to see in your child, in terms of their participation in junior primary mainstream school, in the following areas:

- a) Academic learning
- b) Social learning
- c) Communication
- d) Community integration
- e) 4) How do you communicate with your child.

## **3. Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been asked to take part in the study because you are the expert on your child. This study is looking to examine multiple perspectives, including parents's perspectives.

#### **4. Do you have to take part?**

Your participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences for you or your child if you decide not to take part in this research. If you decide to take part, you may omit individual responses in the interview; for example, if you are unhappy with some interview questions and for any reason you don't want to answer them, you are not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, you can withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, including the withdrawal of your data after participation, which means that you can stop your participation or the use of your data at any time. All information collected from your participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

#### **5. What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks to your involvement in this research and you will not benefit directly from this research. However, the results from this study may provide some insight on how children with ASD are learning in junior primary mainstream schools. These results could lead to informed changes in policy and practice.

#### **6. Will taking part be confidential?**

During the study the researcher will interview you. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, school, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances will the identities of the participant be disclosed. You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.



## **7. The limits of confidentiality**

Children with ASD are considered vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. The limit of confidentiality applies in this research with regards to any issues concerning children's protection and wellbeing. The researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related to any type of concern or risk of harm that may be disclosed during the interview to the relevant authorities. The researcher will discuss this with you first but may be required to report with or without your permission.

## **8. How will information you provide be recorded, stored and protected?**

During the interview, the information you provide will be audio recorded or notes will be taken. You may confirm if you would like your interview to be audio recorded or not by ticking the appropriate box in the Consent Form. If you agree for the interview to be audio recorded, your name will be anonymised on the transcripts to guarantee your anonymity. If you do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded, you will be asked for permission to allow the researcher to take notes. Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the research's written report. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Any information and data collected about you during the study will be anonymised. The information will be stored in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher has access in the Children research centre at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. Any electronic files that may be stored in any devices within or outside of Trinity College Dublin, will be password protected and anonymised to protect participants' information. Any data stored in the personal computer of the researcher will be password protected. Only the researcher and supervisor, if needed, will have access to the data. The data storage and the grounds for continued storage will be reviewed within 12 months of compilation of the data, with a maximum storage duration of 5 years. Any data that will no longer be required, during the

course of the study or after compilation of data, will be destroyed or erased in a safe and secure way.

### **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal articles written as a result of this project, but under no circumstances will third parties, schools, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session, at each school, at the end of the data analysis. You have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014) to access your data at any time and during the debriefing session. The researcher will present you with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session will provide you with the opportunity to examine how your contributions to the study have been used and interpreted.

The researcher is unaware of any conflicts of interest regarding this research.

### **10. Who should you contact for further information?**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 896 2200.

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARENT'S CONSENT FORM**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán // Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves an interview that will not be longer than 45 to 60 minutes.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

Yes       No

If I do not give permission for my interview to be recorded, I give permission for the researcher to take notes,

Yes       No

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the dissertation, journals and conferences.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing.

I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Children's research centre, secured until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for in the Children's Research Centre for two years from the date of the exam board.

I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

I understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

_____	_____	_____
Mother's name	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Father's name	Signature	Date

Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

_____	_____	_____
Researcher's name	Signature	Date

**APPENDIX D - PRINCIPAL INFORMATION FORM AND CONSENT FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION FORM (PRINCIPAL)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to do so, you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on \_\_\_\_\_.

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to have an adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study aims to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academically). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study is looking to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

## **2. What will taking part involve?**

If you decide to take part in this research, your participation in this study, as a participant will involve the following tasks;

The researcher will provide you with a demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire has the purpose of providing the researcher information on your professional experience and background, the questionnaire can be completed in your own time and it should not take you more than five minutes.

Additionally, you will be interviewed once. The interview will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and will take place within the school premises. With the interview, the researcher aims to know your opinion and feedback on the following areas:

Your views and opinion on the actual educational provision in place in your school, the support provided by the system and if there are areas that could be improved and how.

Your beliefs on the implementation of inclusive policies and the transferability of those policies in the classroom and yard, Your understanding and experience of including children with ASD in a mainstream primary school, Your understanding of inclusion,

Your beliefs and perception of the child with ASD's learning outcomes both academic and social, Your opinion on the best practice when educating children with ASD in mainstream schools, Your beliefs about the benefits on the child with ASD in mainstream school, Your beliefs and opinions on the way forward with the inclusion of children with ASD in a mainstream school.

### **3. Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been asked to take part in the study because as school principal, you most familiar with the educational provision and the inclusive policies implemented at your school as well as the resource allocation to those children with ASD at your school. Hence, your input in this study is relevant since it will confer your views and opinion about children with ASD's educational provision in a mainstream school. In addition you can provide information related to policy, experience and outcomes associated with schools, teachers, SNAs, children with ASD and parents.

### **4. Do you have to take part?**

Your participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences for you if you decide not to take part in the study. You may omit individual responses; for example, if you are unhappy with some questions and for any reason you don't want to answer them you are not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, you can withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, this includes the withdrawal of your data after participation. Which means that you can stop your



participation or the use of your data at any time. All information collected from your participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

#### **5. What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks related to your involvement in this research and you will not benefit directly from it. However, the results from this study may provide some insight on how children with ASD are learning in junior primary mainstream schools. These results, could lead to informed changes in policy and practice.

#### **6. Will taking part be confidential?**

During the study, the researcher will interview you. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, school, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances, the identities of the participant will be disclosed. You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.

#### **7. The limits of confidentiality**

Children with ASD are considered vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. Researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related with any type of abuse or concern that may be disclosed during the interview. The information will be reported to the authorities following the Health Service Executive (HSE)' protocol and the National Guidelines on Child Protection: Children First (1999). You will be informed and

involved in this process where necessary, however child welfare and protection will always come first.

### **8. How will information you provide be recorded, stored and protected?**

During the interview, the information you provide will be audio recorded or notes will be taken. You may confirm if you would like your interview to be audio recorded or not by ticking the appropriate box in the Consent Form. If you agree for the interview to be audio recorded, your name will be anonymised on the transcripts to guarantee your anonymity. If you do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded, you will be asked for permission to allow the researcher to take notes. Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the research's written report. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Any information and data collected about you during the study will be anonymised. The information will be stored in the Children research centre at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. Any electronic documentation that may be stored in any devices within Trinity or outside of Trinity College Dublin, will be encrypted and anonymised to protect participant' information. Any data stored in the personal computer of the researcher will be password protected. Only the researcher and supervisor, if needed, will have access to the data. The data storage and the grounds for continued storage will be reviewed within 12 months of compilation of the data, with a maximum storage duration of 5 years. Any data that will no longer be required, during the course of the study or after compilation of the data, will be destroyed or erased in a safe and secure way.

### **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal

articles written as a result of this project, under no circumstances will third parties, schools, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session at the end of the data analysis during which the researcher will present you with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session will provide you with the opportunity to examine how your contributions to the study have been used and interpreted. You have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time during the study and after data has been analysed. The study data will be kept for a maximum of five years, after which period, the data will be destroyed.

#### **10. Who should you contact for further information?**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 896 2200.

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PRINCIPAL'S CONSENT FORM (Participant)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán // Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves an interview that will not be longer than 45 to 60 minutes and a questionnaire.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

Yes       No

If I do not give permission for my interview to be recorded, I give permission for the researcher to take notes,

Yes       No       N/A

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the dissertation, journals and conferences.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing,

I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Children's research centre, secured until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for in the Children's Research Centre for two years from the date of the exam board.

