

Appendix C: Independent school sample communications

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1. Letter to schools requesting participation

KANTAR PUBLIC



Title FirstName Surname
School name
Address1
Address2
Town
County
Postcode

SchoolSerial

Horizons study

Dear Title FirstName Surname,

What is Horizons?

Horizons is an important new study that will follow a representative sample of 12,000 young people who will be in Year 12 in the 2021-22 school year across England. The study will follow them as they progress through their education and beyond, with a particular focus on understanding how the COVID-19 pandemic shapes their experiences in future years.

To fully understand the impact that COVID-19 has had on education, it is important that the study is representative of all young people including students in both the state sector and the independent sector.

Can you help us with this important study?

School name has been selected as part of a random sample of independent schools. We really value your co-operation and very much hope that you will help us with this important study by agreeing to distribute survey invitations to a sample of Year 12 students and their parents at your school in September. We will only need your help in the first year of the study.

We will also ask if one teacher or another staff member at your school can help us by taking part in a short telephone survey to understand the experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic from the school's perspective.

At this stage we only need your agreement in principle and a nominated contact for your school. Survey invites will not be sent until September. The participation of your school is extremely important in ensuring a robust evidence base which accurately reflects the views of young people across the independent sector.

Further information

The Horizons survey is being conducted by Kantar Public, an independent research company, on behalf of University College London (UCL). The study has the support of the Department for Education, the Office for Students, the Independent Schools Council and Heads' associations including the Girls' Schools Association (GSA), Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), Independent Schools Association (ISA), and the Society of Heads.

Further details are enclosed in the attached document. A representative of Kantar Public will be in contact via email and telephone soon to answer any queries you may have. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study you can contact the research team at Kantar Public: please contact Gill Featherstone on Gill.Featherstone@kantar.com or 07588 769017.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Gill Featherstone
Project co-ordinator, Independent schools
Kantar Public
www.kantarpublic.com



2. Email to schools requesting participation

Subject line: Horizons Study: Researching the impact of Covid-19 on young people



Horizons study

Dear {DisplayName},

What is Horizons?

Horizons is an important new study that will follow a representative sample of 12,000 young people who will be in Year 12 in the 2021-22 school year across England. The study will follow them as they progress through their education and beyond, with a particular focus on understanding how the COVID-19 pandemic shapes their experiences in future years.

To fully understand the impact that COVID-19 has had on education, it is important that the study is representative of all young people including students in both the state sector and the independent sector.

Can you help us with this important study?

{EstablishmentName} has been selected as part of a random sample of independent schools. We really value your co-operation and very much hope that you will help us with this important study by agreeing to distribute survey invitations to a sample of Year 12 students and their parents at your school in September. We will only need your help in the first year of the study.

We will also ask if one teacher or another staff member at your school can help us by taking part in a short telephone survey to understand the experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic from the school's perspective.

At this stage we **only need your agreement in principle and a nominated contact for your school**. Survey invites will not be sent until September. The participation of your school is extremely important in ensuring a robust evidence base which accurately reflects the views of young people across the independent sector.

Further information

The Horizons survey is being conducted by Kantar Public, an independent research company, on behalf of University College London (UCL). The study is further supported by the Department for Education, the Office for Students, the Independent Schools Council and Heads' associations including the Girls' Schools Association (GSA), Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), Independent Schools Association (ISA) and the Society of Heads.

Further details are available in PDF format [here](#) and downloadable as a Word document [here](#). A representative of Kantar Public will be in contact via email and telephone soon to answer any queries you may have. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study you can contact the research team at Kantar Public: please contact Gill Featherstone on Gill.Featherstone@kantar.com or 07588769017.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Gill Featherstone
Project co-ordinator, Independent schools
Kantar Public
www.kantarpublic.com

Ref {SchoolSerial}

KANTAR PUBLIC

3. Information for independent school staff and FAQs

KANTAR PUBLIC

Horizons: Survey among independent school students in Year 12 (2021/22 academic year)

Further information

What is the Horizons study?

Horizons is an important new cohort study which will follow a representative sample of 12,000 young people who will be in Year 12 in the 2021-22 school year across England. The study will follow them as they progress through their education and beyond, with a particular focus on understanding how the COVID-19 pandemic shapes their experiences in future years. The study is funded by UK Research and Innovation, the research funder for the UK government.

