



Department
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Growing Up in the 2020s

Wave 1 technical report

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Introduction and background

Growing Up in the 2020s is a national study following the lives of around 8,000 children attending secondary school in the 2020s. The study has been commissioned and funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and is being led by Anna Freud, in partnership with University College London (UCL) and Ipsos. Ipsos is responsible for carrying out the data collection.

The study forms part of DfE's programme of cohort studies that are principally aimed at understanding how different characteristics affect educational attainment, and the disparities that develop by the end of formal schooling. Known collectively as the [Education and Outcomes Pathways Studies](#) (EOPS), the programme to date includes EOPS Early years, EOPS Primary, and EOPS Secondary. This study – EOPS Secondary, publicly known as Growing Up in the 2020s – has a focus on young people in secondary education.

Data collection for Growing Up in the 2020s will be carried out over 4 waves, when the children are in school years 8 (age 12 to 13), 9 (13 to 14), 11 (15 to 16) and 12 (16 to 17). By following the same children and their parents over time, this study aims to answer important questions about learning and development during the critical adolescent stages of development. The ultimate aim is to provide evidence to help shape and improve policy around secondary education, including tackling inequalities, helping all children achieve their full potential and improving their lives.

This report covers the first wave of the study conducted in 2025, when the children were aged 12 and 13 years old. It aims to give a detailed description of each of the key stages of Wave 1, including the development, implementation, administration and data management. A [report of the findings](#) has been published separately.

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Summary of data collected

This chapter gives a summary of the data collected for Growing Up in the 2020s.

The study will follow a random sample of children who were in year 8 in the 2024 to 2025 academic year and attending a state school or receiving alternative state provision. The sample of cohort children for the first study wave was drawn from the National Pupil Database (NPD) (see chapter 4). The main stage fieldwork for the first wave of the study took place from January to June 2025 and featured the following elements:

- **a 20-minute face-to-face interview with the cohort child's primary caregiver** to collect household information. This interview was completed with a parent/carer with legal parental responsibility, who the child lived with at least 50 per cent of the time, and who was the child's main caregiver. This parent is referred to in this report as Parent A. During the interview, these parents were asked to give their consent for the Ipsos interviewer to invite the cohort child to take part in an interview, and for them and the child to take part in other elements of the study
- **a 20-minute web survey with up to two parents living with the cohort child** collecting information about each parent, including more sensitive information than was covered in the Parent A face-to-face interview. The web surveys could be completed by Parent A and – where applicable – their co-resident partner (referred to in this report as Parent B). Parents were eligible to complete the Parent B interview if they were co-resident with Parent A, even if they were not the child's legal parent or guardian
- **a 30-minute face-to-face interview with the cohort child**, collecting information about their life, including activities offline and online, school life, health and well-being, and relationships with their parents and peers. Where both Parent A and the cohort child consented, the interview included the administration of a standardised **cognitive assessment**, the Matrix Reasoning Test developed by Test My Brain. Where Parent A consented, the child was asked to give the name of their form tutor or another teacher who knew them well to facilitate a teacher survey
- **An Internet Use Study**, tracking the internet usage on the cohort child's personal smartphone, for a period of 4 weeks. A randomly selected sub-set of sampled children and one of their parents were asked to give their consent for the child to take part in the Internet Use Study. To participate, children were asked to download the Ipsos MediaLink App to their mobile phone, and to leave it running for 28 days. The app monitored all their internet activity, including app use. More details about this part of the study can be found in Chapter 12.

Participating parents were informed administrative records held about them and their child by the DfE would be linked to their survey answers unless they informed Ipsos they did not want this to happen. Parents were also asked whether they consented for administrative records held by NHS England, His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to be linked to their answers (a process known as **data linkage**). Further details are in Chapter 8.

In addition, the study included **a 15-20-minute web survey with nominated teachers**, asking them to comment on the child's progress, behaviour and wellbeing in school, and about school policies. From May to October 2025, teachers nominated by participating cohort children or, where necessary, Heads of Year, were invited to take part in a web survey.

Ethical approval for Wave 1 main stage was granted by University College London's Research Ethics Committee (reference number 28343/001). Ethical approval for the Internet Use study was granted separately by University College London's Research Ethics Committee (reference number 28343/002).

Wave 1 participation

A fully productive household was defined as where both the Parent A and cohort child face-to-face interviews were completed.

Wave 1 main stage fieldwork resulted in:

- 8,195 interviews with Parent A participants
- 2,286 interviews with Parent B participants
- 7,811 interviews with cohort children
- 7,811 paired interviews (i.e. households where both Parent A and the cohort child took part)
- 2,069 teacher interviews, providing data on the progress of 2,373 cohort children
- 28-day coverage of the internet use of 369 cohort members and fewer days coverage of the internet use of a further 100 cohort members

Pilot

This chapter gives an overview of the pilot for the Growing Up in the 2020s study, a summary of the conclusions drawn and modifications made to the design as a result.

A pilot was carried out in advance of the main Wave 1 survey by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) in collaboration with the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) and the National Children's Bureau (NCB). Following the pilot, the contract for the main stage was awarded to the Anna Freud/UCL/Ipsos consortium. The Anna Freud-led study team drew on the findings from the pilot to help refine the main stage of the study.

The pilot aimed to trial the processes and procedures to be implemented at the main stage to check the processes worked as intended, and to identify areas for improvement.

The pilot fieldwork with children and parents was carried out from 21 June to 30 July 2023, with fieldwork with schools and teachers taking place from 11 September to 13 October 2023. In total, the pilot achieved 111 face-to-face interviews with Parent A participants, 73 web surveys with Parent A participants, 98 fully completed interviews with children, and 37 web surveys with Parent B participants. In addition, 10 schools and 27 teachers participated in the pilot study.

Scope of the pilot

The key objectives of the pilot were to evaluate:

- the quality of the sample frame, and whether the proposed sample design could be implemented using a sample frame drawn from the NPD
- fieldwork protocols, including interviewer training, procedures for making contact, conducting household interviews, placing web surveys during the household visit, and reminding participants to complete the web surveys
- approaches aimed at maximising response rates, including participant communications and materials, incentives, and interviewer approaches
- response rates for different study elements, and among key sub-groups of the sample such as those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- the data collection instruments, including the length of the surveys, how well they flowed, and data quality (including missing data, any errors or problems with routing)
- the materials and protocols used to seek consent for data linkage, and rates of consent for the different types of data linkage
- the protocols, materials and instruments used for administering the school and teacher surveys and the likely response rates for these two elements

The conclusions and recommendations from the pilot included:

- the process for obtaining the NPD sample data worked smoothly, and the variables needed to implement the sampling approach were well or fully populated. The approach to over-sampling FSM-eligible pupils worked as intended. Over-sampling by other variables such as Child in Need status was discussed but dismissed, as the information was deemed too sensitive to share with the fieldwork contractor
- review the incentives strategy for the main stage: in the pilot two £5 unconditional incentives were enclosed with the advance mailing, one for a parent and one for the child. Feedback suggested a consolidated £10 may be more useful. A £10 conditional incentive for FSM-eligible families was found to be useful
- the study materials generally worked well, but interviewer feedback highlighted a few potential improvements including: explaining the aims and potential impact of the study more clearly in the advance materials, consolidating the number of materials and reducing the length and repetition across materials (such as the Data Linkage Leaflet)
- interviewer training sessions would benefit from additional emphasis on engagement strategies, particularly in negotiating study participation and effectively addressing refusals. They should cover lines and strategies to 'sell' the study to families
- ensuring schools are notified in advance of contacting families, via DfE-led communications to schools, to help set participants' minds at ease if they check whether schools are aware of the research
- a realistic response rate assumption (for paired parent A/child interviews) was suggested as 42%, with an increased incentive of £20 for FSM-eligible families
- consider strategies to improve the web response for the main stage for all participants
- interviewer feedback suggested the face-to-face interviews worked well, although both the Parent A and child interviews were slightly longer than intended. Analysis of the paradata and response distributions suggested some improvements could be made to questions, especially the self-completion section for children, to streamline questions
- while most participating parents agreed to data linkage, interviewer feedback suggested simplifying the consent process and related communications could enhance understanding and agreement rates
- a survey of senior staff in schools had a lower-than-anticipated response rate of less than 10%. A survey of teachers of participating children had a 39% response

rate. The contact and reminder strategy worked well, and the instrument generally worked as intended

The main study design was closely based on the pilot design, although the Anna Freud-led consortium suggested some modifications to the study design for Wave 1, including:

- a change in the cognitive assessments used from the Backward Digit Span and Colour Word Interference assessments used in the pilot to the Matrix Reasoning Test. This was to ensure that a baseline assessment of cognitive function was administered at Wave 1, and in response to practical difficulties in administering the assessments in the pilot
- additions to the data collection instruments, such as adding the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
- changes to the approach to asking for consent to link administrative records to survey data. Parents would only be asked to consent to their own data linkage, and to consent to their child's education records being linked, at Wave 1. At the time of writing, the intention is that the cohort children will be asked for their own consent to link their health and economic records, and their consent for education linkage, when they are 16 to 17 years old, in Wave 4 of the study
- a revised incentivisation strategy: as around 10% of the pilot sample was untraced movers, the study team felt that conditional rather than unconditional incentives would be more cost-effective and proposed £10 for parents of FSM-eligible children on completion of the face-to-face and web surveys, and £10 for all participating children
- the addition of an Internet Use Study to track the internet use of a sub-set of children via an app downloaded onto their mobile phones. The Internet Use Study aimed to generate insights into how the online behaviour of cohort children was linked to their well-being and their longer term outcomes
- the pilot included a survey for parents living in a separate household (where applicable) and a survey for senior school staff on school policies. Due to the low response rates observed in the pilot, DfE decided to remove these surveys from the main study

In addition, following the commissioning of the study, DfE indicated that it wished to minimise the risk of insufficient statistical power to detect subgroup differences over the course of the study. Given evidence of differential attrition among some of the groups the study aims to explore, it was agreed the proportion of sampled pupils that were FSM-eligible (the key measure of disadvantage) would be increased from 40% to 50%.

Changes were also made to the data collection instruments after piloting, aimed to make sure that the surveys could be completed in the target times, to avoid the household visit becoming too long and onerous for participants.

Parent A face-to-face survey instrument

The main changes made to the Parent A face-to-face instrument following piloting were amending the gender questions to include non-binary and not listed genders, and eliminate free-text answers that would need manual coding.

Cohort child face-to-face survey instrument

The main changes to the cohort child data collection instrument were:

- around 50 questions were removed after the pilot, some by NatCen because timing data showed that the survey exceeded the intended interview length, other items were removed or revised by the Anna Freud/UCL/Ipsos consortium to maximise the use of harmonised measures and to create space for higher priority items
- the SDQ was added, to allow children to report on their own mental health. Including the SDQ with the impact supplement for both children and parents allows the study team to estimate a measure of 'probable mental disorder', as used on the Mental Health of Children and Young People in England survey. Other similar items tested on the pilot (about feelings of worry/anxiety) were dropped in favour of the SDQ
- questions about the time the child usually wakes up, reasons for missing school, experience of primary schools and the transition to secondary school, the number of hours spent on a typical weekday on social media were added
- the gender question and the question collecting the name of the teacher were amended

The Matrix Reasoning Test was chosen because it's a non-verbal measure of abstract reasoning that is widely conceptualised as an indicator of fluid intelligence and general cognitive function. The Matrix Reasoning Task has excellent psychometric properties with high internal reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.77$; Spearman-Brown corrected split-half reliability = 0.89) and high validity (Passell et al, 2019). The test is considered enjoyable by participants despite its length. Its inclusion enabled the study team to assess cognitive function at an early stage of the study. This was intended to establish a valuable baseline for analysing later educational and developmental outcomes, helping to minimise omitted variable bias in modelling factors associated with educational attainment. The measures used at the pilot captured executive function rather than broader cognitive functioning. The study team intends to use a measure of executive function, which is known to develop rapidly during adolescence, at later waves of the study to understand change and growth trajectories.

The Matrix Reasoning Task has been used on similar projects by the study team previously. This assessment is straightforward to administer as part of an interviewer-led visit, and straightforward and relatively short for children to complete. The hope was that

this smooth experience would help in maintaining the cohort children's engagement with the study.

Parent web survey instruments

The main changes made to the parent web survey instruments following piloting were adding the parent-report SDQ with impact supplement, questions about tutoring, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cohort child, and some other amendments to existing questions.

Teacher web survey instrument

The main changes made to the teacher web survey instrument following piloting were replacing some questions with the teacher-report SDQ (without the impact supplement). This was to give more robust measures than the unvalidated items used in the pilot and comparability with the measures asked of cohort children and their parents, as well as other studies.

In addition, questions were added about the cohort child's relationships with peers, their transition to secondary school, their punctuality and attendance. Questions were also added about school policies on a range of matters.

Sampling

This chapter discusses all aspects of the sampling for the face-to-face core data collection in the Growing Up in the 2020s study. The sampling for the teacher survey and the Internet Use Study are discussed in chapters 11 and 12 respectively.

Sampling design

The sample frame was comprised of all pupils in year 7 identified in the NPD for the summer term of 2024 (and who therefore would be in year 8 in 2024 to 2025 when fieldwork for the Wave 1 survey was conducted). The sample selected for Wave 1 fieldwork consisted of a main sample of 19,824 pupils and a reserve sample of 9,912.

As the fieldwork was carried out by face-to-face interviewers, the sampling was undertaken in 2 stages so fieldwork could be carried out in the most cost-effective manner. At the first stage a random sample of Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) was selected – 826 for the main sample and 413 for the reserve sample - and at the second stage a fixed number of pupils (24) was randomly sampled within each selected PSU.

Sampling frame

The sampling frame used was the School Census and Alternative Provision data held on the NPD.

Sample of PSUs

The PSUs were generated from an anonymous extract of all eligible pupils, containing a limited number of variables from the NPD. The postcode was extracted for each pupil and then aggregated counts of the number of pupils in each postcode sector (PCS) calculated. The PCSs were then merged (where necessary) to form the PSUs based on proximity so that each merged PCS contained at least 40 pupils. A total of 7,514 PSUs were created.

In order to boost the sample size of FSM-eligible pupils¹, a weighted sampling approach was used. The proportion of pupils FSM-eligible in the anonymised extract was 28.2% and the proportion ineligible was 71.8%. Weighting factors of 1.77 and 0.70 were applied to adjust the proportions for both be equal to 50.0% ($1.77 \times 28.2\% = 50.0\%$; $0.70 \times 71.8\% = 50.0\%$) when the sample was selected. These weighting factors were first used to calculate the weighted count for each PSU as the sum of 1.77 multiplied by the number of

¹ The NPD variable was FSM_eligible. It is important to note that in 2018 a new rule was established whereby all pupils eligible for FSM in 2018 retained their status until 2025, regardless of changing circumstances. This means that pupils who were eligible on 1 April 2018, or who became eligible since then, continued to receive free meals, even if their household was no longer eligible under the benefits/low-earnings criteria, up until March 2025 and then until the end of their phase of education.

pupils in the PSU FSM-eligible and 0.70 multiplied by the number of pupils not FSM-eligible.

A random stratified sample of 1,239 PSUs was selected from the list of PSUs, sorted by region, tertiles of the proportion of pupils in each PSU that were FSM-eligible and the average Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) score (based on pupils' home addresses) for all pupils in each PSU. Each PSU was sampled in proportion to its weighted count, as calculated above, rather than its actual sample size. This meant that PSUs with a higher proportion of pupils who were FSM-eligible would have a higher chance of being sampled.

A third (413) of the 1,239 selected PSUs were then randomly allocated to the reserve sample and the remaining 826 to the main sample using the same set of stratifiers.

To manage fieldwork efficiently, the 826 main PSUs were allocated to fieldwork tranches according to the fieldwork capacity available at the time, as follows:

- Tranche 1: 298 PSUs.
- Tranche 2: 355 PSUs.
- Tranche 3: 173 PSUs.

PSUs in each region were randomly allocated to tranches proportionately so that the regional profile of each Tranche was the same.