I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

I understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

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Principal's name	Signature	Date
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Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

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Researcher's name	Signature	Date
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**APPENDIX E- - GATEKEEPER INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**GATEKEEPER'S INFORMATION FORM (PRINCIPAL)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to assist me in the conduct of this research study. Before you decide to do so, you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on \_\_\_\_\_

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to have an adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study aims to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academically). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study is looking to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

## **2. What do I need your assistance with?**

If you decide to take part in this research, your participation in this study as a gatekeeper will involve the following tasks;

Distribution of study documentation to those parents who may be involved in the study directly and indirectly. The following documentation will need to be distributed: (a) Research Information letter for parents including parents and children Information forms and Informed consent, (b) information letter for all parents whose child will be involved in the study.

In addition, the researcher will seek permission to carry out an introduction meeting. This meeting will be arranged within the school, at a mutually agreed time, to introduce the



study within one week of letter distributions to parents and children with ASD. At this meeting the information form and consent forms will be distributed, signed forms will be returned to the school within one week.

In the event that more than two families meet the inclusion criteria, two families will be selected randomly by the researcher before contacting the families. Names will not be distributed to the researcher at this point. The role of the principal will be to allocate consecutive numbers to each family and the researcher will randomly select two numbers. If the families selected do not wish to take part in the study, the selection procedure will be repeated until a maximum of two families are recruited.

After this first week, the researcher will seek your permission to meet the child's parents within the school premises. Parents will meet with the researcher one week after the information and consent forms have been distributed. The purpose of the meeting will be to clarify any questions related with their child's involvement in the study and to get their consent and have their child's assent signed.

During weeks one and two, the researcher will need to review some school documents at a mutually agreed time and place. The documents to be reviewed are: (a) school policies, (b) teacher plan, (c) child individual educational plan, and (d) child school assessment records. The documentary review will take place at a mutually agreed time and place within the school premises.

One to two children diagnosed with ASD will be selected to take part in this research and your role is to send the study letters to all potential participants, to inform them about the study. The study's pupil selection will be based on the following inclusion criteria: (a) children aged 5 to 9, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. For the purpose of this research this inclusion criterion considers any child diagnosed with ASD independently of their category, level of severity, level of ability to communicate, or the type of comorbidities (Battle, 2013),

(b) children with ASD who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class in junior primary school, and (c) children with ASD who have the support of a SNA.

### **3. Who will have access to data from research?**

During the study, the researcher will interview you. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, school, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances, the identities of the participants will be disclosed. You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.

Children with ASD are considered a vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. Researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related with any type of abuse or concern that may be disclosed during the interview. The information will be reported to the authorities following the Health Service Executive (HSE)' protocol and the National Guidelines on Child Protection: Children First (1999). You will be informed and involved in this process where necessary, however child welfare and protection will always come first.

### **4. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal articles written as a result of this project, under no circumstances will third parties, schools, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session at each school, at the end of the data analysis during which the researcher will present you with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session will provide you with the opportunity to examine how your contributions to the study have been used and interpreted. You have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time during the study and after data has been analysed. The study data will be kept for a maximum of five years, after which period, the data will be destroyed.

#### **5. Who should you contact for further information?**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 896 2200.

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**Consent to facilitate research**

**Gatekeeper - Principal**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán // Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I.....voluntarily agree to help facilitate this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to help now, I can withdraw at any time without any consequences of any kind.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that I will assist this research in the following tasks;

Distribution of study documentation to those parents who may be involved in the study directly and indirectly.

Facilitate permission to carry out an introduction meeting.

Facilitate the random selection of two families, in those cases where more than two families are eligible to take part in the study.

Facilitate permission to meet the child's parents within the school premises.

Facilitate school documentation for review (school policies, teacher's plan, child individual educational plan and child assessment records).

Communicate the study to parents of children with ASD in the school.

I understand that all data collected in this study is confidential and anonymous.

I understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing,

I understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

Gatekeeper's signature

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Gatekeeper's name

Signature

Date

---

Gatekeeper's Role

Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

---

Researcher's name

---

Signature

---

Date

**APPENDIX F - RESOURCE TEACHER INFORMATION FORM AND CONSENT  
FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION FORM (RESOURCE TEACHER)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum  
disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to do so, you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on \_\_\_\_\_.

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to enjoy adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study aims to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academic). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study aims to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

The study's pupil selection will be based on the following inclusion criteria:

For the purpose of this research this inclusion criterion considers any child diagnosed with ASD independently of their category, level of severity, level of ability to communicate, or the type of co-occurring problems (Battle, 2013),

Children with ASD who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class in junior primary school,

Children aged 5 to 9 years old, and

Children with ASD who have the support of a SNA.



## **2. What will taking part involve?**

If you agree to participate in this study, the following tasks will be involved;

The researcher will provide you with a demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire has the purpose of providing the researcher information on your professional experience and background, the questionnaire can be completed in your own time and it should not take you more than five minutes.

You will be interviewed once between weeks three and four. The interview will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and will take place within the school premises. With the interview, the researcher aims to know your opinion and feedback on the following areas:

Your understanding and experience of including children with ASD in a mainstream primary school,

- a) Your understanding of inclusion,
- b) Your pedagogical approach,
- c) Your beliefs and perception of the child with ASD academic and social learning outcomes,
- d) Your opinion on the best practice when educating children with ASD in mainstream schools,
- e) Your beliefs about the benefits of placing the child with ASD under study in mainstream school,
- f) Your beliefs and opinions on the way forward with the inclusion of children with ASD in a mainstream school, and
- g) How best to communicate with your pupil/s with ASD.

In addition, the researcher will seek your permission for the following tasks:

The researcher will need to review some school documents, nay, child's teacher's plan, child's individual educational plan and child's school assessment records. In addition,

parent's permission will be sought to review their child's individual educational plan and child's assessment records.

An observation period will need to take place in your classroom. During the observation the researcher will be at the back of the classroom with minimum intrusion and you will decide the best time and day where the observation can take place as well as the duration. Permission is sought in the consent form attached.

### **3. Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been asked to take part in the study, because there is one pupil in your classroom that has been asked to take part in this research, as the child's resource teacher you know best how they are learning at school, their progress and their experience in mainstream education. Hence your input in this study is relevant, since it will confer your views and opinion about children with ASD's mainstream school experience, their learning outcomes and the pedagogical approaches used with these children.

### **4. Do you have to take part?**

Your participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences for you if you decided not to take part. You may omit individual responses, for example if you are unhappy with some questions and for any reason you don't want to answer them you are not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, you can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This includes the withdrawal of your data after participation. Which means that you can stop your participation or the use of your data at any time. All information collected from your participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

## **5. What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks related to your involvement in this research and you will not benefit directly from it. However, the results from this study may provide some insight on how children with ASD are learning in junior primary mainstream schools. These results could lead to informed changes in policy and practice.

## **6. Will taking part be confidential?**

During the study, the researcher will interview you. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, school, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances will the identities of the participants be disclosed. You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.

## **7. The limits of confidentiality**

Children with ASD are considered a vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. The researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related to any type of abuse or concern that may be disclosed during the interview. The information will be reported to the authorities following the Health Service Executive (HSE)' protocol and the National Guidelines on Child Protection: Children First (1999). You will be informed and involved in this process where necessary, however child welfare and protection will always come first.

