

Dear parent / carer

Your child's class is being invited to take part in an important research study being undertaken at their school. I am writing to provide you with some information on the survey so that you can decide whether you are happy for your child to take part.

The Council and its partners are currently working with the Scottish Government through a programme called Realigning Children's Services to help to improve local services for children in your area. In addition to this, the Scottish Government is running a survey called the Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey, which explores attitudes to smoking, drinking and drug use among young people. The survey has been running since 1982 and the results have helped in the planning and development of services for young people in Scotland aimed at reducing smoking, drinking and drug use. These two projects have been combined to ensure that your child is only asked to complete one survey.

All secondary schools in the area have been invited to take part and we are inviting all children in S1 to S4 to complete an online questionnaire during school time on their lives and wellbeing. The results of this survey will be used to understand the wellbeing needs of children in your area. This will improve the way children's services are planned and delivered by your local authority. The results will not look at children's responses on an individual basis. This ensures that all responses are unidentifiable.

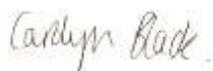
This letter provides you with information about the programme, and contact details should you wish to learn more. It also explains what to do if you are happy for your child to participate, or if you do not want your child to take part in the survey. Your child will also receive a leaflet explaining about the survey.

In order that we get a picture of your child's life and wellbeing, the local authority and our partners are also interested in ensuring, as far as possible, that our services meet their needs. To do this, we would like your permission for your child not only to complete the survey but for us to link to information on your child from local records, known as administrative data. This is held by the local authority and will be added to the survey answers and is called data linkage. This is to look at how local services are meeting needs. There is a more detailed explanation of this in the 'What is data linkage?' section in the accompanying leaflet.

No names will be used when answering the survey or linking the local authority information – there is no way your child or family can be identified. For more information, please see the Frequently Asked Questions over the page.

More detailed information is at the end of this letter. You can also find out more about the survey and Realigning Children's Services by visiting the website: www.transformingchildrensfutures.scot. Alternatively, you can contact Ipsos MORI, the research agency conducting the research, on 0131 226 8677 or at salsus2018@ipsos.com.

Yours faithfully,



Carolyn Black

Associate Director, Ipsos MORI

You do not have to do anything if you are happy for **both** of the following:

1) for your child to take part in the survey

AND

2) for your child's survey answers to be linked with information from the Local Authority ("data linkage")

Your child will also be able to choose not to take part in the survey or to skip any questions they don't want to answer.

If you do not wish for your child to take part in this survey, please complete the slip below and return it to the school **within the next 14 days**. Thank you for your help with this important study.

Children's Wellbeing Survey

I do not wish (Print name of child in capital letters) to take part in the Children's Wellbeing survey, including data linkage.

Signed Date

Name (capital letters)

Relationship to child Child's year group:

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Children

What is Realigning Children's Service?

Realigning Children's Services is a programme which will help to improve local services for children in a number of local authority areas in Scotland. We would like to hear from children in S1 to S4 about their school, their family and their life. This is called the Children's Wellbeing Survey.

The findings of the programme will be used by the Scottish Government to understand the wellbeing and needs of children in your area. Your local authority will then use this information to help improve services for children and families.

What is SALSUS?

SALSUS is the Scottish Government's main source of information on alcohol, drug and tobacco use among Scotland's young people and has been running since 1982. It is vital to the Scottish Government. The data from the survey is the official measure of progress towards targets for reducing smoking and drug use.

Who is running the surveys?

The Scottish Government, in collaboration with individual local authorities, have asked Ipsos MORI, an independent, research agency to run the wellbeing survey in secondary schools.

The National Records of Scotland Indexing team and electronic Data Research and Innovation Service will be responsible for the data linkage aspect of the programme.

What is my child being asked to do?

We are inviting all children in S1 to S4 in your area to fill in the Children's Wellbeing Survey. Your child will be asked to complete an online questionnaire during class time that will take around 30 minutes to complete. Your child's school will organise and arrange for children to take part.

The questions are all well-established items that have been ethically approved for surveys with children of this age and found to be associated with wellbeing. Some of the topics include: local area and activities for children, health, life satisfaction, school enjoyment, social media use and relationships with family and friends.

Where possible, assistance will be provided to children who have Additional Support Needs such as extra time or help with completing the online survey. Guidance issued to teachers can be found on the Realigning Children's Services website.