Sample of pupils

The same weighting factors were employed when sampling the pupils within each selected PSU. The pupils within each selected PSU were first sorted by: FSM eligibility, sex, ethnic group and Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision. A stratified sample of 24 pupils was then sampled within each selected PSU with probability in proportion to the weighting factor. This generated a sample of pupils of which approximately half were FSM-eligible, with equal probability of selection within the FSM sample and non-FSM sample, which optimises statistical efficiency for analyses of those 2 groups.

This gave a sample of 19,824 pupils for the main sample and 9,912 pupils for the reserve sample. The list of anonymised identifiers was then returned to the DfE so that the full contact information could be extracted from the NPD, for the purpose of contacting participants and inviting them to take part. One of the pupils in the reserve sample was not found in the full returned sample data from the DfE, so the full sample returned contained 19,824 pupils for the main sample and 9,911 pupils for the reserve sample.

Examination of the full returned sample data (to which was added the relevant required personal information) found that at 61 addresses there was more than one pupil with the same date of birth and surname. Of these, 60 contained 2 pupils and one had 3 pupils – these were assumed to be siblings in a multiple birth.

The survey was designed for a single pupil within the household. No useable additional information would be gained from interviewing additional children from multiple births, and it would greatly increase the survey burden for those households to do so. Therefore, at these addresses one of the pupils was randomly selected to take part, thus removing 35 pupils from the main sample and 27 from the reserve sample. The final sample comprised 19,789 pupils for the main sample and 9,884 pupils for the reserve sample.

Sampling process

Table 1 presents the steps in the sampling process.

Table 1: Sampling process steps

Step number	Description of sampling process step
1	Agreement between study team and the DfE about the use of NPD for sampling
2	Ipsos identified variables required for sampling and submitted the list to the DfE
3	Anonymised extract of NPD provided to Ipsos by the DfE, comprising information about pupils in year 7 in summer term 2024 necessary for sampling
4	Counts of pupils in each postcode sector created by Ipsos
5	Merging of pupils in each postcode sector by Ipsos so each (merged) postcode sector comprised at least 40 pupils. These (merged) postcode sectors formed 7,514 PSUs
6	Creation of weighted counts of pupils in each PSU (so pupils FSM-eligible were over-sampled)
7	Stratification of 7,514 PSUs by Ipsos followed by random selection of 1,239 PSUs for fieldwork
8	Random allocation of 1,239 selected PSUs to the main (826) and reserve (413) samples
9	Stratification of pupils within PSUs followed by random selection of 24 pupils per PSU for fieldwork
10	Ipsos provided identifiers of 29,736 pupils selected to DfE
11	DfE provided Ipsos with contact details for 29,736 pupils selected
12	Ipsos identified suspected twins/triplets in the selected sample, and randomly selected one for fieldwork
13	Ipsos randomly allocated PSUs in the main sample to fieldwork tranches proportionately by region
14	Ipsos prepared a sample file for fieldwork

Eligibility of parents and cohort children

This chapter sets out the eligibility criteria for parents and cohort children to take part on Growing Up in the 2020s.

Eligibility of cohort children

To be eligible for the study, cohort children had to be in year 8 in the 2024 to 2025 academic year and attending a state school or receiving alternative state provision. As the eligibility for cohort children was determined at the sampling stage, only in a few situations did an interviewer have to record a change to the cohort child's eligibility. Sampled cohort children became ineligible for the study if the interviewer found they:

- were not in year 8 (perhaps because of an inaccurate NPD record)
- had passed away
- had moved outside England

Eligibility of parents

The Wave 1 study aimed to collect data from up to 2 parents of the cohort child. All participating households included an interview with Parent A. In households with 2 parents or parent-figures, Parent B was invited to complete a web survey. Interviewers were asked to determine the eligibility of any parents/guardians living with the cohort child for the Parent A and B roles. Interviewers were asked to do this once they had established contact with the household and secured their participation in the study.

Parent A was defined as a legal parent or guardian of the cohort child. This included biological and adoptive parents. Interviewers were instructed to check the circumstances of any other caregivers to check if they had legal parental responsibility; for example, grandparents were eligible if they had a special guardianship order, and step-parents were eligible if they had adopted the child or made some other arrangement to take on legal responsibility for them. Foster parents were only eligible if they were legal guardians. Interviewers were advised to confirm the legal parental status where it was unclear, and to refer to Ipsos head office for guidance for any rarer situations (such as children living in institutions).

The Parent A definition also required that the parent was living with the cohort child at least 50% of the time. In situations where care of the cohort child was split equally across 2 households, either parent could participate as Parent A if they fulfilled the other eligibility criteria. All interviews with Parent A and the cohort child were carried out at the same address. If the interviewer found no one at the child's address fulfilled the Parent A criteria, the child was ineligible for the study.

The Parent A participant also had to know about the cohort child's school life, health and development, in order to answer the study questions.

If someone who fit the Parent A definition was in prison, they were ineligible for the study as were the cohort child and any potential Parent B.

In many households, 2 parents in a household were both eligible to complete the study as Parent A. In these situations, either parent could complete the Parent A interview.

Parent B was defined as the resident partner or resident co-parent of Parent A – a parent who lives with Parent A and the cohort child all or most of the time. They may or may not be the child's biological parent. Parents who did not live with the cohort child were not eligible for the Parent B web survey. The script for the face-to-face interview with Parent A was also set up to select the relevant Parent B in households with other circumstances (for example, in households with more than 2 parents or parent-figures).

Interviewer training

This chapter gives an overview of interviewer training including briefings, interviewer homework, instructions and support.

Briefings

All interviewers attended a briefing before working on the survey. The briefings took place between 7 January and 24 April 2025. Briefings were run by researchers from Ipsos and members of the Ipsos field staff. UCL, Anna Freud and the DfE also attended the briefing sessions.

In total, 14 briefings were conducted, with 226 interviewers attending. The size of the briefings varied, and attendance ranged from 9 to 24 interviewers, with 15 on average attending.

The briefings were conducted using Microsoft Teams and each lasted around 3 hours.

Briefing content

The interviewer training was bespoke and focused specifically on what information interviewers needed to be able to successfully conduct surveys for Growing Up in the 2020s. Standard elements of interviewing (for example, using the Electronic Contact Sheet (ECS)) had been covered in initial interviewer training previously. The briefings consisted of presentations, alongside more varied modes of active learning. For example, the briefing included interactive discussions to promote interviewer engagement and offer interviewers the opportunity to draw on practical experiences, particularly in relation to how best to encourage parents and children to take part in the survey by explaining the importance of the study and its impact. This provided the chance for interviewers with different levels of experience to learn from each other.

A discursive quiz covering the material that had been presented was also incorporated into the training. Following the interviewers' verbal answers, the trainer presented the correct answer as well as any explanations or clarifications required. This ensured that interviewers were confident and competent in the procedures that they were then required to carry out in the field.

The structure of the briefing was as follows:

- project background
- making contact
- tracing movers
- quiz
- engagement

- managing the household visit (including ensuring that the interview was carried out in private)
- parent A face-to-face interview and web survey
- cohort child face-to-face interview
- cognitive assessment
- data linkage
- parent B web survey placement
- ethics and safeguarding
- field administration
- final questions and answers

Briefing materials

Prior to the briefing, interviewers were given the opportunity to discuss the study and were provided with a briefing pack. The briefing pack contained all materials needed during the briefing including examples of the advance letter, leaflet and other materials required for the household visit.

Following the briefings a Questions and Answers document was produced and sent to interviewers to address any questions that arose during the briefings.

Additional sessions

Further to the main briefing sessions, interviewers working on fieldwork tranches 2 and 3 joined a further one hour Microsoft Teams session before starting a tranche 2 or 3 PSU. This session covered details about the Internet Use Study, provided feedback on progress to date, and answered some frequently asked questions (for example, on tracing and data linkage protocols).

These sessions took place between 24 February and 11 March 2025.

Homework tasks

All interviewers were required to complete some homework tasks after the briefing and before starting work:

- download the cognitive assessment software to their tablet and complete one cognitive assessment using the practice sample provided. Interviewers were required to 'sync' their tablet so that Ipsos could check that the cognitive assessment data was received in the office. Only once this was confirmed to be working as intended was the interviewer able to start work on the project

- complete practice interviews – interviewers were required to practice the Parent A and cohort child face-to-face interviews and a Parent A web survey so that they became familiar with the scripts and the ECS prior to starting work. Practice sample and suggested scenarios were provided to assist completion. It was not a requirement for interviewers to practice the Parent B web survey given its similarity in content to the Parent A web survey

Interviewers were given a homework booklet containing instructions for these tasks.

Interviewer instructions and fieldwork materials

All interviewers were provided with detailed written project instructions containing the information covered in the briefing and contact details for the Ipsos researchers and field staff in case of further questions. The instructions were provided in briefing packs and could also be accessed on interviewers' tablets.

The materials provided to interviewers in their work packs were as follows:

Materials to use when making contact

- standard police notification letter
- spare copies of the advance letter for parents
- spare copies of the advance letter for cohort children
- spare copies of advance leaflet
- calling card
- laminated language card
- appointment card

Materials to use when tracing movers

- occupier letter
- forwarding letter
- school tracing pack

Materials to use during the interview

- showcards
- parent A web survey card
- parent B web survey invitation
- data linkage leaflet
- where to get support sheet for parents
- where to get support sheet for cohort children
- parent B web survey invitation

- data linkage leaflet
- change of address card
- gift cards

On-going support for interviewers

During fieldwork interviewers were invited to attend weekly 30-minute project drop-in sessions with Ipsos field staff, providing them with the opportunity to talk to other interviewers about their experiences of fieldwork on this study and raise any questions. These drop-in sessions provided a forum where interviewers could seek advice, provide feedback and where queries could be resolved.

Support was also provided to interviewers following the briefings on an on-going basis via ad hoc support and coaching sessions (incorporating regular telephone and one-off face-to-face accompaniments in the field where necessary).

Memos were sent to interviewers during fieldwork to clarify some of the protocols, namely:

- reminding interviewers about key points on the Internet Use Study (before the wider roll-out at fieldwork tranche 3). This included a reminder of what was covered in the briefing to make sure interviewers were administering this element as intended and had a full understanding of how this part of the study worked
- clarifying the contact protocols to ensure that interviewers did not make contact after 7pm without an appointment. This was due to a small number of complaints made to the survey helpline about interviewers making contact without prior notice and disrupting bedtimes for younger children in the household.

Household contact, co-operation and engagement

This chapter covers the protocols for contacting parents and children during fieldwork, the interviewer visit, and reminders sent after the visit. It also describes the materials used by interviewers to help make contact, explain the study elements and gain informed consent, and conduct interviews.

Advance mailing

The advance mailing pack was posted to sampled children and their parents from Ipsos' head office around one week before the interviewer visit to their address. This was addressed to the "Mother/Father/Carer" of the cohort child, as the NPD database does not contain parents' names. The advance mailing pack contained:

- a letter for the parent(s) of the selected child
- a letter for the selected child for the parent(s) to pass on
- a leaflet for both the parent(s) and the child, providing more information about the study and what taking part would involve

Letter for Parent(s)

The letter for parent(s) of the selected child introduced the study and its purpose, and explained how their child had been selected to take part. It also provided information about what taking part would involve. Specifically, the letter included information on:

- the purpose of the study
- how respondents had been selected to part
- participation guidelines and expectations including the survey's duration
- details of the organisations carrying out the survey
- an overview of how the study would develop in the future
- details of the incentive
- data protection information, including a link to the study website page containing the privacy policy
- contact information and details about how to learn more about the survey
- how to opt-out before an interviewer made contact with them

Letter for selected children

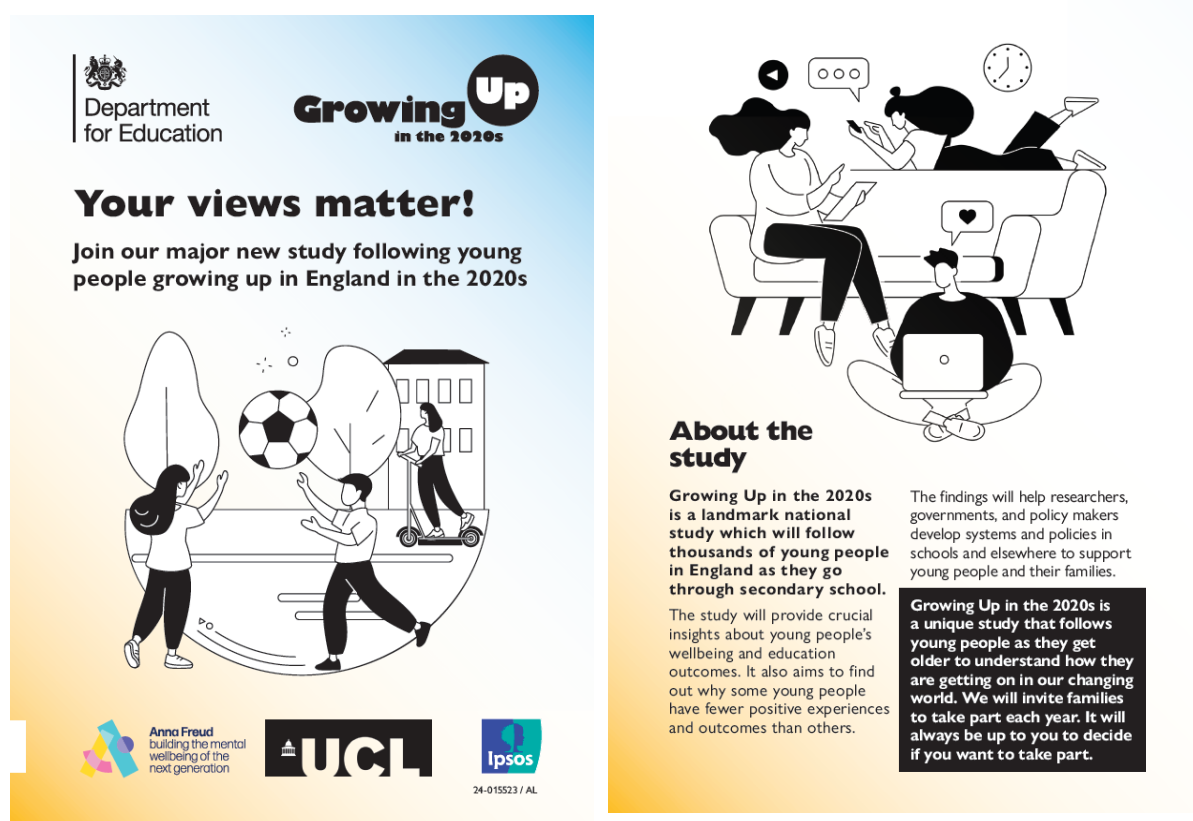
The letter for the selected child included similar content to the parent(s) letter in age-appropriate language.

Leaflet

The leaflet provided further information about the study to ensure informed consent. It provided the selected child and their parent(s) with an overview of the study and the length of the visit (just under an hour) as well as detailed information on some of the study elements:

- parental participation: parents were informed this involved a face-to-face interview with one parent and a web survey for up to two parents to complete
- child participation: a face-to-face interview, which included some questions for them to complete on their own, and a cognitive assessment task referred to as a 'thinking activity' or 'puzzles'
- the leaflet also contained information about other elements of the study requiring either their assistance or consent:
 - a survey of teachers: Parent(s) and selected children were told the child would be asked for the name of a teacher, such as a form tutor, who knew the child well and could be asked questions about the child's school life and educational experience
 - data linkage: The study guide included a brief overview of the types of records data linkage consent would be sought for and advised parent(s) that more information would be provided about this by the interviewer

Figure 1: Leaflet enclosed with the advance mailing



Making contact with families in the field

Interviewers were provided with details of all selected children in their PSUs via the ECS. This included limited background information about each selected child to support interviewers' planning for the visit, such as the incentive due at each address, whether the selected child was eligible for FSM (as recorded in the NPD), and an indication of special educational needs (as recorded in the NPD) that might require additional assistance or flexibility during the interview. The ECS also informed interviewers which children were selected for the Internet Use Study (fieldwork tranches 2 and 3 only). Interviewers also received maps and a list of all addresses in each PSU allocated to them to help them plan visits to the addresses in their PSUs.

