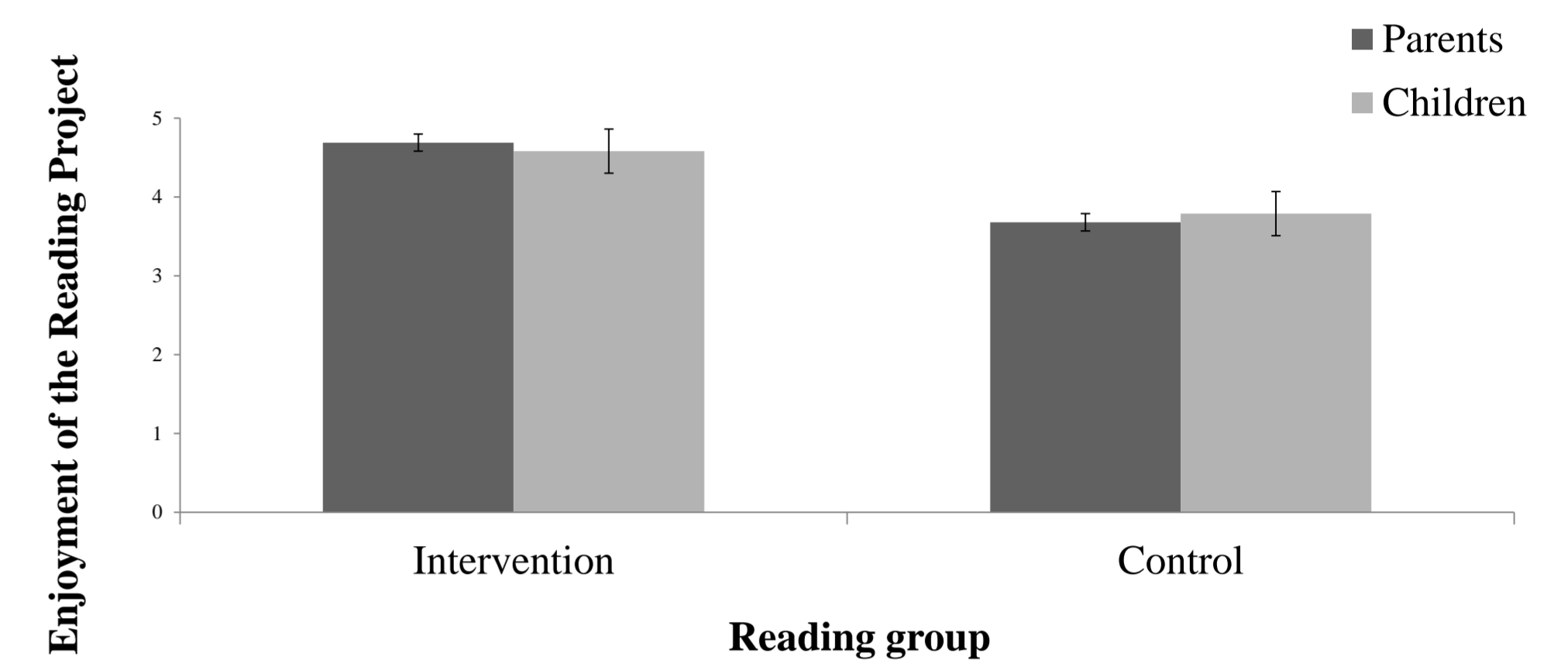


Introduction



Figure 1: A parent-child shared reading group at The Reader in Liverpool.

Evaluation: Caregivers and children in The Reader's Shared Reading group evaluated the reading groups more favourably than caregivers ($t(23.50) = -3.40, p < 0.01, d = 1.08$) and children ($t(43) = -3.26, p < 0.01, d = 0.95$) in the Bookstart 'Story Time' group.



Children who are read to regularly tend to learn language faster, enter school with a larger vocabulary, and become more successful readers in school (Bus et al., 1995; Mol et al., 2008).

However, interventions, especially with caregivers of low socioeconomic status (SES), are not always as effective as they might be, partly because parents may not enjoy reading on their own account and, thus, find shared reading hard to sustain.

The Reader's Shared Reading model is designed to promote reading for pleasure. This model is based on small groups led by trained project workers, coming together weekly to read aloud.

It has been successful at promoting reading among groups who do not normally read (Billington, 2012).

As a result, The Reader's Shared Reading programme has been extended and adapted to families with young children in areas of deprivation in Liverpool.