## **8. How will information you provide be recorded, stored and protected?**

During the interview, the information you provide will be audio recorded or notes will be taken. You may confirm if you would like your interview to be audio recorded or not by ticking the appropriate box in the Consent Form. If you agree for the interview to be audio recorded, your name will be anonymised on the transcripts to guarantee your anonymity. If you do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded, you will be asked for permission to allow the researcher to take notes. Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the research's written report. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Any information and data collected about you during the study will be anonymised. The information will be stored in a locked cabinet, to which only the researcher has access, in the Children research centre at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. Any electronic files that may be stored in any devices within Trinity or outside of Trinity College Dublin, will be password protected and anonymised to protect participant' information. Any data stored in the personal computer of the researcher will be password protected. Only the researcher and supervisor, if needed, will have access to the data. The data storage and the grounds for continued storage will be reviewed within 12 months of compilation of the data, with a maximum storage duration of 5 years. Any data that will no longer be required during the course of the study or after compilation of the data will be destroyed or erased in a safe and secure way.

## **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal articles written as a result of this project, under no circumstances will third parties, school, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session, at the school, at the end of the data analysis during which the researcher will present you with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session, will provide you with the opportunity to examine how your contributions to the study have been used and interpreted. You have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time during the study and after data has been analysed. The study data will be kept for a maximum of five years, after which period, the data will be destroyed.

#### **10. Who should you contact for further information?**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 896 2200.

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY SCHOOL**

**RESOURCE TEACHER'S CONSENT FORM**

**Learning and experiences of diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)  
in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán // Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves an interview that will not be longer than 45 to 60 minutes and a questionnaire.

I understand that I give permission to the researcher to perform observations in the classroom and the yard.

I understand that I give permission to the researcher to review the following school documents;

Teacher's plan

Child Individual Educational Plan

Child assessment records

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

Yes       No

If I do not give permission for my interview to be recorded, I give permission for the researcher to take notes,

Yes       No       N/A

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the dissertation, journals and conferences.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing,

I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Children's research centre, secured until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for in the Children's Research Centre for two years from the date of the exam board.

I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

I understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

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Teacher's name	Signature	Date
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Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

---

Researcher's name

Signature

Date

**APPENDIX G - SNA INFORMATION FORM AND CONSENT FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION FORM (SNA)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to do so you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on \_\_\_\_\_.

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to enjoy adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study aims to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academic). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study aims to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

The study's pupil selection will be based on the following inclusion criteria:

For the purpose of this research this inclusion criterion considers any child diagnosed with ASD independently of their category, level of severity, level of ability to communicate, or the type of co-occurring problems (Battle, 2013),

Children with ASD who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class in junior primary school,

Children aged 5 to 9 years old, and

Children with ASD who have the support of a SNA.

## **2. What will taking part involve?**

If you agree to participate in this study, the following tasks will be involved;

The researcher will provide you with a demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire has the purpose of providing the researcher information on your professional experience and background, the questionnaire can be completed in your own time and it should not take you more than five minutes.

Additionally, you will be interviewed once. The interview will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and will take place within the school premises. With the interview, the researcher aims to know your opinion and feedback on the following areas:

- a) Your understanding and experience of the inclusion of children with ASD in mainstream primary school,
- b) Your understanding of inclusion,
- c) Beliefs and perception of the child with ASD' learning outcomes both; academic and social,
- d) Your opinion on the best practice when educating children with ASD in mainstream schools,
- e) Your beliefs about the benefits on the child with ASD in mainstream school,
- f) Your beliefs and opinions on the way forward with the inclusion of children with ASD in a mainstream school, and
- g) How to best communicate with the child with ASD.

In addition, the researcher will observe the child with ASD under your care in the classroom and the yard. During the observation, the researcher will be at the back of the classroom with as minimum intrusion as possible, any information related with you will be kept confidential. The aim of this observation is to gain insight into the child's interaction and reactions in the classroom during literacy and numeracy, as well as in the yard.

### **3. Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been asked to take part in the study because you as special needs assistant (SNA) of a child with ASD know well how they are doing at school, their progress and their experience in mainstream education. Hence, your input in this study is relevant since it will confer your views and opinion about children with ASD's mainstream school experience, as well as knowledge with regards to their academic and social learning.

### **4. Do you have to take part?**

Your participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences if you decide not to take part in this research. You may omit individual responses. For example, if you are unhappy with some questions and for any reason you don't want to answer them you are not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, you can withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, this includes the withdrawal of your data after participation. Which means that you can stop your participation or the use of your data at any time. If you decide to withdraw from this research you must inform the researcher by email ([garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)). All information collected from your participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

### **5. What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks to your involvement in this research and you will not benefit directly from it. However, the results from this study may provide some insight on how children with ASD are learning in junior primary mainstream schools. These results could lead to informed changes in policy and practice.

## **6. Will taking part be confidential?**

During the study, the researcher will interview you. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, schools, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances, the identities of the participant will be disclosed. You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.

## **7. The limits of confidentiality**

Children with ASD are considered a vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. The researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related to any type of abuse or concern that may be disclosed during the interview. The information will be reported to the authorities following the Health Service Executive (HSE)' protocol and the National Guidelines on Child Protection: Children First (1999). You will be informed and involved in this process where necessary, however children welfare and protection will always come first.

## **8. How will information you provide be recorded, stored and protected?**

During the interview, the information you provide will be audio recorded or notes will be taken. You may confirm if you would like your interview to be audio recorded or not by ticking the appropriate box in the Consent Form. If you agree for the interview to be audio recorded, your name will be anonymised on the transcripts to guarantee your anonymity. If you do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded, you will be asked for permission to allow the researcher to take notes. Your name and identifying information will not be

associated with any part of the research's written report. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Any information and data collected about you during the study will be anonymised. The information will be stored in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher has access, in the Children research centre at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. Any electronic files that may be stored in any devices within Trinity or outside of Trinity College Dublin, will be password protected and anonymised to protect participant's information. Any data stored in the personal computer of the researcher will be password protected. Only the researcher and supervisor, if needed, will have access to the data. The data storage and the grounds for continued storage will be reviewed within 12 months of compilation of the data, with a maximum storage duration of 5 years. Any data that will no longer be required, during the course of the study or after compilation of the data, will be destroyed or erased in a safe and secure way.

### **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal articles written as a result of this project, under no circumstances will third parties, school, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session at the school, at the end of the data analysis during which the researcher will present you with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session will provide you with the opportunity to examine how your contributions to the study have been used and interpreted. You have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time during the study and after data has been analysed. The study data will be kept for a maximum of five years, after that period, the data will be destroyed.

## **10. Who should you contact for further information?**

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 896 2200.



**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT FORM (SNA)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán      Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves an interview that will not be longer than 45 to 60 minutes and a questionnaire.

I understand that I give permission to the researcher to perform observations in the classroom and the yard.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

Yes       No

If I do not give permission for my interview to be recorded, I give permission for the researcher to take notes,

Yes       No

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the dissertation, journals and conferences.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing,

I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Children's research centre, secured until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for in the Children's Research Centre for two years from the date of the exam board.

I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

I understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

_____	_____	_____
SNA's name	Signature	Date

Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

_____	_____	_____
Researcher's name	Signature	Date

**APPENDIX H - TEACHER INFORMATION FORM AND CONSENT FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION FORM (TEACHER)**

**Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to do so, you need to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

This research has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The school's Board of Management reviewed and approved this research to take place in the school on \_\_\_\_\_.

## **1. Who I am and what this study is about:**

This research project is being carried out by Eva García Albarrán, a Ph.D. student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin.

