

To parents/guardians
children in Years 4 to 10

Our ref.:
2019/2879

Your ref.:

Place: Bergen
21.01.2021

Inviting school pupils to participate in a survey regarding bullying, friendship and well-being - spring 2021

This is a letter to parents/guardians informing that all pupils in Years 4 to 10 are invited to participate in a survey regarding bullying, friendship and well-being at school.

This letter is more detailed compared to previous letters on the same subject. This is due to the new Personal Data Act which came into force on 20th July 2018. In relation to this Act, Norway endorses the EU's data protection regulation called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Purpose

In line with Chapter 9A of the Norwegian Education Act, the survey is part of the school's efforts to create a safe and good school environment for all pupils at the school. The survey will provide the school with valuable information about pupils' well-being and safety at school. It will also give an indication of how well the school is succeeding in its anti-bullying work. The collected data will also be used in research on bullying and the school environment, and to further develop the specific measures included in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The Norwegian Research Centre AS (NORCE) is responsible for the project and is one of Norway's largest independent research institutes. The project is managed by the company's health department called NORCE Helse, and the Regional Centre for Child and Youth Mental Health and Child Welfare (RKBU Vest) is responsible for the implementation of the survey.

RKBU Vest conducts research, teaching and the dissemination of knowledge that help to promote the mental health of children and young people. The school is an important arena, and the target group in the Centre's efforts to prevent, expose and deal with bullying and other violations among children and young people.

Why is your child being asked to participate?

Schools that have introduced *The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* receive the opportunity to conduct a pupil survey each year. This applies to pupils at approximately 90 primary schools from all over the country.

The Olweus Program aims to reduce existing bullying amongst groups of pupils and prevent future bullying. The work to prevent bullying in schools requires a long-term and systematic effort. An important part of this work is to monitor developments at one's own school through annual pupil surveys.

What does your child's participation involve?

The survey is conducted during school hours. Pupils use a PC or tablet when responding to the survey. The time that pupils spend responding to the survey depends on age and literacy, but it generally takes between 20 to 40 minutes to respond to the entire form.

Your child will *not* be asked to provide his or her own name or other directly identifiable personal data in the survey. When logging in to the survey, your child will only be asked to provide their gender, year of study, and name of school.

Pupils will receive guidance from their teacher before they start answering the survey. The form contains questions about well-being at school, the number of friends in their class and how often bullying occurs among pupils. There are questions about various types of bullying e.g. the use of bad language and nicknames, excluding fellow pupils from play or other activities, spreading lies, kicking, pushing, fighting and ruining the possessions of others. In addition, the survey attempts to uncover where on the school's premises these negative actions occur, and whether the pupils have reported the events to parents, teachers, siblings and friends, for example. The questionnaire used in the survey can be found on RKBU Vest's website: <https://www.norceresearch.no/rkbu-vest-regionalt-kunnskapssenter-for-barn-og-unge/sporreundersokelsen>

Pupils in Year 4 receive fewer questions than pupils in Years 5 to 10.

Participation is voluntary

It is your child's decision, in consultation with you as their parent/guardian, whether or not to participate in the survey. Parents/guardians may contact the school if they *do not* want their child to participate. You do not need to provide a reason why the child should not be included. Your child may also withdraw from the survey after it has begun.

Pupils who do not take part in the survey will usually be asked to do schoolwork during the period when the survey is being conducted. However, individual schools determine how this can be best arranged.

Pupils' data protection — how we store and use information from the survey

RKBU Vest will only use the information collected from the pupils for the purposes we have informed you about in this letter. We process information confidentially and in accordance with data protection policy.

RKBU Vest uses the Web Form (University of Oslo) as its platform for data collection. When a school has completed the survey, they are sent a standardised report after RKBU Vest has ensured that no pupils can be indirectly identified.

Research is not linked to data from individual schools, but rather the collected results from several schools. Results from individual schools will not be published. Responses from individual pupils will be anonymised in publications or other forms of dissemination.

What happens to information once it has been collected?

The data collected during the annual surveys will be stored on a secure server at Services for secure data storage (TSD) operated by the University of Oslo and with which NORCE AS has an agreement. This server is built in accordance with The Code of Conduct for information security and data protection in the healthcare and care services (Normen), which ensures that information security in relation to confidentiality, integrity and accessibility is safeguarded. The name of the school will be replaced with a number in the data file, and a school-level scrambling key has been created for this. The scrambling key is also stored on the same secure server. Only a small number of employees at RKBU Vest have access to the secure server, and all are subject to duty of confidentiality.

The data will be used in the reports provided to schools so that they can implement measures in relation to how bullying issues develop over a period of time. In our research work at RKBU Vest, we are keen to map out such developments at all schools that introduce the Olweus Program, in order to draw conclusions about the effect of the program on bullying in schools.

Project participant rights

Data protection legislation provides a number of rights to those who participate in surveys (cf. art. 12-22). RKBU Vest is obliged to inform the participants of the project about the processing of personal data and to facilitate so they can exercise their rights:

- obtain access to what type of personal data is recorded about the pupil
- correct personal data about the pupil
- delete personal data about the pupil
- receive a copy of the personal data about the pupil
- submit a complaint to the data protection officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of personal data

The rights apply for as long as the personal data is being processed and when it is possible to identify the registered pupil in a secure manner. Pupils are *not* registered with directly identifiable information such as name or identification number in this project. *Only* background information such as name of school, year of study and gender is recorded. As a general rule, this means that it will not be possible to identify answers from individual pupils. If it turns out that it is possible to identify an individual pupil's answer, we will help in ensuring that requirements are met regarding rights mentioned above.

What gives us the right to process personal data about your child?

On behalf of NORCE AS, the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project complies with data protection policy.

Would you like more information?

For further information, please contact:

- Project Manager Anne Marita Milde at RKBU Vest, NORCE Helse
Email: anmi@norcereseach.no Telephone: 932 32 728
- Senior Consultant Cecilie Marie Fjellbakk at RKBU Vest, NORCE Helse
Email: olweusprogrammet@norceresearch.no Telephone: 56 10 72 23
- Norwegian Centre for Data Research AS
Email: personverntjenester@nsd.no Telephone: 55 58 21 17
- Data protection officer for NORCE AS
- Email: personvernombud@norceresearch.no

Yours sincerely

Ann Heidi Nebb

Centre Manager/specialist psychologist

RKBU Vest
NORCE

Anne Marita Milde

Dr. psychol
Project Manager/researcher
RKBU Vest
NORCE