Interviewers could start work on each tranche of sample from 7 days after the advance mailing was issued, allowing parents time to review the study information and exercise their right to opt out if they wished.

Interviewers carried spare copies of the advance letters and leaflet to refer to on the doorstep, in case parents could not recall receiving the mailing. Interviewers also presented Ipsos photo identification cards to reinforce the legitimacy of the study and the interviewer's affiliation with Ipsos.

Call patterns

Interviewers were required to make a minimum of 6 face-to-face visits at each of the addresses in their PSUs. They were required to make at least 2 evening and 2 weekend visits, ensuring at least 4 visits when parents and selected children were most likely to be available. The 6 visits had to be spread across separate days, with a minimum gap of 3 weeks between the initial and final visit to any address in the sample.

Initial contact and confirming eligibility

On visiting the address, interviewers were required to speak to a parent or guardian of the selected child so that they could secure consent before proceeding to set up an appointment.

At each visit, interviewers were instructed to introduce themselves and the study and make reference to the advance mailing pack the parent(s) previously received.

A key part of the doorstep contact process involved identifying the right parent for participation in the household interview, known as Parent A. In order to confirm eligibility, the interviewers ensured that they were:

- a legal parent or guardian of the young person (for any other situations, such as where the young person is living in an institution, interviewers were instructed to contact the Ipsos office for guidance)
- living with the sampled child at least 50% of the time (if care was shared between parents who were separated, the sampled child was deemed to be living with Parent A at least half of the time. If the care was split equally across 2 households, either parent could be Parent A if they fulfilled the other criteria)
- knowledgeable about the young person's school life, health and development

Making appointments

Interviewers scheduled appointments to meet the needs of each family. When an appointment had been scheduled interviewers left an appointment card to confirm the details of the date and time of the interview. Interviewers were permitted to collect mobile phone numbers to allow them to confirm appointments by text message.

When scheduling appointments, interviewers helped prepare parents and selected children for the visit by:

- reminding the selected child that they should read their letter and leaflet before the visit, if they had not already read it

- highlighting the need for a quiet space, if possible, for the interview and other study elements to take place in (this was especially important for the cognitive assessment)
- encouraging both the parent and child to attend the appointment so they could both complete an interview during one visit. If there was another parent in the household, interviewers were advised to try to arrange a time to speak to them as well so they could place the Parent B web survey. This was important because a fully productive household was one where both the Parent A and cohort child face-to-face interviews were complete
- if rescheduling an appointment by telephone, interviewers were advised to let parents know that they would send an appointment card in the post or confirm in a text message
- leaving the data linkage leaflet, and if necessary a copy of the advance letters and leaflet

Data linkage

All parents invited to take part in the study were provided with information about data linkage in the leaflet that was posted with the advance mailing pack (for more information on Data linkage in this study, see chapter 8). A separate data linkage leaflet was provided to each interviewer to leave with parents when making the appointment and to refer to during the visit. Both documents provided important information about the data linkage:

- explanation of data linkage: why linkage to DfE records is a standard part of the study and why the study is asking permission for linkage to NHS England, HMRC and DWP records
- explanation that DfE records will be linked for both parents and children, and that other records (NHS England, HMRC, DWP) will be linked for parents if they consent at this stage. The cohort child will be asked to consent for their health and economic records to be linked when they reach year 12, but they can decide then whether to agree to this
- reassurances on data security and confidentiality
- how participants can withdraw consent and contact details for any queries or concerns

Further information, including Questions and Answers about data linkage, was made available on the study website.

Calling cards

In cases when a family was not available when the interviewer called, including cases where interviewers had made an appointment, interviewers left a calling card at the address. Calling cards emphasised the importance of the study and also included the interviewer's contact information and encouraged the family to get in touch at their earliest convenience.

Language barriers

Ipsos provided language cards to assist interviewers in identifying and documenting any language support requirements. The language card stated "I speak [language]" in 65 different languages, and interviewers could present this card to allow parents to point to the language they speak. Individuals known to the family (e.g. Family members, friends, neighbours) could act as interpreters if language support was required, and in all cases where translation was required this is what happened.

The Parent A interview was carried out in a language other than English in 127 households (out of 8,195 participating households) in a total of 24 languages. The main languages were Urdu (47), Bengali (15), Arabic (13), Punjabi (7), Turkish (7) and Somali (5).

The cohort child interview was carried out in a language other than English in 54 households (out of 7,811) in a total of 18 languages. The main languages were Urdu (17), Arabic (10), and Punjabi (5).

Tracing movers

Interviewers attempted to trace families if they found that a selected child was no longer living at the address provided, or if they were unclear whether they were living at the address following multiple attempts to contact them. Tracing was also required when addresses were found to be inaccessible, unoccupied, or otherwise unidentifiable.

A variety of tracing methods were used. The first step involved following the call pattern to maximise the chances of contact with the occupier. If these visits revealed that the selected child no longer lived at the address, interviewers undertook appropriate tracing actions which could involve:

- if the selected child had moved from the issued address, interviewers asked the current occupier if they could provide a forwarding address
- if no contact was made with the current occupier, interviewers left an occupier letter at the address. This letter explained that the interviewer was trying to make contact about the study and explained how the parent could get in touch with the interviewer if they wished to take part

- at least 2 face-to-face visits were made to 32 neighbours. If the current occupier or neighbours knew the selected child's whereabouts but were reluctant to reveal any details to the interviewer, interviewers left a forwarding letter with them to send on to the parents. The letter explained that the interviewer did not have any contact details for them and that the letter had been forwarded by their neighbour/current occupier of their previous address, and that the study team would like to invite them to take part in the Growing Up in the 2020s study. If the parents wished to take part, they were asked to contact Ipsos to provide their current address and contact details so that an interviewer could get in touch with them
- interviewers might also visit other people living in that street or friends of the family who might have useful information

Where these tracing activities did not yield any contact, the interviewers were instructed to contact the school that the selected child was attending in 2023 to 2024 (as stated on the NPD). The school's name and address were available to interviewers in their ECS. Interviewers sent the school tracing pack to the school, which included:

- a letter for the headteacher introducing the study and explaining that the interviewer had been trying to make contact with the selected child but had been unable to find them at the address Ipsos had on record. It also included name and date of birth of the child that the interviewer was trying to reach
- a letter for the headteacher to forward to the parents at their new address, enclosed in an envelope ready to be sent. This letter for parents also included a reply-paid envelope that parents could use to send back to Ipsos a reply form with their name and address

If the interviewer received information that the child was living in an institutional setting, such as a care home, they were encouraged to find out as much information as possible (including the name and address of the institution) and contact Ipsos head office as soon as possible for additional instructions on how to proceed.

All tracing activities, including outcomes and any new information about the participants' addresses or contacts, was recorded by interviewers in the ECS.

The household visit

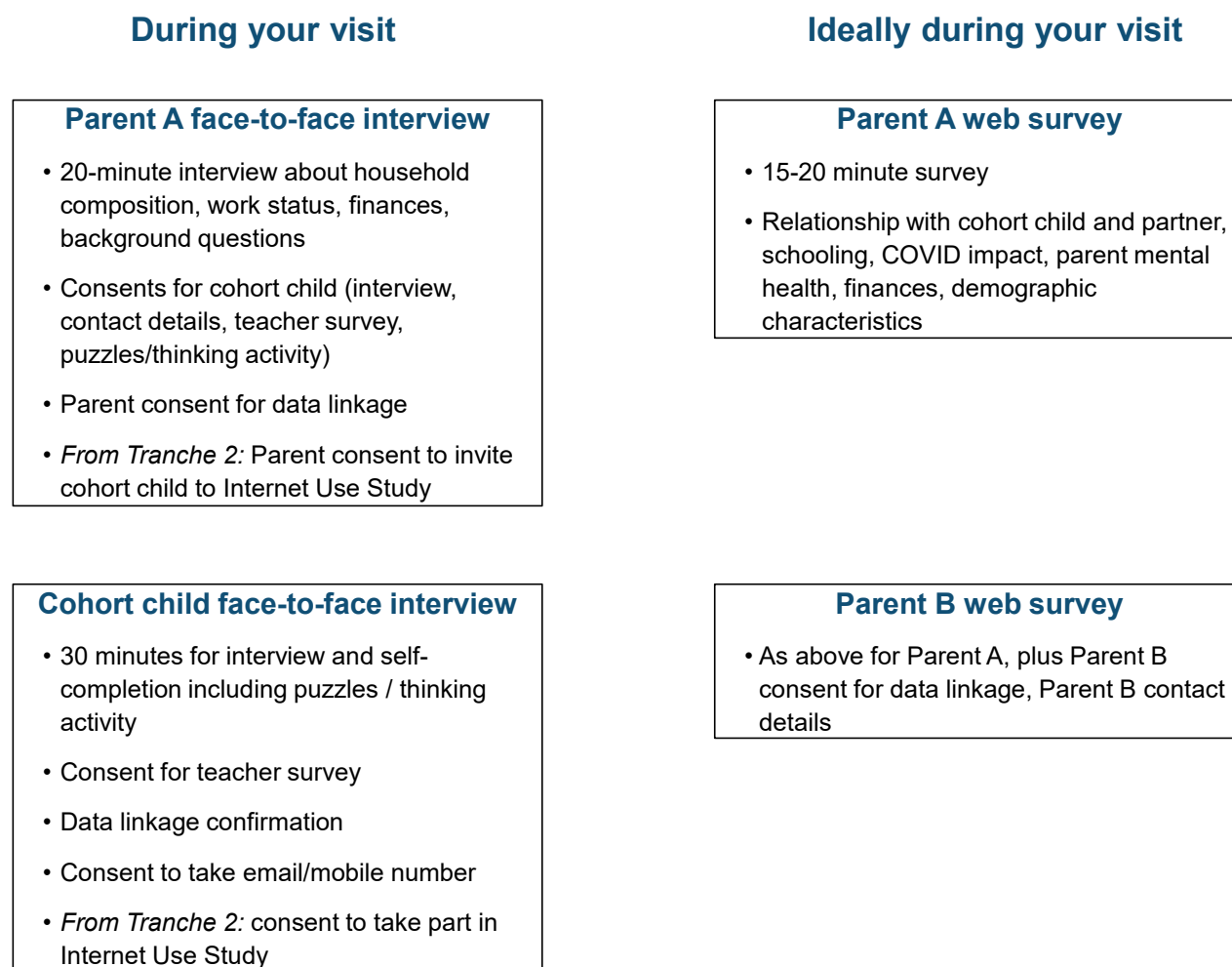
Figure 7.2 gives an overview of the study elements which were part of the visit. Two elements had to be completed during the visit: the face-to-face interview with Parent A and the child face-to-face interview. Both of these had to be completed for the case to count as fully productive.

The Parent A face-to-face interview had to be completed first. This ensured that in all cases we had parental consent for the child interview and consents for all study elements involving the child.

Interviewers were asked to ensure that as far as possible Parent A should complete their web survey while they interviewed the cohort child. Where Parent B was available during the visit, interviewers were asked to place the Parent B web survey and encourage them to complete it then. These protocols were intended to maximise response and allow interviewers to answer any queries. However, the Parent A and Parent B web surveys could be completed after the interviewer visit. Interviewers would not always meet Parent B if one was identified during their visit. In these situations, interviewer could leave a letter for Parent B to provide an introduction to the study and their log in details.

Feedback from interviewers suggested that these protocols were effective, and that parents typically perceived the web survey to be longer and the study more onerous if they completed it after the visit.

Figure 2: Briefing slide showing interviewer tasks during the household visit



As far as possible, interviewers managed the family during the visit, to ensure that interviews were conducted in private, with as little disruption as possible, so that high quality data was collected. Where conditions were not suitable for an interview – for example, if there were lots of disruptions and distractions – interviewers were permitted to reschedule the interview.

Interviewers tried to ensure that all interviews were carried out in private, with as little disruption as possible, in a communal room (not a bedroom) where a parent/guardian was nearby but ideally could not overhear their answers. Where parents were in the same room, interviewers explained to both child and parent that for the child interview they wanted to hear from the young person only. Interviewers were prompted in the child interview to say, if a parent or other person was present, that they wanted the child to answer the questions on their own, without anyone else interrupting or listening. At the end of the face-to-face interview, interviewers recorded who had been present in the room while they conducted the child interview.

Interviewers could provide support to parents and children during the interview where needed. This included:

- reading the advance letter and leaflet with participants before the interview
- reading questions and answer codes aloud where they suspected/were informed of literacy or language difficulties
- going through the interview more slowly, and taking breaks, where needed
- allowing more time for children to answer
- making any other adjustments needed, by working with participants and asking them how they/their child could be supported to take part in the interview

Change of address card

Interviewers gave all parents who participated in the study a change of details card (document reference: C4) at the end of the interview. They were asked to return the card to Ipsos with updated address details in the event that they decide to move in the future.

Parent web surveys

Interviewers were encouraged to place the Parent B web surveys in person; this was always done with Parent A.

Each parent had their own unique log in to access their survey. To help interviewers place the correct survey with each parent, different materials were used (a postcard for Parent A, a letter for Parent B). The interviewing script prompted interviewers to fill in the correct details for Parent A on the postcard, and the correct log in details for Parent B on the Parent B letter.

Helpline sheets

Interviewers left the following at the address at the end of each interview: Helpline sheets for both parents and children: 'Where to get support for Young People' and 'Where to get support for Parents'. Each document contained details of organisations that can support parents and carers or young people with dealing with topics discussed in the interview, and referred participants to a place on the study website that included more sources of support that may be useful.

After the visit

There are a few scenarios where interviewers made further efforts to complete the study elements once the visit was complete:

- **if Parent A was unable to complete the Parent A web survey during the visit:** if interviewers saw that Parent A had not completed their web survey a day or two after the visit, they made one telephone call and sent one text message reminder to

Parent A asking them to complete the web survey (suggested wording was provided). Interviewers recorded that they had done so in the ECS

- if the Parent A face-to-face interview was completed but **the child face-to-face interview was not completed during the visit** (for example because the child was unavailable or unwilling to do so), interviewers made a minimum of 2 more calls and a maximum of 6 more calls to the household to contact and interview the selected child

Further email and text message reminders were sent from Ipsos head office to Parent A and Parent B participants who had not completed their web survey once the case was finalised by the interviewer (see chapter 10 for more details).

Incentives

As a token of appreciation for taking part in the interview, the child received a voucher for £10. If a child was FSM-eligible then Parent A was also eligible for a £10 incentive, if they completed both the face-to-face interview and web survey.

The interviewer gave a gift card to all participating children and to eligible parents who chose to receive a gift card rather than an e-voucher. Within one week of the interview being completed, the gift cards were activated at the Ipsos head office so their value could be redeemed by the recipients.

Where Parent A was eligible for an incentive, interviewers could give them a physical voucher if they were still at the address when Parent A completed their web survey. If the Parent A web survey was not completed when the child's face-to-face interview concluded, or Parent A requested an e-voucher, an e-voucher was sent by email from Ipsos head office. If parents wanted to collect the gift card from the interviewer, but the interviewer had left the address or closed the script before giving the parent the voucher, parents were sent an e-voucher instead.

Other participant communications and information

Participant helpline

All those in the issued sample were able to contact Ipsos via post, email or telephone.