The number of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in the last decade and as a result, the number of children with ASD included in mainstream schools has also increased at a rapid rate. However, information related to how children with ASD are progressing at school is limited. In order to provide children with ASD with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to enjoy adequate inclusion and participation in society, it is important to know how they are learning at school. Therefore, this study aims to identify the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. In order to achieve this, the study aims to know and understand children's outcomes in their reading and mathematics (academic). In addition, it aims to gain knowledge related to how they make friends and socialise (social). Furthermore, the study aims to understand the teaching strategies used with children with ASD, and in general, their educational provision in junior primary mainstream school.

The study's pupil selection will be based on the following inclusion criteria:

For the purpose of this research this inclusion criterion considers any child diagnosed with ASD independently of their category, level of severity, level of ability to communicate, or the type of co-occurring problems (Battle, 2013),

Children with ASD who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class in junior primary school,

Children aged 5 to 9 years old, and

Children with ASD who have the support of a SNA.

## **2. What will taking part involve?**

If you agree to participate in this study, the following tasks will be involved;

The researcher will provide you with a demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire has the purpose of providing the researcher information on your professional experience and background, the questionnaire can be completed in your own time and it should not take you more than five minutes.

You will be interviewed once between weeks three and four. The interview will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and will take place within the school premises. With the interview, the researcher aims to know your opinion and feedback on the following areas:

- a) Your understanding and experience of including children with ASD in a mainstream primary school,
- b) Your understanding of inclusion,
- c) Your pedagogical approach,
- d) Your beliefs and perception of the child with ASD academic and social' learning outcomes,
- e) Your opinion on the best practice when educating children with ASD in mainstream schools,
- f) Your beliefs about the benefits of placing the child with ASD under study in mainstream school,
- g) Your beliefs and opinions on the way forward with the inclusion of children with ASD in a mainstream school, and
- h) How best to communicate with your pupil/s with ASD.

In addition, the researcher will seek your permission for the following tasks:

The researcher will need to review some school documents, nay, child's teacher's plan, child's individual educational plan and child's school assessment records. In addition,

parent's permission will be sought to review their child's individual educational plan and child's assessment records.

An observation period will need to take place in your classroom and in the yard. During the observation the researcher will be at the back of the classroom with minimum intrusion and you will decide the best time and day where the observation can take place as well as the duration. The aim of the observation by the researcher is to gain insight into the classroom, particularly when pupils are learning about literacy and numeracy, and in the yard when they interact with other children. The researcher will provide you with the observation checklist for your perusal, you can provide the researcher with any comments or guidance on the form.

Permission is sought in the consent form attached.

### **3. Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been asked to take part in the study, because there is one pupil in your classroom that has been asked to take part in this research, as the child's teacher you know best how they are learning at school, their progress and their experience in mainstream education. Hence your input in this study is relevant, since it will confer your views and opinion about children with ASD's mainstream school experience, their learning outcomes and the pedagogical approaches used with these children.

### **4. Do you have to take part?**

Your participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences for you if you decided not to take part. You may omit individual responses, for example if you are unhappy with some questions and for any reason you don't want to answer them you are not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, you can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This includes the withdrawal of your data after participation. Which means that you can stop your

participation or the use of your data at any time. All information collected from your participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

#### **5. What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no anticipated risks related to your involvement in this research and you will not benefit directly from it. However, the results from this study may provide some insight on how children with ASD are learning in junior primary mainstream schools. These results could lead to informed changes in policy and practice.

#### **6. Will taking part be confidential?**

During the study, the researcher will interview you. The information collected from the interviews will be anonymised and stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Extracts of data may be used in the final report, academic articles and conference presentations but under no circumstances will identities of third parties, school, carers or children be made known. In addition, direct quotations may be used in the research report but under no circumstances will the identities of the participants be disclosed. You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time. However, in the extremely unlikely event that illicit activity is reported to the researcher during the interview, the researcher is obliged to report it to the appropriate authorities.

#### **7. The limits of confidentiality**

Children with ASD are considered a vulnerable population in research, therefore all necessary care is taken in order to preserve their integrity, protection and welfare. The researcher's duty of care involves the obligation to report any information related to any type of abuse or concern that may be disclosed during the interview. The information will be reported to the authorities following the Health Service Executive (HSE)' protocol and the National Guidelines on Child Protection: Children First (1999). You will be informed and



involved in this process where necessary, however child welfare and protection will always come first.

### **8. How will information you provide be recorded, stored and protected?**

During the interview, the information you provide will be audio recorded or notes will be taken. You may confirm if you would like your interview to be audio recorded or not by ticking the appropriate box in the Consent Form. If you agree for the interview to be audio recorded, your name will be anonymised on the transcripts to guarantee your anonymity. If you do not agree for the interview to be audio recorded, you will be asked for permission to allow the researcher to take notes. Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the research's written report. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential.

Any information and data collected about you during the study will be anonymised. The information will be stored in a locked cabinet, to which only the researcher has access, in the Children research centre at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. Any electronic files that may be stored in any devices within Trinity or outside of Trinity College Dublin, will be password protected and anonymised to protect participant' information. Any data stored in the personal computer of the researcher will be password protected. Only the researcher and supervisor, if needed, will have access to the data. The data storage and the grounds for continued storage will be reviewed within 12 months of compilation of the data, with a maximum storage duration of 5 years. Any data that will no longer be required during the course of the study or after compilation of the data will be destroyed or erased in a safe and secure way.

### **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The documentation of the findings will be published and disclosed to a body of examiners in Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, as well as external examiners. There may be lectures, Ph.D. theses, conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal

articles written as a result of this project, under no circumstances will third parties, school, carers or children be identified.

The researcher will hold a debriefing session, at the school, at the end of the data analysis during which the researcher will present you with the data collected and a summary of the findings. This session, will provide you with the opportunity to examine how your contributions to the study have been used and interpreted. You have the right under the Freedom of Information Act (2014), to access your data at any time during the study and after data has been analysed. The study data will be kept for a maximum of five years, after which period, the data will be destroyed.

#### 10. Who should you contact for further information?

Thank you for taking your time to read this information form. If you have any questions about this research you can ask the researcher or supervisor to seek further clarification and information. You can call the researcher at the following mobile number, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie). Otherwise, you can email the researcher's supervisor Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie), or call to the following number, (01) 896 2200.

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY SCHOOL**

**TEACHER'S CONSENT FORM**

**Learning and experiences of diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)  
in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán // Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves an interview that will not be longer than 45 to 60 minutes and a questionnaire.

I understand that I give permission to the researcher to perform observations in the classroom and the yard.

I understand that I give permission to the researcher to review the following school documents;

Teacher's plan

Child Individual Educational Plan

Child assessment records

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

Yes       No

If I do not give permission for my interview to be recorded, I give permission for the researcher to take notes,

Yes       No

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the dissertation, journals and conferences.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand the researcher's duty of care and the limit of confidentiality with regards to any issue concerning children's protection and wellbeing,

I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Children's research centre, secured until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for in the Children's Research Centre for two years from the date of the exam board.

I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher, Eva García Albarran – Mb, (086) 804 9229 or email at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie).

Supervisor, Dr. Edurne Garcia Iriarte -Tel, (01) 8962200, or email at [iriartee@tcd.ie](mailto:iriartee@tcd.ie).

I understand that any effort will be undertaken to ensure anonymity in any write up and any other project outputs.

