

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2026 Survey

School Information Sheet

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the HBSC Scotland 2026 survey. This sheet provides some more information about the survey and what it involves for your school.

What is the purpose of the HBSC study?

HBSC is an international study and Scotland has been involved since 1990, with surveys carried out every four years. The study aims to better understand the health and wellbeing of young people, monitor changes in health and wellbeing over time, and to see how young people in Scotland are doing compared with those in other countries. 50 countries from Europe and North America are taking part in the 2025/26 survey round.

The HBSC 2026 survey in Scotland is funded by Public Health Scotland and is led by researchers at the University of Glasgow.

Over the last 30 years, HBSC has provided a key source of data on young people's health and wellbeing and findings have been used by policymakers and researchers to inform educational and health policies and programmes. The 2026 survey will also be able to help us to better understand the longer-term impact of COVID-19 on young people's health.

Why has my school been invited to take part?

Your school was randomly selected to take part in this survey. We have invited around 234 schools from across all Local Authorities in Scotland to take part.

What will it involve?

In primary schools, one P7 class is asked to take part and in secondary schools, one S2 and S4 class are asked to take part. We ask for the survey be administered online

What will happen to the data from my school?

All the information we collect from pupils and schools will be kept strictly confidential. We will not know any pupil names and the data will be pseudonymised, that is, we will remove personal information from the working dataset such as -date of birth and postcode and replace it with age and local area measures respectively. The personal data will be stored separately in a secure location.

Once collected, all data in electronic format is sent to the University of Glasgow and stored on secure password-protected computers, only accessed by the HBSC Scotland Team.

The data will be stored in archiving facilities in line with the University of Glasgow retention policy of up to 10 years. After this period, further retention may be agreed or the data will be securely destroyed in accordance with the relevant standard procedures. Researchers from the HBSC Scotland Team collect, store and process all personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. The anonymised datasets (pupils and school level) will be made available to other trusted researchers for teaching and research purposes only.

A version of the pseudonymised dataset will be deposited in the HBSC Data Management Centre at the University of Bergen and data included in the HBSC 2026 international report (previous international reports are available at <https://hbSC.org>).

To read the HBSC Scotland privacy notice, please visit gla.ac.uk/hbSCscotland

Where can I find out more?

We'd be happy to answer any questions. Please email the HBSC Scotland team on shw-hbSCscotland@glasgow.ac.uk or visit the website: gla.ac.uk/hbSCscotland.

What are the next steps?

If you are happy to take part, please read through the class teacher instructions and

Web: www.gla.ac.uk/hbsc