

## **Information for School Staff**

### **Research Study: 'Exploring the experiences of girls in secondary education'**

University research is being undertaken in the school, having commenced October 2013, and will continue until the end of the school year 2014.

#### **What is the research about?**

The research is exploring the experiences of girls (in the 14-16 years age group) in secondary school and the challenges and dilemmas that girls might face in school. This is an interesting study as there is a large amount of research about boys' experiences in school; the experiences of girls, however, is an under researched area.

#### **How will the research be done?**

The researcher is planning to 'shadow' the female students as they go about their school activities. This type of research is called ethnography and involves trying to understand the world from the point of view of the female students. This may involve talking to others who know them well (the male students, teaching staff and parents), but mostly involves observation and informal discussion with the students. The researcher would like to represent the students own voices and feel that this would be the best method for this research.

#### **How would this affect the school?**

The researcher will be in an observational role, but knows how busy schools are and so is happy to help if needed. The researcher will be taking field notes in order to remember how the day is structured and how students are reacting

to different situations and any discussion we might have. However, they will not be assessing teaching. The aim is to understand how the students view themselves in school. Should you wish, you are welcome to see the notes made.

If you are happy to take part it would be helpful to the researcher if you could sometimes answer questions or maybe take part in an informal interview, which would be audio taped. The researcher would ask such questions as to your understanding of girls' experiences in school and interviews would be arranged at a time to suit you. Although the researcher's presence may make your working day slightly different I will try to be as unobtrusive as possible. I know you are all very busy people and really do appreciate the opportunity to sit in on lessons.

### **What will happen to the research?**

The information gathered will be used for a PhD thesis, and may be used in publications or academic conferences or seminar presentations. All data will be treated confidentially and all participants will be given pseudonyms and the school will not be identified. Every effort will be made to keep the information anonymous and data will be securely held and available only to the researcher on a password protected computer. It will be safely destroyed once no longer needed.