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Teacher's name	Signature	Date
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Researcher's statement

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

---

Researcher's name

Signature

Date

## APPENDIX I - FIRST LETTER CONTACT TO SCHOOL

Dear,

**Ref: Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

I hope that this email finds you well and enjoying a successful school year. My name is Eva Garcia Albarran, and I am a doctoral student at the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College of Dublin. I am conducting a research study that is looking to gain knowledge and awareness of the educational provision of children with ASD in junior primary schools in Ireland. The study is going to examine the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD who are placed in mainstream classes. In addition, the study is looking to gain awareness and understanding of the pedagogical approaches used by teachers to facilitate the learning outcomes of children with ASD placed in a mainstream setting. The sample from which I seek to obtain data has the criteria of been a catholic school with at least one child with ASD in junior primary mainstream school, who spends most of the school hours in a mainstream class and who has the support of an SNA.

If you have pupils with ASD in junior primary school who spend most of their school day in a mainstream class, your school is eligible to take part in this research. In that case, I would be more than grateful if we could arrange a meeting, at your earliest convenience, to discuss the study in detail and provide you with all the information to help you to make a decision whether to take part in this research.

I would like to thank you in advance for your time,

Yours sincerely

---

Eva Garcia Albarran

Structured PhD Child and Youth Research

Children's Research Centre

Trinity College of Dublin

[garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)

086 8049 229



## APPENDIX J - SCHOOL INTRODUCTION LETTER

**Ref: Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

Dear,

I hope that this letter finds you well and enjoying a successful school year. My name is Eva Garcia Albarran, and I am a doctoral student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College of Dublin. I am conducting a research that is looking to gain knowledge and awareness on the educational provision of children with ASD in junior primary schools in Ireland. The study is going to examine the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD who are placed in mainstream classes. In addition, the study is looking to gain awareness and understanding of the pedagogical approaches used by teachers to enhance the learning outcomes of children with ASD placed in a mainstream setting. The sample from which I seek to obtain data has the criteria of been a catholic school with at least one child with ASD in junior primary mainstream school, who spends most of the school hours in a mainstream class and who has the support of an SNA. Since your school meets these criteria, I'm inviting you to take part in this study.

This research is under review/has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy's Research Ethics Committee / on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The rationale of this study is grounded on the results from the empirical data reviewed associated with the inclusion of children with ASD in mainstream schools in Ireland and Internationally. The review of the literature has shown that children with ASD present difficulties in communication, social interaction and flexible imaginative functions (with restricted and repetitive behaviours and interests), which makes their adjustment and integration to mainstream schools challenging. Due to the rapid growth of children diagnosed with ASD' prevalence, the challenge for schools is to acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills and pedagogical techniques to successfully accommodate children with ASD in

mainstream primary schools. To date, very little is known on how children with ASD are faring in the early years of primary schools; their learning outcomes or the pedagogical approaches used to enhance their learning. Thus, the aim of the present research is to gain knowledge and awareness on how children with ASD are faring in junior primary mainstream schools.

Four to six schools in the Dublin area will take part in this study, the researcher aims to be at each school for a total of 4 weeks, conducting interviews, observations and document analysis. Document analysis and observation will take place during the first 2 weeks, semi-structured interviews will take place in weeks 3 and 4.

In order to help you make an informed decision on whether to participate, additional details and information regarding the research methods used in this study are below. This study will use interviews, observation and review of documents' methods, in order to gather the study information.

1. Observation will take place in, a) classroom and b) yard with minimal intrusion as possible.

Observation is looking to gain information on children behaviour and learning, both academic and social, in the classroom and yard. In addition, teacher's observation aim to gain knowledge on their pedagogical approaches with children with ASD in the areas of numeracy and literacy.

2. Documents to be reviewed are;
  - a) School policies,
  - b) Teacher's plan,
  - c) Child's individual educational plan and
  - d) Child's school assessment records.

The documentary review will take place at a mutually agreed time and place. Document analysis is looking to complement the interview and observation data by reviewing the school inclusion policies, teaching plan, child's IEP and child's educational assessment.

3. A demographic questionnaire, to gain knowledge of principal, teachers and SNAs' experience and background will be provided. The questionnaire will not take you more than five minutes to complete and can be returned to the researcher at their earlier convenience.
4. The interview method is going to solicit responses from;
  - a) Principals,
  - b) Teachers,

- c) Resource Teacher,
- d) SNAs,
- e) Parents and,
- f) Children with ASD

I would be interested in interviewing you and your staff; teacher, resource teacher and SNA, as well as the child with ASD' parents for approximately 45 to 60 minutes, children's interview duration will be 30 minutes. The interviews will occur at a mutually agreed-upon location and time that is convenient for the participants.

If you are willing to participate in the study, the procedure to follow is to submit the study to your school Board of Management. Once the study has been approved by your Board of Management and before any participants consent to the study, I would request to have an introductory meeting with parents and staff to inform them of the study and to allow any questions before considering their participation in the study. This meeting can take place on a one to one basis, if need it and it will only take 15 minutes of their time.

Following this step, all participants in the study will sign a consent form indicating their agreement to participate prior to their involvement in the study. All participants will be free to refuse to answer any questions, as well as to withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me through personal conversation, written communication, phone call, or email.

At the end of the study, after I analyse the data, if you would like to learn about the outcomes of the study, I would arrange to have a debriefing session to disclose my findings with all participants in your school, when you consider adequate.

Your time and cooperation are very much appreciated, if you have any questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me;

Email; [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)  
Mobile; 086 8049 229

Your time and cooperation are very much appreciated. Thank you for considering my invitation to participate in the study.

With kind regards,

---

Eva Garcia Albarran  
Structured PhD Child and Youth Research  
Children's Research Centre  
Trinity College of Dublin  
Email; [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)  
Mobile; 086 8049 229

## APPENDIX K- SCHOOL BOARD OF MANAGEMENT LETTER

Eva Garcia Albarran  
Children research centre  
30 Anglesea Street  
Trinity College of Dublin,  
The University of Dublin  
Dublin 2

The Board of Management

Dear Principal and Board of Management,

**Ref: Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

I hope that this letter finds you well and enjoying a successful school year. My name is Eva Garcia Albarran, and I am a doctoral student at the Children research centre and the School of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College of Dublin. This research was approved by the school of Social Work and Social Policy' Research Ethics Committee, in Trinity College of Dublin, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

I am taking this opportunity to present you the research I am working on with the aim to seek your permission to undertake the present research at your school.

I am conducting a research study that is looking to gain knowledge and awareness of the educational provision for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland. The study is going to identify the academic and social learning of children with ASD placed in mainstream classes. In addition, the study is looking to gain awareness and understanding of the pedagogical approaches exercised by

teachers to enhance the learning outcomes of children with ASD placed in a mainstream settings. The sample from which I seek to obtain data has the criteria of being a catholic school with at least one child with ASD in junior primary mainstream school, who spend most of the school hours in a mainstream class and who has a SNA.

Four to six schools in the Dublin area will take part in this study, the researcher aims to be at each school for a total of 4 weeks, documentary analysis and observation will take place in the first 2 weeks, semi-structured interviews will take place in weeks 3 and 4. The field work in total is expected to take place from May 2016 to December 2016. The rationale of this study is grounded on the results from the empirical data reviewed in relation with the inclusion of children with ASD in mainstream schools in Ireland and Internationally. The review of the literature has shown that children with ASD present difficulties in communication, social interaction and imagination, which makes their adjustment and integration to mainstream schools challenging. Due to the rapid growth of children diagnosed with ASD' prevalence, the challenge for schools is to acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills and pedagogical techniques, to successfully accommodate children with ASD in mainstream primary schools. To date, very little is known on how children with ASD are faring in the early years of primary schools; their learning outcomes or the pedagogical approaches used to facilitate their learning. Thus, the aim of the present research is to gain knowledge and awareness of how children with ASD are faring in junior primary mainstream schools.

