Reviewer's report

Title: A cross-sectional pilot study of the Scottish Early Development Instrument: A tool for addressing inequality

Version: 2 Date: 26 August 2013

Reviewer: Michael E. Msall

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Minor Essential Revisions

On page 5 please elaborate on the context of school entry. What is the minimal age for children to start P1. What determines if a child attends a preprimer school compared to P1?. What determines if a child is starting p1 at age 6?

On Page 7 first paragraph beginning "within Scotland". Please change grammar from "identify early years' inequalities" to identify inequalities in early childhood."

On Page 7 as part of your phase 2 objectives please clarify what psycholmetric properties and discriminatory ability you are referencing. Specifically are you referring to discriminating communities where children are well prepared for school compared to communities where children and their teachers are managing complex challenges?. Please clarify.

On Page 9 please use a footnote to describe in detail how many children had missing data or special needs.

In addition to rating children's competencies Physical Well Being, Language and Cognitive Skills, and Social and Emotional Development, Teachers expressed their concern about a child struggling to do their school work and if they were needing further assessment, on a waiting list for further assessment or receiving school based supports. Is there any correlation between these summary indicators of overall functioning and the children who are developmentally vulnerable? Please describe.

In the discussion please help the larger audience understand what initiatives are taking place in Scotland to improve children's early health, behavioral and developmental competencies and their caregivers knowledge of child development.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.