

RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Westbourne Academy is taking part in a research project this academic year (2018-19). The school has agreed to take part. Below, we describe why we are doing this research project, and what is involved for you and your child.

Please read the information carefully and keep this sheet for future reference. If you decide that you do **NOT** want to be involved in the project or for your child to be involved in the research, then please follow the link at the end of this letter to withdraw yourself and your child from the project by Tuesday 13th November. **If you are happy to be involved in the project and for your child to be involved in the associated research, you do not have to do anything.** If you change your mind later, you are free to withdraw yourself and your child from this project at any time by also using the link at the end of this letter.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT?

The purpose of the research is to help improve communications between schools and parents/carers. In this project, we will be delivering a programme of weekly supportive SMS communications to parents across primary and secondary schools in Ipswich Opportunity Area. The messages are crafted in consultation with your school. Our project team will evaluate if improving communications between schools and parents can reduce persistent and unauthorised absences, and improve pupil attainment.

We are conducting this study across 10 schools in Ipswich, as a Randomised Controlled Trial. This means half of the participating parents/carers will be randomly chosen to receive weekly text messages. These parents/carers belong to the 'intervention' group. The other half will not receive the SMS messages. These parents/carers belong to the 'control' group. The random allocation of parents/carers is essential to the evaluation as it is the most rigorous way to evaluate the effects of the programme. **At this stage we do not know whether you will or will not receive the weekly text messages**, however, we will be collecting data on the pupils from all schools in the study, regardless of whether they are in intervention or control groups.

WHAT DATA WILL WE RECEIVE ABOUT YOU?

If you are happy to take part, our project team will request parent/guardian name and mobile phone number from Westbourne Academy, which are then used to send weekly informative SMS messages about your child's learning in school.

WHO IS UNDERTAKING THE RESEARCH?

The Ipswich SMS project team is delivering this programme. The project team is made up of two organisations: Behavioural Insights Team (BIT),¹ and EasyPeasy.² BIT leads on the

¹ To find out more about our work, visit:

<https://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/education-and-skills/four-principles-to-support-learners-our-new-reports-from-the-behavioural-research-centre-for-adult-skills-and-knowledge/>

² To find out more, visit: <https://easypeasyapp.com/>

analysis of the results, and EasyPeasy leads on the sending out of the weekly text messages. We also work closely together with Ipswich Opportunity Area and participating schools.

The weekly texts are crafted by our project team, on the basis of your school's curriculum. Project leads at your school will have signed off on the content of the messages, to ensure the SMS are timely and informative. Teachers are not involved in the weekly scheduling of these texts; we are testing if this project can reduce teacher workload.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IF MY CHILD TAKES PART?

If you and your child are happy to take part, Westbourne Academy will provide our project team with the following data about your child: name, gender, date of birth, Free School Meals status, Pupil premium status, English as Additional Language status, unique pupil number, year group, class code, school reference number, and attendance and achievement data. We will also collect: parent/carer name and mobile phone number. Once this data is included in the data set, the data will be anonymised and no one will be able to identify individual pupils. Additionally, third parties will never have access to your data. Your contact details will be destroyed from our text-messaging platform after the final Ipswich SMS text is sent out which will be approximately the end of May 2019.

We will not use your name, your child's name or the name of the school in any report arising from the research. All personal data will be treated with strictest confidence by the evaluators in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The school remains the data controller for this project, and is therefore the party that will deal with data subject requests or deal with the Information Commissioner's Office if there is a personal data breach. The data protection officer [or equivalent title] at Westbourne Academy is Tracy Hanson, and is available at: tracy.hanson@westbourne.attrust.org.uk.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The results of this project will be reported by the project team at Ipswich SMS, and shared with the Ipswich Opportunity Area Board. The report will be freely available on their website.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions about how we will use your data or your child's data or about the way this study is conducted, please contact us by email: ipswichsms@gmail.com

Thank you very much for your time!

RESEARCH PROJECT WITHDRAWAL

Please only complete if you do NOT want your data or your child's data to be used in this research project.

Details of the research project are included in the attached information letter. **If you are happy for your data and your child's data to contribute to this project, then you do not have to do anything.**

If you do **NOT** want your data or your child's data to be used for this evaluation, then please withdraw yourself and your child from the project online, via this link:

bit.ly/withdraw-ipswichsms