The methods used in this study to gain the study information will be interviews, classroom and yard observation by the researcher and review of documents. Observation will take place in the classroom and yard with minimal intrusion as possible. Observation is looking to gain information on children's behaviour and learning, both academic and social in the classroom and yard. In addition, teacher's observation aim to gain knowledge on their pedagogical approaches with children with ASD in the areas of numeracy and literacy.

The documentation to be reviewed are; a) school policies, b) teacher's plan, c) child's individual educational plan and d) child's school assessment records. The documentary review will take place at a mutually agreed time and place.

The interview method is going to solicit responses from principals, teachers, SNAs, parents and children with ASD. Specifically, I would seek to interview your staff, child and parents for approximately 45 to 60 minutes at a mutually agreed-upon location that is convenient for the participants. A demographic questionnaire, to gain knowledge of principal, teachers and SNAs' experience and background will be provided. The questionnaire will not take more than five minutes to complete and can be returned to the researcher at their earliest convenience.

Children with ASD involvement in the study will be treated with extreme care in order to avoid any distress to the child. the present research is going to use a different method of communication that will be adapted to each child' needs, those are; a) photographs of locations and situations related to the classroom and yard and b) children's drawing of themes related to classroom, yard, learning and friendship.

The protocol interview will be divided into four sections a) school and home, b) classroom, c) yard and d) relationships. The child will be informed by the teacher prior to the interview, with the purpose to prepare the child for the interview but also to reiterate their voluntary participation. Informed consents and assents would have been reviewed and signed prior to this visit, the however researcher will assent the child before the interview reassuring him/her that they can stop the interview at any time.

Social stories will be used to explain to the child a) the interview procedure, b) the process of the interview, c) introducing the person interviewing, d) the duration of the interview and c) the stop card. Social stories™ are useful to inform and to reassure the child with ASD, preventing children's anxiety to the unknown and the unpredictable. In addition a writing schedule will be used with symbols introducing the interview schedule, adding a tick

when the task is finalised, again the stop card will be introduced to allow the child to finish the interview at their request.

Questions will be explained to the child beforehand, to prepare the child for what to expect, responses will not be requested to the child, allowing them to have space to think about their answer. Questions will be repeated along the four sections of the interview with a twofold purpose, a) to confirm the child has understood the question and b) to generate trustworthy data.

Although the literature has shown that having the presence of a SNA or parent may affect the fluency of the communication process, it has been also confirmed that children with ASD may feel more relaxed in the presence of the researcher if there is a familiar face with them. Therefore, a second person in the room will be acceptable when interviewing the child, if the child does prefer this option.

Once agreement and permissions have been granted at the school, all participants will sign a consent form indicating their agreement to participate prior to their involvement in the study. Privacy and confidentiality of sites and participants will be protected following a list of pseudonyms in where schools and participants' names will be changed. Location of schools will not be disclosed in any study documentation and names of schools and participants will be altered. A matrix list will be compiled with the correct names and pseudonyms to avoid any mistakes in data collection, however once the report is been completed the matrix will be destroyed. All participants will be free to refuse to answer any question, as well as withdraw from the study at any time by contacting the researcher through personal conversation, written communication, phone call, or email. Once the research data have been analysed, the researcher will hold a meeting at the school to inform school staff, parents and children on the results of the study.

I will be more than grateful if you could consider this research for your review. Gaining knowledge and awareness of children with ASD's outcomes in junior primary



schools and the pedagogical approaches used by teachers to enhance their academic and social learning, could provide an insight into how the educational provision is happening in Ireland. This information could lead to a better understanding of what work best for children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland, what areas need more attention, and/or what support schools need to cater for children with ASD. In addition, the results from this study could influence policy and provision for children with ASD education in the early years of mainstream setting.

I have attached with this letter the study documentation for your perusal, including;

- Participants' Information Forms
- Participants' Consent/assent Forms
- Observation checklist
- Document analysis checklist
- Demographic Questionnaire

Your time and cooperation are very much appreciated. Thank you for considering this research for review, should you need any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,

---

Eva Garcia Albarran  
Structured PhD Child and Youth Research  
Children's Research Centre  
Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin  
Email; [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)  
Mobile; 086 8049 229

## APPENDIX L- PARENTS INFORMATION LETTER AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Eva Garcia Albarran  
Children research centre  
30 Anglesea Street  
Trinity College of Dublin, the  
University of Dublin  
Dublin 2

### **Ref; Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study**

Dear Parents,

I hope that this letter finds you well, my name is Eva Garcia Albarran and I am a doctoral student at the Children's Research Centre and the School of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. This study was approved by the school of social work and social policy's Research Ethics Committee, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

As the principal of your school has already mentioned to you, I am conducting a research that is looking to gain knowledge and awareness of the educational provision for children with ASD in junior primary schools in Ireland. The study is going to examine the academic and social learning of children with ASD who are placed in mainstream classes. Additionally, the study is looking to gain awareness and understanding of the pedagogical approaches exercised by teachers to enhance the learning outcomes of children with ASD placed in a mainstream setting.

The sample from which I seek to obtain data has the criteria of being a catholic school with at least one child with ASD in junior primary mainstream school, who spends most of the school hours in a mainstream class and who has the support of a SNA.

You and your child are invited to take part in the study, your participation is completely voluntary, which means that there will be no negative consequences for you or your child if you decide not to take part in this research. If you decide to take part, you may omit individual responses in the interview; for example, if you are unhappy with some interview questions and for any reason you don't want to answer them, you are not obliged to give an answer.

In addition, you can withdraw from the study at any time, without any consequences, including the withdrawal of your data after participation, which means that you can stop your participation or the use of your data at any time. All information collected from your participation in the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

In order to help you make an informed decision on whether to participate, additional details and information regarding the research methods used in this study are described in this letter.

This research will collect the study information throughout interviews, observation and review of some documents.

You and your child will be asked to be interviewed, interviews will be performed in the school premises, or at a location convenient for you and it will be arranged at a mutually agreed-upon time. Your interview will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Your child's interview will be about 30 minutes, and your child will have the option to be accompanied of his SNA.

If you are interested in taking part in this research, please complete the form enclosed with this letter and return to the school at your earliest convenience. An information meeting will be held in the school to provide further information about the study, the researcher will contact you with regards to this meeting in due course.

If you have any questions regarding this study, I would be more than happy to meet you personally to discuss further, if you wish to do so, you may contact me by phone or email at the information provided below,

Email: [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)

Mobile: 086 8049 229

Your time and cooperation are very much appreciated. Thank you for considering my invitation to participate in the study.

With kind regards,

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Eva Garcia Albarran  
Structured PhD Child and Youth Research  
Children's Research Centre  
Trinity College of Dublin

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY  
CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**Title: Learning and experiences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.**

**STUDY CONFIRMATION OF PARTICIPATION' FORM**

I have read the information letter related to the above-mentioned study and I would like to confirm my interest to take part in this research

In order to get more information about the study, I would like to be invited to the research information meeting that will take place at the school.

