

Research Information and Consent for Schools

Dear Head Teacher,

My name is Stephanie Bowen, and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Southampton. I would like to invite your school to take part in a research study that I am conducting which aims to investigate whether the way in which gratitude diaries are written and presented to children impacts their effectiveness at increasing gratitude, a sense of school belonging and positive emotions. Your school may also be invited to participate in a separate, follow up study which seeks to interview a small number of children who have taken part in this study to see how they felt about filling in the diary. By agreeing to this study, you would also be agreeing for children to be identified for interview later on, however parents will be sent a separate consent form should any child from your school be identified for a follow up interview.

To help you decide whether you would like your school to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve; details of the study are explained below.

Study Title: An Initial Exploration of what makes a gratitude diary successful

Researcher: Stephanie Louise Bowen

ERGO number: 70859, **Date:** 25.03.22 **Version:** 2

Who has been asked to take part?

This study is designed to be a whole class project; It involves classes of children in Years 3, 4 and 5. I am hoping to find out whether specific elements of gratitude diaries (i.e., the way they are written and presented to children) impact their effectiveness on a child's feeling of gratitude, their sense of belonging in school and their positive emotions.

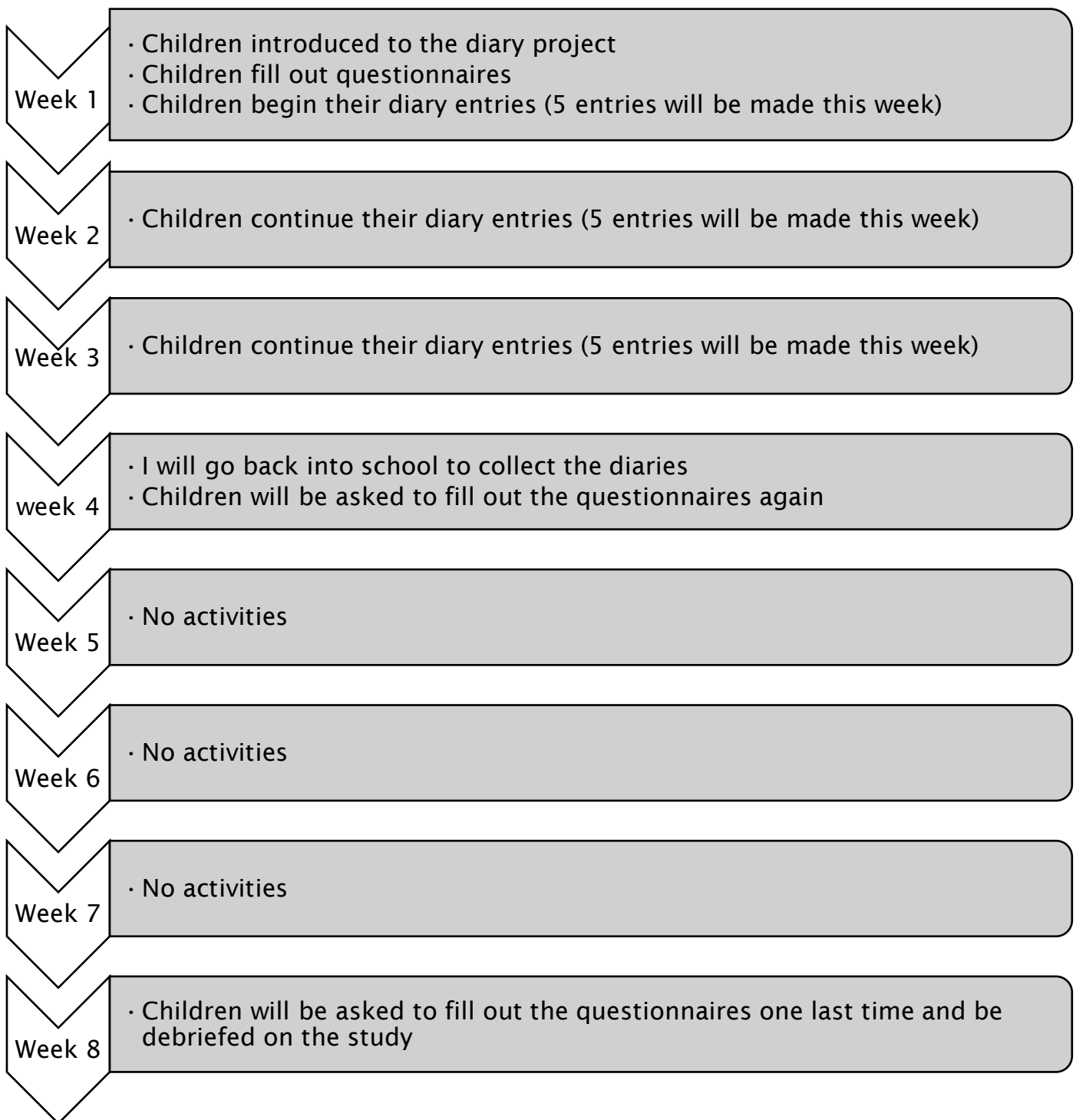
What does the research involve?

