



Information Sheet for Parents

University of Birmingham Research Project on Values and Character Strengths

This research is taking place within the School of Education at the University of Birmingham. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, based in the School of Education is a pioneering research centre focussing on character, virtues and values in the interest of human flourishing. The Centre promotes and builds character strengths in the contexts of the family, school, community, university, professions, voluntary organisations and the wider workplace.

Kings Langley School has agreed to take part in a study which aims to foster character strengths in the school context. Participating students will reflect on character strengths that connect us to other people and, over a 5-week period, will take part in activities to develop these strengths. The overall aim of the study is to help create responsible, caring and connected citizens.

We are interested to see if a greater sense of connection to and responsibility for other people will foster better wellbeing in those taking part, and whether the project will encourage students to connect with and help other people. We and Kings Langley School believe young people will enjoy the activities that make up this study.

Approximately 300 secondary school students in Years 7 and 8 will take part in this study across three schools in the United Kingdom.

This document provides further information about the study which you may wish to read before deciding whether you are happy for the responses your child provides over the course of the programme to be used as data in our research project.

Further information about the conduct of the study and the use of any data collected can be found below:



What is this study about?

This project examines whether it is possible to promote character strengths in young people aged 11 – 13 as a direct result of a targeted 5-week programme. The activities that make up the programme will take place in form time and in longer once-weekly lessons. We would like to know whether we can create in young people a greater sense of connection to and responsibility for other people as a result of the study. Furthermore, we are interested to see whether this might lead to better wellbeing in those taking part.

Why is my child taking part in the study?

Kings Langley School has carefully considered working alongside the University of Birmingham in this venture. The school believes that the various activities which make up the programme are relevant to personal, health and social education and that the young people participating will find them enjoyable and rewarding.

Does my child have to take part in the study?

Since Kings Langley School sees educational, social and personal merit in this project, it will form part of your child's activities within school for the duration of the study. However, as described in the attached consent form, we are giving parents/guardians the opportunity, once fully informed about the requirements of the study, to request that their child's data is not used as part of the study. If you decide to opt-out, this will mean that your child's written responses to the classroom activities (questionnaire answers, activity sheets) will not be used as data in our research project.

What will happen?

The project is scheduled to start on 9 January and will run in Kings Langley School for 5-weeks. Findings from the project will be shared with the participants and there will be an opportunity for parents/guardians to hear more about the results of the study. All data from the study will be made freely available in a published research report by 2017.

How will this study benefit my child? How will it benefit wider society?

This research aims to build up our common life and wellbeing by stimulating reflection and action on human strengths that connect us to other people. We hope that our research will help to create responsible, caring and connected citizens. We believe participants will find the activities within the programme enjoyable and valuable.

Will the information be kept confidential?

Yes. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee of the University of Birmingham and will be conducted following ethical and legal guidelines as set out by the Committee. All data will be handled confidentially. The details are included in Part 2. The only people to see any information your child provides will be researchers at the University of Birmingham who work on the project. Prior to analysis, they will assign an ID code to the data so that your child's identity will be protected at all times. All data, in its original form, will

be stored on secure University of Birmingham servers or in locked filing cabinets. This data may be stored for up to ten years, in line with University of Birmingham guidelines.

With whom will my child's responses to the project activities be shared?

Only anonymised data will be made more widely available so that your child's responses to the questionnaires and classroom activities cannot be identified. This applies to reports and publications made available by the researchers and the John Templeton Foundation (the funders of this project). The data may be archived at a Data Centre such as the UK Data Archive. This will allow other registered researchers to have access to the data in this anonymised form.

How will the information my child provides be used?

The researchers on the team will use your child's responses to a questionnaire to evaluate whether it is possible to promote other-oriented character strengths in a five-week programme. Your child's written responses to activities that are part of the programme (e.g. their responses to a comprehension exercise) might be used to illustrate publications and reports. However, confidentiality would be strictly enforced and your child's responses would not be identified as theirs.

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should contact the researchers involved. They will do their best to answer any further questions you may have (see below).

What if I want to withdraw my child's data later in the study?

Please note that you have the right to withdraw data from your child (or children) from being used in the study at any point up to the completion of the programme. If this is the case, please contact either the school or the researchers conducting the study.

Who is conducting this research?

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (www.jubileecentre.ac.uk) at the University of Birmingham is conducting this research. We are happy to talk to you more about the project or answer your questions. You can contact us by telephone or via email:

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Dr Liz Gulliford
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0121 414 4813



Dear Parent/ Guardian

28/11/16

Opt-Out Form

Use of son / daughter's written responses to classroom activities in a University of Birmingham study.

Kings Langley School has agreed to take part in a research project being conducted by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham. Pupils will take part in classroom activities, over a 5-week period, aimed to help develop character strengths. More information about the programme and the conduct of the study can be found in the accompanying Information Sheet.

In order for the programme to be evaluated we will collect data (in the form of questionnaire answers and written responses to several classroom activities) from participating schools. All information gathered from participants will be treated **confidentially**. We will use only ID codes to identify participants once we have received data from participating schools. Any data used in publication will be reported anonymously. It will not be possible to identify individual responses from this point onwards. Compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 will be assured at all stages.

If you are happy for your son or daughter's written responses to be used as data in this 5-week programme then you do NOT need to fill in the attached form.

If, however, you do *not* give permission for your son or daughter's written responses to classroom activities to be used as data in this study, please complete, sign and return the form below. If the School does not receive a completed form within **two weeks** of the date of this letter we will presume that you are happy for your son or daughter's written responses to provide data for our research. ***Please note that you have the right to withdraw data from your child (or children) from being used in the study at any point up to the completion of the programme.***

If you have any questions about the project, you are welcome to contact the researcher involved:
Dr Liz Gulliford: l.z.gulliford@bham.ac.uk or on 0121 414 4813.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Liz Gulliford, Research Fellow, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham

If you are happy for your son or daughter's written responses to classroom activities to be used as data in our research then you ***do not need to fill in the form***. **Only fill this form in if you DO NOT want your son or daughter's written responses to classroom activities to be used as data in a research project about developing human strengths.**

I DO NOT want my son or daughter's response sheet to be used as data in a research project about developing human strengths

Your Name Signed:

Date:

Your Son/ Daughter's Name Class

Please return this form to [Mr M.Moyo] at Kings Langley School