

Parent / Carer Information Sheet

THE SPA (School Physical Activity) PROJECT

I would like to invite your child to take part in the SPA project that is looking at young people's levels of physical activity (PA). Specifically, I am aiming to research how active young people are throughout their normal daily routines.

In order to ensure you make an informed decision, I have produced this information sheet to help parents / carers understand what the project will involve and why it is being carried out. This document will provide you with the key information relating to the project, and hopefully it will answer all of your questions. However, if you still require further information or have any additional questions, I will also provide details of how you can contact me in order to have your questions answered fully.

Why is this project being completed?

The UK government and health agencies recognise the importance of daily PA in helping reduce the development of key health issues across the population, including for children and young people. This includes reducing the incidence and development of chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Current research indicates that young people are becoming less active, due to a myriad of reasons, and are more at risk of not meeting daily PA goals. As such, concerns have been raised about the health and well-being of young people as PA levels decline.

Physical education (PE) lessons within secondary schools represent an opportunity for students to be physically active, and learn through physical movement. Therefore, PE can play a significant role in helping young people to meet their daily PA goals.

This project is therefore investigating how active young people are throughout the day, including the contribution PE lessons make to their overall levels of PA.

Why has my child been chosen to take part?

The Headteacher of the school has kindly granted permission for me to work with students across year 7. It is the intention of the project to work with all students in year 7 at the school, and this is why your child has been included in the list of potential participants.

Does my child have to take part in this project?

I very much hope that all participants will be keen to take part in the project. However, your child is not obliged to take part, and you have the option to decline the invitation.

If you decide that you would like your child to be involved in the project, I will ask both yourself and your child to sign a consent form confirming that you wish to be included.

Your child's participation in the project is voluntary, and they are free to withdraw at any point.



What will my child be expected to do?

Your child will be provided with a small device, known as an accelerometer, that is able to track their PA levels throughout the day. The device is worn on the hip, and does not have any impact on normal movement or activities. All participants will be asked to wear the accelerometer for a 1-week period, in order for me to identify how their PA levels change throughout the course of the day. This will include collecting information during school time (at breaktime and lunchtime, in classroom lessons, and during PE lessons), and also outside of normal school hours.

All participants will be given full guidance on how to attach and use the accelerometer. Once in use, participants are asked to go about their daily patterns as normal. They will not be asked to change anything about their routines and normal behaviour – it is simply an observational tool used to understand more about young people's PA habits over the course of a week.

Are there any additional risks or disadvantages to my child if they take part?

There are no additional risks posed by taking part in the study, above those of normal day-to-day living. The project has been designed specifically to observe PA habits via the accelerometer, and all participants are encouraged to continue with their normal routines. There will be no direct intervention programs or activities as part of this study.

What are the benefits to my child and the school?

It is hoped that participation in the project will be effective in educating students about their own PA habits, engaging them with 'real-life' personal data that enhances their knowledge and understanding of PA and the impact on their own health and well-being.

The project will provide the school with a unique insight into their students, and the PA habits students currently engage in. This information could be used by the school in a number of ways, in order to develop PA across the whole school. For example, the data could support the PE department in reflecting on their current sports club offer, building on identified strengths and enhancing provision for students.

Will my child's involvement in the project remain confidential?

All information and data collected during the project will be kept strictly confidential, and the researcher will ensure that individual participants are not able to be identified in the final report. The data collected will be stored using password protected databases with access strictly limited to research personnel with the relevant authorisation.

Once the research project ends, what happens next?

When the data collection process has been completed, the researcher will begin collating and analysing the results from the project. The final report will identify key themes and conclusions, and aim to make recommendations for future research and practice within schools.

Your school, and in particular the year 7 participants, will be invited to an event where the key findings of the project will be discussed. In addition, copies of the final report will be made available via the school.

If you have any additional questions, or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Mike Bond (Researcher) – Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. Email - Michael.Bond@pgr.anglia.ac.uk

or Lee Smith (Research Supervisor) – Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. Email – Lee.Smith@anglia.ac.uk