Prior to beginning their diaries, I will lead a whole-class session where the children will be asked to fill out four short, self-rated questionnaires. These questionnaires explore gratitude, positive emotions and a sense of school belonging. The children will then be split into three groups, and they will fill out their diaries together each day over a three week period. The diary activity should take approximately 5-10 minutes. The diaries will only be completed at school; the children will not have to take these home to complete at the weekend.

After the three week intervention, I will collect the diaries the children have filled in, they will **not** be analysed for their content, but diaries will be screened to ensure there are at least 10 diary entries, and a percentage will be checked to make sure that children have written their entries as they were asked to. When I collect the diaries from school, I will lead another whole-class questionnaire session, to ask the children to complete the short questionnaires again.

After a further four weeks, I will return to school to lead a final whole-class session, to ask the children to fill out the same questionnaires one last time. This will allow me to see if any impact of the intervention has lasted over a period of time. Please see the diagram below for an approximate timeline of the full project process.

May I ask that any children who need additional support to fill out these questionnaires in line with their normal way of working receive such support from school.



Are there any benefits for children taking part?

The aim of this project is to explore if gratitude diaries increase children's feelings of gratitude, their sense of school belonging and their feelings of positive emotions. This is an area of great interest to Educational Psychologists to help us understand how to make gratitude diaries as successful as possible. The findings of the project will be fed back to you once the study has ended and the results analysed; we hope you will find them useful if you would like to implement this intervention for any children in the future.

The study is underpinned by positive psychology research, and we hope that it will contribute to the overall wellbeing to the children in your school.

Are there any risks to children being involved?

The research is designed to be low risk, but it might be that some children feel uncomfortable writing in their diary or would like to talk to someone they trust about something they have written in their diary or any worries or concerns that they may have. Before the study begins I would like to work with you to identify a person within school that you would be happy for children to go to should they wish to speak to someone about their diary.

What data will be collected from children and how will it be stored and used?

Apart from their diary entries, children will be asked to provide their name (which will later be initially pseudonymised and then anonymised, please see below), their age and their gender.

Once the children have completed their questionnaires, their names will be removed from them and replaced with a corresponding ID number. This means that the children's names will not appear on the questionnaires when they are taken off school site. Similarly, when the diaries are collected, these will also be pseudonymised with the same ID number. Therefore, children's names will not be on any documentation that leaves the school.

A printed spreadsheet will be kept securely in school, in line with your data protection policy, which keeps a record of children's names and their corresponding ID numbers, this is to ensure that if any safeguarding concerns are raised, or a child wishes to stop being involved in the study, their data can be retrieved or removed as necessary. The hard copies of the diaries and questionnaires that are taken off school site by the researcher will be stored in a lockable and secure container. They will be scanned and saved onto a computer at the earliest point possible and will be saved on a secure university storage account. After they have been scanned into the computer, the original hard copies will be destroyed.

During data analysis, the data may be shared with my research supervisors and collaborators for the purpose of supporting accurate data analysis, but due to the data being pseudo anonymised my supervisors will not be able to connect the data with your school. Adding to this, responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to the data 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 the data. All these people have a duty to keep children's information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

After the research study has ended, the spreadsheet with children's names and corresponding ID numbers will be destroyed, removing all connection of children to the data meaning the data will be fully anonymised. The findings of the study will be written up and disseminated more widely where appropriate, but no data will be published that connects your school, or your children, to the project.