Method

A randomised control trial (conducted to CONSORT guidelines) evaluated the effectiveness of The Reader's Shared Reading programme on:

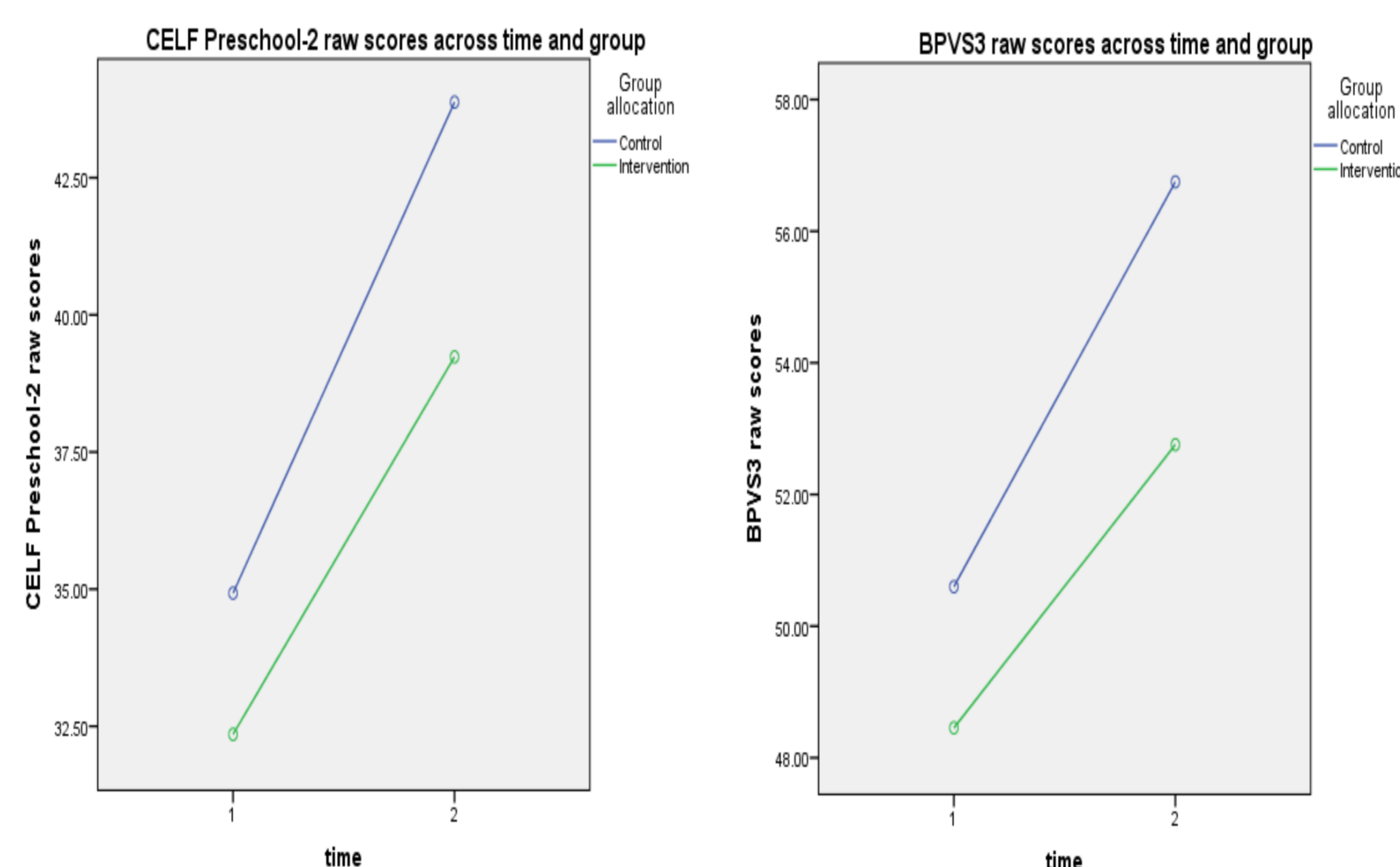
- Children's vocabulary
- Attendance
- Caregiver attitudes to reading

Eighty five primary caregivers and their children (3 to 4 year olds) of low SES were randomly allocated to an 8 week reading group:

