Reviewer's report

Title: Participation in everyday activities and quality of life in pre-teenage children living with cerebral palsy in South West Ireland.

Version: 2 Date: 5 August 2008

Reviewer: Jan Willem Gorter

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript has been improved by the authors. The authors took the comments of the reviewers into account and made significant changes in the text. The manuscript is much easier to read and the methods are clearer now.

In the end of the introduction section the authors state the aim and the specific research questions of this study in a sample of children with CP in Ireland and another sample of children without disabilities in mainstream schools.

The overall aim of the study is the comparison of the frequency of participation (not activity, see also the operationalisation of this construct under measures on page 4) between children without disabilities and children with CP. Specific research questions in this study are: 1. does severity of CP impact on participation and 2. (among children with CP) does participation affect Quality of Life.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. abstract: the terms mild, moderate and severe impairment should be either be made very clear (as in the manuscript) or - in my view - be replaced by the term severity of CP, as the major components are the GMFCS and IQ level. Both indicators reflect capacity / performance rather than impairments at the body function/ structure level.

2. Conclusions: The conclusions is confusing and does not read very well. I think that it should be: while increased impairment due to CP restricts participation in the majority of everyday activities, the level of participation has a limited effect on the quality of life of the children with CP in the age 8-12 years.

3. Background, last paragraph, page 3: "The aim of the study..." and further in the text: the authors should be very clear in their terminology and use the term participation instead of activities/ everyday activities as this is the core of the study.

4. Methods, Measures, Page 5, last paragraph: the terms mild, moderate and severe impairment as used in this paper should be replaced by "severity of CP" to get away of the incorrect use of impairment (of body function and structure) and stay closer to the meaning of the GMFCS.

5. The same as comment 4 on page 8: the heading and the terminology should avoid impairment or "impaired GMFCS".
Minor Essential Revisions

1. abstract: the methods should mention the measures used for participation (FPQ) and Quality of Life (KISCREEN).
2. abstract, methods: "effect of imopairments" should be replaced by "effect of severity of CP"
3. Background, 2nd paragraph, line 5 & 6. The introduction of the instruments FPQ and KIDSCREEN should go with a brief introduction and full name of instrument.
4. Background, 2nd paragraph, last sentence: "This age group" what do the authors mean by "this"?
5. Background, 3rd paragraph, line 1: ICF should be introduced by its full name.
6. page 8, under "imprament", 1st paragraph, last sentence: ... it would improve..." I think this statement is not yet evidence based. If so it needs a reference, otherwise the authors can replace would by "might"

Discretionary Revisions:

1. background, 3rd paragraph, 6th line: why the explicit distinction between clinicians and nurses? BPlease clarify or just delete nurses.
2. page 3 1st line. Voorman et al... please add of a child aged 9-16 years.
3. Figure 1: The Title or subtitle should say "in XX (number) children with CP aged 8-12 years"

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'