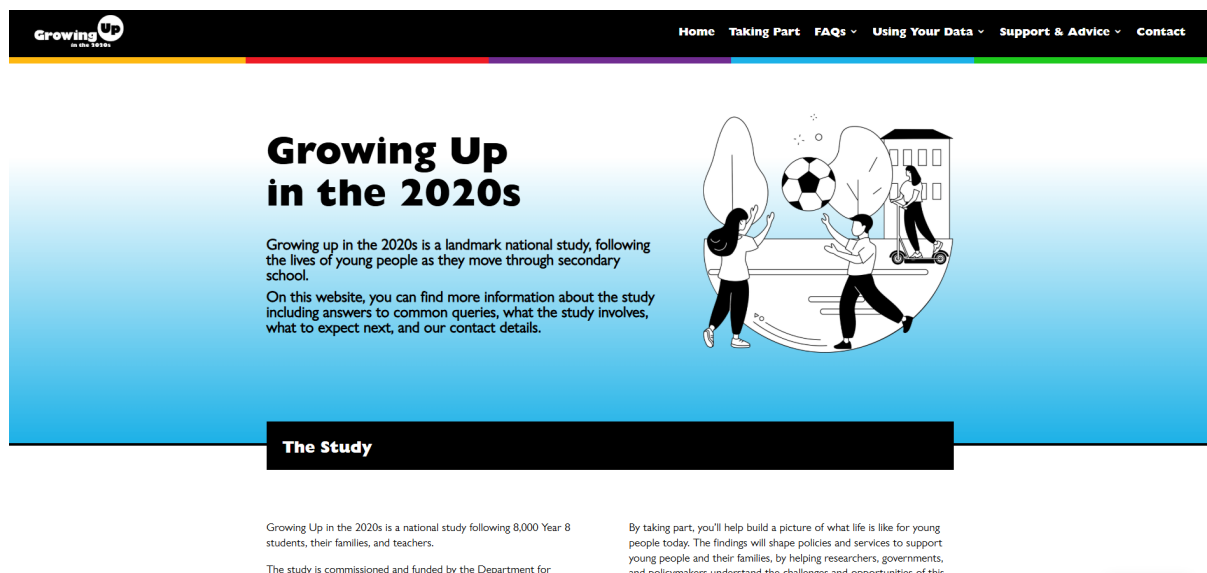
A dedicated helpline team within Ipsos monitored and managed the communication with those sampled. The helpline team was given a full briefing on the background to the study as well as standard answers to use for common queries and were also in regular contact with the Ipsos study team. All communications received by the helpline team were logged on a dedicated spreadsheet in which each row corresponded to an interaction with a family. For each query or any contact made, the helpline team logged the contact details of

the person, a description and classification of the query, and notes on how the helpline team responded.

Participant website

A dedicated study website for those sampled was set up at growingup2020s.ipsos.com. This website provided more information about what taking part would involve for parents and children, included detailed questions and answers about each element of the study, linked to the study's privacy notice and provided guidance about how data was stored and used on the study, and provided links for advice and help for parents, children and teachers involved in the study. The website also included links to the study helpline and email address for those who wanted to get in touch with the study team.

Figure 3: Participant website home page



Core data collection

This chapter gives an overview of the procedures to make contact and secure consent, and the questions asked in each of the core data collection instruments. The core data collection instruments included:

- a face-to-face interview with Parent A
- a face-to-face interview with the cohort child
- web surveys with Parent A and B

The data collection instruments used for the teacher survey and the Internet Use Study are discussed in chapters 11 and 12 respectively.

This chapter also gives an overview of the average interview lengths for each element and discusses the processes for programming and checking the scripts administered during fieldwork.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing software (CAPI).

The following data collection instruments were used:

- **parent A face-to-face interview:** this was a 20-minute face-to-face interview with the cohort child's primary caregiver to collect household information. During the interview, these parents were asked to give their consent for the Ipsos interviewer to invite the cohort child to take part in an interview, and for them and the child to take part in other elements of the study
- **cohort child face-to-face interview:** this was a 30-minute face-to-face interview with the cohort child. It asked about a range of topics relating to home and school life, including extra-curricular activities, experiences of school, satisfaction with life, health and well-being, and relationships with peers and family. Where both Parent A and the cohort child consented, the interview included the administration of a standardised cognitive assessment, the Matrix Reasoning Test. Where consent was given, the child was asked to give the name of their form tutor or another teacher who knew them well
- **parent A / Parent B web survey:** this was a 20-minute web survey for Parent A and (where applicable) Parent B. Both parents were asked a similar set of questions about their relationship with the cohort child, engagement with child's school life, relationship with partner, health, mental health and financial security

All participating parents and children were informed that administrative records held about them and their child by the DfE would be linked to their survey answers. Parents were also asked whether they consented for their administrative records held by NHS England,

HMRC and DWP to be linked to their own answers (a process known as **data linkage**). Further details about data linkage are in Chapter 9.

Questions that were considered more sensitive were covered either in the self-completion modules (included in both the Parent A and child face-to-face interviews) or in the parent web interviews. When the interview was completed with an interviewer, participants were asked to complete the self-completion module using the interviewer's tablet. If necessary, they could be assisted in completing the module by the interviewer, a friend, a family member including their partner, or a non-friend/family-member individual. If they were being assisted, a message reminded them that they could skip past any questions they did not want to answer.

Securing consent to participate

All parents of the sampled children were sent the advance mailing by post from the Ipsos office. Interviewers were asked to start making contact one week after the letters were sent.

The advance mailing provided the sampled child and their parent(s) with information to consider in advance of agreeing to an appointment with the Ipsos interviewer. It was an ethical requirement of the study that the sampled child and their parent(s) could familiarise themselves with the individual elements of the survey before the interviewer visit.

The advance mailing contained a letter for the parent(s) of the sampled child, a letter for the sampled child, and a leaflet for both the parent(s) and the sampled child, providing more information about the study. The leaflet provided the sampled child and their parent(s) with an overview of the study as well as what the interviewer would ask the parent(s) and the sampled child to do. The leaflet informed them the household visit would last just under one hour. The leaflet also gives information about other permissions the interviewer would ask for, for example consent for the teacher survey and data linkage. The letter and the leaflet explained what the parent(s) of the sampled child had to do if they did not wish to take part.

When interviewers made contact, they asked to speak to the parent of the sampled child first, regardless of who answered the door, and established if the sampled child was eligible for the study. After establishing the eligibility of the parent for the study, they asked for their consent to take part. They asked the parent for consent to speak to the sampled child about the study so the sampled child could decide themselves whether to take part. Interviewers recorded they had secured the necessary consents in the data collection instruments.

Parent A face-to-face interview

The face-to-face interview with Parent A collected consent for the parent's participation in the study, for the cohort child's participation in each study element (including the interview, the cognitive assessment, and the teacher survey), and to collect the mobile phone number and email address of the cohort child. It also collected important background information about the household and contact details so that Ipsos could keep in touch with both parents in future. Towards the end of the interview, the interviewer also asked Parent A if they would be willing to provide 'stable contact' details – these are details for friends or family members that Ipsos could use to attempt to contact the cohort family if they lose touch with them – as is standard practice on longitudinal studies.

The Parent A face-to-face interview included a short self-completion module to collect more sensitive information including an assessment of the cohort child's health and any special educational needs they have.

Table 2 presents the content and average completion time for each section of the Parent A face-to-face interview. The average overall length of the interview is presented later in Section 8.5.

Table 2: Content of Parent A face-to-face interview

Module	Topics	Median length
Introduction	• introduction to study • study consent • translation requirements	1 minute 52 seconds
Household	• confirming name/ age/ sex/ gender/ relationships for cohort child, Parent A and (if applicable) Parent B • parent A consents for cohort child interview • name/age/gender/relationships for all other household members • whether cohort child has a parent living elsewhere	3 minutes 27 seconds
School	• whether cohort child attends school some/ all the time, and name of school • whether cohort child has access to a device to complete schoolwork	32 seconds

Module	Topics	Median length
Socio-demographics	- parent A work status, type of work, whether supervisory responsibilities at work, number of jobs, hours worked - partner's work status, number of jobs, hours worked - parent A and partner's qualifications. - cohort child's country of birth - household income from earnings and benefits received - tenure	4 minutes 0 seconds
Data linkage	explains data linkage request, and records consent (or no consent) for NHS England, HMRC, DWP data linkage for Parent A. Explains that Parent A and cohort child's DfE data will be linked unless they request this does not happen	1 minute 1 second
Parent A self-completion	- health problems experienced by cohort child - details of SEN suspected/diagnosed in cohort child, whether an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)/other support in place - involvement of Parent A in cohort child's education, aspirations for their future	2 minutes 15 seconds
Contact details for Parent A, partner, stable contact	collecting mobile phone number, other phone number, email address for Parent A, Parent B (where applicable), and (where possible) stable contacts	2 minutes 15 seconds
Parent A and B web survey placement	providing log in details for Parent A's web survey and (where applicable) details for Parent B to log in to their own web survey	2 minutes 12 seconds

Cohort child face-to-face interview

If Parent A consented to the cohort child interview, the child was then asked whether they consented to take part. Where the corresponding consent had been given by Parent A for other elements of the study – including the cognitive assessment and collecting teacher

name for the teacher survey – the child was asked to give their own consent for these elements before they were administered.

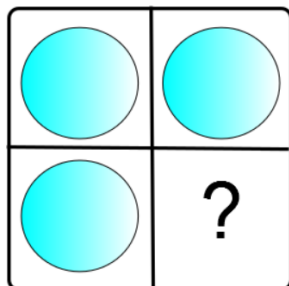
In addition to the survey questions, the cohort child interview included a cognitive assessment (the Matrix Reasoning Task). During the interview, the interviewer explained that there were some questions that the child should complete on their own using the interviewer's tablet. If the child agreed to the self-completion section, the interviewer handed over the tablet to them. Once the child had entered the self-completion module, and if both Parent A and the child had given consent to the cognitive assessment, the script redirected to the Matrix Reasoning Task.

The Matrix Reasoning Task began with a guided example of how to complete the questions, before the children completed the assessment (see Figure 8.1). It included up to 36 multiple choice questions, asking participants to complete visual puzzles. The questions are designed to progressively increase in difficulty. Once the participant records three incorrect answers consecutively the assessment ends.

The screenshots in Figure 8.1 are from the practice and explain how the cognitive assessment works. (Images provided with permission of the Many Brains Project.)

Figure 4: Screenshots of the Matrix Reasoning Test

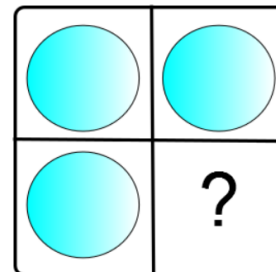
1. TMB Matrix Reasoning



[Click here for instructions](#)

2.

Instructions:

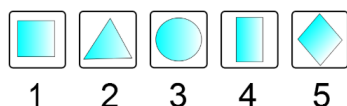
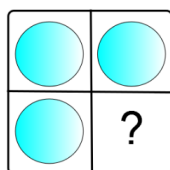


This pattern is missing one image.

[Click here to continue](#)

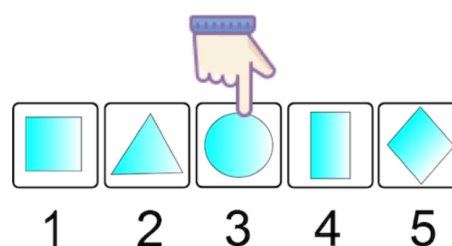
3.

Practice



4.

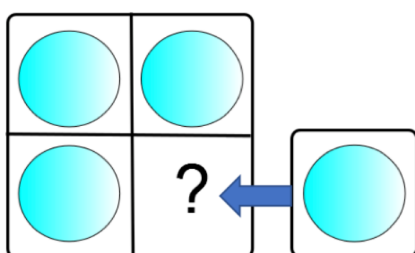
Instructions:



Now let's practice selecting the image that best completes the pattern.

[Click here to continue](#)

5.



The image that best completes the pattern is this one on the right.

[Click here to continue](#)

6.

Excellent!

There will now be up to 36 more image pattern completions.

Let's start!

[Click here to continue](#)

Table 3 presents the content and average completion time for each section of the cohort child face-to-face interview. The average overall length of the interview is presented later in Section 8.5.

Table 3 Content of cohort child face-to-face interview

Module	Topics	Median length
Introduction and consent	- introduction - reasons for refusal - confirming parental consents for cohort child elements if not recorded in Parent A face-to-face interview	25 seconds
Activities	extra-curricular activities/hobbies done regularly	1 minute 43 seconds
School	- perceived difficulty of maths and English homework - disruption in lessons from other children	1 minute 28 seconds

Module	Topics	Median length
Cohort child self-completion	- Matrix Reasoning Task cognitive assessment - feelings about school – belonging, feeling safe, treatment by teachers	7 minutes 23 seconds
Health and well-being (self-completion)	- life satisfaction - mental well-being, assessed using the SDQ - sleep patterns - worries about money	5 minutes 53 seconds
Relationships with peers (self-completion)	- frequency of seeing friends outside school - use of social media	1 minute 15 seconds
Bullying (self-completion)	frequency of being physically bullied, or bullied in other ways	34 seconds
Relationships with family (self-completion)	relationships with Parent A, Parent B, and (if applicable) parent who lives elsewhere	1 minute 29 seconds
Trusted adult (self-completion)	who cohort child considers as a trusted adult to turn to	16 seconds
Smoking (self-completion)	whether cohort child has tried smoking or vaping/e-cigarettes	31 seconds
Child characteristics	email address and mobile phone number	44 seconds
Final consents and voucher administration	- introduction, eligibility and consent (the interviewer was prompted at this stage to discuss this with Parent A as well as the cohort child) to take part in the Internet Use Study (for those selected for this element) - voucher administration	1 minute 23 seconds

Parent A/ Parent B web survey

The parent web surveys were placed with Parent A and (where present in the household) Parent B towards the end of the Parent A face-to-face interview. The interviewers provided the log in details and passcodes to enter the survey.

The web survey included questions on more sensitive topics that parents might prefer to answer privately, rather than tell the interviewer. The Parent A and Parent B web survey content was almost identical, but the Parent B version included a few additional questions (such as data linkage consents) that had been asked of Parent A as part of the face-to-face interview, and the Parent A version included the SDQ.

Table 4 presents the content and average completion time for each section of the Parent A/Parent B web surveys. The average overall length of the interview is presented later in Section 8.5.

Table 4: Content of the Parent A/ Parent B web surveys

Module	Topics	Parent A median length	Parent B median length
Introduction and name check	• introduction to the study • check on cohort child's correct name • confirming participating parent's name	40 seconds	42 seconds
Parent-cohort child relationship	• languages spoken in household • parent-child attachment scale • parent's knowledge of cohort child's life	2 minutes 27 seconds	2 minutes 27 seconds

Module	Topics	Parent A median length	Parent B median length
Parental engagement with schooling	• whether cohort child attends school • awareness of life at school, social life at school • attitudes towards education • helping cohort child with homework • choice of current school • whether cohort child has been tutored outside school, type of tutoring • parent's academic aspirations for the cohort child • cohort child's emotional and behavioural development - SDQ	7 minutes 9 seconds	3 minutes 4 seconds
Perceived impact of COVID-19 on cohort child	• perceived impact of COVID-19 on cohort child's academic progress, well-being, social relationships	1 minute 30 seconds	1 minute 40 seconds
Parent A/ B relationship	• whether partner living in house • whether relationship is happy, frequency of disagreements and arguments, any partner violence	1 minute 1 second	50 seconds
Relationship with a parent outside the household and contact (asked of Parent A)	• whether the parent outside the household has seen cohort child in the past 12 months • frequency of contact between the parent outside the household and cohort child • relationship between Parent A and the parent outside the household • extent of joint decisions about cohort child (Parent A/ the a parent outside the household) • the parent outside the household's financial contributions to cohort child/ household	36 seconds	Not applicable

Module	Topics	Parent A median length	Parent B median length
Parental health and mental health	- health conditions experienced by parent - parent mental health (Patient Health Questionnaire – 8 (PHQ-8))	1 minute 31 seconds	1 minute 45 seconds
Financial security	impacts of financial difficulties on parent/ family life	26 seconds	Not applicable
Adverse events	adverse events experienced in the last 12 months (e.g. losing job, serious illness or deaths in the family)	40 seconds	Not applicable
Socio-demographics	- gender, sex, date of birth, ethnicity, country of birth, religion - employment status, type of employment, supervisory duties - satisfaction with work-life balance - qualifications held	56 seconds	2 minutes 52 seconds
Smoking and drinking	- whether smoke, vape, drink - volume/frequency of alcohol drunk	30 seconds	37 seconds
Parent B Consents	data linkage consents – NHS England, DWP, HMRC	Not applicable	39 seconds
Parent B contact details	email address, mobile phone number, other phone number for Parent B	Not applicable	35 seconds
Voucher, thank you and close	administration of e-voucher (where parent is eligible, and interviewer no longer in home or parent prefers to receive e-voucher)	28 seconds	10 seconds

Instruments and the scripting development process

The instrument specifications were developed in Microsoft Word and agreed by the DfE and the study team.

