



UNIVERSITY  
of  
GREENWICH

## **Parents' and Carers' Information Sheet**

### **Exploring Attitudes to the Teaching and Learning of Writing in Primary Schools**

Your child's primary school is about to embark on an exciting writing project which is designed to enrich the teaching and learning of writing in the school. It is called The Enriching Writing Project.

Teachers will be working alongside academics from the University of Greenwich on this project which begins this October and ends in May 2015.

As part of this development project, the school's teachers, working alongside the academics, want to find out more about children's attitudes to writing to help us tailor the teaching to the needs of the children. The academics also would like to watch the children being taught and collect some of their work. To do all this we need you to be made fully aware about what will be happening and to give you the opportunity to opt your child out of the research aspect of the project if you wish.

This sheet has been written to help you decide. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

#### **What is the Purpose of the Study?**

The purpose of the study is to find out more about what children think about writing and learning to write well. The children's views will influence the way writing is taught in your school and lead the direction of the writing development project which will be running until May 2015. We intend to publish this information to help teachers in other schools nationwide to tailor their teaching to the needs of their children.

#### **Why has my child been chosen to participate?**

All the children in Key Stage 2 are being asked about their views on writing. Teachers in Year R and Key Stage 1 will be randomly selecting 6 children from their classes.

#### **Does my child have to take part in the research?**

No, it is up to you to decide whether or not your child takes part, but we would be very grateful if they did. If you decide that you wish your child to be part of the research project, you need to do no more. However, if you feel for any reason that you would prefer not to allow your child to participate in the research, please sign the opt-out form at the bottom of the invitation letter that has accompanied this information sheet.

We will also be asking your child if they would like to take part in the research too. They are free not to participate from the beginning and if they start but change their minds they are also free to do so without the need to give a reason.

#### **What will happen to my child if s/he takes part?**

Depending on your child's age and experience of writing they will either be asked to complete a simple questionnaire by their teacher or will engage in a short discussion with him/her about writing and learning to write. They will be asked to do this at the start of the Project and at the very end to measure any changes in the attitudes of the children in the school.

In addition, s/he and the rest of their class may be observed being taught writing for one morning. The research team will be watching and simply taking notes about what they observe.

Teachers will also be collecting particular pieces of children's written work from their classes to analyse.

**Will the information you collect from my child be kept confidential?**

Any data collected will only be studied by teachers on the project and members of the research team, who have a duty of confidentiality to you and your child as a research participant. We will ensure that the information gathered is stored securely, and if ever presented outside the school we will ensure that the identity of any individual, and indeed of the school itself, will not be known.

All information gathered during the course of the study will be kept confidential. However if any child was to disclose any information that indicates that they or any other child may be at risk in any way, we will of course be obliged to pass on this information to the relevant authority.

**What are the possible disadvantages to taking part in the study?**

We are aware that some children may not feel comfortable about answering questions about their attitudes to school work. We will reassure children that no harm will come to them and explain the process. We have designed surveys which should be quick and easy to use. The questionnaires or discussions on writing will only last around fifteen to twenty minutes. Teachers have been trained to detect any sign of distress in the children and will immediately stop the process if this is seen. They will also provide relief for any ongoing distress.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

This important research project will allow your children to see that their teachers feel their views are important and may influence the teaching of writing in school. It may also allow your child to reflect a little on their learning of how to write well. The research will also influence the Project and help to enrich the teaching of learning of writing in your child's school.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

All the information will influence the development of the writing project and help enrich the teaching of writing. It may also be published in teaching journals, academic papers and books. Your child's name will never be revealed any of these publications. Any work published that your child has written will be published anonymously and only with yours and your child's permission.

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