

Understanding the impact of school choices for improving school attendance and engagement

Privacy Notice – Parents/carers

Please note: this privacy notice contains information about the second phase of this project starting in April 2024. No parent/carer data was processed in stage one but if you would like to read more about, there is information here:

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/biolpvbz/aesc_for_schools_privacy_notice_2026.pdf

1 Why are we collecting this data?

The [Education Endowment Foundation](#) (EEF) and the [Youth Endowment Fund](#) (YEF) have commissioned and funded the [National Foundation for Educational Research](#) (NFER) and [The Difference](#) to carry out a study of approaches used by mainstream secondary schools to improve student attendance and engagement with school.

In this phase of the research, personal data (such as your name and your views and opinions) will be used to understand the different approaches used by schools to support students at risk of absence/exclusion. Detail as to how and why personal data will be collected from parents/carers is described in Sections 3 and 4 below.

2 Who is the data controller?

NFER is data controller for the study and will make decisions about how and what personal data is used in accordance with the objectives of the study set by EEF and the YEF, guided by the study advisory board. We are carrying out this research in partnership with The Difference, who are a data processor on the study.

3 What is the legal basis for processing activities?

The legal basis for processing personal data from parents/carers is covered by GDPR Article 6 (1) (f):

Legitimate interests: the processing is necessary for your (or a third party's) legitimate interests unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests.

We have carried out a legitimate interest assessment, which demonstrates that this research fulfils one of NFER's core business purposes (undertaking research, evaluation and information activities). It has broader societal benefits and will contribute to improving the lives of learners by

providing evidence on the effectiveness of different approaches used by schools. The research cannot be done without processing personal data, but NFER will ensure your rights are respected at all times.

A separate legal basis is identified for processing special data (see section 5 for details). The legal basis for processing special data is covered by GDPR Article 9 (2) (j):

Processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) based on Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject.

The processing is unlikely to cause substantial damage or substantial distress to participating parents/carers and no measures will be created or decisions taken about individuals as a result of the research.

4 How will personal data be obtained?

Personal data from parents/carers will be collected directly through interviews with parents/carers in case-study schools.

Where it proves difficult for the school to arrange interviews with parents/carers on our behalf, they may share parent/carer contact details with the research team so that the researchers can arrange the interviews directly.

5 What personal data is being collected by this project?

As described in Section 3, this project is processing personal data from parents/carers collected through interviews with parent/carers in case-study schools.

Parents/carers may provide personal data such as views and opinions, in the course of answering questions in interviews. During these interviews parents/carers may also reveal special data about themselves (such as information regarding their physical or mental health).

As part of the process of setting up interviews with parents/carers, schools may share personal data in the form of contact details of parents/carers with researchers.

6 Who will personal data be shared with?

Personal data collected from parents/carers during interviews will be shared between NFER and The Difference for the purposes of conducting research and for data analysis.

NFER and The Difference will use a number of third-party tools to support data collection activities, for example Hubspot to organise interviews and Google Meet, Zoom and Microsoft Teams to host them. Your personal data could be shared with them.

[Privacy notice for Zoom](#)

[Privacy notice for Microsoft Teams](#)

The interviews will be audio recorded and auto-transcribed. The recordings and transcripts will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team and permission to record will be requested at the start of the interview.

7 Is personal data being transferred outside of the UK?

Some of the third-party software used may transfer data outside of the UK and to countries not considered adequate under UK data protection legislation. Where such transfers are made, they are safeguarded by use of contractual controls such as the UK Extension to the EU-U.S. Data Privacy Framework. Please contact us for further details.

8 How long will personal data be retained?

NFER and The Difference will securely delete any personal data relating to parent/carer interviews collected by the project when the final report for the project is published, currently expected in April 2026.

9 Can I stop my personal data being used?

You may stop your interview data being used in the study at any time until February 2025, at which point the data will have been analysed. Please contact the NFER project team with any queries at: pupilsupport@nfer.ac.uk. NFER handles personal data in accordance with the rights given to individuals under data protection legislation. No schools or individuals will be named in any report for this study.

We appreciate your participation in the research, should you withdraw from it, NFER and The Difference will still use anything you have provided up to that point unless you indicate otherwise.

10 What are my rights with respect to personal data?

NFER handles personal data in accordance with the rights given to individual under data protection legislation. Under certain circumstances data subjects have the right:

- to request access to information that is held about them (a data subject access request).
- to have personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete.
- to request the deletion or removal of personal data where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing.
- to restrict processing of personal data (for example, permitting its storage but no further processing).
- to object to processing
- to data portability
- not to be subject to decisions based purely on automated processing where it produces a legal or similarly significant effect.

Note that some of these rights may only be possible until the data has been analysed (see Section 9 for more information). We may need to request specific information from you to help us

confirm your identity and ensure your right to access the information (or to exercise any of your other rights). This helps us ensure that personal information is not disclosed to any person who has no right to receive it. To exercise these rights, please contact compliance@nfer.ac.uk.

11 Who can I contact about this project?

NFER is responsible for the day-to-day management of the study. Please contact the NFER project team with any queries at: pupilsupport@nfer.ac.uk.

If you have a concern about the way this project processes personal data, we request that you raise your concern with NFER in the first instance (see details above). If you remain dissatisfied, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office, the body responsible for enforcing data protection legislation in the UK, at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.

12 Updates

We keep this privacy notice under review to make sure it is up to date and accurate. Any changes will be noted. The date when this privacy notice was last updated is shown in the footer at the bottom of this document.

Date	Update
25/03/25	Changes made to expected report due date made on 25/03/25. Report date changed from February 2025 to January 2026.
05/03/26	Changes made to expected report due date made on 25/03/25. Report date changed from January 2026 to April 2026.