Ipsos reviewed the finalised specifications and added routing and programming instructions to each question. For example, these instructions specified whether participants could give only one answer or multiple answers to each of the questions, and routing instructions clarified which participants should answer each question (for example, details of how COVID-19 had affected their child's academic progress was only asked if

parents had answered at an earlier question that COVID-19 had affected their academic progress).

The specifications were then programmed to create interviewing scripts. Ipsos checked the scripts matched the finalised specifications, using scenario checks.

The scenario checks involved documenting which questions appeared for each of the major routes through the interview, to ensure that the correct set of questions were asked in each case. For example, for the cohort child face-to-face interview, 14 questions were identified that affected large parts of the subsequent routing (e.g. whether the cohort child normally attended school or was home-schooled, and the parent's relationship to the cohort child); the checks involved running through the script giving each answer at these key routing questions, and documenting the questions asked in the script. These checks helped to ensure that the script matched the specification and identify any instances where the questions asked were illogical based on the scenario being tested. The same types of check were carried out on the other scripts.

The checking was carried out in stages:

- the individual scripts were checked separately, and any errors identified were corrected
- each of the individual scripts was checked again using test sample. The test sample included all the details that would be included in the live sample file but comprised fictional details for the purposes of checking. This stage of checking allowed Ipsos to ensure that any questions or text in the script that incorporated information from the sample file (for example, where the cohort child's name or current school was fed into the script) pulled through correctly
- the scripts were then integrated so that Ipsos could check the interactions across the scripts. For example, there were instances where information collected in the Parent A face-to-face interview fed across to the cohort child face-to-face interview
- In parallel with the script checking, Ipsos developed an 'Electronic Contact Sheet' (ECS) for interviewers to record their progress at each address. A final stage of checking involved ensuring that the scripts interacted as intended with the ECS – for example, when a Parent A face-to-face interview was completed, Ipsos checked that this was correctly marked as a completed Parent A face-to-face interview in the ECS.

A few elements of the study required further checks:

- once the SDQ had been programmed, Ipsos shared screenshots of the interview scripts with Youth In Mind, who license the use of the SDQ, to check the layout and instructions were acceptable within the terms of the licensing. The Youth In Mind representative requested some changes to the layout of the SDQ before signing off this section of the script, including adding the title to the pages using the SDQ

questions ('Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire') and copyright information ('© Robert Goodman, 2005'). The Youth In Mind representative also requested changes in the way that extra text in the script was added before / within the SDQ to remind parents to answer the questions about the cohort child

- the Matrix Reasoning Test: the data for this element is captured by Test My Brain rather than Ipsos' standard data capture environment. As the data was being gathered separately the study team wanted to confirm before fieldwork that the data collection was working as intended. A file of the data generated by Ipsos during the script checking process was sent to UCL/Anna Freud so that they could check the test data looked as expected. Another file was sent during the early weeks of fieldwork to check that the live data from this element of the study worked as intended

A final stage of checking was done once fieldwork had begun. Data were checked to ensure that the expected number of participants were answering each of the questions in the scripts. One error was detected at this point, affecting 2 cases in the sample: carers who did not have parental responsibility for the child (for example, those who were foster carers) were asked to give permission to data linkage, instead of skipping these questions as intended. This was corrected in the scripts, and the 2 carers involved were sent a letter to explain that no administrative records would be linked to their answers.

Ipsos also ran a daily check to identify any interviews where the Matrix Reasoning Test was expected but not received for any reason. The Ipsos field team followed up with each interviewer as soon as possible to take any corrective action or to recover the data file stored on the interviewer's tablet. Data was received for 97.4% of cohort child interviews where the parent consented to the cognitive assessment.

Interview lengths for each data collection instrument

Table 5 presents the interview lengths for each data collection instrument. These are based on all interviews with outliers removed for the Parent A face-to-face interviews (any longer than 50 minutes disregarded in the calculation) and cohort child face-to-face interviews (any longer than 60 minutes disregarded in the calculation). For the Parent web surveys the calculations exclude those completing the survey across multiple sessions.

The observed Parent A face-to-face interview length was very similar to the intended length, with the observed cohort child face-to-face interview length being marginally shorter than the intended length. The Parent A web survey took longer than intended.

Table 5: Interview lengths

	Intended length	Mean	Median
Parent A face-to-face interview	20 minutes	20 minutes 27 seconds	19 minutes 0 seconds
Cohort child face-to-face interview	30 minutes	29 minutes 35 seconds	28 minutes 0 seconds
Parent A web survey	15-20 minutes	23 minutes 10 seconds	21 minutes 0 seconds
Parent B web survey	15-20 minutes	19 minutes 19 seconds	17 minutes 0 seconds

It was expected that the addition of questions asking the cohort child to participate in the Internet Use Study would lengthen the child face-to-face interview. Where the cohort child was selected for the Internet Use Study, whether or not they agreed to participate, the consent process added a mean of 5 minutes and 16 seconds (median 3 minutes and 26 seconds) to the child face-to-face interview length. Where the cohort child was selected for the Internet Use Study and agreed to participate, the consent process added a mean of 7 minutes and 15 seconds (median 4 minutes and 17 seconds) to the child face-to-face interview length.

Data linkage

Growing Up in the 2020s sought consent to link information from administrative records with participants' survey answers recorded in the study datasets. This chapter describes the types of administrative records that may be linked, the consent process, and how parents were given information about data linkage to ensure fully informed consent. Consent rates for this element are given in Chapter 13.

Data linkage overview

Government departments and agencies, such as the NHS and the DWP, routinely collect data about the population. These data are stored in administrative records and used to help plan and provide services.

Data linkage is a common feature of national longitudinal studies, offering significant analytical value by providing a more comprehensive understanding of participant's lives, while reducing data collection burden and enabling those who may be lost to the study by attrition in the future to be followed through administrative records, or new contact details obtained via these records. For Growing Up in the 2020s, the DfE may link information from the following types of administrative records:

- **(parents and cohort children) education records** held by the DfE, including information such as participation and achievement in school and further education as well as details about the school, college, or training centre attended
- **(parents only) health records** held by NHS England, such as admissions or attendances at hospital, visits to a GP or other health professionals, specific conditions and prescriptions or treatment given
- **(parents only) employment and tax records** held by HMRC, including information on employment, Income Tax, Tax Credits, and Child Benefits. The records also hold information on pensions and National Insurance contributions
- **(parents only) employment programmes, benefits and pension schemes** held by the DWP, including participation in employment programmes, benefit receipts, and pension schemes

All parents and cohort children invited to take part in the study received information about data linkage in the leaflet enclosed with the advance mailing. Further information was available on the study website, including Frequently Asked Questions about data linkage. When interviewers made an appointment to interview, they provided a further 'Data Linkage' leaflet which explained the types of records being linked, how data linkage works, and information about data security. The leaflet also explained that the data linkage would occur on an ongoing basis unless participants opted out, and that data would be linked that related to their past, present and future circumstances.

Types of consent

Opt-out consent for education records

As Growing Up in the 2020s is commissioned by DfE to improve understanding of children's experiences and outcomes, linkage to education records held by DfE is treated as a standard part of the study. Parents and cohort children were informed that their education records would be linked to their answers unless they opted out by contacting the study helpline (details were provided in the advice mailing and on the website). The study leaflet sent with the advance mailing and the data linkage leaflet explained this, and the script followed by interviewers made sure this was emphasised during the interviews.

The option to opt out for the cohort child's education records was only offered to Parent A.

The thank you mailing sent after the interview reiterated that education records would be linked and provided instructions for withdrawing consent.

Opt-in consent for health, employment and benefits linkage

For administrative records held outside of DfE (NHS England, HMRC, DWP) parents were asked to give explicit consent. During the Parent A interview, the interviewer provided information about the types of records held by each organisation and asked participants to provide consent to each linkage individually. Showcards with diagrams were used at this point in the interview to illustrate the data linkage process in more detail. For Parent B participants, these consents were asked for in the web survey in the same way, with help screens providing more detailed information about how data linkage works.

Consent for linking cohort children's health and economic records was not sought at Wave 1.

Carers who do not have legal parental responsibility for the cohort child

Only parents or carers with legal parental responsibility for the cohort child were informed that their and the cohort child's education records would be linked unless they opted out of this. If they were looking after young person in residential home, they were not asked to consent to data linkage for their own administrative records.

Fieldwork

The main stage fieldwork took place from January to July 2025. This chapter describes the timings for each tranche of fieldwork, fieldwork management processes, and the processes for contacting and reminding participants from Ipsos head office. It also summarises the contacts made to the study helpline.

Fieldwork timings

To help manage the large number of addresses sampled, and to help interviewers manage their workload, the fieldwork was divided into 3 tranches (see chapter 4). These tranches were each divided into 2 smaller sub-tranches. The fieldwork start dates were staggered so that interviewers could try to start working each address shortly after the advance letters had been sent to participants.

Table 6 presents the dates for the mailing of the advance letters and start of fieldwork for each tranche of sample. The face-to-face fieldwork ended for all tranches on 15 July 2025. The web survey fieldwork continued until 21 July 2025 to allow time for any parents who had taken part in the final days of the face-to-face fieldwork period to participate.

Table 6: Fieldwork processes

Tranche	Number of PSUs	Number of addresses	Advance letters mailed	Fieldwork start date
1A	241	5,763	6 January 2025	13 January 2025
1B	57	1,363	27 January 2025	3 February 2025
2A	264	6,321	24 February 2025	3 March 2025
2B	91	2,177	17 March 2025	20 March 2025
3A	116	2,769	14 April 2025	21 April 2025
3B	57	1,362	24 April 2025	1 May 2025
Total	826	19,755		

Fieldwork management

Through fieldwork, a weekly report was produced to track progress and outcomes in the field on the main study elements. This allowed real-time monitoring of progress for each tranche of the sample, and the FSM and non-FSM sample. Among other metrics the reports tracked:

- fully and partially complete interviews for each element

- the demographic composition of the issued, finished and interviewed main sample; and the composition of the Parent A and Parent B web survey sample
- rates of consent among parents and cohort children for different elements, and completion rates of those elements (including the cognitive assessment, the interview, consenting to contact teacher, data linkage, providing contact details, providing stable contact details, consent to complete the self-completion sections)
- placement rates and completion rates for the parent web survey elements
- outcomes for the Internet Use Study: numbers consenting, eligible, invited, and actively providing data
- interview lengths
- teacher survey invitations and completion rates

The detailed fieldwork reports allowed Ipsos to identify and address other problems affecting data quality in the early stages of fieldwork. This included a number of interviewers who in the first weeks of fieldwork were administering the self-completion section on behalf of some parents. In many cases, interviewers did this at the request of parents who were comfortable to continue with the interviewer administering the questions; these interviewers were reminded that they should only complete on behalf of parents where parents were unable to do it themselves and that these should be exceptional cases (the interviewer completed the self-completion section in 6.5% of Parent A interviews and in 2.2% of cohort child interviews).

Interviewers attended weekly drop-in calls during fieldwork to discuss issues in the field and any practices they had found helpful in securing high participation rates or higher quality interviews. These drop-in sessions highlighted some areas for improvement, including questions that were unclear or not consistently answered, and other aspects that parents found more difficult to understand. Full details of data issues identified and rectified during fieldwork can be found in Chapter 14.

Mailings and reminders during fieldwork

Tables 7 and 8 present the details of a number of processes Ipsos ran throughout the fieldwork period to contact participants and encourage high levels of co-operation and engagement with the study. Ipsos ran most of these processes twice each week so that participants received reminders or incentives shortly after taking part in the study. Copies of the letters, emails and text messages can be found in the appendices, and are described further in Chapter 9.

Table 7: Fieldwork processes for core data collection

Type of contact	Description	How often sent
Advance mailing	Advance letter and leaflet sent by post for each sub-tranche of sample. Interviewers could start fieldwork from 7 days after the letters were mailed	At the start of each sub-tranche of fieldwork (see dates in previous section)
Parent A / Parent B web survey reminder	Email / text message reminder to those where the web survey was placed but not completed. Where the parent gave both an email address and a mobile phone number, they were sent an email reminder followed by a text reminder. Where parents gave only an email address or a mobile phone number, they were sent both reminders in the same mode. Reminders provided the log in details for the survey	First reminder 7-11 days after case finalised by interviewer Second reminder 7 days after first reminder sent
Parent A/ Parent B letter reminder	Final letter reminder to Parent A / Parent B asking them to complete the web survey	Three batches during the fieldwork period
Cohort child/ parent gift card activation	The gift cards given at the end of the face-to-face interviews were activated from Ipsos head office	Processed within 4-5 days of interview completion
Parent e-vouchers	Where parents opted to receive an e-voucher, or completed the web survey after the interviewer visit, e-vouchers were sent by email.	Sent 4-5 days after interview completion
Thank you mailing	Letter for parents and postcard for cohort children to thank them for taking part, remind them of the permissions they had given for data linkage during the interview, and remind them that Ipsos will recontact them about future waves of the study.	Sent after fieldwork concluded

Table 8: Fieldwork processes for Internet Use Study

Type of contact	Description	How often sent
Internet Use Study invitations for parents and cohort children	Invitation to take part in the Internet Use Study sent to both parents and cohort children (where child's contact details given) to provide information about the app, download instructions, and a link to download the app. Sent by both email and text message where both an email address and a mobile phone number were available.	Sent 3-7 days after the interview
Internet Use Study reminder for parents and cohort children	Reminder to take part in the Internet Use Study sent to both parents and cohort children (where children's contact details given) to provide information about the app, download instructions, and a link to download the app. Sent by both email and text message where both an email address and a mobile phone number available.	Sent 7 days after invitation for Internet Use Study
Thank you/ incentive email for Internet Use Study	Thank you email for those who had completed the Internet Use Study, including an e-voucher code for £30.	Sent within 7 days of completing Internet Use Study
Deactivation of Internet Use Study	Where participants had completed the Internet Use Study, Ipsos manually deactivated the app so data collection stopped.	Within 7 days of thank you mailing for Internet Use Study

Cohort child web survey

The study team anticipated that some cohort children would not be comfortable or able to take part in a face-to-face interview but may be willing/able to take part in a web survey. As a result, a web version of the child face-to-face interview was developed. Where parents indicated that the cohort child was unable to take part in a face-to-face interview, they were asked whether their child might be willing or able to take part in a web or telephone survey instead.

The questionnaire specification for the child interviewing script was adapted to include wording that was appropriate for web rather than interviewer administration (for example, interviewer instructions would not appear but instructions for participants would display on

screen instead; question wording would be adjusted to say 'The next set of questions are about ...' rather than 'I now have a set of questions about...' and so on).

The intention was to send letters in the post to parents in households where parents had taken part in the face-to-face interview, but where the cohort child had not taken part. The mailing would include a letter for the parent explaining that we would still like to hear from their child, if they were willing and able to take part in a web version of the interview; there was also a letter for the parent to pass on to the child which explained that they were being invited to take part in a web version of the study, and how to complete the web survey if they wished to do so. The letters explained that taking part in the study was voluntary.

The aim was to send this letter in circumstances where:

- Parents had given consent for the cohort child to take part, but the child had not ultimately done an interview (for example, the child refused, was unavailable, missed the appointment, etc.), and where there was no indication from interviewers or messages to the study helpline that the case should not be issued. (Occasionally a parent contacted the interviewer or helpline after the visit to say they did not want the child to take part/be approached.)
- Parents had indicated that the child was incapable of taking part in a face-to-face interview but may be able to take part in a web survey.