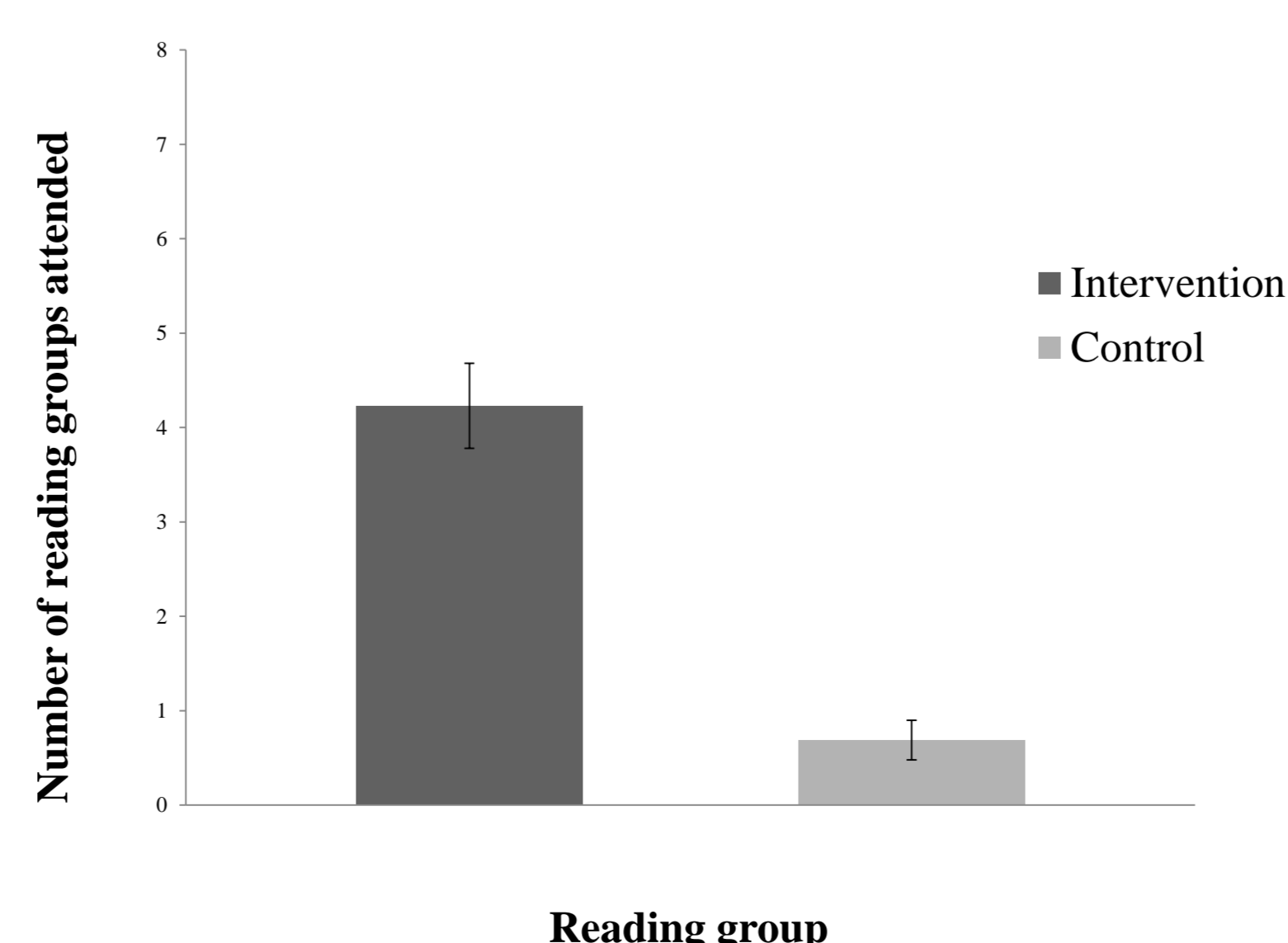
1. The Reader's Shared Reading programme (**intervention**)
2. Local Bookstart Story time library reading group (**control**)