What will happen in the follow up study?

A small number of children will be asked to participate in a follow up study, to talk about their experiences of participating in the gratitude diary intervention. This will support our understanding of how to design future gratitude diaries and ensure they are effective. Children who are invited to take part will be asked to participate in a short interview with the researcher, Rosalind Keefe, a trainee educational psychologist. This will involve the child answering a few questions about their experiences. For example, asking them to describe aspects of the intervention that they enjoyed or did not enjoy. The

interview will take up to 30 minutes. Rosalind will ensure that all interviews are anonymised so that the children who have participated cannot be identified. Parents will be contacted separately by Rosalind to gain their consent for their child to take part in the follow up study, should their child be selected.

What will happen to the results/findings of the research?

As mentioned previously, children's personal details will remain anonymous, with only those who are deemed necessary having access to the data (i.e., myself and my supervisors). No details of your school will be shared. The data from the study will be held on the 'Pure' data repository at the University of Southampton. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify children or their school. It is hoped that the findings of the study will be useful to your school. It is also possible that the study's findings may be presented in an academic journal.

What if parents do not wish for their child to take part?

If you consent to your school taking part in the project, parents/carers will be sent an information letter about the study, similar to this one, and an opt-out consent form. This means that unless parents return the consent form, it will be assumed by the researcher that they consent for their child to take part. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the research at any point by telling their teacher. Similarly, children have equal rights to change their mind about taking part in the study. Children will be asked to assent to the study, but they can also withdraw this at any point by telling their teacher or parents/carers if they do not wish to take part.

Please note, if a child is selected for the qualitative follow up study, their parents will be contacted separately, and asked to provide opt-in consent for their child to take part in an interview.

Where can I get more information, or go to if I am concerned?

If you have any complaints, concerns or questions about the research please feel free to contact me (Stephanie Bowen, the researcher) on the following email address: s.l.bowen@soton.ac.uk

The research is supervised by Dr Colin Woodcock (C.Woodcock@soton.ac.uk) and Dr Catherine Brignell (C.Brignell@soton.ac.uk) from the University of Southampton.

In the unlikely case that something goes wrong in this study we advise you to contact the Head of Research Governance, University of Southampton, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk, +44 (0) 2380 595058

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).

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 to take part in a research study, we will use information about you 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 you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/Is/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 you 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 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 the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about your child for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your 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 personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your 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).

Thank you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering your school participation in the above study.

I provide permission for my school to take part in this research study and subsequent follow up study. I confirm that any personal data collected as part of the project will be held securely in school in line with our data protection policy and regulation.

I provide permission for opt-out consent to be gained from parents for the first part of this study.

Name: _____

Role at School: _____

(If not the Head Teacher, please confirm by ticking this box that you have permission from the Head Teacher to sign this consent form on their behalf)

I have permission from the Head Teacher to sign this consent form:

Name of School: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Parent/Carers Consent Form (Shortened Accessible Version)

Research Information and Consent for Parents/Carers

Study Title: An Initial Exploration of What Makes a Gratitude Diary Successful

Researcher: Stephanie Louise Bowen

ERGO number: 70859

Date: 13.05.22 **Version:** 3

Dear Parent/Carer,

My name is Stephanie Bowen, and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Southampton. I would like to invite your child to take part in a research study that I am doing which aims to investigate whether the way gratitude diaries are written and presented to children impacts on their effectiveness at increasing gratitude, a sense of school belonging and emotions.

To help you decide whether you would like your child to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Details of the study are explained below.

