



25 February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Participation in educational study

I am writing to inform you of the research study I am currently undertaking as part of my Masters degree at the University of Cambridge.

This research study aims to examine and deepen understanding of how students best learn in the Music classroom at Key Stage 3. There will be a variety of methods undertaken in order to collect meaningful data as part of my study, which include (but are not limited to):

- Observation of students' work and engagement whilst taking part in our KS3 curriculum
- Interviews with students currently studying Music in Year 7, 8 and 9, as well as interviews with current students in Year 10 and above, to reflect on their experience with our KS3 Music curriculum
- Analysis of data comparing current KS3 Music students with their counterparts from three years ago, to examine how the pandemic may have affected attainment in the Music classroom

If your child is in Year 7, 8 or 9, I would like to make it clear that they will not be asked to complete any work beyond what is normally expected of our students, although I would like to stress that participation in the project itself is compulsory as the work undertaken will be no different to our normal Key Stage 3 Music curriculum. However, whether or not you give permission for your child's work and their contributions to the project to be included in the final thesis remains entirely at your discretion. If your child is in Year 10 or above, I may ask them to take part in a short interview (as detailed above) however participation is entirely at their discretion.

Information will be gathered from your child as detailed in the data collection methods above. Any information on your child in the form of academic records, student work, or any feedback they provide during the course of the research will not be associated with their name or the school. All information will be entirely anonymised if used within the research thesis. All material will only be used for the purpose of educational research and will be conducted under the guidelines published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA). More information on these guidelines can be found here: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018>. This project has received ethics clearance through the University of Cambridge's ethical approval process for research involving students.

As detailed in the guidelines, both you and your child have the right to withdraw from the study at any point, but Year 7, 8 and 9 students must continue to engage with the project itself, since as discussed above, the study will be based on their normal and expected levels of classwork.

If you do not wish for your child's work and experiences to be included in the final research thesis then I would be grateful if you could contact me via e-mail at mharris@st-martins.essex.sch.uk by Friday 4 March to make this known. Likewise, if you have any concerns, or would like any further information about this study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Harris
Head of Music

Be The Best You Can Be