The data will be made available to researchers both in the UK and worldwide and the findings will be used by teachers, education leaders, and policy makers across the sector to understand this year group's experiences during this important phase and how to better support them in the future. It is important that we seek the involvement of all students across both the state sector and the independent sector.

The survey is branded as Horizons for survey participants, while for researchers the survey is known as the COVID Social Mobility and Opportunities (COSMO) study. For more information please visit <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ie/departments-and-centres/centres/centre-education-policy-and-equalising-opportunities/research-themes/schools/covid-social-mobility-and-opportunities-study-cosmo>

Who is carrying out the research?

The study is a cross-organisational collaboration led by University College London (UCL) and the Sutton Trust. The project is supported by key stakeholders, including the Department for Education, the Office for Students, the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and Heads' associations including the Girls' Schools Association (GSA), Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), Independent Schools Association (ISA), and the Society of Heads.

Kantar Public will be conducting the survey fieldwork. Kantar Public is a social research agency which carries out research for a variety of government departments, public organisations and universities. Kantar Public is bound by the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct – a set of agreements that ensure research is conducted in an ethical and safe manner. Further information about Kantar Public can be found at <https://www.kantarpublic.com/>

Why does the study need the support of independent schools?

To understand fully the impact that COVID-19 has had on education, it is important that the study is representative of all students in Year 12 in England, including those who attend independent schools. In total, we are aiming to achieve approximately 12,000 interviews with young people; this will include around 1,000 interviews with young people from the independent sector.

The study sample for the state sector will be drawn from DfE records. However, the only way to reach students from the independent sector is through schools directly. Therefore we are seeking your help to ensure a representative sample of independent school students can be included. We will ask for your help in distributing survey invitations to a sample of students at your school in September, as described below.

We have worked with schools to develop an approach that will minimise burden, as we appreciate how busy schools are, especially during these challenging times.

Why has this school been chosen to participate in this study?

Your school has been chosen at random from publicly available records. We have drawn a sample of independent schools across England which has been selected to represent the sector by region, size and type of school (e.g. mixed or single sex).

<https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>



KANTAR PUBLIC

If this school agrees to participate what will you need us to do?

If your school agrees to participate, we will ask a nominated contact to send web survey invites to up to 54 students. Your school will still be eligible to participate if there are fewer than 54 students enrolled; in this situation we would ask you to distribute the survey to all Year 12 students. Survey invitations will ideally be sent out during week commencing 13 September but can be sent as soon after as possible if this week is not convenient.

Kantar Public will prepare emails and invites so all that we ask from your school is to distribute these on Kantar's behalf through your existing email communication channels (or by postal letter if preferred). We will also ask your school to send emails to the parents of these students as we are looking to contextualise the student data with information from parents, for example to collect parental views on education during the pandemic. We will not be asking your school to share any personal information about your pupils with us. We are only asking you to send out the invitations on our behalf.

At a later stage, in October 2021, we will also ask if one teacher or other staff member can help us with a short telephone interview to provide some school-level contextual information on for example school-based experiences of lockdown education and 'catch up' provision. However, you can decide whether to help with the school survey at a later stage; you do not need to decide this now.

What do I need to do next?

In the first instance, we would be grateful if you could nominate a contact, who can liaise with Kantar Public to discuss the practicalities of selecting a sample of up to 54 students (and their parents) in order to distribute a survey. Please use the contact channels provided at the end of this document to confirm contact details of this liaison point and to discuss any further details as required.

Will information about the school and its students and parents be treated confidentiality?

Yes. This research has been approved by the research ethics committee of UCL Institute of Education, and has the support of the Department for Education. The data from the survey will not be shared in a form that identifies any student, parent, teacher or school individually. Kantar Public complies with a range of security policy requirements, including those set by the Market Research Society Code of Conduct, the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). Kantar Public are working under their instructions. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in their 'general' privacy notice: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice> More information on data privacy in this study will be provided to potential participants before they decide whether or not they want to take part.

What is the timetable for this study?

We request that the survey invitations be sent to the sample of pupils and parents during week commencing 13 September. If this time is not convenient then we ask that they are sent as soon afterwards as possible. Prior to fieldwork launch, Kantar Public will be in touch again (via email or phone call) with the relevant contact to discuss the practicalities of sending out the survey invites.

Who can I contact for further information?

Please contact Gill Featherstone.

