



Parent/Guardian Information Sheet: Secondary Cohort Study

If your child was in this school last year, you may remember us inviting them to take part in research into how pupils learn mathematics at school. As this research is taking place over seven years, we are now inviting all pupils currently in Year 8 at your child's school to take part. The study will support our knowledge of pupils' feelings about maths including how much they enjoy maths, how they experience learning maths at school, and how these things change over time. This sheet tells you about the study. Please read it carefully and discuss it with your child. Your child's teacher will also talk to the class about it.

Who is conducting the study?

The Observatory for Mathematical Education at the University of Nottingham is undertaking this research. The study will identify trends in maths learning, explore learner experiences and changing attitudes in pupils from reception through to university level. In schools across the country, the secondary cohort study will follow one group of pupils from Year 7 to Year 11 (or Year 13 if they continue into sixth form at their school).

Why are we doing the study?

Learning maths is important for each young person's future, for success in education and in life generally. Understanding changes in learners' confidence and enjoyment of maths helps us to advise schools, colleges, and universities as well as policy makers about what to do to better support all pupils to learn maths effectively.

How does the study work?

- 150 secondary schools are taking part in this research. Last year, Year 7 pupils in these schools completed a survey. This year the same pupils - now in Year 8 - are being asked to complete a survey. We will ask this group of pupils to do one survey each year that they are in secondary school.
- In a maths lesson, the teacher will give the pupils a paper survey of questions to complete. The survey is a set of multiple-choice questions asking their opinion about maths at school. Pupils are not required to do any writing or maths work, and they are told they don't need to do the survey or complete all the questions if they don't want to.
- Each year we are also doing a survey of teachers to ask them about their maths teaching. We do not ask them about individual pupils and do not share pupil's question responses with them.

What information is being collected about my child?

We will ask your child's school to share a list of the pupils in Year 8 with us. Your child's name, date of birth and unique pupil number will be on this list so that we can send the school individual surveys with a barcode on for each child and so that we can make links to the existing records about pupils in England. The barcode on each child's survey helps us track the surveys, so we can avoid surveys getting mixed up. The school puts all their surveys into an envelope, and these are sent to a secure data processing plant where automatic scanners record the answers, then the survey sheets are shredded. This means that the survey answers can be sent to us digitally and securely, without any names.



You can choose for your child not to participate in the research. To do this, you need to complete the form in the letter that your child's school sent to you. If you are unable to find this, email mathsobservatory@nottingham.ac.uk and we will send a link to the form. If you complete the withdrawal form, we will never send a survey sheet to the school for your child to complete and we will not retain their pupil number or date of birth. We will keep a secure record of their name to process, and quality assure the withdrawal throughout the study.

You can withdraw your child from the study at any time, even after the research has started. When you withdraw your child, no further information will be collected about them. If you request it, we will also delete any information that we have about them. However, their anonymous data may still be included in any publications, reports or presentations that are already in progress and where we are not able to practically remove it.

What happens to the information collected for the study?

We store the data securely in a SharePoint site and a Database that are only accessible to the research team. The class list data will be deleted as soon as possible after the survey data has been processed and anonymised. The anonymised survey data will be stored for a minimum of 14 years and then deleted if no longer in use.

How are we ensuring GDPR compliance?

We are processing personal data based on Article 6(1)(e) of UK GDPR in which processing is legal as it has a basis in public interest. Further details of how we ensure compliance with GDPR are provided in the [Privacy Notice](#).

Where will the research be published?

We will publish the research in reports, articles and presentations. No pupil, teacher, parent/guardian or school names will be included in these publications.

Why are you organising the research in this way?

The research is being conducted in this way because:

- research is being undertaken to benefit learners in England
- we are only asking for a small amount of data about each child
- the data and topic of research is attitudes to and experiences of maths, which is unlikely to cause concern
- parents are given a clear way to withdraw their child
- pupils are told that they do not have to answer the questions and can stop at any time
- all data collected is strictly controlled and protected.

To make it easy for parents, they only need to respond if they do not want their child to take part in the research. However, parents will be sent a letter each year to remind them that they may withdraw their child. This will be sent before the annual pupil surveys are printed and distributed.

Where can I find out more information?

If you have questions about the research, contact mathsobservatory@nottingham.ac.uk.

If you have concerns or a complaint, contact educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk.