A cluster-randomised, controlled trial of the impact of Cogmed Working Memory Training on both academic performance and regulation of social, emotional and behavioural challenges

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Abstract

Background
We explored whether school-based Cogmed Working Memory Training (CWMT) may optimise both academic and psychological outcomes at school. Training of executive control skills may form a novel approach to enhancing processes that predict academic achievement, such as task-related attention, and thereby academic performance, but also has the potential to improve the regulation of emotion, social problems and behavioural difficulties.

Methods
Primary school children (Mean age = 12 years, N = 148) were cluster-randomised to complete active CWMT, a nonadaptive/placebo version of CWMT, or no training.

Results
No evidence was found for training effects on task-related attention when performing academic tasks, or performance on reading comprehension and mathematics tasks, or teacher-reported social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Conclusions
CWMT did not improve control of attention in the classroom, or regulation of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.