



Supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing in schools

Information leaflet for Parents and Carers in Years 3-5

Your child's school has chosen to take part in the *Stand Together* project which is looking at ways to reduce bullying and promote wellbeing in primary schools in the UK. We are working with many schools in your area. Your school's involvement does not mean the school has a bullying problem, just that they are interested in research. The school has not given us any information about you, or your child and they are sending this letter on our behalf.

Please read this leaflet carefully and feel free to contact us if you have any questions or would like more information. If you are happy for your child's information to be collected, then there is no need for you to do anything in response to this leaflet.

If you are a parent of a child in year 4 or 5 you'll know that we started the Stand Together project in your school during the academic year 2019/2020. Unfortunately, we had to take the very difficult decision to stop the project in mid-March due to the COVID-19 lockdown which sadly meant that we were not able to collect all of the information we needed. We have restarted the project and are planning to collect this information again from January 2021.

RIGHT TO OBJECT

If you decide that you do not want your child's confidential information being used in this research, you can complete and return the enclosed opt-out form.

Introduction

In UK primary schools over 1 in 5 pupils are bullied on a weekly basis. Bullying can lead to poor mental health, impact academic performance and increase the risk of behavioural problems later in life.

What is the project about?



We want to find out if **KiVa**, an antibullying programme developed in Finland, can help reduce school bullying and promote the wellbeing of children in Years 3-6. **KiVa** involves fortnightly 45 minute class lessons delivered by teachers and online games to help children build strong and supportive relationships with each other. Pupils and teachers also learn how to deal with bullying, should it occur.

Will my child receive the KiVa programme?

We want to compare KiVa with schools' existing anti-bullying strategies, so only half of the schools in the project will be randomly selected to receive the KiVa programme. The other half of the schools will continue with their usual strategies.

What will my child be asked to do?

- fill in surveys at the start and end of the trial about their experience of bullying at school, how they feel about school and their general wellbeing (around 30 minutes each time)
- we will explain to them what the research is about, why they have been asked to take part and what we are asking them to do
- we will tell them that it's ok if they do not want to take part and that they can stop at any time without giving a reason



What other information is being collected?

- your child's age and sex
- your child's school attendance
- the contact your child has had with the school regarding bullying
- your child's teacher will provide information about the behaviour and emotional wellbeing of all their pupils in Years 3-6

What will happen to the information?

Researchers at Cardiff University will store the de-identified trial data, and along with Stand Together researchers will analyse the findings. We would like to publish the findings from the project so other people working in this area can learn about our work. The school will send you a summary of our findings on our behalf.

Privacy, safety and ethical approval

- ✓ individual teachers, pupils, schools or other people will not be identified in any reports
- ✓ to comply with General Data Protection Regulation, all information is stored securely and confidentially and only the research team can access it
- ✓ we will create a list containing children's names and their matching study ID number; however, this list will be **stored separately** from trial data. That way, no one will be able to tell what data belongs to which child
- ✓ all researchers who come into your school will have enhanced safety checks
- ✓ a school staff member will be present when researchers are working with children
- ✓ this project has been approved by the Bangor University School of Psychology ethics committee (application reference 2019-16592).

Is the research COVID secure?

We have changed our protocols and received updated ethical approval to carry out this research whilst COVID-19 restrictions are in place.

Researchers will visit the school to guide children through their questionnaires via electronic tablets. All staff will have completed mandatory COVID training and will adhere strictly to contact tracing procedures (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>) as well as the school-specific COVID-secure procedures. Our researchers will not come to your school if they feel unwell. During the class visits the researchers will be wearing a face covering, will use hand sanitiser and will remain 2 meters away whenever possible. They will have thoroughly cleaned and sanitised the electronic tablets before the children use them.

Does my child have to take part?

If you **do not want** us to collect your child's confidential information, just return the **Right to Object** form to school. You can withdraw your child's data from the trial (without needing to provide a reason) up until the end of the 2020/2021 school year (July 2021), after which the data will be analysed and unable to be withdrawn.

More information

More information can be found on the project website <https://standtogethertrial.weebly.com/>

If you have any questions about the **KiVa** programme, please contact your school's Headteacher or the *Stand Together* researchers:

Dr Siobhan Mitchell and Hayley Gains

Email: together@exeter.ac.uk

If you have any queries about the research, please contact the Chief Investigator:

Professor Judy Hutchings (Bangor University)

Tel: +44 (0)1248-383758

Email: j.hutchings@bangor.ac.uk

If you would like information or support regarding school bullying, please visit <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>.