Gill Featherstone	Project co-ordinator, Independent school survey	Gill.Featherstone@kantar.com	07588 769017
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4. Sampling instructions for participating schools

Instructions for sampling students at independent schools for the Horizons survey

It is very important that we obtain a random representative sample of students and their parents.

We are aiming to sample approximately 60 students at each school, and we would like to achieve this in a way which minimises burden on schools.

To achieve this, the simplest approach will be to take a random selection of school forms/tutor groups.

The sample should be drawn according to the following steps.

1. We would like each school to provide a list of tutor groups/forms, ideally with a number of Year 12 students in each form. If the forms/tutor groups are roughly the same size an overall average number per form will be sufficient. Please provide this list in alpha-numeric order if possible. Please note that we do not require names of individual form teachers or students – if your form names include any personal identifying information such as teacher name then you can use initials instead.
2. Ideally, we wish to exclude students with an international home address (i.e. international boarders). If this applies to your school and it is possible to easily exclude those with an international home address, for example because there are separate forms for international students, then please provide a list of forms which exclude these.
3. Ideally we would also exclude students who moved to the UK for sixth form (i.e. spent their equivalent of Year 11 in a different country)
4. Once we receive the list of eligible forms, research staff at Kantar Public will then randomly draw a selection of forms/tutor group so that we achieve a sample of roughly 60 students overall. It doesn't matter if this number is not exact, but it is important that we do not significantly over-sample or under-sample students (see note below).
5. It doesn't matter how the forms are organised (for example if these are organised according to gender or subject), the most important thing is that the forms are selected on a random basis.
6. Once Kantar Public has finalised the forms to be selected, we will notify the school so that you know which students and parents should be contacted.
7. Please then send email invites (based on the template we provide to you) to the c. 60 students and the main parent contact of each of these, so that c. 120 survey email invites are sent in total. We know that not all c. 120 young people and parents will want to take part, but we are hoping for as high a response rate as possible among those who have been selected from each school.
8. For parents, if you have more than one parent listed at the school, then it is fine to select just one (e.g. first listed on your database).

Example: An example of what we need to draw the sample of forms

Forms (in alpha-numeric order)	Number of Year 12s per form
1AB	10
2TG	12
3BC	8
4DD	9
5BA	14
6EF	10
7SF	6
8FR	16
9YT	14
1ORF	12
11CD	11
12KL	13
TOTAL STUDENTS	135


Important note:

It is very important that only c. 60 students and their parents, selected randomly, are invited to take part. This ensures that we achieve a roughly equal number of interviews from each participating independent school, and that the overall independent school sample is balanced and representative. Therefore, we kindly request that you do not promote the survey link on any kind of open forum (such as student intranet, student e-newsletter etc.) as this will lead to people taking part who have not been selected, and this will damage the overall representativeness of the sample and lead to lower data quality. In addition, we are offering each student a £10 voucher as a thank you for their participation and we do not have the budget to provide a voucher for higher number of participating students.

Thank you very much for your help with this important survey. If you have any queries about any of this, please contact **XXXX**