Results

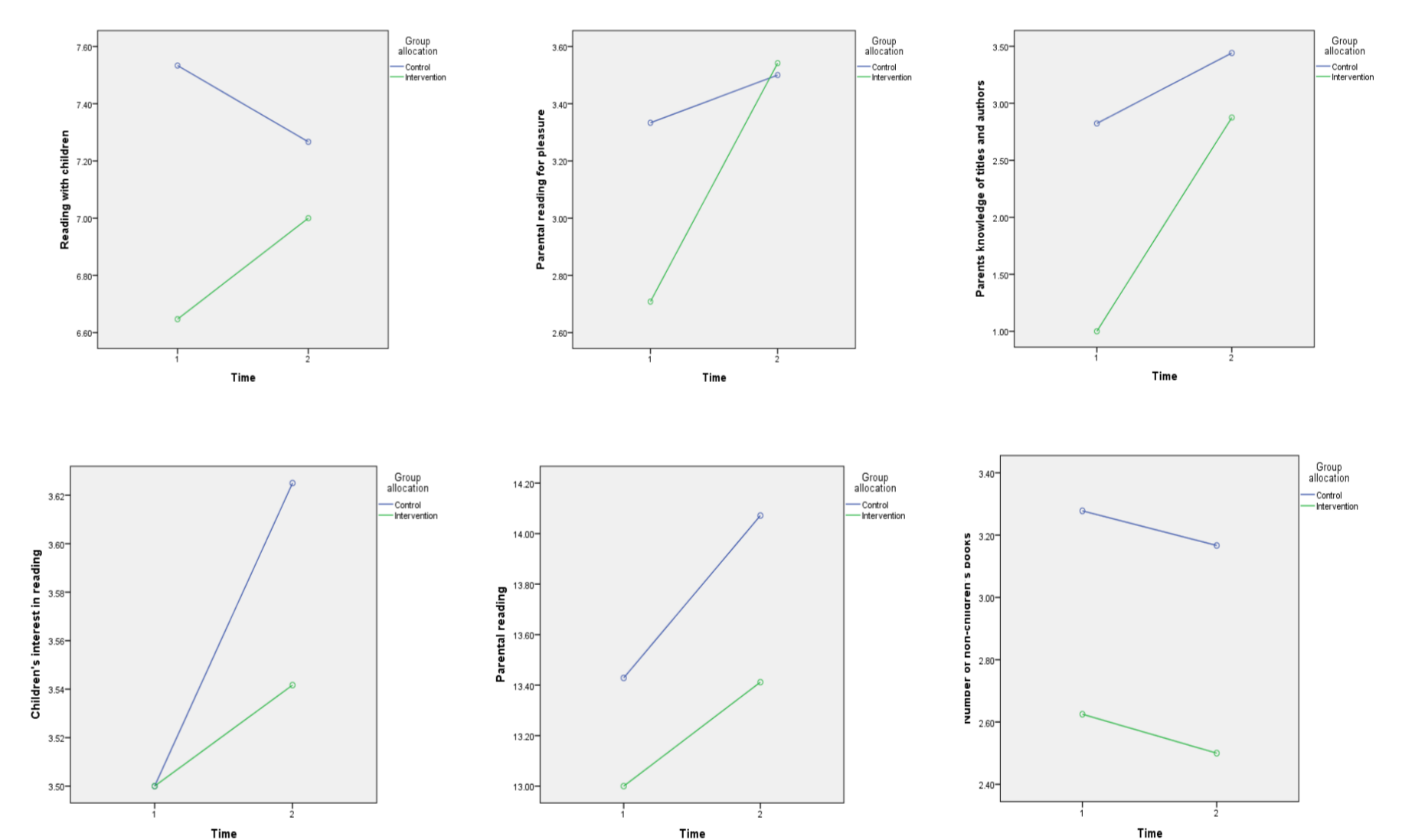
Children's vocabulary: There was no difference in vocabulary growth between the two groups as measured by the CELF Preschool 2 ($F(1, 73) = 1.34, p = 0.25, n_p^2 = 0.02$) or the BPVS3 ($F(1, 71) = 0.65, p = 0.42, n_p^2 = 0.01$). There was no interaction between group and time, on either measure indicating that both groups improved at the same rate.



Attendance: Families who took part in The Reader's Shared Reading programme attended 53% of the reading groups and families in the Bookstart 'Story Time' group attended 9% of the reading groups. This difference in attendance was statistically significant ($t(59.29) = -7.16, p < .001, d = 1.55$), with a large effect size.



Attitudes Behaviours and Knowledge: In the intervention group there were increases which did not reach significance in: frequency of reading with children, number of hours reading for pleasure, and knowledge of books and titles.



Discussion

The Reader's Shared Reading programme had no significant effect on children's vocabulary gains.

However, The Reader's Shared Reading groups were rated more favourably and attended more often than the Bookstart 'Story Time' groups.

The Reader's Shared Reading programme is not long enough, or intensive enough, to have a significant short-term effect on children's language.

In order to establish whether the Reader's Shared Reading programme has the potential to significantly impact on children's vocabulary and caregivers' reading attitudes and behaviours, the programme needs to be evaluated in a more intensive and/or longer intervention, with 6 month and 12 month follow ups.