

To parents/guardians  
children in Years 4 to 10

Our ref.:  
Hilde Brendehaug Hugaas

Your ref.:

Place: Bergen  
04.09.2023

## Inviting school pupils to participate in a survey on bullying, friendship and well-being

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

### **Purpose**

This survey forms part of the school's work on creating a good, safe school environment for all pupils at the school, in line with Chapter 9A of the Norwegian Education Act and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. 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. Additionally, the data collected will be used in research on bullying and the school environment, and to further develop the specific measures included in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme.

The owner of the school is responsible for conducting the Olweus survey at the school, while NORCE is responsible for the research.

### **Who is responsible for the research project?**

The Regional Centre for Child and Youth Mental Health and Child Welfare (RKBU Vest) is responsible for conducting the survey in collaboration with the owner of the school. RKBU Vest is involved in research, teaching and disseminating knowledge, all with the aim of promoting the mental health of children and young people. Schools are important arenas and target groups in the Centre's efforts to prevent, identify and deal with bullying and other violations among children and young people. RKBU Vest is part of Norwegian Research Centre (NORCE) AS, which is responsible for the project and research work. NORCE is one of Norway's largest independent research institutes.

### **Why is your child being asked to participate?**

Schools that have introduced the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme* are offered an opportunity to conduct a pupil survey each year. This applies to pupils at approximately 105 primary and lower

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secondary schools throughout the country. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme 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.

We process data about your child because the research project is deemed to be in the public interest, cf. the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Article 6, (1) (e) and Article 9 (2) (g). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that the best interests of the child must be a fundamental consideration in all actions concerning children. Research shows that the Olweus Programme can reduce bullying in schools ([https://ungsinn.no/post\\_tiltak\\_arkiv/olweus-programmet-obpp-2-utg/](https://ungsinn.no/post_tiltak_arkiv/olweus-programmet-obpp-2-utg/)), and the results from the Olweus survey are important for schools when it comes to being able to refine their measures for the benefit of the pupils.

### **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, nor is there any possibility to write freely 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, ruining the possessions of others and digital bullying. In addition, the survey will 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 survey can be viewed on RKBV Vest's webpage (<https://www.tryggscoleogfritid.no/sprreskjema-pdf>)

Pupils in Year 4 will be asked 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. You may contact the school if you *do not* want your child to participate. You do not need to provide a reason why your child is not participating. Your child may also withdraw from the survey after starting it. 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**

RKBV 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 the data protection regulations.

RKBU Vest uses Nettskjema (University of Oslo) with secure storage in Services for Sensitive Data (TSD) as a platform for data collection. After the school has finished the survey, the headteacher will be sent a standardised report with results from the survey regarding their own school. Before submitting the report, RKBU Vest will do its best to minimise the possibility of students being indirectly identified. For example, RKBU Vest will provide verbal feedback at a more general level if we believe there is a risk of indirect identification. RKBU Vest encourages that the report is mainly used as an internal work tool for quality improvement in schools.

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 from the annual surveys are stored at TSD (<https://www.uio.no/tjenester/it/forskning/sensitiv/mer-om/>) which is operated by USIT at the University of Oslo, and with which NORCE AS has a data processing agreement. TSD is based on The Code of Conduct for information security and data protection in the healthcare and care services (Normen), which ensures that information security regarding 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 survey such developments at all schools that introduce the Olweus Programme, in order to draw conclusions about the impact of the programme on bullying in schools. Information NORCE uses for research purposes will be anonymised in 2042.

#### **The rights of project participants**

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), project participants enjoy a number of rights (ref. Articles 12-22) – [Act relating to the processing of personal data \(Personal Data Act\) – CHAPTER III The Rights of the Data Subject – Lovdata](#). RKBU Vest is obliged to inform project participants about how it processes personal data and to enable them to 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
- object to the processing of personal data concerning 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, email or national 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 provides us with a legal basis for processing personal data about your child?**

On behalf of NORCE AS, Sikt Personverntjenester has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project complies with the data protection regulations.

#### **Would you like more information?**

For further information, please contact:

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Yours sincerely,



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