



Information Letter for Parents and Carers

Dear Parent/Carer

We are a group of researchers from King's College London. Last year, your child's head teacher, and the school governors, gave us permission to undertake a research study, REACH, in your child's school. We are writing again to let you know that we will be returning to your child's school in the next few weeks to continue the study. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please read it carefully. It will tell you why the research is being done and what your child will be asked to do if he/she takes part.

What is the aim of the research?

The aim is to understand what things lead to better mental health and what things lead to worse mental health in young people from all backgrounds.

What are we doing?

We are doing a study in schools in south London to see what things influence young people's mental health. The study is focussing on what leads to better mental health. The study is called REACH, which stands for **R**esilience, **E**thnicity, and **A**doles**C**ent **M**ental **H**ealth, and is funded by the European Union. Over 2,700 young people are taking part. Last year, we invited everyone in your child's year at school to take part. We will be returning to your child's school in the next few weeks to continue the study with your child's year group.

Why are we doing this?

Most mental health problems begin when people are still at school. Around 1 in 10 young people experience a mental health problem each year. The types of problems and how common they are can vary among people from different social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds.

The purpose of REACH is to investigate why, when faced with similar challenges and difficulties, some young people develop mental health problems and others do not. In doing this, REACH will provide information on how and when to intervene to improve mental health and well-being among young people. Doing this study could help many young people in the future.

How can your child help us?

We need your child's help so that we can see how positive and negative life experiences and circumstances affect mental health over time.

There are two parts to the study.

1) a) If your child chooses to take part, he/she will be asked to complete a questionnaire about how they feel, their life experiences and circumstances, and how they handle difficult situations. The questionnaire will be completed individually during lesson time. We will visit the school again, one year from now, and ask your child to complete the questionnaire again. We will contact you again before we do this.

b) We will also ask your child's school to provide some basic information about your child. This will include how well your child is doing at school and whether he/she receives any additional support.

All questionnaire responses and information from schools will be **completely confidential (private)** to the research team. The responses will not be seen by parents, other pupils, teachers, or any employee of the school. Your child's name will not be on the questionnaire and information from schools will be anonymised, so that your child cannot be identified.

2) We will ask some children who complete the first questionnaire whether they would like to take part in an extra part of the study. We will choose young people for this part of the study at random. This part of the study will involve completing further questionnaires and some computer-based tasks, which measure how we make judgements about things and how we understand different emotions. This is so that we can understand in more detail what leads to better and poorer mental health. If your child is chosen, we will give you more information and ask for your consent before we ask your child to do anything further.

If your child decides to take part in the study they will receive a certificate of participation. If they are selected and decide to take part in the second part of the study they will receive a £15 voucher for their time.

If, while taking part, your child tells us something that makes us concerned for his/her welfare, we may inform the school's safeguarding lead.

We may also contact you in the future about any follow-up REACH activities that your child has the opportunity to be involved in.

What do I do if I have any questions?

If there is anything you don't understand or if you have any questions you would like to ask then please do. You can ask us any questions by contacting Gemma Knowles (email: reach@kcl.ac.uk; tel: 020 7848 0510) or the school office. You can also visit our website for further information (www.thereachstudy.com).

This research study has been approved by an independent group of people called the Psychiatry, Nursing and Midwifery (PNM) Research Ethics Subcommittee (RESC) Committee (reference:

HR15/162320). If this study harms you or your child in any way, please contact the Chair of the PNM RESC at email rec@kcl.ac.uk.

What do you need to do now?

If you have understood what we are asking and you do not have any more questions, please now decide if you want your child to take part in our study. This is entirely up to you. It's ok if you don't want your child to take part and you do not have to explain your reasons. **You are also able to change your mind and stop your child taking part at any time and withdraw them from the study.** If you change your mind before 30 August 2020, which is the end of the study, we will destroy all information we have on your child.

If you **do** want your child to take part in the study, you do not have to do anything further.

If you **do not** want your child to take part in the study, please either complete the attached form and return it to the school office or contact the school or the research team directly by **within the next week**.

If you told us last year that you **did not** want your child to take part, we will assume he/she should **not** take part this year either. If you have changed your mind, and would now like your child to take part, please let us know.

Thank you very much for reading this letter.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Morgan'.

Professor Craig Morgan, on behalf of the REACH Research Team