**Parent Information Sheet**

**Study Title**: Understanding the impact of teaching assistant support on school belonging.

**Researcher**: Charlotte Finnegan, Trainee Educational Psychologist doctoral student, [C.Finnegan@soton.ac.uk](mailto:C.Finnegan@soton.ac.uk)

**Research Supervisors:** Tim Cooke Academic and Professional Tutor, T.Cooke@soton.ac.uk, and Rob Webster, Associate Professor, UCL Institute of Education.

**ERGO number:** 63860

You are being invited for your child to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like your child to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide for your child to take part in this research. You may want to discuss it with others, but it is up to you and your child to decide whether or not they take part. If you consent to your child taking part, you can complete the questionnaire now using the following link: **QUESTIONNAIRE LINK**

**Your child must be aged eight or over to participate.**

**What is the research about?**

This is a thesis project being conducted by a final-year doctorate Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Southampton. This study will explore the factors that impact a child’s sense of school belonging, focusing on a child’s relationships with their class teacher and teaching assistant or equivalent paraprofessional, and whether these differ between children with and without special educational needs. Positive student-teacher relationships have been found to foster school belonging. However, until now, no research has been conducted into whether a strong student-teaching assistant relationship can replicate this effect in children who receive a lot of teaching assistant support and may spend significant time away from their teacher and classroom. Those children may have fewer opportunities to build a strong student-teacher relationship, but with increased opportunities to build a strong relationship with their teaching assistant. It is expected that a strong relationship with a teaching assistant will offer similar benefits to those derived from a strong relationship with a class teacher.

**Why have you been asked to participate?**

Your child has been invited to participate as their school have agreed to participate in the research.

I am hoping to recruit around 80 children with special educational needs and 80 children without special educational needs who are in years 4-6 across multiple local schools.

**What will happen to you if you take part?**

If your child participates in this research, I will ask you and them to complete a questionnaire about their sense of school belonging and relationships with their classroom adults. The questionnaire should take no longer than ten to fifteen minutes and will be completed using a Microsoft Form. Once this has been completed, your child’s school will be asked to indicate if, and how much, they receive teaching assistant/equivalent paraprofessional support in school, which will be kept strictly confidential.

You will also be given the option to indicate that you are happy to be contacted for further consent to allow your child to be involved in an individual interview about their relationships with school staff. The number of children being interviewed will be very limited; however, if your child is selected, you will be provided with further information about this part of the study before giving consent. The interviews will either happen in person at the child’s school or virtually via Zoom, depending on the COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the interview. The interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed. If in-person, the child will also be offered the opportunity to play a short game after the interview as a reward for taking part.

**Are there any benefits in you taking part?**

Your child’s school will have the opportunity to win some money for their PTA. One entry will be entered into a prize draw for every participating child to win one of three monetary prizes for the school PTA: £75, £50, £25.

It is also hoped that the results will contribute to a better understanding of how we can foster a greater sense of school belonging which has been shown to have significant academic, psychological and behavioural outcomes. If your child participates in the interview part of the study, I hope it will be an enjoyable interaction that will end with playing a short game.

**Are there any risks involved?**

There are no risks involved for participants of this research. However, it is advised that your child completes the questionnaire with you present in case they become upset while thinking about their sense of school belonging or relationships with their classroom adults.

**What data will be collected?**

You will be asked to enter your child’s name, age, class, whether they have special educational needs and how many extracurricular activities they are involved in. Your child will then be asked to answer questions about their sense of school belonging and relationships with their classroom adults. Once the data has been collected from your child’s school about any support they receive at school, all data will be anonymised, meaning all names and other personal details will be deleted. Your child’s personal details will be kept until the interviews have been conducted if you also consented to this part of the study but will be deleted upon completion of these.

Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed by a transcription service approved and accredited by the university. A confidential agreement form will be signed and returned to the researcher before the recordings are sent to the service for transcription.Once transcription has been completed and returned to the researcher, audio files will be destroyed.

**Will your participation be confidential?**

Your child’s participation and the information we collect about your child during the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about your child for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your child’s data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Data will be securely stored on the University of Southampton’s server and not accessible to people not associated with the research. Data will be archived and maintained for a minimum of 10 years, as stated in the University Research Data Management Policy.

**Do you have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you and your child whether they decide to take part. Please enter their details and your email address on the Microsoft Form if you decide they want to participate.

**What happens if you change your mind?**

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw your child from the study at any time until 20.12.2021 without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please contact the researcher at [c.finnegan@soton.ac.uk](mailto:c.finnegan@soton.ac.uk). After this time, all personal details will be removed, and data anonymised; therefore, it will no longer be possible to identify and withdraw an individual’s data.

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

Your and your child’s personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify your child without your specific consent. Once the data has been collected and analysed, your child’s school will be provided with a summary of the findings, along with a child friendly version to share with participants.

**Where can you get more information?**

If you have any further questions, please contact the researcher Charlotte Finnegan at [c.finnegan@soton.ac.uk](mailto:c.finnegan@soton.ac.uk).

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)).

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree for your child to take part in a research study, we will use information about them in the ways needed and for the purposes specified to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about your child.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses personal data when participants take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which your child can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your child’s personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For data protection law purposes, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your child’s information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about your child for one month after the data has been collected, after which time any link between your child and their information will be removed.

To safeguard your and your child’s rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your child’s personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your and your child’s personal data is used or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University’s data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer ([data.protection@soton.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@soton.ac.uk)).

**Thank you.**

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering the opportunity for your child to take part in this research.