



Department  
for Education



January 2025

Dear Headteacher

One or more pupils in Year 8 of your school have been selected to take part in **Growing Up in the 2020s**, a new national study of thousands of young people in England. This is an innovative study that will follow participants and their families throughout secondary school to understand how experiences of school, home life and relationships shape their attainment, wellbeing and employment outcomes.

For the first stage of the study, the research contractor (Ipsos) will be sending letters to the parents or guardians of the selected young people at their home address from January 2025. **If pupils or their parents/carers contact your school to query the research, we ask that you provide reassurance that this is an official Department for Education (DfE) study.** The information posted to families will list the various ways families can get in touch with the study team should they have questions about participating or opting out. However, families may also contact your school to verify the legitimacy of the research. You may also wish to inform staff at your school who interact with Year 8 pupils.

#### **Will teachers be involved in the study?**

Yes, to build a more complete picture of participating young people's experiences it is important we collect information from their teachers. With permission from the young person and their parent/carer, we will ask a teacher to complete a short online survey to get a more complete picture about how selected pupils are getting on at school. We will contact the teachers that participating pupils nominate later this year.

Please find answers to **Frequently Asked Questions** overleaf. You can also visit the study website at [growingup2020s.ipsos.com](http://growingup2020s.ipsos.com). If you have further queries, the Growing Up in the 2020s team would be more than happy to discuss them with you. Contact: [team.longitudinal@education.gov.uk](mailto:team.longitudinal@education.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

Michele Weatherburn  
Chief Social Researcher  
Department for Education

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the value of the study?**

We have selected a group of young people who are currently in Year 8 at school to represent all young people in their age group in England, to help us understand what it is like to grow up in England in the 2020s. By following the same group of young people and their families and teachers over time, this study will provide unique insights about how different experiences shape young people's lives, and how they get on both while they're at school and after they leave school.

Studies like Growing Up in the 2020s are crucial for understanding which factors and experiences are most influential to young people's lives. They help inform decisions being made about how school and education will work in the future, and how young people and their families are supported.

### **Who is carrying out the study?**

The study has been commissioned and funded by DfE. It is being carried out by Anna Freud, in collaboration with University College London (UCL) and Ipsos. Ipsos will be carrying out the data collection. The study has been reviewed by the UCL Research Ethics Committee, an independent group of researchers, to protect participants' safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity (Reference no. 28343/001).

### **How have the young people been selected?**

The study includes young people in England who are in Year 8 at school in the 2024/2025 academic year. One or more pupils in Year 8 at your school have been selected at random from the DfE's National Pupil Database. The group of young people will represent all young people in their particular age group.

### **What does it involve for pupils and their families?**

Households of the selected pupils will be sent a letter in the post with information about the study. These will be sent out from January 2025. Subsequently, an interviewer from Ipsos will visit the family to explain more about the study and arrange an interview at a time that is convenient for them. The interviewer will show a photo ID card. The interviewer will ask one parent or carer to take part in a short interview about the household. The interviewer will then ask up to two parents or carers in the household (where applicable) to complete a short web survey. With the parent's or carer's permission, and if the young person is happy to, we will ask the young person to do an interview too, to get their perspective, and one short thinking task. In total the interview visit should last for around an hour.

### **What happens to the information collected?**

Individual young people, their families, or teachers will not be identified in any published research from the study. Personal details and questionnaire responses will remain strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The information will only be shared with approved researchers for statistics purposes only. The privacy notice explains how we keep information safe and can be found here:

[growingup2020s.ipsos.com/using-your-data/#privacy](https://growingup2020s.ipsos.com/using-your-data/#privacy)

### **Do the pupils and their families have to take part?**

No, participation is voluntary. If families do not wish to take part, they can let us know. We explain how to do this on the materials posted to families. They can also simply tell the interviewer when they visit. We rely on each family selected for the study to take part, so we hope they will take part and give their views.

### **Will I know which young people in the school are taking part?**

Participation in the study is confidential, and answers given by anyone taken part will be used for research purposes only. We will not send schools a list of pupils selected for the study, nor a list of all the pupils taking part. However, as part of the interview with pupils and parents/carers we ask them if they are happy for us to ask the young person's teacher to complete a short survey, and ask for their teacher's name. Survey invitations will subsequently be sent to the school addressed to these teachers. These teachers will know which pupil(s) nominated them to take the survey.

### **Where can I find out more?**

There is a dedicated website about Growing Up in the 2020s to update pupils, families, and schools on the study at [growingup2020s.ipsos.com](http://growingup2020s.ipsos.com). You can also find the study listed on the [DfE research page](#).

If you would like to talk to someone about the study, please contact the DfE team at [team.longitudinal@education.gov.uk](mailto:team.longitudinal@education.gov.uk)