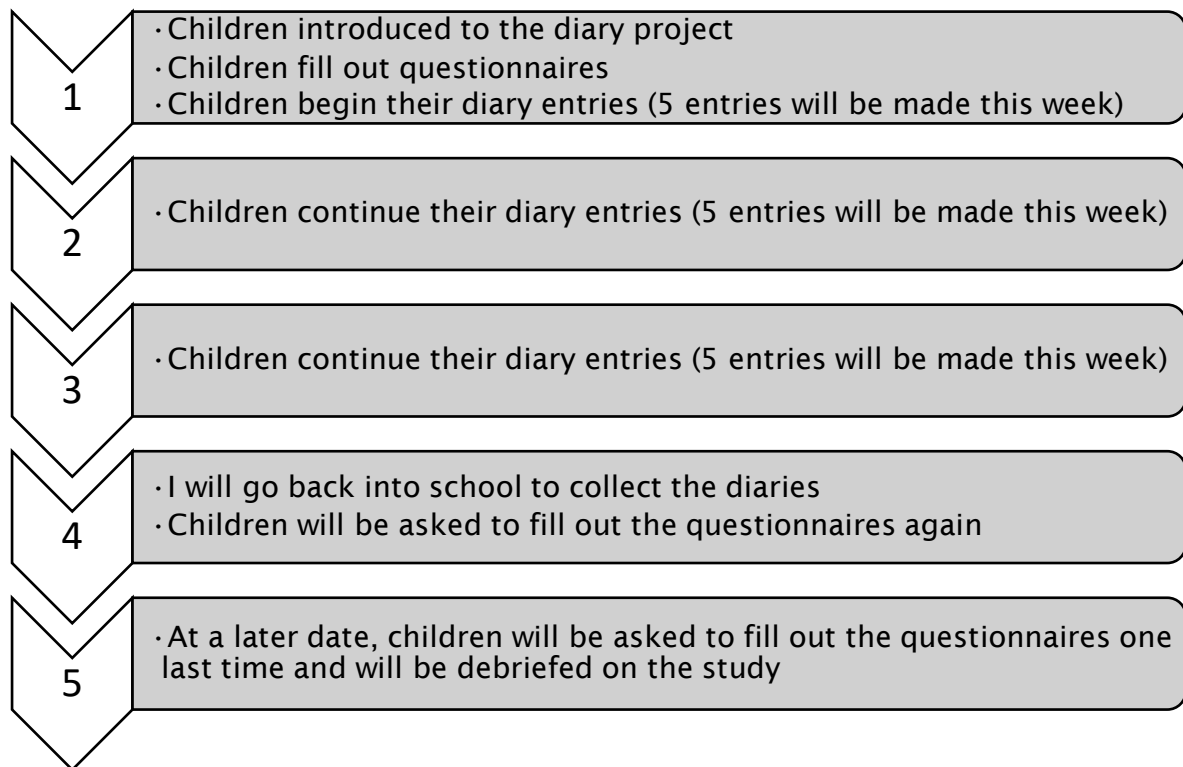
Why has my child been asked to participate?

- This study is designed to be a whole class project for children in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- I am hoping to find out whether specific elements of gratitude diaries impact their effectiveness on a child's feeling of gratitude, sense of school belonging and emotions.

What will happen to my child if they take part?

- First, children will be asked to fill out four short questionnaires, at school. This will be supported by familiar adults they work with in the classroom.
- Then, children will be split into three groups, and they will fill out their diaries together each day over a three week period.
 - The diary activity should take approximately 5-10 minutes.
 - The diaries will only be completed at school; the children will not have to bring them home to complete at the weekend.
- After three weeks, I will collect the diaries the children have filled in.
 - When I collect the diaries from school the children will be asked to complete the short questionnaires again.
- At a later date, I will return to school to ask the children to fill out the same questionnaires one last time. Please see diagram below for an overview of the process.
- Your child may also be selected to participate in a follow up interview after the study has finished. You will be asked to give permission for your child to take part, should they be selected for this.

Flow Chart of the Study:



Are there any benefits in my child taking part?

- We hope that the study will contribute to your child's overall wellbeing.
- Using gratitude diaries to increase wellbeing is an area of great interest to Educational Psychologists and schools, and it will be helpful to know how we can make gratitude diaries as successful as possible.
- The results of the project will be fed back to your child's school once the study has ended.

Are there any risks to my child being involved?

- The research is designed to be low risk.
- Some children may feel uncomfortable writing in their diary or may like to talk to someone they trust about something they have written in their diary, or any worries or concerns that they may have. Children will be made aware of who they can go to in school if they would like to speak to someone about their diary.

What data will be collected from my child and how will it be stored and used?

