



# Health Behaviour in School-aged Children 2026 Survey

#### Parent and carer's Information Sheet

## What is the study about?

Your child's school has been chosen at random to take part in a survey on young people's health and heath behaviours. The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study (HBSC) is led by researchers at the University of Glasgow. It is funded by Public Health Scotland.

HBSC is an international study and Scotland has been involved since 1990. Surveys are carried out every 4 years and aim to better understand young people's health and wellbeing, measure changes in health over time, and see how young people in Scotland are doing compared with those in other countries. In 2026, the survey will involve around 6000 pupils from across Scotland in P7, S2 and S4 as well as young people from over 50 countries in Europe and North America.

The results are used by policymakers and researchers to inform health and education initiatives for children in Scotland.

#### Does my child have to take part?

No, not at all. It is up to you and your child to decide and if either of you choose not to take part that's fine. You do not need to give a reason why. If you do not want your child to take part or they do not want to take part, we ask that you sign and return the opt-out consent form (located at the end of this information sheet) to the school. You can also phone or email the school to let them know you do not wish to participate.

If you and your child decide that they do want to take part, you do not need to do anything. On the day of survey, your child will have the opportunity again to decide if they want to take part. We encourage you to talk to your child about what taking part means.







## What happens to my child if they take part?

- Your child will complete an online questionnaire during class time, along with the rest of their class.
- The questionnaire will include questions about their health and health behaviours, such as eating habits, physical activity, social media use, sleep, alcohol and tobacco use, emotional wellbeing, school life, relationships with family and friends (all age groups) and sexual health (S4 only).
- The survey takes around 30 -40 minutes to complete, and children will be asked to complete it on their own. It is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

## Who will see my child's answers?

Once completed, all responses to the questionnaire will be sent to the research team at the University of Glasgow. Children are not asked to give their names so we will not know who has said what.

Responses from all participants are combined and the data are analysed in aggregate form, for example, to look at trends by gender or age group.

## What happens to the survey data?

All electronic data will be stored on secure password-protected computers at the University of Glasgow where members of the research team are based. 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 (e.g. urban/rurality) respectively. The personal data will be stored separately in a secure location only accessible by the research team. 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).

In line with University of Glasgow policy, the data will be stored for a minimum of 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 dataset (a dataset with no identifying information about your child, such as date of birth) will be made available to other trusted researchers for teaching and research purposes only.

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

### How will the findings be used?

- We will *never* identify participating schools and pupils in any public documents.
- Each participating school will receive a report that combines the results from all
  the pupils who completed the survey in the school. It will **not** be possible for
  schools to identify individual pupils.
- The HBSC team will also publish a report with findings from the national data. The national report from the previous (2022) survey is available at gla.ac.uk/hbscscotland
- The results will be written up and published in academic journals and presented at conferences and other events.

#### Where can I find out more?

We'd be happy to answer any questions. Please email the HBSC Scotland team on <a href="mailto:shw-bbscscotland@glasgow.ac.uk">shw-bbscscotland@glasgow.ac.uk</a> or visit the website: gla.ac.uk/hbscscotland

If your child takes part in this study, and you or they are unhappy afterwards, then please contact ethics committee at the University of Glasgow: mvls-ethics-admin@glasgow.ac.uk

#### Thank you for reading this information sheet

The College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences Ethics Committee of the University of Glasgow has checked this research study and have given it their approval.







# **HBSC Scotland 2026 Survey**

## **Opt-out form**

Please only complete this form if you <u>do not want</u> your child to take part in the research. Please return the form to the school office or your child's class teacher by *Insert date*. You can also phone or email the school to let them know that you do not wish to take part.

If you do not return this form, we will assume that you are happy for your child to take part.

This form will only be seen by members of school staff, it will not be shared with the HBSC research team.

Name of Child:	
Class:	
Name of Parent/ Guardian:	
I DO NOT give permission for my child to participate the HBSC 2026 survey	
Signed:	
Date:	

