

## **MSc Psychology In Education - Empirical Research Project**

**Title: Exploring parental experiences of recognising and supporting school attendance anxiety in non-verbal and minimally verbal autistic school-age children.**

**Dear Parent/Carer,**

My name is Lia Cashman, I am a student on the MSc Psychology in Education programme at the University of York. I am carrying out a research project exploring anxiety around attending school experienced by non-verbal and minimally verbal autistic children. If you have noticed signs of reluctance about going to school from your child, I'm keen to discuss your experiences of this. The study is seeking information about how your child expresses reluctance to go to school, any strategies you use to support them, what help (if any) you have had around this issue and what additional help or support you would like to receive in the future. If this sounds like something you have experienced, I would like to hear from you and hope you will consider taking part in this study.

Before agreeing to take part, please read this information sheet carefully, it explains what taking part in the study would involve and how the information gathered by the study will be used. Please let me know if anything is unclear or you would like further information by emailing me directly via [lmc555@york.ac.uk](mailto:lmc555@york.ac.uk).

For information about General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) please follow the link below:

[https://www.york.ac.uk/education/research/gdpr\\_information/](https://www.york.ac.uk/education/research/gdpr_information/)

### **Purpose of the study**

- To explore parents' experiences of recognising school attendance anxiety in their non-verbal and minimally verbal autistic children and examine if there are any triggers or antecedents of school attendance anxiety.
- To gain information on how parents respond to any school attendance anxiety exhibited by their child and gain their opinions of what support is available for them and their children around this issue.
- To explore what support is available to you, and what support you would like to receive related to school attendance anxiety.

### **The research team**

Researcher: Lia Cashman – current post-graduate student - MSc Psychology in Education at the

University of York.

Dissertation supervisor: Dr Laura Fox – associate lecturer and researcher at the University of York.

### **What would participating in this research involve?**

- Answering a short online questionnaire taking approximately 10 minutes to complete. This will gather a small amount of background information about you and your child. Your name and child's name will be removed from the questionnaire after it has been collected and an anonymous identifying code will be used to ensure your data is kept confidential.
- Taking part in an online interview lasting approximately 60 minutes or less using Zoom, which will take place at a time convenient to you and will be arranged directly between you and the researcher. The interview can use sound and video or just sound as per your preference. A written transcript of the interview will be produced and saved, but your name and child's name will not be attached. The recording of the meeting will be deleted after the transcript has been saved. You may see and comment on the written transcript record if you wish.

### **Participation is voluntary**

Participation is optional and you can withdraw **at any time**. If you do decide to take part, you should complete the consent form below once you have thoroughly read the following information and save a copy of this information sheet for your records. If you change your mind at any point before or during the online questionnaire or interview, you will be able to withdraw your participation without having to provide a reason. If you want to stop taking part, simply inform the researcher, Lia Cashman directly or via email at [lmc555@york.ac.uk](mailto:lmc555@york.ac.uk).

### **Anonymity and confidentiality**

The data that you provide (questionnaire responses, notes and audio transcript of the interview) will be stored anonymously using a coded participant identifier. Any information that identifies you will be stored separately from the data. You will be given the opportunity to comment on a written record of your interview. You will have two weeks to respond or make changes to this. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time during data collection. After data collection (questionnaire and interview), and following your comments on your interview transcript, data will be anonymised so it will not be possible to withdraw your data after this point.

### **Storing and using your data**

We will put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect your personal data. Data will be stored on a password protected computer. Data will be fully anonymised 2 weeks after transcription has been completed.

Anonymised data will be kept for 5 years (after which time it will be destroyed).

The data that I collect may be used in **anonymous** format in different ways e.g., publications, presentations and online. Please indicate on the consent form with a tick if you are happy for this anonymised data to be used in the ways listed.

Anonymised data may be used for future analysis and shared for research or training purposes. If you do not want your data to be included in any information shared as a result of this research, please do not sign the consent form.

### **Disclaimer**

**Please note:** If we gather information that raises concerns about you or your child's safety or the safety of others, or about other concerns as perceived by the researcher, the researcher may pass on this information to another person.

### **Questions or concerns**

If you have any questions about this participant information or concerns about how your data is being processed, please contact Lia Cashman via email at [lmc555@york.ac.uk](mailto:lmc555@york.ac.uk) in the first instance, or the Chair of Ethics Committee via email [education-research-admin@york.ac.uk](mailto:education-research-admin@york.ac.uk). If you are still dissatisfied, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer at [dataprotection@york.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@york.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read the above information. I hope that you will agree to take part. If you are happy to participate, please use the link below to access a short consent form and screening survey. You can click on the link directly or copy-and-paste it in to your internet browser.

### **Consent form and screening questionnaire:**

[https://york.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_en7LdWNzBGWNiLA](https://york.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_en7LdWNzBGWNiLA)

Alternatively, you can email the researcher, Lia Cashman, at [lmc555@york.ac.uk](mailto:lmc555@york.ac.uk). Please keep this information sheet for your own records.

Yours sincerely

Lia Cashman

