

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017

OPT OUT PERMISSION LETTER

Dr Rebecca Grist  
Researcher  
Department for Health  
University of Bath

Dear Parent/Carer

**RE: Important information about a research project being conducted at your child's school  
University of Bath, Research Ethics Approval Committee for Health # EP 16/17 12**

My name is Rebecca and I am a researcher in the Department for Health at the University of Bath. I am currently working on a research project looking at the social and emotional wellbeing of children in Bath and North East Somerset. The study is being supervised by Professor Paul Stallard who is a Professor of Child and Family Mental Health in the department.

Mrs Bull, Headteacher, would like St Edmund's Girls' School to participate in the project. I would be most grateful if you would allow your daughter to take part. We are interested in screening the emotional and social wellbeing of secondary school children in the local area. This is important because there has been increasing recognition that schools have a role to play in supporting school children to be resilient and mentally healthy. One key action for schools is to understand and plan a response to students' emotional health and wellbeing. We would like to therefore provide a wellbeing screen for secondary schools in the local area. We are also interested in exploring how children use technology like smartphones, and their opinions on mobile apps designed for mental health support.

Please read the information sheet attached to this letter. You will see that students will be asked to complete a short online survey which will take around 10 – 15 minutes to complete. All students' answers are highly confidential and anonymous. We will, of course, ask your child whether they assent to participating before beginning. If they do not agree they do not have to do the survey and they can stop at any time if they change their mind while filling it in.

I am an experienced researcher and have several years of experience in conducting this type of research. The University conducts police criminal records checks on all researchers (including me) working with children. Furthermore, our research has been reviewed by the University's Research Ethics Approval Committee for Health to ensure that it meets ethical guidelines and poses minimal risk to participants. Studies involving children are subject to the fullest review by the committee. We have also obtained consent from the school's Headteacher before beginning the study. My colleagues and I generally find that the students really do enjoy taking part.

If you have any further questions about the research, please contact me on: [r.grist@bath.ac.uk](mailto:r.grist@bath.ac.uk) If you have any concerns about the research please contact the principal investigator, Professor Paul Stallard, [p.stallard@bath.ac.uk](mailto:p.stallard@bath.ac.uk)

If you would prefer that your daughter does **NOT** take part, please sign and return the form enclosed.

**If you are happy for your daughter to take part, you do not need to do anything. Unless we receive a signed copy of the slip below by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017 we will assume you are happy for your daughter to take part.**

Yours faithfully

**Rebecca Grist - Researcher  
Department for Health  
University of Bath**

# Parent/ Guardian Information Sheet

## Student wellbeing screen and opinions on mobile apps for mental health

This information sheet explains why we are doing this research and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully together with your child. Please contact me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for reading this.

### **What is this study about?**

We want to ask secondary school students about their emotional and social wellbeing in a confidential and quick way. It is important to help schools understand the wellbeing of students. We would also like to understand more about young people's opinions on smartphone apps to help support their emotional and mental health. This is important to understand because apps are being made but young people may or may not use them.

### **How will my daughter be involved?**

We are asking young people between the ages of 11 – 18 at local secondary schools to fill in our questionnaire. Your child will be given a link to an online questionnaire by their school. The questionnaire covers different questions about wellbeing. This will include questions about how they feel, any feelings of low mood or worries, any drug or alcohol use, home and school life, friends, eating behaviours and whether they have experienced any bullying. They will also be asked about their internet and smartphone use and opinions on smartphone apps for supporting mental health in children and adolescents. This should take about 10 – 15 minutes to complete. All responses will remain confidential and your child will not be identifiable by their answers.

### **Is there anything to be worried about if my child takes part?**

The questions in this study aim to get a picture of the emotional and social health of secondary school children in the local area. The children may be worried about whether or not their answers will be kept private. All answers will remain confidential and no results will be used to personally identify individual children. There is also a list of support services given at the end of the survey, should they feel that they would like to talk to someone independent about anything in the survey.

**The questions in this study are not aimed at making a diagnosis of any emotional or mental health problem. If you are concerned about the emotional or mental health of your child please contact your GP.**

### **Who will have the access to the research information (data)?**

All responses to the questionnaire will be confidential. Any of the data used for the purposes of the study will not be able to identify children individually and any identifiable data will be destroyed at the end of the study. All study information will be kept on a password protected server at the University of Bath, only accessed by the research team. All data will be treated in line with the Data Protection Act 1988.

### **What will happen to the results of this study?**

- We plan to publish the results of this study in scientific journals and may present them at conferences.
- All information will be anonymised and participants will not be identified in the results.
- We will send all schools a summary of our findings at the end of the study.

### **Who has reviewed this study?**

Before any research goes ahead it must be checked by a Research Ethics Committee. They are an independent group of people who are there to protect your interests and make sure that the research is fair and ethical. This project has been checked and given a favourable ethical opinion by the Research Ethics Approval Committee for Health at The University of Bath (EP 16/17 127)

### **Who do I speak to if I have questions about this research?**

If you would like more information or have any questions about this research please let me know. You can contact me via the University at the following address: [r.grist@bath.ac.uk](mailto:r.grist@bath.ac.uk) If you have any concerns about the research please contact the principal investigator, Professor Paul Stallard, [p.stallard@bath.ac.uk](mailto:p.stallard@bath.ac.uk).

### **What do I do next?**

If you are happy for your child to be involved in my research you do not need to do anything. Please keep this information for reference.

**If you do not want your child to be involved in this research, please complete one copy of the attached form and send back to the school by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017:**

**By Hand:** Please ask your daughter to hand in at St Edmund's School reception

**By Email:** Scanned, signed copies can be emailed to Elaine Slack: [eslack@st-edmunds.eu](mailto:eslack@st-edmunds.eu)

**By Post:** Please address to Mrs N Bull, Headteacher, St Edmund's Girls' School, Church Road, Laverstock, Salisbury, SP1 1RD.

Please keep the letter, information sheet and the second copy of the form for your information.

**Thank you for reading this project information sheet**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN OPT-OUT FORM**

**(1<sup>ST</sup> COPY FOR RETURN TO RESEARCHER)**

**Student wellbeing screen and opinions on mobile apps for mental health**

I have read the information about the study and talked about this with my child.

*Please tick the box below.*

**I am not willing** for my child to take part in the study.

Name of child: .....

School: .....

Class: .....

Signature of parent/guardian: .....

Date: .....

**PARENT/GUARDIAN OPT-OUT FORM**

**(2ND COPY FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN RECORDS)**

**Student wellbeing screen and opinions on mobile apps for mental health**

I have read the information about the study and talked about this with my child.

*Please tick the box below.*

**I am not willing** for my child to take part in the study.

Name of child: .....

School: .....

Class: .....

Signature of parent/guardian: .....

Date: .....