**Parent's Name;** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date;** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Details;**

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name and Address;**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX M - LETTER PARENTS RELATED TO OBSERVATIONS IN  
CLASSROOM**

**PARENTS INFORMATION LETTER**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**CHILDREN'S RESEARCH CENTRE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

Dear Parents,

I hope that this letter finds you well, my name is Eva Garcia Albarran, and I am a doctoral student at the Children Research Centre and the School of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin. I am conducting a research in the school at present, I will like to inform you that I will be performing some observations in your child's classroom, however, I will not have any type of interaction with your child and no information about your child will be collected or included in this research.

This study has been approved by the School of Social Work and Social Policy' Research Ethics Committee in Trinity College Dublin and at your child's School Board of Management.

If you would like to learn more about this research or you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact the me at [garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)

With kind regards,

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Eva Garcia Albarran  
Structured PhD Child and Youth Research  
Children's Research Centre  
Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin

**APPENDIX N - STUDY WITHDRAWAL FORM**

**STUDY WITHDRAWAL FORM**

**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**Learning outcomes and experiences of children diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study**

**Researcher: Eva García Albarrán**

**Supervisor: Edurne García Iriarte**

Participants can withdraw from the study at any time;

Their data will be withdrawn after they stop their participation, without penalty.

All collected information during the study will be removed immediately and will not be included in the research documentation.

If you do decide to withdraw from the research you must inform the researcher by email ([garciaae@tcd.ie](mailto:garciaae@tcd.ie)), or by signing the withdrawal form and returning the same to the school.

I \_\_\_\_\_ have decided to withdraw my consent to the study entitled; Learning outcomes and experiences of children diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), in junior primary mainstream school in Ireland: A multiple case study.

I have decided to withdraw my consent for the following reasons; (optional)

Participants Name; \_\_\_\_\_

Participant signature; \_\_\_\_\_

Role; \_\_\_\_\_

Date; \_\_\_\_\_

School Name and Address; \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX O - PILOT STUDY, SCHOOL INFORMATION LETTER

Eva Garcia Albarran  
Children research centre  
30 Anglesea Street  
Trinity College of Dublin, the University of Dublin  
Dublin 2

Month, Day,  
X Junior Primary Mainstream School  
Address  
Ireland

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I hope that this finds you well and enjoying a successful school year. My name is Eva Garcia Albarran, and I am a doctoral student at the Children's Research Centre, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. I am conducting a research study that is looking to gain knowledge and awareness on the educational provision of children diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in junior primary schools in Ireland. The study is going to examine the academic and social outcomes of children with ASD who are placed in mainstream classes. In addition the study is looking to gain awareness and understanding of the pedagogical approaches exercised by teachers to enhance the learning outcomes of children with ASD placed in a mainstream setting.

Gaining knowledge and awareness on children with ASD's outcomes and teachers' pedagogical approaches could provide an insight on how the educational provision is happening in Ireland. This information, could lead to a better understanding on what work best for children with ASD in junior primary mainstream schools in Ireland, what areas need more attention, and/or what support schools need to cater for children with ASD. In addition

the results from this study could influence policy and provision for children diagnosed with ASD's education in the early years of mainstream school setting.

The sample from which I seek to obtain data has the criteria of being a catholic school with at least one child diagnosed with ASD in junior primary mainstream school, who spend most of the school hours in a mainstream class and who has the support of an SNA. Since your school meets these criteria, I'm inviting you to take part in this study.

The study I am proposing to you is the preamble of the formal study, this study is called pilot study. The purpose of this pilot study is twofold;

First it will provide the researcher with the opportunity to be familiarized with school' routines and procedures, aiding in gaining experience and knowledge on the best approach when accessing the school and their staff. In the other hand, the researcher will be familiarized with parents and how to best approach them when discussing their children' inclusive learning and school experience. Moreover, the pilot study will help the researcher to work with children with ASD and to acquire, knowledge, experience and a notion on the best approach and tools to be used, when interviewing children with ASD.

Secondly, the pilot study will provide a "test run" for the study methods, allowing for modifications, removal or addition in the a) schools documents that should be reviewed b) questions on the interviews and c) areas of focus in classroom and yard observations. The data collected in the pilot study will not be used in the final analysis and interpretation of findings. However, a detailed description of the pilot study with the experiences and results will be included in this methodology chapter. Confidentiality and privacy of the participants will be protected, using pseudonyms and a matrix to record the original data and the pseudonyms

In order to help you make an informed decision as whether to participate, additional details and information regarding the research methods used in this study are outlined

below. This study will use interviews, observation and review of documents' methods, in order to gather the study information.

Observation will take place in,

- a) classroom and
- b) yard with minimal intrusion as possible.

Observation is looking to gain information on children behaviour and learning, both academic and social in the classroom and yard. In addition, teacher's observation aim to gain knowledge on their pedagogical approaches with children with ASD in the areas of numeracy and literacy.

Documents to be reviewed are;

- a) School policies,
- b) Teacher plan,
- c) Child individual educational plan and
- d) Child school assessment records.

The documentary review will take place at a mutually agreed time and place. Document analysis is looking to complement the interview and observation data by reviewing the school inclusion policies, teaching plan, child's IEP and child's educational assessment.

A demographic questionnaire, to gain knowledge on principal, teachers and SNAs' experience and background will be provided. The questionnaire will not take you more than five minutes to complete and can be returned to the researcher at their earlier convenience.

The interview method is going to solicit responses from;

- Principals,

- Teachers,
- SNAs,
- Parents
- Children with ASD

I would be interested in interviewing you and your staff; teacher and SNA, as well as the child with ASD and parents for approximately 45 to 60 minutes, children's interview duration will be 30 minutes. The interviews will occur at a mutually agreed-upon location and time that is convenient for the participants.

If you are willing to participate in the study, and once the study is approved by the research ethics committee at the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin. The procedure to follow is to submit the study to your school Board of Management, once the study has been approved by your Board of Management and before any participants consent to the study, I would request to have an introductory meeting with parents and staff to inform them of the study and to allow any questions before considering their participation in the study.

Following this step, all participants in the study will sign a consent form indicating their agreement to participate prior to their involvement in the study, which I have attached in this letter for your perusal. All participants will be free to refuse to answer any question, as well as to withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me through personal conversation, written communication, phone call, or email. A withdrawal form is attached with the study documentation for your perusal.

At the end of the study, after I analyse the data, I would request to have a debriefing session to disclose my findings with all participants in your school.

I have attached with this letter an appendix with the study documentation for your perusal, including participants' Information Form and Consents, Interview protocol, Background questionnaire, observation checklists and document analysis checklist.

Your time and cooperation are very much appreciated, if you have any questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me;

Email; garciaae@tcd.ie

Mobile; 086 8049 229

I will follow up this letter, in a couple days of receipt, with a phone call. If it is suitable for you, I would be more than grateful to arrange a meeting with you to discuss the study further. Your time and cooperation are very much appreciated. Thank you for considering my invitation to participate in the study.