- In addition to completing their diaries children will be asked to provide their name, age and gender. Names will later be removed and replaced with an ID number so it will not be possible to connect your child to the study.
- A spreadsheet will be kept in school which keeps a record of children's names and their corresponding ID numbers: this is to ensure that if any safeguarding concerns are raised, or your child wishes to stop being involved in the study, their data can be retrieved or removed.
 - This spreadsheet will be kept securely by a key contact at school and not by the researcher.
 - After the study this spreadsheet will be destroyed.

- During data analysis, the data may be shared with my research supervisors and collaborators for the purpose of supporting accurate data analysis, but they will not be able to identify your child from the information (because children's names will have been removed by this point).
- The findings of the study will be written up and disseminated more widely where appropriate, but no data will be published that connects your child to the project.

What will happen to the results/findings of the research?

- The anonymised data from the study will be held on the 'Pure' data repository at the University of Southampton.
- The results may be put into a report, or published in an academic journal, but no details of your child will be shared.

Does my child have to participate in the study?

- No.
- If you **DO NOT** want your child to take part in this study please sign and return the slip below.
- If your child starts the study but then decides at any point that they do not wish to take part any more they can stop without needing to give a reason.
- If you consent to your child participating (i.e., if you do NOT return the form) your child will still be asked to assent to taking part in the study when it starts. This means that your child will be asked if they want to take part. If they do, they will be included in the project. If they do not, they will be asked to write their name on a form to record that they do not want to be included.

Where can I get more information, or go to if I am concerned?

- If you have any complaints, concerns or questions about the research please feel free to contact me (Stephanie Bowen, the researcher) on the following email address: s.l.bowen@soton.ac.uk.
- The research is supervised by Colin Woodcock (c.woodcock@soton.ac.uk) and Dr Catherine Brignell (C.Brignell@soton.ac.uk) from the University of Southampton, who you may also contact about this research.
- The following contact details can be used if you remain unhappy, or have a complaint about the study:
 - The chair of the Ethics Committee, Psychology, University of Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK. Phone: 02380 593856, email fshs-rso@soton.ac.uk.
 - The University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

For a more in depth understanding of the study and information about the University of Southampton's Data Protection Privacy policy please scan the below Q-R code:



Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering your child's participation in the above study.

If you would **not** like your child to participate in this project, please complete and return the slip below. If you would like your child to participate in this study, you do not need to take any further action.

By completing this slip, you are stating that you **do not** want your child to take part in the gratitude diary project being completed by Stephanie Bowen.

Child's Name:
Class:

Class Teacher:

I confirm that I **do not** wish for my children to part in the gratitude diary study as outlined in the parent information sheet.

Parent/Carer's Signature:
Date:

Please return to your child's class teacher

Research Information and Consent for Parents/carers

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Stephanie Bowen, and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Southampton. I would like to invite your child to take part in a research study that I am conducting which aims to investigate whether the way gratitude diaries are written and presented to children impacts their effectiveness at increasing gratitude, a sense of school belonging and positive emotions. Children participating in this study will be asked to complete a short diary exercise each day for three weeks. After this, your child may also be invited to participate in a follow up interview to see how they felt about filling in the diary; if your child is selected for this interview then you will be contacted again to gain your consent for this. This letter concerns only the first part of the study – i.e., the daily diary exercise.

To help you decide whether you would like your child to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Details of the study are explained below.

If you would not like your child to participate in this project, please complete and return the slip at the end of this letter.

Study Title: An Initial Exploration of what makes a gratitude diary successful

Researcher: Stephanie Louise Bowen

ERGO number: 70859, **Date:** 13.05.22 **Version:** 3

Why has my child been asked to participate?

This study is designed to be a whole class project; It involves classes of children in Years 3, 4 and 5. I am hoping to find out whether specific elements of gratitude diaries (i.e., the way they are written and presented to children) impact their effectiveness on a child's feeling of gratitude, their sense of belonging in school and their positive emotions.

What will happen to my child if they take part?

Prior to beginning their diaries, the children will be asked to fill out four short, self-rated questionnaires. These questionnaires explore gratitude, positive emotions and sense of school belonging. The children will then be split into three groups, and they will fill out their diaries together each day over a three week period. The diary activity should take approximately 5-10 minutes. The diaries will only be completed at school; the children will not have to bring them home to complete at the weekend.