Ipsos identified 120 cases that could be issued to this part of the study. Prior to issuing this part of the study, the study team sought to clarify the methodology for this part of the study with the academic ethics panel that had reviewed the study design. Unfortunately, ethics approval was not granted in time for this element of the study to be administered within the fieldwork period. As a result, this part of the study was not administered. However, the cohort children that would have been approached will be invited to take part in Wave 2 of the study.

Study helpline

Throughout fieldwork a dedicated helpline team managed participant enquiries. All the participant materials and the study website provided a freephone telephone number and email address for the helpline.

The helpline team was given a detailed briefing about the project by Ipsos researchers, and some background information to help them respond to enquiries (for example, the helpline team had a file containing the sample details, dates when incentives were mailed to participants, the e-voucher codes sent to participants, and the log in details for those participating in the Internet Use Study). Where the helpline team could not respond to these enquiries, or where participants expressed a complaint or cause for concern, details were sent to Ipsos researchers.

The helpline team ensured messages were passed to interviewers in a timely manner where necessary.

The survey helpline received 1,679 messages by telephone, email or letter. Table 9 presents an overview of the nature of the messages to the survey helpline. It is important to note that a person sampled might contact the helpline more than once.

Table 9: Nature of messages to the survey helpline

Nature of message	Number of messages
Total	1,679
Office refusal	485
Returned mail or gone-away from issued address	248
New information about cohort household	166
Incentive query	156
Change of appointment	100
Survey query/issue	65
New address or contact details for cohort household	32
Data deletion request	26
Complaint	19
Administrative records consent withdrawal	16
Confirmed address or household details	5
Subject access request	2
Other	359

Complaints and causes for concern

The Anna Freud/UCL/Ipsos consortium agreed with the DfE a policy to deal with complaints or causes for concern voiced by participants.

A ‘complaint’ was defined as any issue/incident raised by a participant which the DfE or study team regarded as either serious, unsatisfactory or unacceptable to the individual complaining which, if left un-addressed and un-resolved, a complaint may result in damage to the study’s reputation as well as that of Ipsos and the DfE.

A ‘cause for concern’ was the term used to describe other ‘issues’ raised by a participant or by another individual - which were not deemed to be a ‘complaint’. However, a ‘cause for concern’ that is left un-addressed and/or ignored may rapidly escalate to become a ‘complaint’.

Where a complaint or cause for concern was received, this was logged by the organisation receiving it, who then sent an acknowledgement to the complainant. Responsibility for an investigation and response was then assigned with the aim of responding within 14 days.

During fieldwork, among the 1,679 messages received by the survey helpline, 7 were complaints, and 4 regarded by Ipsos as causes for concern.

Data deletion

The Anna Freud/UCL/Ipsos consortium agreed with the DfE a policy to deal with data deletion requests from participants.

Ipsos logged details of all data deletion requests, because Ipsos was the only organisation with an identifier enabling Anna Freud/UCL/DfE to delete any data held about that person from their study dataset(s).

During fieldwork 34 data deletion requests were received (by the survey helpline or interviewers) and the requested action was taken.

Safeguarding

The Anna Freud/UCL/Ipsos consortium agreed with the DfE a policy to deal with how safeguarding concerns would be handled. Separate protocols applied to the face-to-face fieldwork and the Internet Use Study.

Interviewers who believed a participant was at serious risk of being harmed and not in a position to act on their own behalf, were asked to call the emergency services (if the risk was immediate) or report the matter to the Ipsos field management and complete an incident report. In the latter case, the Ipsos Public Affairs Disclosure Board decided how best to proceed.

During fieldwork one safeguarding concern was raised by an interviewer and discussed by the Ipsos Public Affairs Disclosure Board.

Teacher survey

This chapter discusses the design of the teacher web survey. It gives an overview of the collection of the teacher details during the household visit, the content of the teacher questionnaire, and the processes used to invite and remind teachers to take part.

Collecting teacher details during the household visit

During the household visit, interviewers asked Parent A and the cohort child whether, if the child attended school, they consented for Ipsos to contact one of the child's teachers to invite them to complete a survey as part of Growing Up in the 2020s. Children were told, 'We ask [teachers] about the school life of the young people who are part of the study. This helps us get a more detailed picture of what things are like for young people, both at home and at school. Nothing that you have said during this interview will be shared with your teacher.'

Where consent was given, the interviewer asked for the name of the child's form tutor. If the child seemed unsure or said they did not want to share the name of their form tutor, the interviewer asked for the name of their English teacher instead. Children were also asked for their consent for Ipsos to contact the Head of Year 8 in case the same teacher was nominated by more children than could reasonably be asked about during the teacher survey. No contact details were collected in the interview; details of how teachers were invited to take part are given in section 11.4.

Interviewers were briefed about how the teacher survey worked and were instructed to reassure parents and children about the confidentiality of answers on all sides – that is, that answers given by parents and children would never be shared with teachers, and that teacher's answers were also private and confidential and would not be shared with parents/children.

Considerations guiding sampling and fieldwork timing

Following the household visit, up to 2 teachers were available to contact for each participating cohort child – that is, the form tutor/English teacher, and/or the Head of Year. There were a few important considerations guiding the sampling approach and timing for the teacher survey.

It was important to maximise the number of children about whom data were collected, while capping the number of children that any single teacher was asked about at 2, to avoid the survey becoming excessively long. As the sample was clustered in postcode sectors, which contain on average around 3,000 addresses, it was possible that some sampled children attended the same school and had the same form tutor/English teacher.

The estimated survey length suggested that teachers would need around 15 minutes to complete the survey for one child, and around 20 minutes to complete the survey for 2 children.

When the limit of 2 children was reached for the form tutor, the named Head of Year (where available) was selected, and allocated to up to 2 children.

The sampling process selected the first 2 child interviews completed where a teacher had been nominated, and those were then the children that the teacher was asked about. The selection prioritised those children who had not agreed for us to contact the Head of Year. This prioritisation maximised the number of children teachers were asked about – for example, if 4 children nominated the same form tutor, and only 2 gave permission to contact the Head of Year, the prioritisation ensured a teacher was invited to provide information about all 4 children – the Head of Year would be asked about the 2 children giving permission for Ipsos to contact them, and the form tutor would be asked about the other 2 children.

As the first sample of teachers was issued when the parent/child face-to-face fieldwork was still ongoing, only teachers that had already been nominated twice were issued in May 2025. To reduce the burden on teachers, each teacher was invited to take part in the study only once so where they were asked about 2 children, this would always happen within the same survey. This meant that any teachers that had been nominated only once by April 2025 were not eligible for the first sample of teachers, as there was a chance they would be nominated again in the remaining face-to-face fieldwork period.

The face-to-face fieldwork – during which the teacher's names were collected – ran until the end of the academic year, finishing in July 2025. The preference was to ask teachers to take part in the same (2024 to 2025) academic year that children were interviewed in, if possible. There was therefore a trade-off between the length of the teacher fieldwork period and the number of nominated teachers that could be approached in the time available in the 2024 to 2025 academic year. Issuing cases as late as possible would ensure that a higher proportion of nominated teachers could be invited to complete the survey in the 2024 to 2025 academic year, but issuing the cases later would shorten the length of time that these teachers had to complete the survey and reduce the scope for additional reminders to improve the response rate.

The second sample of teachers was issued for fieldwork on 2 July 2025, allowing around 2 to 3 weeks of teacher fieldwork before the end of the academic year. A final reminder for these teachers was issued in September 2025, at the start of the following academic year, to allow those who had not had the chance to participate at the end of the previous year to take part. A further reminder was issued in October 2025.

As a large number of face-to-face interviews with parents/children took place in June and July 2025 and, therefore, too late for nominated teachers to be invited to take part, a third sample of teachers was issued in September 2025. The third sample of teachers was

issued for fieldwork on 19 September 2025 with 2 reminders issued in October 2025. The final reminder for the third sample of teachers notified teachers of the closing date of the survey of 31 October 2025.

Teacher survey sampling

The process for sampling teachers was based on case-level data (i.e. one row per participating child/parent) and entailed:

- Creating a derived school variable to ensure the sample was based on the school the cohort child told us they currently attended (although school information was available on the NPD sample, a small number of children had moved schools since the sample was drawn and provided updated information during their interview).
- Sampling teachers within each school:
 - Ipsos researchers inspected the teacher's title and surname (given by the cohort child during their interview) manually to correct obvious errors and typos
 - A variable was calculated to count the number of times each teacher was nominated
 - Another variable counted the number of times the Head of Year had been nominated.
 - For the first sample of teachers, only teachers nominated by 2 or more children were issued. Heads of Year were not issued at this stage.
 - The remaining teachers and Heads of Year were included in the second and third samples of teachers, but were limited to being asked about 2 pupils. Teachers already issued in previous tranches were excluded.

Table 10 presents for each sample of teachers, how many cohort children teachers were asked about.

Table 10: Teacher sample design (all cases issued at each stage of fieldwork)

	First sample of teachers	Second sample of teachers	Third sample of teachers	Total
Asked about 1 child	-	4,056	751	4,807
Asked about 2 children	439	278	55	772
Total number of teachers invited	439	4,334	806	5,579

Invitation process

Prior to the launch of the teacher survey, the DfE sent a letter to all headteachers of schools attended by selected children for Growing Up in the 2020s, explaining that individual teachers in their school may be invited to take part in the teacher survey in spring/summer 2025.

Teachers were invited to take part in the survey in a letter sent by post. Letters were addressed to the nominated teachers using the information given by cohort child in their interview and the school address information from the NPD. One to two weeks later a reminder email was sent to the school office, with the subject making it clear it was 'For the attention of ...' (i.e. with the teacher named in the subject line). The email included a link for teachers to click to complete the survey. For the second sample of teachers, in addition a letter reminder was issued on 19 September 2025, and a further reminder email in October 2025. For the third sample of teachers, a second reminder email was issued.

The invitation letter and email were based on those used in the pilot, but the study team shortened the text to help ensure the letters were accessible for busy teachers. The letter and emails did not include the names of the children that had nominated teachers, as the study team considered this could introduce bias into the data if teachers were more inclined to participate if they had a favourable view of the child. Teachers would see the names of the children they were being asked about when they started the survey.

Content of the teacher questionnaire

Teachers were asked to answer the survey questions based on their knowledge of how the cohort child was getting on at school generally, and not just their own experiences of teaching them. The survey introduction stressed that teachers' answers would remain confidential and would not be shared with children/parents.

In some instances, the same teacher was nominated by more than one child. In these cases, the survey asked the teacher to comment on 2 cohort children. The main sections of the survey were asked twice in these instances, once for each child, but the final sections of the survey about school policies on teacher feedback, and positive recognition strategies, were asked only once.

Table 11 presents the content and average completion time for each section of the teacher web survey. The teacher survey took a mean of 13 minutes and 31 seconds (compared to an expected 15 minutes) and a median of 12 minutes to complete. The calculations exclude those completing the survey across multiple sessions.

Table 11: Content of the teacher web survey

Module	Topics	Median length
Introduction, eligibility, guidance	• introduction to study • explanation of how they were nominated for the teacher survey, names of children nominating them • check on whether nominated teacher is eligible to take part • guidance on answering questions	37 seconds
Engagement and cohort child's attainment and potential	• perception of cohort child's attitude to school and learning • perception of cohort child's relationship with peers • view of cohort child's overall academic ability	1 minute 42 seconds
Cohort child's attendance	• unauthorised lateness and absences • reasons for absence	37 seconds
Cohort child's health and well-being	• mental and emotional health measured through the SDQ	1 minute 42 seconds
Teacher/cohort child relationship	• how well the teacher knows the cohort child and how confident they are in the accuracy of the answers they have given	45 seconds
Teacher feedback	• how often teachers provide formal/informal feedback to children and parents	49 seconds
Positive recognition	• types of rewards and punishments used by the school • school mobile phone policy	2 minutes 34 seconds
Teacher belonging	• teacher sense of belonging to the school	34 seconds

How the teacher script worked

The teacher web survey included 2 types of questions: questions about individual children and questions about school policies.

For the questions about individual children, each teacher was asked to comment about up to 2 children (where 2 cohort children had nominated the same teacher). The teacher was asked the full set of questions about the first child, then asked the same questions again about the second child. The script made clear which child was being asked about at each point. Teachers who did not feel they could answer about one child could indicate that they were unable to and skip past that section.

The school-level questions were asked once of each teacher, as they asked about school policies which would apply for all children at that school.

Teacher survey fieldwork

The teacher fieldwork was conducted from May to October 2025 in three stages of fieldwork. Table 12 presents an overview of teacher fieldwork. The closing date for the survey for all 3 samples was 31 October 2025.

Table 12: Overview of teacher fieldwork

Fieldwork phase	Date of survey invitations being mailed	Number of teachers issued
First sample of teachers	15 May 2025	439
Second sample of teachers	2 July 2025	4,334
Third sample of teachers	19 September 2025	806

Table 13 presents an overview of teacher fieldwork processes.

Table 13: Teacher survey fieldwork processes

Type of contact	Description	How often sent
Teacher invitation letter	Invitation to take part in the Teacher Survey element of the study sent directly to named teachers nominated by cohort children. Letters included a link to access the web survey and a unique log in.	Tranche 1: 15 May 2025 Tranche 2: 2 July 2025 (and a reminder letter on 19 September 2025) Tranche 3: 19 September 2025
Teacher reminder email	Reminder email sent to school office (with a request to forward to the named teacher). Email included the log in details for teachers to access the survey.	Tranche 1: 9 June 2025 Tranche 2: 14 July 2025 Tranche 3: 6 October 2025
Teacher final reminder email	Final reminder email sent to school office (with a request to forward to the named teacher). Email included the log in details for teachers to access the survey.	Tranche 2: 6 October 2025 Tranche 3: 15 October 2025

The timing of fieldwork for the teacher survey depended on the progress of the face-to-face fieldwork, which generated the sample for the teacher survey. As a result, there was a relatively short time for survey fieldwork for some teachers sampled prior to the 2025 summer holidays, and for other teachers there was no time for them to be invited to complete the survey prior to the holidays. Accordingly, a final phase of fieldwork with teachers took place in September to October 2025. The teacher questions were adapted slightly to make sure that teachers were answering about the child's time at school in the 2024 to 2025 academic year. This was straightforward and simply entailed changing the preambles to questions, or the introductions to the sections of the survey.

Internet Use Study

This chapter discusses the design of the Internet Use Study. It gives an overview of the development and ethical approval, fieldwork protocols, interviewer training, fieldwork and implementation.

Overview of the Internet Use Study

The internet and social media play an increasingly important part of teenagers' lives and potentially have a significant influence on their outcomes. However, accurately measuring online behaviour presents a major challenge. Much of the existing research on the impacts of social media use on teenagers' outcomes relies on self-reported behaviour. While we may assume that those reporting heavy use are in fact the heavy users, we do not know that this is the case, and we also do not know if those reporting declines in life satisfaction or other adverse outcomes are using social media in a different way to those who do not report such impacts. It is widely agreed that research in this area should embrace objective measures of internet use to provide a more nuanced understanding of digital life (see Hamilton et al. 2022 for a review).

To address this gap, at Wave 1 Ipsos carried out an Internet Use Study to collect internet use data. The intention was to simultaneously evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of the methodology while generating usable data to examine the correspondence between self-reported internet use and more objective app tracking, as well as associations with a range of other factors. After consent was secured from Parent A and cohort children, 469 cohort children participated in the study. These participants downloaded the Ipsos Medi-aLink App on their mobile phone and were asked to leave it running for a period of 28 days, in return for a £30 e-voucher. The app has been used in previous studies by Ipsos for this purpose and collected data on:

- websites and/or apps visited including website or app name
- time/date/duration of visit to the website or app
- frequency of visits to the websites and/or apps

To enable data analysis, Ipsos created variables about the time each participant spent on certain types of websites or apps, smartphone use across days and times, which can then be linked to the survey data collected as part of the main study.

This Internet Use Study had two aims.

Aim 1: feasibility and engagement

The Internet Use Study aimed to test how to effectively recruit and retain children without compromising engagement with the other elements of the study. The broader aim was to test whether this technology could be rolled out more widely on later waves of the study.

