Parent/Carer Information about University of Sheffield Health-Related Study

Dear Parent/Carer,

Our school is collaborating with the University of Sheffield on a health-related study investigating seasonal changes in school absences during the autumn term, after pupils return to school in September. The study will run from July 2026 to December 2026.

What are the benefits of taking part?
We will be able to contribute to research, which aims to reduce the increase in health-related school absences, which often happens following the return to school after the long summer holiday.

What data will we be collected?
Fully anonymised school attendance data for all pupils for the Autumn terms of 2025 and 2026 will be collected by school staff and shared with the University of Sheffield study team. The collected data will include school year, gender, and attendance records. Each pupil record will be assigned a unique anonymised ID number without revealing any personal information, such as names, dates of birth, addresses, or other identifiable information.

How will pupil data be used?
All anonymised data will be used only for this research project. It will be stored securely on protected University of Sheffield servers and accessed only by authorised members of the research team. Data will be kept for ten years in line with university policy and then securely destroyed. Findings may be shared in reports, academic journals, or conferences. No school, child, or parent will ever be identified.

Who is running the study?
The study is being conducted by the University of Sheffield as part of a PhD research project.

Data Controller: The University of Sheffield, responsible for ensuring your information is handled lawfully and securely.

Ethical Approval: Approved by the School of Medicine and Population Health Ethics Committee (reference number: 073439).

Contact
If you have questions on the study, then please contact:

- Professor Steven Julious
- Email: s.a.julious@sheffield.ac.uk

If you wish to report a safeguarding concern, then please contact the head of department:

- Dr Louise Preston
- Email: l.r.preston@sheffield.ac.uk

Opt-out
You can opt out of the study within two weeks of receiving this letter. [**Contact details to be added by the school**].

You may also withdraw from the study at any point before data collection by contacting the school by 1 December 2026: [**Contact details to be added by the school**].

Yours sincerely,
[**School Name**]

Parent/Carer Opt-Out Form

Please complete this form if you do not want your child's anonymised attendance data to be used in the University of Sheffield research study.

Child's full name:

……..……..…….

Child's class/year group:

……..……..…….

Name of parent/carer completing this form:

……..……..…….

Relationship to child:

……..……..…….

I confirm that I do not want my child's anonymised attendance data to be included in this study.

☐ I wish to opt my child out of the study.

Parent/carer signature:

……..……..…….

Date:

……..……..…….

Please return this form to [**Contact details to be added by the school**].