

Fix our Food: Free School Meal Auto-Enrolment Information Sheet for Parent Interviews

Your child's school Stocksbridge High School is part of a network of schools that have been involved in a new programme in which those who are entitled to Free School Meals are automatically enrolled to receive them. This means that parents no longer need to apply, but rather, now receive a letter home giving them the option to opt-out of receiving a free school meal for their child if they wish.

The Fix Our Food team, at the University of York, have been working closely with your council to explore how effective this free school meal auto-enrolment programme has been. FixOurFood is a project with the vision of transforming food in schools across all of Yorkshire and beyond. At Fix our Food, our aim is that tasty, good quality, sustainable food is eaten by all children in schools and early years settings.

You have been invited to take part in an interview to tell us what you think about the free school meal auto-enrolment programme.

1. What is the purpose of this?

Understanding your experience and gathering your opinions on the auto-enrolment process can help shape future policies and initiatives involving school food and could help more and more children get access to a free, hot, healthy meal at school on a daily basis.

We are inviting parents of children within your school to share their thoughts and experiences of the free school meal auto-enrolment process during an informal interview with trained members of the Fix our Food team. In the discussion, you will be asked to tell us what you think about the auto-enrolment process, if/how it has impacted you, including any positive or negative consequences, and whether (if relevant) you decided to opt-out and why. There are no right or wrong answers.

2. Who is doing the study?

The project is being led by Professor Maria Bryant, and the Fix our Food study team (led by Professor Bob Doherty) at the University of York in collaboration with the Food Foundation [], and Bremner & Co [<https://bremnerco.com/>]. The study has been reviewed and approved by the University of York Research Ethics committee REF [xx]

3. Why have I been asked to participate?

You are being invited to take part as your child is attending a school that has been part of the new free school meal auto-enrolment process, alongside many other schools in Yorkshire and beyond.

4. Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. If you would like to take part, there is an attached consent form for you to sign.

5. What will the interview involve?

You will be invited to take part in an interview (online or in person (in your home) depending on your preference). Interviews will cover questions about your experience of the free school meal auto-enrolment process and how this may have positively or negatively impacted you or your child. Interviews will additionally ask you to describe your general feelings of free school meals and whether your child has previously been registered to receive free school meals, factors that may have prevented registration initially, and if applicable, factors that may have led you to opt your child out of receiving free school meals. Interviews are aimed to last around 45 minutes or less at a time which is convenient to you.

6. Will my information be kept confidential?

All data collected will only be accessed and used by named members of the research team and all information will remain confidential. The interviews will be audio recorded, typed up and anonymised (your name will not be included). These written transcripts will be stored securely on the University of York's computer system and audio recordings will then be erased. Your contact details (used to arrange the interviews) will be stored separately on the University secure server and will be destroyed at the end of the study.

For further information on the university's policies on GDPR, please note the following links:

<https://www.york.ac.uk/records-management/dp/>

<https://www.york.ac.uk/records-management/dp/guidance/gdprcompliantresearch/>

<https://www.york.ac.uk/records-management/dp/your-info/generalprivacynotice/>

In addition, information on the Department of Health Sciences' webpages that contain generic information about GDPR and data management is as follows:

<https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/research/trials/trials-gdpr/>

<https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/research/trials/trials-gdpr/research-participants>

7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You will be compensated £25 for your time (voucher) and up to £20 for travel expenses, if applicable. In addition, we hope that you will feel satisfaction in helping us understand your thoughts and experiences of the free school meal auto-enrolment programme and whether it is seen as an acceptable approach by parents, or not. This will also form an integral part of a wider groundbreaking research project that aims to transform the food system in Yorkshire and other areas for the benefit of dietary and planetary health. We will take learnings from this research and apply this throughout the UK. This can truly make a huge difference to young people's health and wellbeing and could provide them with a fairer start in life.

8. Are there any disadvantages or risks to taking part?

Apart from a burden on your time, there are no perceived disadvantages or risks of you taking part in Fix our Food Free School Meals Auto-Enrolment interviews.

9. Can I withdraw from the study at any time?

You are welcome to withdraw from the study and are not required to give a reason for withdrawing. There will be no consequences which may arise due to your withdrawal. You will have two weeks from the date of the interview to withdraw your data. Withdrawn data will be

deleted and will not be used in the study. Data not withdrawn within this time will be included in the study.

10. How can I find out more information?

If you would like to find out more about the study before deciding to participate, please contact any of the members of the team listed at the end of this information sheet. You can also access our website www.fixourfood.org or follow us on Facebook or Twitter if you would like to know more about the study.

11. How will I find out the results of the study?

The results of this study will be published in scientific journals and policy briefs but we will also make sure that they are included in our newsletters and are available through our website (www.fixourfood.org).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact us:

Dr Sundus Mahdi, Research Associate, Department of Health Sciences, University of York
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Maria Bryant, Professor in Public Health Nutrition, University of York
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Shona Goudie, Food Foundation
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Alternatively, you can provide us with your contact details through completing this [contact form](#), and we will get back to you within 3 working days.

12. Who do I contact in the event of a complaint?

For general complaints, please contact the Chair of Department of Health Sciences' Research Governance Committee (Professor Stephen Holland: stephen.holland@york.ac.uk) or Head of Department (Professor Kate Flemming: kate.flemming@york.ac.uk). If you become unhappy with the way your personal data has been handled, you have a right to complain to the University's Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@york.ac.uk; if you are still unsatisfied, you have a right to report concerns to the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk/concerns.