Specifically, this Internet Use Study aimed to assess:

- how to collect internet use data ethically, including processes, information and protections to ensure informed consent
- how many parents and children would consent to this sort of data collection. Of those who consented, how many would go on to download the app. Of those who downloaded the app, how many would go on to leave the app running for the 28-day period requested
- what reasons are given for refusing to consent to this part of the study
- what other issues arise when running this type of study with our cohort population, and what processes are needed to run the study effectively

Aim 2: analytical potential

The Internet Use study aimed to generate a dataset of approximately 400 participants to explore the relationship between internet use and education, health and well-being metrics collected in the main study, answering questions such as:

- does self-reported social media use correlate with app-reported social media use?
- are there correlations between app-reported social media use and well-being?
- does time of day of internet use impact well-being or mental health?
- is heavy usage of social media sites associated with poor mental health?
- do children make use of AI tools?

Internet Use Study development and ethical approval

Informed consent

To ensure that participation in the main study remained the priority, the Internet Use Study was introduced at the end of the Wave 1 household visit, after completion of the parent and child face-to-face interviews. Interviewers used an information leaflet to explain the Internet Use Study's purpose and participation requirements. Parents received a paper copy of the Privacy Notice (specific to the Internet Use Study) and Terms and Conditions of using the app. These documents outlined how data would be stored, shared, and used, and explained the safeguarding measures that would be in place.

Interviewers emphasised:

- participation was voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any time without giving a reason

- cohort children could participate in the main study without taking part in the Internet Use Study
- a £30 incentive would be provided if the app remained installed for 28 days

The consent process involved the interviewer using the study materials outlined above to obtain verbal consent from both Parent A and the cohort child, recorded electronically within the interview script. Interviewers emphasised that even if a parent consented, the final decision to participate rested with the child. A minimum 48-hour cooling-off period was observed before Ipsos sent a link (via text message or email) to download the app.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding approach for the Internet Use Study was consistent with that of the Growing Up in the 2020s study, operating under a presumption of confidentiality except in exceptional cases.

The Anna Freud/UCL/Ipsos consortium agreed with the DfE a policy to deal with how safeguarding concerns on the Internet Use Study would be handled. If the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) visited gave rise to a cause for concern that serious harm could be caused to the participant or someone else, the research team would complete an incident report and submit it to the Ipsos Public Affairs Disclosure Board who would decide how best to proceed.

During Internet Use Study fieldwork, Ipsos researchers did not identify any causes for concern.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval for the Internet Use study was granted separately by University College London's Research Ethics Committee (reference number 28343/002).

Fieldwork protocols

Table 14 presents the steps a participating child eligible for the Internet Use Study, had to take for the child to begin participation in the study:

Table 14: Internet Use Study participation steps

Step number	Description of participation step
1	Interviewer secures consent from Parent A
2	Interviewer secures consent from cohort child
3	Parent A confirms cohort child has mobile phone which only they use
4	Parent A confirms they have read terms and conditions of participation
5	Parent A confirms their decision about their child's participation
6	Cohort child confirms they have read study leaflet and decides to participate
7	Cohort child confirms they have a mobile phone that only they used (i.e. was not shared with other members of the household) using Android or Apple operating system
8	Cooling off period
9	Parent A and cohort child receives email and/or text message informing them how to install the Ipsos MediaLink App app
10	Parent A and cohort child receives reminder email and/or text message informing them how to install the Ipsos MediaLink App app

During the life of the Internet Use Study, Ipsos monitored calls and messages to the Growing Up in the 2020s helpline. A high volume of messages concerned the Internet Use Study, including problems logging into the app, queries about whether the app was working as intended, and queries about what date participants could deactivate the app and receive their voucher for taking part. Some changes were made to the invitation and reminder emails in response to these messages, to make it easier for participants to download the app.

At the end of the 28-day period, participants were sent an email which notified them that they had completed the study and included their £30 e-voucher. Ipsos also deactivated each of the links for those who had completed the study so no further data was collected from their phone.

Interviewer training

Interviewers were given a focused one-hour training session about the Internet Use Study, and a set of written instructions covering this element. The training explained the protocols for administering the Internet Use Study in the household, as well as background information about the app we were asking participants to use, the types of data that would and would not be collected through the app, and offered reassurances to participants about

this element of the study. Interviewers were trained not to put parents and children under pressure to take part in this element of the study, as keeping families engaged in the main study remained a priority.

The training emphasised to interviewers:

- the interest from policy-makers in this novel type of data
- the voluntary nature of the Internet Use Study
- to prioritise the main study and not to continue persuading children or parents to take part if they had reservations about participation
- their role in administration was to follow the interviewing script which prompted them to introduce the Internet Use Study at the end of the face-to-face interview, then hand out the information leaflets, and record the outcome (consent or refusal)
- how Ipsos would send information to children/parents and what taking part would involve for participants
- information about data privacy, including the fact that the Ipsos MediaLink App does not collect sensitive information such as typed content on websites, email/text message content, or phone call recordings
- information about how the information will be used: interviewers were told that Ipsos would look at the types of websites/apps children visit and how much time they spend on them across the 400 or so children taking part.

Internet Use Study fieldwork

The Internet Use Study was not launched until the Tranche 2 sample was issued for fieldwork. As there was considerable uncertainty about how this part of the study would work – including how acceptable parents and cohort children would find the request to take part in the Internet Use Study, how many would be willing to take part, and the potential impact on interview length and fieldwork progress – a relatively small sample was issued in Tranche 2.

In Tranche 2, 456 children were randomly selected for the Internet Use study from the issued sample of 8,520 cohort children. During Tranche 2, a consent rate of approximately 50 per cent was observed for the Internet Use Study at an early stage among those who had agreed to take part in Growing Up in the 2020s, with around 40 per cent of those who consented to the Internet Use Study downloading the app and sending data to Ipsos. Interviewer feedback raised no concerns that the invitation to join the Internet Use Study was negatively affecting engagement with the main study. Based on these findings, for Tranche 3 sample – the final phase of Wave 1 fieldwork – all 4,131 sampled children were selected for the Internet Use Study in an attempt to recruit around 400 cohort children in total to take part in this element.

The detailed breakdown of response to the Internet Use Study is given in Chapter 13.

Implementation of the Internet Use Study

As indicated earlier, there were 2 aims for the Internet Use Study; the first was to assess the feasibility of using a novel passive smartphone tracking approach with adolescents and to identify its strengths and limitations within the context of a longitudinal cohort study; the second aim was to provide preliminary insights into patterns of adolescents' smartphone internet use, including how use varies across demographic groups, times of day, days of the week, and different categories of online activity, as well as how it relates to mental health and wellbeing, educational engagement, and sleep. These aims are explored in depth in the first themed report on smartphone internet use.

UCL's academic ethics review of the Internet Use Study protocols highlighted some important considerations for how it was implemented. This included the introduction of a 'cooling-off' period so that participants could change their minds after giving the initial consent to interviewers during the household visit, and an explanation of safeguarding measures.

The information leaflet used during the household visit was adapted from that used by a similar previous study. If the Internet Use Study is rolled out in future Waves of Growing Up in the 2020s, Ipsos recommend reviewing the leaflet and the privacy notice information given to parents. In particular, it would be useful to consider whether any of the reasons for refusing to consent to the Internet Use Study could be addressed in the leaflet and/or interviewer training. It would also be useful to test the leaflets with the Anna Freud Young Person Advisory Group for Growing Up in the 2020s, to gain more insight into how best to explain and reassure participants about how this element will work.

A large volume of queries came to the study helpline about the app, mostly about how to install it, whether it was installed properly and when the voucher would be received. To reduce the considerable amount of time spent in responding to these queries individually, Ipsos may suggest introducing an additional process during fieldwork to notify users after around 48 hours of using the app to confirm that it is working as intended, and to notify them about when their 28-day period ends and how/when their voucher will be sent.

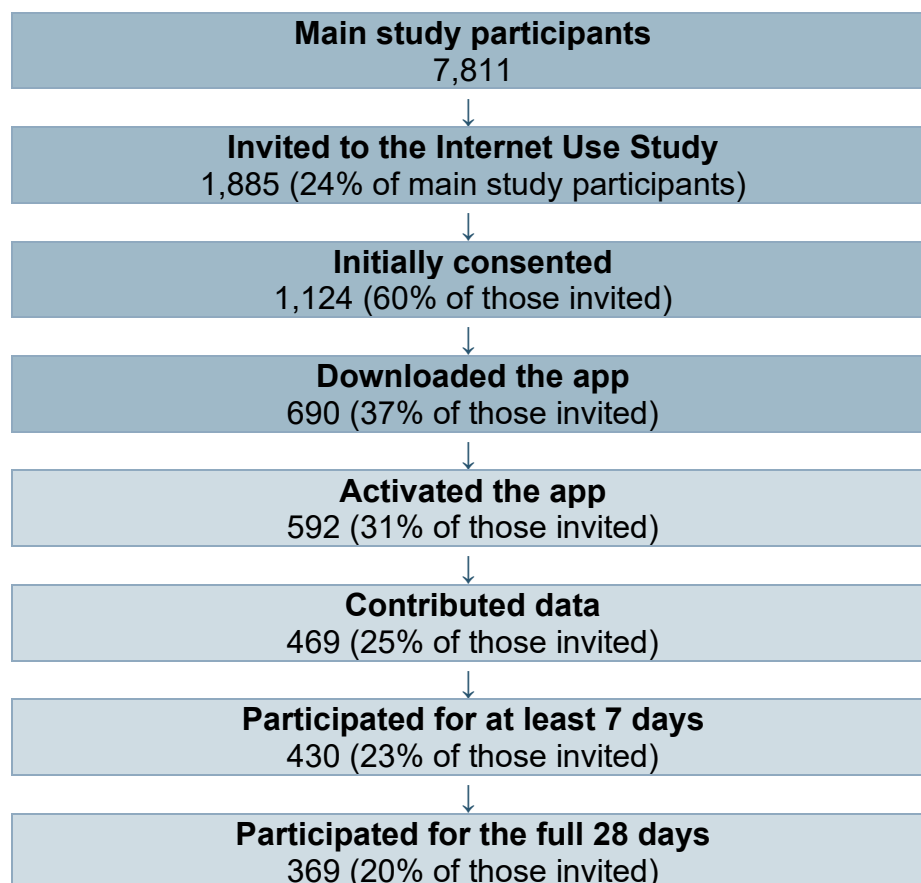
Full details of response to the Internet Use Study are given in Chapter 13. Of the 4,587 cohort children sampled for the study, 469 participated, of whom 369 did so for the full 28 days. The Internet Use Study demonstrated it was feasible to collect internet use data from cohort children with informed consent in an ethical manner, without compromising engagement with the other elements of the study. It remains to be seen whether response among participants will be lower at future Waves of the study than it is for those not recruited into the Internet Use Study; however, there is no reason to believe this will be the case.

The 369 cohort children participating represented a response rate of 8% to the study. This is a low response rate and it is likely therefore that the sample of participants is biased towards those who believe their internet use would not be seen as problematic by others, and to those highly engaged with the study (who, in turn, are likely to be highly engaged with their school work).

Over one in five (21%) participated in the Internet Use Study but did not provide data for 28 days, either out of choice or because they had failed to configure their smartphone correctly after reading the instructions. While this drop-out rate to the study might be reduced by reminders, how appropriate this would be would need careful ethical review.

Figure 12.1 gives an overview of the participant flow into the Internet Use study.

Figure 5: Participant flow into the Internet Use Study



Fieldwork outcomes and response

This chapter presents the outcomes for each of the study elements, and the response rate to the study. Please refer to Chapter 5 for a full explanation of the eligibility of the respondents for the different elements of data collection.

Overview of achieved sample

The issued sample was 19,789. The headline response rate for Wave 1 of the study is based on both Parent A and the cohort child taking part in a face-to-face interview – we refer to this as a ‘paired interview’. Both Parent A and the child had to complete the full face-to-face interview to qualify as a productive case.

During fieldwork 0.5% of cases in the issued sample were identified as ineligible, resulting in an eligible sample of 19,691. Among eligible cases, a Parent A face-to-face interview was completed in 41.6% of cases, and a paired interview was completed in 39.7% of cases. Overall, 34.0% of households resulted in a refusal, 18.5% of households could not be contacted and 1.3% did not take part for some other reason.

Where a Parent A interview was completed, the selected child was interviewed in 95.3% of cases. In some instances, parents reported that their child was incapable of taking part in an interview due to special educational needs or disabilities. Among cases where selected children were able to take part, a cohort child interview was completed in 96.6% of cases.

Where a selected child took part in an interview, and their parent consented for them to take part in the cognitive task, cognitive assessment data was collected in 97.2% of cases.

Among those Parent A participants that took part in the face-to-face interview, 84.7% also completed the web survey. The Parent A web survey response rate did not vary by FSM status.

In 72.7% of households where a Parent A face-to-face interview was complete, a Parent B was identified (including 51.9% of FSM and 89.9% of non-FSM households). Among households where a Parent B had been identified, 40.5% of parents completed the Parent B web survey.

Response during the household visit

Table 15 presents the household fieldwork outcomes for Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. The Parent A response rate (of eligible sample) was lower (38.3%) in FSM households than non-FSM households (44.9%). The paired Parent A/child response rate (of eligible sample) was also lower in FSM households (36.1%) than non-FSM households (43.3%). Refusal rates were similar for FSM and non-FSM households, but the non-contact rate was higher for FSM households (21.1%) than non-FSM households (15.9%).

Table 15: Household fieldwork outcomes

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sampled	19,789		9,860		9,929	
Data deletions	34	0.2	12	0.1	22	0.2
Issued	19,755		9,848		9,907	
Ineligible (all categories inc. opt outs)						
Cohort member deceased	22	0.1	16	0.2	6	0.1
Cohort member has moved abroad	56	0.3	23	0.2	33	0.3
Named child(ren) not of correct age	20	0.1	10	0.1	10	0.1
Duplicate address	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
All ineligible cases	98	0.5	49	0.5	49	0.5
Eligible (all categories)						
Number of completed Parent A interviews	8,195	41.4	3,758	38.1	4,437	44.7
Office refusals	458	2.3	190	1.9	268	2.7
Refusals	6,735	34.0	3,419	34.7	3,316	33.4
Other non-response (eligible but recorded as non-response (e.g. primary caregiver unable to participate due to illness/language barrier)	250	1.3	154	1.6	96	1.0
Non-contact after 6+ calls (e.g. confirmed mover)	3,657	18.5	2,077	21.1	1,580	15.9
Address vacant, demolished/derelict, non-residential, holiday home	362	1.8	201	2.0	161	1.6
All eligible cases	19,691	99.5	9,811	99.5	9,880	99.5
Parent A response rate (of eligible sample)		41.6		38.3		44.9

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
Number of completed child interviews	7,811		3,537		4,274	
Paired Parent A/ child response rate (of eligible sample)		39.7		36.1		43.3

Table 16 presents the Parent A data linkage consent rates collected face-to-face in Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. Very few parents opted out of linkage of their National Pupil Database records to the study data (0.1%). Over half of Parent A participants consented to the other three data linkages, these being health records (72.4% consented), DWP records (67.6% consented), and HMRC records (66.6% consented). Consent rates to these records was around 6 percentage points higher in non-FSM households than FSM households.

Table 16: Parent A data linkage consent rates

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent A face-to-face interview completed	8,195		3,758		4,437	
Education records						
Opt-out of education data linkage	11	0.1	2	0.1	9	0.2
Consent to education data linkage	8,184	99.9	3,756	99.9	4,428	99.8
Health records						
Consent during interview to health linkage	5,942	72.5	2,610	69.5	3,332	75.1
Withdrew consent to health linkage after interview	10	0.1	2	0.1	8	0.2
Adjusted consent rate to health data linkage (all those currently consenting)	5,932	72.4	2,608	69.4	3,324	74.9
DWP records						
Consent during interview to DWP linkage	5,549	67.7	2,410	64.1	3,139	70.7
Withdrew consent to DWP linkage after interview	11	0.1	2	0.1	9	0.2
Adjusted consent rate to DWP data linkage (all those currently consenting)	5,538	67.6	2,408	64.1	3,130	70.5
HMRC records						
Consent during interview to HMRC linkage	5,469	66.7	2,401	63.9	3,068	69.1
Withdrew consent to HMRC linkage after interview	10	0.1	2	0.1	8	0.2
Adjusted consent rate to HMRC data linkage (all those currently consenting)	5,459	66.6	2,399	63.8	3,060	69.0

Table 17 presents the cohort child face-to-face interview response for Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. The response rates to the child interview (where a Parent A interview was completed) was slightly lower in FSM households (94.1%) than non-FSM households (96.3%).

