



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

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INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION – CASE STUDY

The CANTEEN Study: Free School Meals, Diet Quality and Food Insecurity in Secondary School Pupils: a Mixed Methods Study

You are being invited to take part in an **interview** as part of the CANTEEN study. Your child's school is one of several schools in Northern Ireland (NI) and England that has agreed to complete the second part of the CANTEEN study. The study is being conducted by researchers from Queen's University Belfast and the University of Birmingham and is funded by the National Institute for Health Research. Please take time to read the following information carefully to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the aim of the study?

Not having enough money to buy food is known as **food insecurity** and is common in UK children. Free School Meals are offered to children based on household income. About 1 in 5 pupils do not take their Free School Meal. The CANTEEN study aims to find out a) what influences whether pupils in secondary schools in Northern Ireland and England take their Free School Meal, b) how Free School Meals are related to the quality of the food children eat and their food insecurity and c) whether changing who qualifies for Free School Meals would impact the food eaten and food insecurity. Understanding these things will help us to improve national Free School Meal policy. To understand this fully, however, we also need to understand the broader school food environment, how school meals are organised, the canteen setting, the school approach to food education and the culture of the school in relation to food, and healthy eating. All of these things are likely to influence school meal uptake in general, as well as uptake of Free School Meals. The findings of the CANTEEN study are intended directly to influence school food policy and practice for the future, with the ultimate aim of improving the nutritional intake of secondary school-aged children. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate your input, by taking part in an interview.

Why am I being invited to take part in the second part of this study?

Your child's school has agreed to participate in this part of the CANTEEN study and you are invited to an interview.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is up to you to decide whether you take part in this study.

IF YOU ARE HAPPY TO TAKE PART:

Please read this information sheet carefully and contact the research team if you have any questions. If you are happy to take part, please complete the consent form via the link provided. If the consent form was provided to you as a paper copy, please complete it and return it to the school. Alternatively, if you would like to complete the consent form with a member of the research team over a telephone or video call, please email: canteenstudy@qub.ac.uk and we will arrange this with you.

What happens if I change my mind about taking part?

If you agree to take part in the study, your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. You can withdraw your data until March 2025 when the interviews will be analysed.

If I take part, what will the study involve?

If you consent to take part in the interview, you will be asked to complete a short survey which asks questions about you and your child (e.g. your age, gender and ethnicity, whether your child is eligible to receive Free School Meals and questions on family food insecurity). You then will be asked to complete an interview at a date and time that suits you. The interview will take between 60-90 minutes and you can choose whether you would like to take part in-person, over the phone or online (through Microsoft Teams). The interview will include questions about your views on school meals in general as well as Free School Meals. We will also ask about food at home, your child's usual food choices and usual home food practices because understanding your child's whole food situation is important for us to understand their food choices. By answering these questions for us you can play a very important role in helping us to work out how, in future, school meals and Free School Meals can be of most benefit, to those who might need it most. We know that some of these questions are private, sensitive, and answering them could be difficult or uncomfortable. You can choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

If you decide to take part, you do not have to talk about anything you don't want to, and you will be free to stop or leave the study at any time, without giving a reason. Anything you do choose to share will be respected and treated in a non-judgemental manner.

Interviews will be audio-recorded and the recording will then be typed up for research purposes. The typed transcript will not contain any names and will be labelled with your unique study number. The recording will be destroyed once the information has been analysed by the research team.

As a thank you for time spent taking part in the study, a £15 Amazon voucher will be offered to all parents/guardians who complete the interview. We will ask you to provide your full name and email address to provide you with this voucher. A small monetary contribution (£5) will also be made to the school for each parent interview completed.

What are the benefits and risks of taking part?

By taking part in our research, we can help further development of UK policy relating to Free School Meals and help shape the health of future secondary school pupils.

We are collecting information from you on food insecurity. There is a small possibility that collection of this data may be a sensitive issue for some individuals. You don't have to answer questions that you do not wish to answer.

What if there is a problem?

If you have any concerns about any aspects of the study, you can contact the Chief Investigator, Professor Jayne Woodside (Telephone 028 9097 8942; Email j.woodside@qub.ac.uk). Should you remain unhappy and wish to make a formal complaint, you can contact the Research Governance Team at Queen's University Belfast (Telephone: 028 9097 2529; Email: researchgovernance@qub.ac.uk).

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, all information about you will be kept confidential. The transcribed interviews will be stored confidentially (anonymised using ID numbers) in a password protected database on a secure server at Queen's University Belfast/ University of Birmingham. Identifiable information (consent forms) will be stored separately from other data (e.g. interviews). Prior to the interview, you will be asked to provide some information in a survey that is known as "Personal data" (see above). Personal data will be stored in a separate database to other study data. Your name and email address will only be stored until they are used to provide you with a voucher.

The audio-recordings will be processed by third parties (known as data processors), such as software and transcription companies. Contractual terms, policies and procedures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality is respected. Only authorised members of the research team at Queen's University Belfast and

the University of Birmingham will have access to your personal data. Your information in anonymised form (using ID numbers) may be shared with collaborating researcher institutions. In some instances, inspectors from regulatory authorities may need to access data for checking the quality of the research. Study documentation will be kept for 10 years from when the study has been completed to allow for full and final publication of the research results and will be held securely by the Chief Investigator. At the end of this period data that are no longer required will be securely destroyed.

This research will be conducted in compliance with data protection legislation. For more information about how we look after your information, how to access your rights and who to contact if you have any queries or concerns about data protection please visit the Queen's University Belfast website - www.qub.ac.uk/privacynotice/Research/ListofResearchPrivacyNotices/PrivacyNoticeforResearchParticipants.html

What will happen to the results of the study?

A final report will be written at the end of the study and you will have the option of receiving a summary of this report. The results of the study will also be published in scientific journals and other reports for a variety of audiences, and presented at scientific conferences and meetings. You will not be identifiable in any of these reports, publications and presentations. Other researchers may be given access to your data but only in anonymised form - they will not be able to link this data to you.

Has this study been approved by an ethics committee?

Yes, this study has been approved by the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Queen's University Belfast.

What if I have more questions or do not understand something?

You can contact the research team (contact details below) to discuss any questions or concerns you have.

Contact for Further Information:

CANTEEN Study, Centre for Public Health, School of Medicine Dentistry & Biomedical Sciences, Institute of Clinical Science Block A, Grosvenor Road, Belfast BT12 6BJ.

Email: canteenstudy@qub.ac.uk

Researcher contact for all schools in Northern Ireland:

Dr Désirée McIlwee, CANTEEN study Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre for Public Health, School of Medicine Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences, Queen's University Belfast, Institute of Clinical Science Block B, Grosvenor Road, Belfast BT12 6BJ.

Email: d.mcilwee@qub.ac.uk Tel: 07823368446

Researcher contact for all schools in England:

Dr Emma Alving-Jessep, CANTEEN study Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Institute of Applied Health Research, College of Medical and Dental Sciences, The University of Birmingham, Murray Learning Centre, Edgbaston B15 2TT.

Email: e.alking-jessep@bham.ac.uk Tel: 0121 414 8072

CANTEEN study Chief Investigator

Professor Jayne Woodside, Centre for Public Health, School of Medicine Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences, Queen's University Belfast, Institute of Clinical Science Block B, Grosvenor Road, Belfast BT12 6BJ.

E-mail: j.woodside@qub.ac.uk Tel: 028 9097 8942

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY.