Reviewer's report

Title: Effectiveness of the bucco-lingual technique within a school-based supervised toothbrushing program on preventing caries: a randomized controlled trial

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Reviewer: Martijn Rosema

Reviewer's report:

The author reports a clinical study where the effectiveness of a brushing technique is assessed and the respective effect on dental caries. This paper deals with an interesting issue, potentially relevant for preventive dental therapy and primary oral health. I recommend this paper to be published however, there are some comments.

General:
Throughout the manuscript the spelling and word order could improve for better reading. I suggest to upload your manuscript to an editing service, for instance American Journal Experts http://www.journalexperts.com/.

Background:
The study is about a special technique: "the bucco-lingual technique". It would be very useful to describe how this technique is different from other techniques. Please describe in detail how this technique is performed or add a reference to a paper which defines this brushing technique.

Methods:
- It is stated that the study is an 18 month trial. A time line incorporated into the flowchart (fig 1) would make it easier to understand.
- The preschools were randomly assigned to a test and control group but it is unclear how the schools were selected in the first place.
- Please define the primary and secondary response variables.
- The method section would read easier when the ‘topic’ statistics is extracted and put into a separate paragraph. Then a detailed description of the test procedure as well as the control procedure would improve this section. Now it is unclear in what way the two groups differ.
- The study is supposed to be blinded but the dental assistants seem to have their own group (one for the test, one for the control group). This suggests that the study is not completely blinded.

Results:
- It seems remarkable that out of the participants, 68 have two follow-ups, and 86 have three follow-ups. Usually, more subjects would have two follow-ups than
three follow-ups as the drop out rate increases by time.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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'