5. Template email for schools to send to selected participants

5.1 Young Person version

<div data-bbox="555 248 911 323"></div> <div data-bbox="598 331 869 354"><p>LOOKING BEYOND COVID-19</p></div> <div data-bbox="763 359 913 381"><p>School Ref: XXXX</p></div> <p>Dear pupil,</p> <p>Horizons study: Looking beyond COVID-19</p> <p>I am writing to invite you to take part in Horizons, an important new research study set up to understand how young people's lives have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study will follow 12,000 young people who left Year 11 in Summer 2021, <u>and also</u> one of their parents or guardians. I very much hope that you can help us by completing our survey.</p> <p>The survey will take around 30 minutes to complete and, as a thank you for taking part, you will be offered a £XX e-voucher. You can choose from a range of vouchers including Amazon and Love2Shop, or we can add the amount to a PayPal account. We will process your voucher once the survey has closed, which will be within 6-7 weeks after you complete the survey.</p> <div data-bbox="219 735 920 847" style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px;"><p>To complete the survey, simply go to the website below and then at the end you can claim your voucher. You can use a computer, <u>smartphone</u> or tablet to complete the survey.</p><p>Web link: horizonsresearch.co.uk</p></div> <p>The Horizons study is led by University College London (UCL) and the Sutton Trust, with support from the Department for Education. The data collection is being carried out on our behalf by Kantar Public, a leading independent research company.</p> <p>Everything you tell us in the survey will be treated in the strictest of confidence. Your data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The privacy notice for this study can be found on the Horizons study website.</p> <p>The FAQs below tell you more about the study, including how you were chosen, and gives information on how you can get in touch with us if you have any further questions.</p> <p>Thank you in advance for your help.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p> Jake Anders University College London</p> <div data-bbox="228 1289 521 1326"></div> <div data-bbox="692 1262 909 1326"></div>	<h3>Commonly Asked Questions</h3> <p>What is the Horizons study? Horizons is an important new study seeking to understand how young people's lives have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study will follow 12,000 young people who left Year 11 in Summer 2021, <u>and also</u> one of their parents or guardians. The Horizons study has been reviewed and approved by the research ethics committee of UCL Institute of Education.</p> <p>Who is carrying out the research? Horizons is being led by University College London (UCL) and the Sutton Trust, with support from the Department for Education (DfE). The study is funded by UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Economic and Social Research Council, with additional funding from the Sutton Trust. The data collection is being carried out in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct by Kantar Public, an independent research agency.</p> <p>How was I chosen for this study? Independent schools were randomly selected from across England to participate. Each school that agreed to take part has been asked to select a random sample of young people in Year 12, that is the first year of sixth form. For each young person selected, we have also invited one of their parents or guardians to participate.</p> <p>What will I be asked about? You will be asked how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected you, and how it might have affected your wellbeing and <u>future plans</u>.</p> <p>Parents and guardians will be asked about their perspectives on these topics too, as well as about household details such as employment status and the impact of COVID-19 on family life. We are also conducting a school survey to collect information about disruption during the pandemic.</p> <p>Do we both have to take part? No. The decision to take part is entirely up to you individually. However, because we can't replace you with anyone else, we would really appreciate your participation.</p> <p>You may decline to answer any questions or withdraw from participation in the study at any time. If you do wish to withdraw your participation, contact the Horizons helpline on 0800 051 0889.</p> <p>How can I complete the survey? The survey can be completed online, and you can access it on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. The web link to access the survey can be found in this email.</p> <p>How do I collect the voucher? Once you have completed the survey, the research team will send a web link to Perks via email to the address you have provided. From the Perks website you will be able to choose from a range of different vouchers. Instructions on how to claim your voucher will be provided in this email.</p> <p>Will you be contacting me again? Yes, if you are happy for us to. This is just the start of this project. We plan to contact young people once a year for the next few years so we can better understand your experiences and opinions in the future and find out what you have done since we last contacted you. Parents or guardians will also be contacted again. You will receive another voucher each time to thank you for your help.</p>
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What if I want to get support about the things covered in the survey?

If you are worried about any of the issues covered in this survey, there are sources of help and support such as the ones below:

- **The Mix** (0808 808 4994) www.themix.org.uk
Support for young people on a wide range of issues including relationships, health, money, safety, work and study.
- **ChildLine** (0800 1111) www.childline.org.uk
A 24-hour helpline for young people aged up to 19. It is confidential and calls are free. You can also get advice by email or through a 1-2-1 chat online.
- **Talk to FRANK** (0300 123 6600) www.talktofrank.com
Free, confidential advice on drugs and alcohol. You can text them on 82111, phone FRANK for free, or get advice via online webchat.

More are available at www.horizonsresearch.co.uk/support.

Is the survey confidential?

Yes. The information you provide will be treated in strict confidence and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data in a form which ensures that you cannot be identified will be made available to academic researchers through the UK Data Service.


The data controller for the Horizons study is University College London (UCL). The data protection privacy notice, as well as general privacy notices for UCL, can be found on the Survey Privacy Information section on the Horizons study website at www.horizonsresearch.co.uk/privacy.

To better understand the data collected in the Horizons study, we would like to link information about you held in various administrative records to your answers. We will provide you with further information and ask for your permission to do this at the end of the survey. Whether you agree is entirely optional – it does not affect your participation in the rest of the study. You can withdraw permission at any time by contacting the Horizons helpline on 0800 051 0889.

Where can I find out more information about the Horizons study?

Further information for young people taking part in the Horizons study is available at www.horizonsresearch.co.uk/youngpeople.

5.2 Parent version



School Ref: XXXX

Dear Parent/Guardian

Horizons study: Looking beyond COVID-19

I am writing to invite you to take part in **Horizons**, an important new research study set up to understand how young people's lives have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study will follow 12,000 young people who left Year 11 in Summer 2021, and also one of their parents or guardians. I very much hope that you can help us by completing our survey.