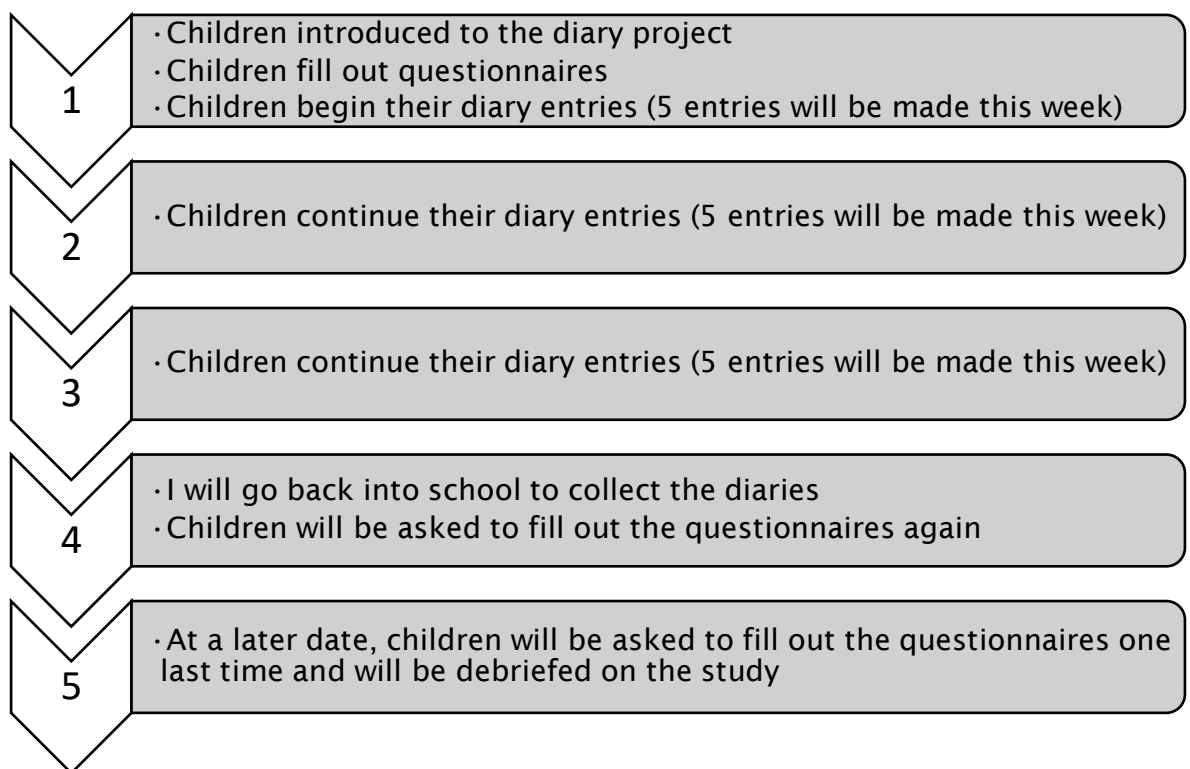
After this three week intervention, I will collect the diaries the children have filled in, they will **not** be analysed for their content, but diaries will be screened to ensure there are at least 10 diary entries and a percentage will be checked to make sure that children have

written their entries as they were asked to. When I collect the diaries from school the children will be asked to complete the short questionnaires again.

At a later date, I will return to school to ask the children to fill out the same questionnaires one last time. This will allow me to see if any impact the intervention had has lasted over a period of time. Please see the diagram below for an overview of the process.

Any children who need additional support to fill out these questionnaires in line with their normal way of working will receive such support from school.

As mentioned earlier, your child may also be selected to participate in a follow up interview after the study has finished. You will, however, be sent a separate consent form and information sheet, should your child be selected for an interview.



Are there any benefits in my child taking part?

The overall aim of this project is to explore if gratitude diaries increase children's feelings of gratitude, their sense of school belonging and their feelings of positive emotions. This is an area of great interest to Educational Psychologists and schools to help us understand how to make gratitude diaries as successful as possible. The findings of the project will be fed back to your child's school once the study has ended and the results analysed.

