Reviewer's report

Title: Hearing screening for school children: Utility of noise-cancelling headphones

Version: 1 Date: 6 April 2013

Reviewer: Stavros Hatzopoulos

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MINOR REVISIONS

Page 3, line 5: The authors state that "Newborn hearing screening cannot detect mild hearing loss, acquired and/ or late-onset hearing loss". Mild hearing loss is defined in a range of 25-40 dB HL, which is identifiable by AABR and AOAEs. The issues of acquired and late-onset impairment are not present at birth therefore cannot be tested. Since the major issue here is the time of testing and not the testing procedures, I suggest to the authors or to eliminate the phase (as well the one before it --screening methods identify major Hearing impairment at birth), or re-formulate it.

Page 4, second paragraph. The main source of noise in schools is the poor acoustic isolation of the buildings, particularly in areas prone to seismic activity (more flexible materials are more prone to low frequency noise). The authors can decide whether to integrate this comment or not.

Page 6, line 7. The noise attenuation estimates at 500 Hz (2 dB) correspond to a small signal change. The 250 Hz is more significant. I suggest reformulate the phrase.

Page 8, line 12. How the correction factors were calculated? By a linear regression or another model?

Page 8, line 13: Although the biological correction procedure is theoretically correct, the small sample size makes the correction sample-dependent. The authors should discuss this issue in the discussion section.

Page 11, Figure 1: It is necessary to show error bars on the noise spectral averages from the 4 tested locations. I suggest to the authors to expand the Y-scale and to present data from 20 dB.

Page 15, line 1: Change "combat" to eliminate

Level of interest: An article of importance 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