



Invitation to our study

Your child has been invited to participate in a new research project conducted by academics at the University of Essex. Please read the following information carefully, it will tell you about the aims of the study, what your child's contribution will involve, and how the data collected will be processed and stored. Do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information. Contact details are given below.

Background on the Project

The purpose of this study is to help students in making decisions about their future education, including the choice of GCSEs and post-16 options, with an emphasis on the paths towards higher education. We aim to better understand the factors which affect children's educational decisions, and specifically the role of information (about future job opportunities, financing, etc.) offered by the school, parents or peer groups. Children will be asked to participate in two online surveys. They may also be randomly chosen to participate in activities aimed at helping them with educational choices and to take part in a free school trip to the main campus of the University of Essex. The surveys and activities will take place at your child's school during school hours.

This project is part of the activities of the Make Happen team in your child's school. Make Happen delivers activities and events to help inform and inspire interest in Higher Education. Make Happen is part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) funded by the Office for Students (OfS) to support young people to access Higher Education. For further information, visit the Make Happen website (www.makehappen.org).

Your child's contribution

The legal basis for using personal data is consent. Your child will be asked whether he/she wants to participate in this study. Before deciding whether or not to participate, your child will be given information about the study and an opportunity to clarify anything that is still unclear. If he/she decides to take part in the study, your child will be invited to complete up to two on-line surveys each lasting about 45 minutes. Some children in some schools will also be invited to participate in two activities taking place during school time, each lasting 45 minutes, as well as a whole day school trip to the campus of the University of Essex. Schools and forms will be chosen randomly by the study team. The surveys (all schools and all Year 10 children) and the activities (some schools and some Year 10 children) will take place during school hours in the academic year 2019/2020 and will be scheduled by the form teacher so as not to interfere with school work.

The study team will link the child survey responses to her/his school records containing your child's test results, post-16 choices (e.g. College or Sixth Form) and other relevant personal information. The child survey responses will also be linked to information from a different survey which we will ask you, as the child's parent or guardian, to take at some point in the academic year 2019/2020 and from a teacher survey. Please, rest assured that your child's survey responses

will always be treated confidentially. The linkage will be done using your child's name and date of birth. Once linked, all names and dates of birth will be stripped from the data.

Your right to Opt Out

Should you not agree that your child can take part in this study, you have the right to opt out before the study starting date. Please contact your school's Make Happen Coordinator or the Principal Investigator of this study to let them know (see contact details below) or simply hand the slip below to your school. You do not have to give a reason. If you decide to opt out your child might still be asked to participate in some of the activities - so that she/he does not feel excluded - but no data will be collected or the data collected and pertaining to your child will be immediately and safely destroyed.

Your child's right to withdraw from the Study

Your child is free to change his or her mind about being part of the study at any time. Participation in the study is completely voluntary and your child can withdraw at any time. Your child does not have to give a reason. If your child chooses to withdraw from the study, all the data associated with him or her will be destroyed and not included in the research. It is also important to stress that your child is free not to answer any questions he or she feels uncomfortable answering.

What happens to your child's survey records afterwards?

The information collected from the online surveys will be analysed by our research team. Names and other identifying details will be collected only for the purpose of linking the responses to the different surveys and to school records, so that we know which surveys were answered by the same child. Any information which can lead to the identification of your child will be kept securely on a secure data drive and will be encrypted. The data is used for research purposes only with no information that may identify your child being included in any of the published results. It will be stored for a maximum period of 5 years since the end of the data collection and then destroyed using secure software or shredding facilities.

Ethical approval

This project has been reviewed on behalf of the University of Essex Social Science Ethics Sub-Committee and had been given approval.

Concerns and complaints

If you have a concern or complaint, please contact in the first instance the Make Happen coordinator associated to your school. If you are still concerned or you think your complaint has not been addressed to your satisfaction, please contact Professor Del Bono, the principal investigator of the study and Director of Research at the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex. If you are still not satisfied, please contact the University of Essex Research Governance and Planning Manager. See all contact details below.

Please keep this information sheet for your records.

Contact details

Make Happen school Coordinator

Nick Dunn

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University of Essex Research Governance and Planning Manager:

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Phone: 01206-873561

If you do not wish your child to participate in the study YOUR LIFE YOUR FUTURE please complete this form.

After reviewing the information sheet for the study YOUR LIFE YOUR FUTURE, I do not want your child to participate in the study. Please email Mr Dunn at ndunn@eastwood.southend.sch.uk with the following details;

Pupils name

Tutor group:

Name of the school:

Parent/legal guardian name:

Date: