The Dragon in my Skin
The Dragon In My Skin
Copyright © 2021 Fiona Cowdell

Written by Hazel Gould
Illustrated by Jay Nolan-Latchford

Developed as part of an Eczema Mindlines Knowledge Mobilisation study led by Fiona Cowdell, Professor of Nursing and Health Research, Birmingham City University and Associate, Centre of Evidence Based Dermatology, University of Nottingham. Nurses, other healthcare professionals, children and young people contributed to the development of this book.

This book is accompanied by a digital telling of the story including songs written during a project with Sinfonia Viva, led by Abimaro Gunnell and Hazel Gould, featuring children with eczema and their families in early 2021.

Key Stage 1 curriculum linked resource pack and further information about the project can be found at www.sinfoniaviva.co.uk and www.bcu.ac.uk/the-dragon-in-my-skin
The Dragon
In My Skin
I have a dragon who lives in my skin

It is my dragon and only mine

I don’t like this dragon!

It won’t hurt anyone else but sometimes it hurts me!

I will fight this dragon!
Today my dragon is sleeping
It is quiet and calm
YOU can’t see it
but I know it’s there...
Now I can feel the dragon waking up
It is stretching and yawning
and making my skin tingle and twitch
It's spreading its wings and growing red and angry!
I don't like this dragon!
Now I am feeling worried and scared

my dragon begins to BLARE!
Now my dragon is FURIOUS and WILD and breathing FIRE!

The more ANGRY it gets the more I SCRATCH.
And the more I scratch, the more angry it becomes!

I will scratch all day and all night until I slay this dragon.
But...scratching and fighting won’t make this dragon disappear

Maybe I should take care of it instead...
For really angry days like today I have some special cream - it is cool and smooth. When I put it on I can feel my dragon begin to rest.
For quieter days I have some every-day kind of cream

Like a refreshing drink of water - it keeps the dragon cool
Me and my grown up are the World experts on my dragon

I know what food to eat and how to wash myself and what clothes to wear to keep my dragon happy
I have a dragon who lives in my skin

It is my dragon and only mine.

When I’m grown up my dragon might fly away — but it might live with me my whole life.

It won’t hurt anyone else and if I care for this dragon it won’t hurt me.

I will look after this dragon.
The Dragon in my Skin was commissioned by Sinfonia Viva and Fiona Cowdell in 2020 as part of a knowledge mobilisation project to improve consultation experiences and self-management of childhood eczema by sharing five key, consistent, evidence-based messages:

1. Eczema is more than just dry skin
2. Eczema does not just go away
3. Moisturisers are for every day
4. Steroid creams are okay when you need them
5. You know your child’s eczema best.

The National Eczema Society are pleased to support this educational resource.

Fiona Cowdell is funded by a National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), Knowledge Mobilisation Research Fellowship. This publication presents independent research funded by the NIHR. The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.
#DragonInMySkin
Sometimes it feels like there is a dragon living in our skin that is breathing fire and out of control. When we fight it – it fights back!

This story asks, what happens if we try to look after this dragon? What happens if we make friends with the dragon in our skin...?