If you would like more information, or to receive a copy of the questionnaire before deciding whether or not you are happy with your child taking part, you can contact the researchers by emailing lucy.setterfield@ipsos.com.

Will anyone see my child's answers?

No one other than the team running the survey will see your child's answers. This team are trained to keep data safe, confidential and anonymous. Your child will **not** be asked to type their name into the survey. The survey will be uploaded to the team running the survey immediately, and the school will not see or store any of the answers.

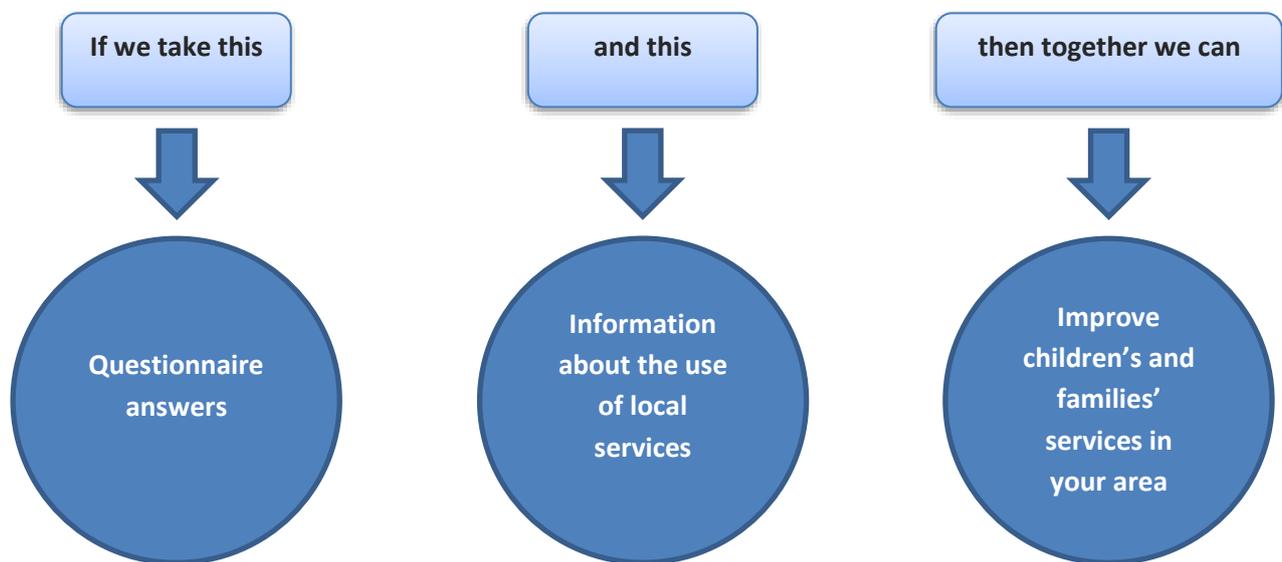
All information will be confidential and secure and no one will be able to recognise any child from the data. The findings will be shared more widely as general statistics on wellbeing across the local authority.

What is Data Linkage?

Data linkage is the process of adding together different types of information about individuals from different sources. This information will be kept safe and confidential. Data linkage allows us to look at and compare anonymous information about children in the local area. The picture below shows how we are doing this.

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) Indexing Team and the electronic Data Research and Innovation Service (eDRIS) will be responsible for the data linkage and for making sure that it is completely anonymous.

See picture on next page for more information.



Will my child's answers affect the services they receive?

Your child's answers will be combined with what other children have said in other schools in your local area, to help plan services. The survey **will not** follow up on particular responses or directly target services for individual children or their families. The overall findings of the survey will be used to improve services in your local area.

Does my child need to take part?

No. It is up to you and your child to decide to take part. You can opt-out of taking part by completing and returning the slip enclosed in the letter to the school within the next 14 days of receiving this. Your child can also say to their teacher that they do not want to take part or stop the survey at any point up until the survey is submitted. Not taking part will have no impact on your child's schooling or any services used.

How can I find out more?

More information about this can be found at www.transformingchildrensfutures.scot. On this website there are copies of the questionnaire and many other helpful pieces of information. If you have any further questions please contact us on 0131 226 8677 or at lucy.setterfield@ipsos.com.