The study is underpinned by positive psychology research, and we hope that it will contribute to your child's overall wellbeing.

Are there any risks to my child being involved?

The research is designed to be low risk, but it might be that some children feel uncomfortable writing in their diary or would like to talk to someone they trust about something they have written in their diary or any worries or concerns that they may have. Children will be made aware of who they can go to in school should they wish to speak to someone about their diary.

What data will be collected from my child and how will it be stored and used?

Apart from their diary entries, children will be asked to provide their name (which will later be pseudo anonymised and then anonymised, please see below), their age and their gender.

Names will be removed and replaced with an ID number (pseudo anonymised). Therefore, your child's name will not be on any documentation that leaves the school.

A spreadsheet will be kept in school which keeps a record of children's names and their corresponding ID numbers: this is to ensure that if any safeguarding concerns are raised, or your child wishes to stop being involved in the study, their data can be retrieved or removed as necessary. This spreadsheet will be kept securely by a key contact at school and not by the researcher. The hard copies of the diaries and questionnaires that are taken off school site by the researcher will be stored in a lockable and secure container.

During data analysis, the data may be shared with my research supervisors and collaborators for the purpose of supporting accurate data analysis, but due to the data being pseudo anonymised my supervisors will not be able to identify your child within it. Additionally, 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 these people have a duty to keep your child's information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

After the research study has ended, the spreadsheet with children's names and corresponding ID numbers will be destroyed, removing all connection of your child to the data, meaning the data will be fully anonymised. The findings of the study will be written up and disseminated more widely where appropriate, but no data will be published that connects your child to the project.

What will happen to the results/findings of the research?

As mentioned previously, your child's personal details will remain anonymous, with only those who are deemed necessary having access to the data (i.e., myself, collaborators, and my supervisors). No details of your child's school will be shared. The data from the study will be held on the 'Pure' data repository at the University of Southampton. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can

directly identify your child. It is hoped that the findings of the study will be useful to your child's school. It is also possible that the study findings may be presented in an academic journal.

Does my child have to participate in the study?

No, it is up to you and your child to decide. If you DO NOT want your child to take part in this study then please sign and return the slip below. Participation in this study is voluntary and if your child decides at any point that they do not wish to take part in the study they can stop without needing to give a reason. If you consent to your child participating (i.e., if you do NOT return the form) your child will still be asked to assent to taking part in the study when it starts. This means that your child will be asked if they want to take part. If they do, they will be included in the project. If they do not, they will be asked to write their name on a form to record that they do not want to be included.

Where can I get more information, or go to if I am concerned?

If you have any complaints, concerns or questions about the research please feel free to contact me (Stephanie Bowen, the researcher) on the following email address:

s.l.bowen@soton.ac.uk

The research is supervised by Colin Woodcock (c.woodcock@soton.ac.uk) and Dr Catherine Brignell (C.Brignell@soton.ac.uk) from the University of Southampton.

In the unlikely case that something goes wrong in this study we advise you to contact the Head of Research Governance, University of Southampton, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk, +44 (0) 2380 595058.

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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 you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/Is/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 you 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 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 the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about your child for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your 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 personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your 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).

Thank you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering your child's participation in the above study.

By completing this slip, you are stating that you **do not** want your child to take part in the gratitude diary project being completed by Stephanie Bowen.

Child's Name:

Class:

Class Teacher:

I confirm that I **do not** wish for my children to part in the gratitude diary study as outlined in the parent information sheet.

Parent/Carer's Signature:

Date:

Please return to your child's class teacher

CHILD ASSENT FORM

Study title: An Initial Exploration of What Makes a Gratitude Diary Successful

Researcher name: Stephanie Louise Bowen

ERGO number: 70859

Date created: 25.03.22

Version: 2

Participant Identification Number (if applicable):

If you do not want to take part in the gratitude diaries project please write your name and put a tick in the box at the bottom. This means that you will not be completing a diary or be asked to participate in a follow up interview with my friend Rosalind Keefe.

You can stop taking part at any time during the study, you just need to let your teacher know.

Gratitude Diary Research Project: Child Opt-Out Form

I do **NOT** want to take part in this project.

Name:
