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*Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018*

Dear Parent / Carer,

**Research Study: An evaluation of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Programme in the West Midlands**

We are writing to inform you about an exciting new violence prevention programme and a research study being conducted by Prof Claire Fox from Keele University; the research is funded by the West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance. Details of the research being carried out in the school are given below. **If, after reading this information, and discussing it with your child, you decide that you do NOT wish your child to take part in the research part of the project then please contact Mr Milner by Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December date to let him know.**

MVP trains older students (mentors) to teach younger students about a range of abusive behaviours. The aim is to convey that there are a range of non-physical and proactive ways for bystanders to intervene so that 'doing nothing' is not an option. Your child will be present in lessons that will be delivered by MVP mentors, with the support of teachers. Given the investment that is being made to roll-out MVP in schools across the West Midlands it is important that we collect data to see whether it is effective in reducing violence in our schools.

This letter is seeking your permission for your child to complete an online survey to evaluate the effectiveness of MVP. The online survey can be completed in class time (most likely form time) or outside of school, with students being sent the link to complete in their own time. Before the survey students are told about the purpose of the study, what it will involve, and that they do not have to take part if they do not want to, and so we hope that students and parents/guardians are able to make an informed decision in good time. Students can stop taking part at any time and without giving a reason. For any child with experience of abuse it is explained that they could find the questions upsetting and so it might not be a good idea for them to take part. If you would like to see a preview of the survey it can be accessed here:

<https://tinyurl.com/MVP-MenteeSurvey2>

The survey takes 15-20 minutes to complete, with questions about attitudes towards and experiences of a range of abusive behaviours (e.g. peer victimisation, cyber-victimisation, feelings of safety, willingness to seek help, defender behaviour). All students in years 7 and 8 are being asked to take part. Next year your child will be invited to take part once again (June 2019 and October 2019). This will enable the researchers to assess the effectiveness of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Programme, which is being implemented in this school and others within the West Midlands. Even if you give your consent on this



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occasion, and your child is happy to take part, this does not mean that they have to take part next year as well.

NB: Once the survey has been completed it will be difficult for you or your child to withdraw consent because the children are asked NOT to put their names on their questionnaire. Instead they are being asked a series of questions to generate a 'secret code'. However, if you remain concerned following participation please do contact Claire Fox, who will try her best to locate and delete the survey responses.

**Data Protection**: The researchers are working within data protection legislation (1998, 2019) to ensure that confidential and sensitive data remains secure. The anonymous data will be stored securely using an online system. It will be downloaded onto electronic sheets for the purposes of data analyses. Only members of the research team will have access to these data, which is accessible with a password. In addition to Claire Fox this will be Nick Garnett and Nicola Ralph of Keele University. The data within the online system will be kept for a minimum of 10 years. All electronic data will be stored securely on password protected university computers accessible with a password. The University of Keele will be what is known as the 'Data Controller'. To manage the process of opt-out parental consent the school will be the 'Data Processor'; they will know the names of children who do not have parental consent to take part. They will use these data only for this purpose, keep the data securely in line with data protection guidelines, and destroy these data once data collection is complete. These names will not be passed onto members of the research team. NB: we will seek consent afresh at subsequent time points. For the university's privacy notice please see: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/privacynotices/privacynotice-researchparticipants/>. The contact details of the university Data Protection Officer are as follows: [governance.dpo@keele.ac.uk](mailto:governance.dpo@keele.ac.uk).

The researchers will write up the findings in a report for the West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance, and an article to submit for publication. No individuals will be identified. The anonymised data set will be retained indefinitely and could be used in future research project by Prof Claire Fox. If you have any queries regarding this research please do not hesitate to contact Prof Claire Fox: Tel 01782 733330 email: [c.fox@keele.ac.uk](mailto:c.fox@keele.ac.uk). If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study please contact:

Research Integrity Team

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Tel: 01782 733371

Email: [research.governance@keele.ac.uk](mailto:research.governance@keele.ac.uk)

Yours sincerely,



Mr R Milner

Safeguarding Manager