

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET Version 5.0; 17 Nov 2022

Title of Project: The effect of autistic traits and gender on mathematic achievement amongst middle-school pupils.

Name and Contact Details of Student Researcher(s): Emily Price - x3i11@students.keele.ac.uk

Name and Contact Details of Project Supervisor: Nicola Marsh - n.f.marsh@keele.ac.uk

SPEC Reference Number: PSY-2022-393

Your child is invited to take part in this research which is part of a student project at Keele University School of Psychology. Participation in the research is voluntary and they can withdraw at any time. Before you decide, you should read this information sheet so that you understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you and your child. I am happy to answer any questions you may have before you decide, you can find my contact details, along with my supervisor's, within this letter.

If after reading this information you are **NOT** happy for your child to take part in this research, please complete the form on the final page and return it to the school.

1. What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of this study is to investigate whether there is a relationship between autistic traits and gender on mathematical achievement. Further aims are to establish the difference in scores on a mathematical test between individuals who perform high or low in autistic traits and to establish the difference in scores on a mathematical test between males and females. From this, we can provide targetted support for pupils as required. **Pupils will NOT be told the purpose of the study until after it has taken place, where they will be debriefed.**

The headteacher of James Bateman Middle School, Mrs Price, has reviewed this study and has approved it being carried out.

2. Who can participate?

Middle-school pupils, aged 11 to 13 (Year 7 and Year 8) from James Bateman Middle School will be able to participate, unless their parent chooses for them not to take part.

3. What will happen to my child if they take part?

Your child will:

- Answer an anonymous questionnaire based on their behaviour and social experiences
- Complete some mathematical questions.
- Be required to complete the questionnaire in their PSHE lesson.

Your child will not be identifiable by taking part as it is completely anonymous and the study is not aimed to cause any deliberate emotional or mental harm or distress. If your child feels concerned or worried after participating in the research, they will be provided with a short debrief and will be encouraged to speak to their teacher or parent if they have any questions. Parents and teachers are welcome to get in contact with the researcher and/or supervisor if they wish to.

4. What data will be collected and how will it be used and stored?

This section of the information sheet tells you about the personal information and research data we will collect, how it will be processed and how it will be stored if you consent for your child to participate in this research project.

4.1 Personal information and research data

Participants will be asked for their age, year group and gender. No personal, identifiable information will be required; the children taking part in the study will remain anonymous.

4.2 How your data will be used

The purpose of this data collection is for a research project as part of an undergraduate degree in Psychology at Keele University.

To comply with the Keele University Research Data Management Policy, research data will be kept for a minimum of 10 years by the research supervisor.

As the data is completely anonymous, it cannot be withdrawn after the participant hands in their questionnaire to the researchers because there is no way to identify the data.

4.3 How we protect your personal data and who will have access to it.

Participants data will be truly anonymised. All data will be stored on a password-protected computer and hard-copies of the data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the research supervisor's locked office. The data will be converted to electronic data and will be stored on password protected laptops and password protected online storage (OneDrive). The researcher (Emily Price) and the supervisor (Nicola Marsh) will have access to the data.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks (if any) of taking part?

As the researcher, I do not expect there to be any disadvantages or risks when taking part in this study. Children will be asked to reflect on their behaviour and social experiences; if they find this difficult or upsetting, they will be encouraged at the end of the survey to talk to their teacher or parent. **The research will not provide a diagnosis of autism**, however, if you feel your child displays autistic traits, then the following websites will provide you with further information and guidance.

- Child Autism UK – Helpline: 01344 882248
- National Autistic Society – www.autism.org.uk
- NHS: Help for families of autistic people – www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/autism-and-everyday-life/help-for-families/

6. What are the possible advantages or benefits (if any) of taking part?

Your child will not receive any direct personal benefits from participating, however, you and your child may help contribute towards knowledge around autism and achievement. Additionally, James Bateman Middle School will receive a summary of the results, which they could put to use in their maths classes to support the pupils.

7. Queries, Concerns and Complaints

If you have a query about this study please contact a member of the research team. Researcher: Emily Price - x3i11@students.keele.ac.uk Project Supervisor: Dr Nicola Marsh – n.f.marsh@keele.ac.uk

If you have a concern or complaint about the researcher or the manner in which the study has been conducted then please contact the Psychology Student Project Ethics Committee at psychology.ethics@keele.ac.uk.

CONSENT FORM; Version 5.0; 17 Nov 2022

Title of Project: The effect of autistic traits and gender on mathematic achievement amongst middle-schoolers

Name and Contact Details of Student researcher(s): Emily Price – x3i11@students.keele.ac.uk

Name and Contact Details of Project Supervisor: Nicola Marsh – n.f.marsh@keele.ac.uk

SPEC Reference Number: PSY-2022-393

If you agree with the statements below, you are not required to fill in the slip and you have given consent for your child to take part in the study.

However, if after reading this information, you are **NOT** happy for your child to take part in the research, please complete the form below and return it to the school. By not returning the form, you are in agreement with the statements below:

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that this research does not result in a formal diagnosis of Autism.
- I agree for my child to take part in the study.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet, if you have any further questions, mine and my supervisor's contact details can be found below.

Kind regards,

Researcher: Emily Price – x3i11@students.keele.ac.uk Supervisor: Dr Nicola Marsh – n.f.marsh@keele.ac.uk

Parent Permission Slip to Withdraw from 'The effect of autistic traits and gender on mathematic achievement amongst middle-school pupils.'

Please Reply By: Tuesday 13th December 2022

I have been notified about the research taking place in the school and I do **NOT** give permission for

_____ (child's name) to take part in this study.

Child's Year Group

Date

Name of parent

Signature

