Author's response to reviews

Title: The Healthy Lifestyles Programme (HeLP), a novel school-based intervention to prevent obesity in school children: study protocol for a randomised controlled trial

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Thank you for your comments and please find our responses below:

We have amended the title to: The Healthy Lifestyles Programme (HeLP), a novel school-based intervention to prevent obesity in school children: study protocol for a randomised controlled trial.

With respect to the reviewer’s comments regarding the psychometric properties of the measurements tools and citing the Chronbach alpha or kappa, we would like to suggest why we do not feel this information would be a useful addition to the reader.

The only questionnaire which we reference the reliability and validity for is the Food Intake Questionnaire or FIQ. The children complete this twice (once for a weekday and for one day of the weekend) to record the types of food and beverages they are consuming. This information will be used to understand how HeLP may (or may not) affect weight status of the children and it is BMI SDS which is the primary outcome measure of the study. The papers reporting the reliability and validity of the FIQ have produced a matrix of twenty items showing the Pearson’s correlation coefficients between energy intake, total fat intake, total sugars intake and fibre intake from a three day food diary against the mean score for foods in the FIQ groups. Given the detail of the matrix we do not feel it would be helpful to the reader to include these in our paper. We cite the papers to show
that the questionnaire has been previously validated in school children of a similar age to those participating in the trial.

We hope this is acceptable to the reviewer and the editor
Yours sincerely
Katrina Wyatt