The survey will take around 30 minutes to complete and, as a thank you for taking part, you will be offered a **£XX e-voucher**. You can choose from a range of vouchers including Amazon and Love2Shop, or we can add the amount to a PayPal account. We will process your voucher once the survey has closed, which will be within 6-7 weeks after you complete the survey.

To complete the survey, simply go to the website below and then at the end you can claim your voucher. You can use a computer, [smartphone](#) or tablet to complete the survey.

Web link: horizonsresearch.co.uk

The Horizons study is led by University College London (UCL) and the Sutton Trust, with support from the Department for Education. The data collection is being carried out on our behalf by Kantar Public, a leading independent research company.



Everything you tell us in the survey will be treated in the strictest of confidence. Your data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The privacy notice for this study can be found on the Horizons study website.

The FAQs below tell you more about the study, including how your child was chosen, and gives information on how you can get in touch with us if you have any further questions.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Jake Anders
Jake Anders
University College London



Commonly Asked Questions

What is the Horizons study?
Horizons is an important new study seeking to understand how young people's lives have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study will follow 12,000 young people who left Year 11 in Summer 2021, and also one of their parents or guardians. The Horizons study has been reviewed and approved by the research ethics committee of UCL Institute of Education.

Who is carrying out the research?
Horizons is being led by University College London (UCL) and the Sutton Trust, with support from the Department for Education (DfE). The study is funded by UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Economic and Social Research Council, with additional funding from the Sutton Trust. The data collection is being carried out in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct by Kantar Public, an independent research agency.

How was I chosen for this study?
Independent schools were randomly selected from across England to participate. Each school that agreed to take part has been asked to select a random sample of young people in Year 12, that is the first year of sixth form. For each young person selected, we have also invited one of their parents or guardians to participate.

What will I be asked about?
You will be asked about how you think the pandemic has affected your child's education, their wellbeing and their future plans. Your child will be asked about their perspective on these topics too.

As well as this, you will be asked about household details such as your employment status, and the impact of COVID-19 on family life.

Do we both have to take part?
No. The decision to take part is entirely up to you individually. However, because we can't replace you with anyone else, we would really appreciate your participation.

You may decline to answer any questions or withdraw from participation in the study at any time. If you do wish to withdraw your participation, contact the Horizons helpline on 0800 051 0889.

How can I complete the survey?
The survey can be completed online, and you can access it on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. The web link to access the survey can be found in this email.

How do I collect the voucher?
Once you have completed the survey, the research team will send a web link to Perks via email to the address you have provided. From the Perks website you will be able to choose from a range of different vouchers. Instructions on how to claim your voucher will be provided in this email.

Will you be contacting me again?
Yes, if you are happy for us to. This is just the start of this project. We plan to contact young people once a year for the next few years so we can better understand your experiences and opinions in the future and find out what you have done since we last contacted you. Parents or guardians will also be contacted again. You will receive another voucher each time to thank you for your help.

What if I want to get support about the things covered in the survey?

If you are worried about any of the issues covered in this survey, there are sources of help and support such as the ones below:

- **Family Lives** (0808 800 2222) www.familylives.org.uk
Support on a range of family issues including parenting, school and relationships.
- **Citizens Advice** (0800 144 8848) www.citizensadvice.org.uk
General issues including benefits, housing, debt and consumer issues.
- **NSPCC** (0808 800 5000) www.nspcc.org.uk
Support and advice for adults concerned about the welfare of a child.

More are available at www.horizonsresearch.co.uk/support.

Is the survey confidential?

Yes. The information you provide will be treated in strict confidence and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data in a form which ensures that you cannot be identified will be made available to academic researchers through the UK Data Service.

The data controller for the Horizons study is University College London (UCL). The data protection privacy notice, as well as general privacy notices for UCL, can be found on the Survey Privacy Information section on the Horizons study website at www.horizonsresearch.co.uk/privacy.

To better understand the data collected in the Horizons study, we would like to link information about you held in various administrative records to your answers. We will provide you with further information and ask for your permission to do this at the end of the survey. Whether you agree is entirely optional – it does not affect your participation in the rest of the study. You can withdraw permission at any time by contacting the Horizons helpline on 0800 051 0889.

Where can I find out more information about the Horizons study?

Further information for parents and guardians taking part in the Horizons study is available at www.horizonsresearch.co.uk/parents.