With kind regards,

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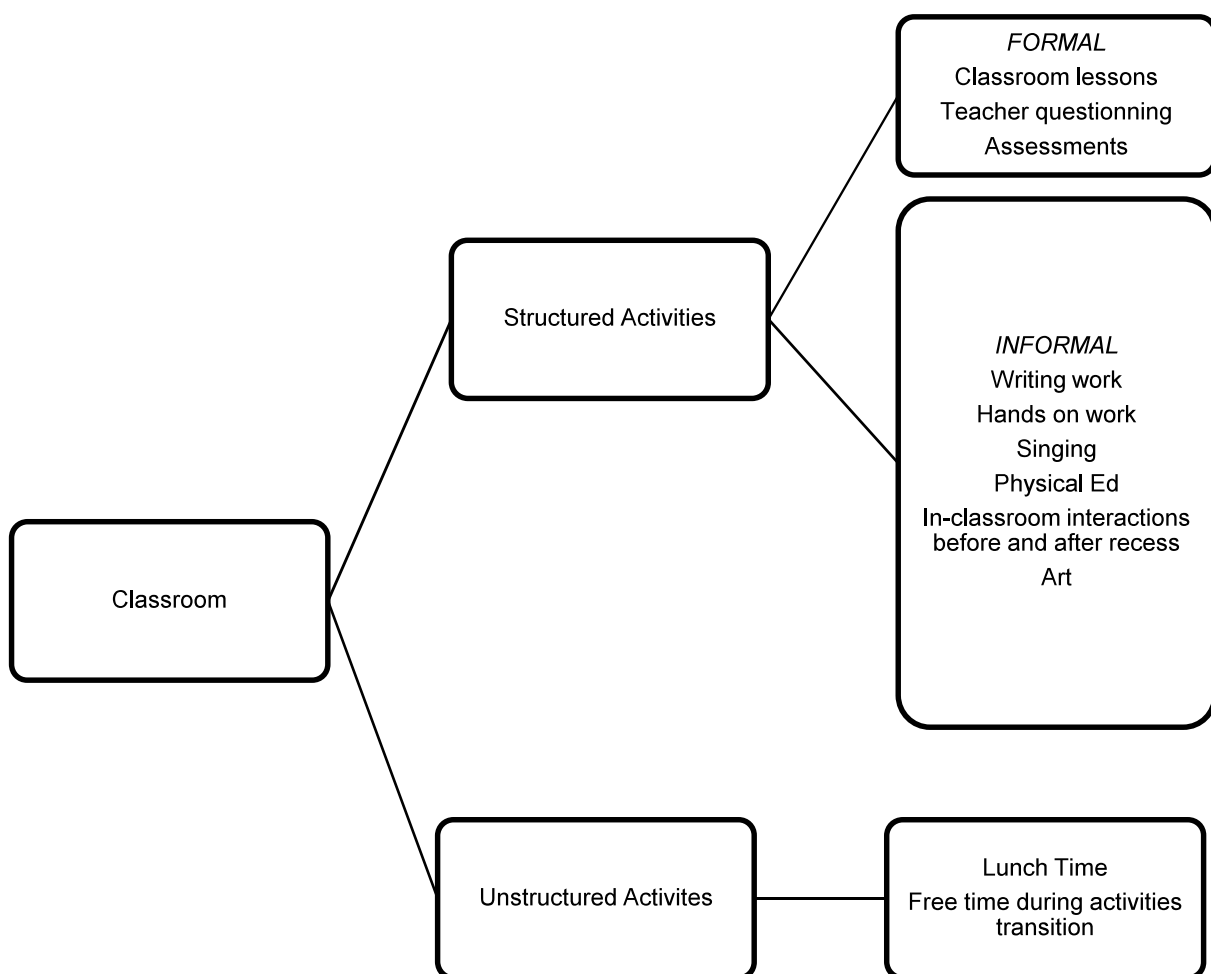
Eva Garcia Albarran  
Structured PhD Child and Youth Research  
Children's Research Centre  
Trinity College of Dublin  
Email; garciaae@tcd.ie  
Mobile; 086 8049 229

## APPENDIX P - SEMI-STRUCTURED NON PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Actors	Areas of observation
Teacher	<p>Communication during structured and unstructured activities</p> <p>Support (verbal / nonverbal)</p> <p>Engagement with child during activities</p> <p>Promotion of child participation in all activities, how is the communication, support provided, contact and interest to facilitate and engage the child participation</p> <p>Accommodations to facilitate the child learning with the group. What is done in the classroom and the playground that enables the child to take part in the activities. What type of accommodations, strategies are put in place i.e., seating child near teacher.</p> <p>Personal interactions, talking, smiling, involving child when in conversation with other pupils, involving child during questioning and writing work.</p> <p>Communication during instruction and writing work, the level of communication, the aim for this communication.</p> <p>Instructional support during instruction and writing work, how is the teacher interacting with the child, what type of strategies are put in place to support the child learning within the group, how is the child instructed during group work and individual work.</p> <p>Classroom organisation, accommodations put in place to enable child's learning. What type of strategies and accommodations are put in place to enable the child learning with peers.</p>
SNA	<p>Communication during structured and unstructured activities. Level of contact and communication, aim of their communications, outcomes from communications, reasons behind communication during instruction and writing work.</p> <p>Personal interactions, reassurance, feedback, contact, chats.</p> <p>Instructional support during activities, type and level of support or instruction provided. Support (verbal / nonverbal), type and level of support in all activities. Strategies and accommodations put in place if any.</p>

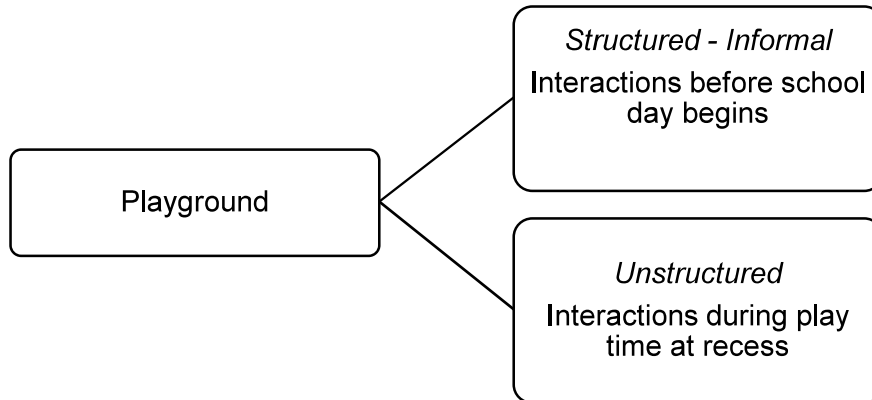
	<p>Engagement with child during activities, with personal or instructional support</p> <p>Level of promotion of child participation and support during activities. How are they helping the child to participate?</p> <p>Accommodations to facilitate interactions with peers and teacher, strategies put in place to enable child to work and play with peers</p> <p>Classroom organisation, accommodations put in place to enable the child to learn in the classroom.</p>
Peers	<p>Engagement with the child during activities in all settings. Contact, initiations, reciprocal contacts.</p> <p>Communication (verbal/nonverbal)</p> <p>Playing together in classroom and playground</p> <p>Support during activities in all settings</p> <p>Working together on tasks in classroom and playground</p> <p>Involving and supporting child when participating in group activities,</p> <p>(Un)acknowledged initiations</p> <p>Social isolation/inclusion</p>
Children with Autism	<p>Engagement with all education actors</p> <p>Communication (verbal/nonverbal)</p> <p>Initiations and reciprocal interactions with all education actors</p> <p>Support (asking for support or providing support during activities with peers)</p> <p>Working together on tasks, with peers in classroom activities</p> <p>Participating in group activities, type and level of engagement during the activity with all education actors</p> <p>(Un)acknowledged initiations with peers, teachers and SNAs</p> <p>Social isolation/inclusion, how does the child tries to get socially involved. How is this involvement.</p>

## APPENDIX Q - CLASSROOM CONCEPTUALISATION OF TERMS





## APPENDIX R - PLAYGROUND CONCEPTUALISATION OF TERMS



**APPENDIX S - SUPPORT CLASSROOM CONCEPTUALISATION OF TERMS**