Table 17: Cohort child face-to-face interview response

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent A face-to-face interview completed	8,195		3,758		4,437	
Parent A did not consent for child to be interviewed	99	1.2	57	1.5	42	0.9
Parent did not want child to take part	19	0.2	8	0.2	11	0.2
Child not capable of taking part due to SEN or disability/ies	44	0.5	27	0.7	17	0.4
Child unable to take part for other reason	36	0.4	22	0.6	14	0.3
Parent A consented for child to be interviewed	8,096	98.8	3,701	98.5	4,395	99.1
Child interviewed	7,811	95.3	3,537	94.1	4,274	96.3

Table 18 presents the reasons for cohort child non-response following the Parent A face-to-face interview at Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. The main reason was the child refusing before the interview (64.2%), followed by other non-response (13.1%), refusal by the child during the interview (11.9%) and no contact with the child after the Parent A interview (10.5%)

Table 18: Reasons for child non-response (after Parent A interview)

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent A consented for child to be interviewed	8,096		3,701		4,395	
No child interview						
No contact after Parent A interview	30	10.5	19	11.6	11	9.1
Refusal by child before interview	183	64.2	100	61.0	83	68.6
Refusal by child during interview	34	11.9	18	11.0	16	13.2
Other reason	38	13.3	27	16.5	11	9.1
Child interviewed	7,811		3,537		4,274	

Table 19 presents the cohort child cognitive assessment outcomes at Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. Where the child face-to-face interview as completed, very few parents or children refused to complete the cognitive assessment (less than 1%). Overall cognitive assessment data was not received for 2.2% of the cohort child interviews.

Table 19: Cohort child cognitive assessment outcomes

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Child face-to-face interview completed	7,811		3,537		4,274	
Parent A did not consent for child to complete cognitive assessment	13	0.2	10	0.3	3	0.1
Parent A reported that child not capable of completing the cognitive assessment	9	0.1	3	0.1	6	0.1
Parent A consented for child to complete cognitive assessment	7,789	99.7	3,524	99.6	4,265	99.8
Child refused cognitive assessment	27	0.3	21	0.6	6	0.1
Cognitive data not received	171	2.2	100	2.8	30	0.7
Cognitive assessment data received	7,591	97.2	3,403	96.2	4,188	98.0

Table 20 presents the cohort child data linkage opt out rates in Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. Very few parents opted out of linking their child's National Pupil Database records to the study data (0.1%).

Table 20: Cohort child data linkage opt out rates

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cohort child face-to-face interview completed	7,811		3,537		4,274	
Education records						
Opt-out of education data linkage	11	0.1	2	0.1	9	0.2
Consent to education data linkage	7,800	99.9	3,535	99.9	4,265	99.8

Response to the parent web surveys

Table 21 presents the Parent A web survey response rate at Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. Interviewer successfully placed the Parent A web survey in 97.7% of Parent A face-to-face interviews, with little difference between FSM and non-FSM households. Of the completed Parent A face-to-face interviews, 84.1% resulted in a fully completed Parent A web survey, with a further 4.6% partially completed. There was little difference in response rates observed between FSM and non-FSM households.

Table 21: Parent A web survey response rate

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent A face-to-face interview completed	8,195		3,758		4,437	
Parent A web survey placed	8,007	97.7	3,663	97.5	4,344	97.9
Parent A web survey fully completed	6,893	84.1	3,185	84.8	3,708	83.6
Parent A web survey partially completed	373	4.6	178	4.7	195	4.4

Table 22 presents the Parent B identification rate at Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. A Parent B was identified in 72.7% of households overall. A Parent B was identified in 51.9% of FSM households and 89.9% of non-FSM households.

Table 22: Parent B identification rate

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent A face-to-face interview completed	8,195		3, 758		4, 437	
Parent B identified in household	5,675	72.7	1,834	51.9	3,841	89.9

Table 23 presents the Parent B web survey response rate, calculated as a percentage of the Parent B potential respondents identified by interviewers. Interviewers successfully placed the Parent B web survey in 84.0% of households where a Parent B was identified. They were more successfully in doing so in non-FSM households (87.8%) than in FSM

households (76.2%). Of the Parent B web surveys placed, 40.5% were fully completed and 2.6% partially completed. In FSM households 29.6% of Parent B web surveys placed were fully completed, compared with 45.7% in non-FSM households.

Table 23: Parent B web survey response rate

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent B identified in household	5,675		1,834		3,841	
Parent B web survey placed	4,768	84.0	1,397	76.2	3,371	87.8
Parent B web survey fully completed	2,300	40.5	543	29.6	1,757	45.7
Parent B web survey partially completed	148	2.6	58	3.2	90	2.3

Table 24 presents the Parent B data linkage consent rates collected in the web interview in Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. Very few parents opted out of linkage of their National Pupil Database records to the study data (0.3%). Over half of Parent B participants consented to the other three data linkages, these being health records (72.2% consented), DWP records (65.4% consented), and HMRC records (63.7% consented). These consent rates were very similar to those observed in the Parent A face-to-face interviews. The difference in consent rates between FSM households and non-FSM households was higher than that observed in the Parent A face-to-face interviews.

Table 24: Parent B data linkage consent rates

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent B web survey completed	2,300		543		1,757	
Education records						
Opt-out of education data linkage	6	0.3	2	0.4	4	0.2
Consent to education data linkage	2,293	99.7	546	99.6	1,747	99.8
Health records						
Consent during interview to health linkage	1,667	72.5	365	67.2	1,302	74.1
Withdrew consent to health linkage after interview	6	0.3	2	0.4	4	0.2
Adjusted consent rate to health data linkage (all those currently consenting)	1,661	72.2	363	66.9	1,298	73.9
DWP records						
Consent during interview to DWP linkage	1,505	65.4	310	57.1	1,195	68.0
Withdrew consent to DWP linkage after interview	6	0.3	2	0.4	4	0.2
Adjusted consent rate to DWP data linkage (all those currently consenting)	1,499	65.2	308	56.7	1,191	67.8
HMRC records						
Consent during interview to HMRC linkage	1,464	63.7	296	54.5	1,168	66.5
Withdrew consent to HMRC linkage after interview	63	0.3	2	0.4	4	0.2
Adjusted consent rate to HMRC data linkage (all those currently consenting)	1,458	63.4	294	54.1	1,164	66.2

Table 25 presents the break-off rates for the Parent web surveys, by Parent A and Parent B. As is normally observed in web surveys the highest proportion of break-offs was observed at the introduction, and in the first substantive module. Break-offs occurred in almost every module for both Parent A and Parent B web surveys.

Table 25: Break-off rates for parent web surveys

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Break-offs	521		373		148	
Introduction	183	35	119	32	64	43
Parent-young person relationship	75	14	49	13	26	18
Parental engagement with schooling	29	6	19	5	10	7
Young person's social, emotional and behavioural development	38	7	38	10	0	0
Perceived impact of Covid on study young person	22	4	9	2	13	9
Parent A/B relationship	15	3	10	3	5	3
Parent O relationship and contact (asked of Parent A only)	21	4	21	6	0	0
Parent health and mental health	43	8	34	9	9	6
Financial security (asked of Parent A only)	11	2	11	3	0	0
Adverse events (asked of Parent A only)	4	1	4	1	0	0
Socio-demographics	27	5	17	5	10	7
Smoking and drinking	9	2	8	2	1	1
Consents (asked of Parent B only)	4	1	0	0	4	3
Parent B and Parent O contact details (asked of Parent B only)	5	1	0	0	5	3
Voucher, thank you and close	35	7	34	9	1	1

Collection of contact details to facilitate future Waves of the survey

Table 26 presents the contact details collection rates in Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. Around one in six parents (17.8%) provided stable contact details. In FSM households 18.7% provided stable contact details, compared with 17.0% in non-FSM households. Almost all parents agreed to the interviewer collecting the contact details of their child.

Two-thirds of cohort children provided contact details (66.2%). In FSM households 63.3% provided contact details, compared with 68.6% in non-FSM households.

Table 26: Collection of contact details

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parent A face-to-face interview completed	8,195		3,758		4,437	
Stable contacts provided	1,457	17.8	704	18.7	753	17.0
Parent A consented to collect child contact details	7,890	96.3	3,604	95.9	4,286	96.6
Cohort child face-to-face interview completed	7,811		3,537		4,274	
Contact details collected	5,172	66.2	2,239	63.3	2,933	68.6

Teacher survey response

Table 27 presents the willingness of parents and cohort children to provide teacher name for the Wave 1 teacher survey, by FSM-eligibility. Almost all parents (98.4%) agreed interviewers could ask their child for their teacher's name. More than four in five cohort children agreed to give their teacher's name (84.6%) and 82.7 per cent did so. In addition, around three-quarters (74.8%) agreed Ipsos could contact their Head of Year if Ipsos was unable to contact their teacher. During the teacher survey, data were collected for 30.4% of cohort children (for 26.8 per cent of children who were eligible for FSM, and for 33.3% of children who were not). The consent rates for the teacher survey were higher in non-FSM households than in FSM households.

Table 27: Teacher web survey: response rates at pupil level

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Child face-to-face interview completed	7,811		3,537		4,274	
Parent A did not consent for child to be asked for teacher name	124	1.6	76	2.1	48	1.1
Parent A consented for child to be asked for teacher name	7,687	98.4	3,461	97.9	4,226	98.9
Child attends school	7,649	97.9	3,411	96.4	4,238	99.2
Child consented to give teacher name	6,606	84.6	2,870	81.1	3,736	87.4
Child gave their teacher name	6,459	82.7	2,795	79.0	3,664	85.7
Child consented to contact Head of Year	5,842	74.8	2,503	70.8	3,339	78.1
Child for whom teacher data collected	2,373	30.4	949	26.8	1,424	33.3

Table 28 presents the response rate to the teacher survey, at the teacher level. A total of 5,579 teachers were invited to provide data about at least one cohort child, and 2,069 (37.1%) did so. The figures are not broken down by FSM and non-FSM households, because teachers could have been asked about a pupils from both FSM and non-FSM households.

Table 28: Teacher web survey: response rates at teacher level

	N	%
Teachers invited (total)	5,579	
Teachers responding	2,069	37.1

Table 29 presents the break-off rates for the teacher web survey. Here half of break-offs took place at the module where the first substantive questions about the child's progress were asked.

Table 29: Break-off rates for teacher web survey

	N	%
Break-offs	283	
Introduction	0	0
Respondent check for first pupil asked about	23	8
Survey guidance for first pupil asked about	142	50
Young person attendance for first pupil asked about	24	8
Young person's health and wellbeing for first pupil asked about	37	13
Contextual questions – teacher/young person relationship for first pupil asked about	4	1
Respondent check for second pupil asked about	5	2
Survey guidance for second pupil asked about	3	1
Young person attendance for second pupil asked about	0	0
Young person's health and wellbeing for second pupil asked about	2	1
Contextual questions – teacher/young person relationship for second pupil asked about	1	0
Teacher feedback	10	4
Positive recognition	24	8
Thank you and close	8	3

Internet Use Study response

An overview of the approach taken to the Internet Use Study is provided in Chapter 11. This subsection focuses on the response to this element.

Table 30 presents the response rates to the Internet Use Study at Wave 1, by FSM-eligibility. The response rate calculation is based on those eligible for the study – 4,587 of the 19,789 pupils sampled for the study (23% of the sample).

The overall response rate was 8.0% (5.3% for FSM-eligible children, and 10.8% for those not eligible for FSM). The cohort child had to go through a number of steps to take part in the Internet Use Study and these are set out in the table (see the earlier [Chapter](#) for a fuller description of the steps to participation), with the percentages based on those sampled. As with the overall response rate, FSM-eligible children were less likely to take each step than children not eligible for FSM.

Overall, 41.1% of those cohort children completed the face-to-face interview and were invited to participate in the Internet Use Study. Of those who were invited to participate, 59.6% said they would do so, but fewer – 36.6% – downloaded the Ipsos MediaLink App, and fewer still activated it (31.4%). Around one in five of those invited to participate completed the full 28 days in the study (19.6%), around one quarter provided some data (24.9%).

Table 30: Internet Use Study: response rates

	Total		FSM-eligible		Not FSM-eligible	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Selected for Internet Use Study	4,587		2,304		2,283	
Child face-to-face interview achieved and interviewer asked if the parent and young person consented to participation in the Internet Use Study	1,885	41.1	893	38.8	992	43.5
Consented to taking part	1,124	24.5	492	21.4	632	27.7
Downloaded Ipsos MediaLink app	690	15.0	281	12.2	409	17.9
Activated Ipsos MediaLink app	592	12.9	224	9.7	368	16.1
Some data received	469	10.2	167	7.2	302	13.2
Completed 28 days in the Internet Use Study	369	8.0	123	5.3	246	10.8

A variety of reasons were given by both parents and cohort children who refused participation in the Internet Use Study. Among parents the top three concerns were worries about confidentiality (16%), privacy concerns (11%) and a perception the study was too intrusive and personal (11%). Among cohort children the top three concerns were being tracked/monitored (33%), not being interested or not liking the idea (22%) and privacy concerns (12%).

Table 31 presents the representativeness of the Internet Use Study sample at Wave 1, by the 2 key steps of consent and completing 28 days in the study. The proportion of males and females consenting and completing 28 days in the study was similar to the profile of those selected for the study. While 50.2% of children selected for the Internet Use Study were FSM-eligible, this fell to 47.4% of those consenting to participate and 33.3% of those completing 28 days in the study. Around two-thirds of those selected for the study were White British (66.0%), this fell to 62.8% of those consenting to participate, but rose to 72.4% of those completing 28 days in the study.

Table 31: Internet Use Study: sample representativeness

	Selected for Internet Use Study		Consented		Completed 28 days	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	4,587		1,885		369	
Sex						
Male	2,321	50.6	969	51.4	180	48.8
Female	2,266	49.4	916	48.6	189	51.2
FSM-Eligibility						
FSM-eligible	2,304	50.2	893	47.4	123	33.3
Not FSM-eligible	2,283	49.8	992	52.6	246	66.7
Ethnicity						
White British	3,027	66.0	1,184	62.8	267	72.4
Ethnic minority group	1,560	34.0	701	37.2	102	27.6

Assessment of response bias across the Wave 1 data collection instruments

To assess response bias, we need information about non-responders as well as responders. We have information about non-responders from the National Pupil Database but this information relates to the cohort children only. Table 32 compares the population profile for children in year 8 in the 2024 to 2025 academic year and attending a state school or receiving alternative state provision, derived from the National Pupil Database, for the following variables: FSM-eligibility, sex, region, ethnicity and Special Educational Needs. The population profile is compared to the profile achieved for each data collection instrument.

Generally speaking, the profile achieved for each of the main data collection instruments administered by the interviewers (the Parent A face-to-face interview, the Parent A web survey and the child face-to-face interview) was very similar to the population profile. Note that the profile does differ by FSM-eligibility – this is to be expected given the sampling strategy used for Wave 1 of the study. There is some evidence of response bias for the elements where the interviewer had much less or no control over the outcome – the child teacher survey, the Internet Use Study and the Parent B web survey. As around half of the issued sample was FSM-eligible, for these instruments the profile was biased towards those in non-FSM households. For these 3 instruments the sample was biased towards

children without Special Educational Needs, and for the Internet Use Study and the Parent B web survey, the profile was biased towards those children of White ethnicity.

Table 32: Profile of response by data collection instruments, compared with population

	Population	Parent A face-to- face interview	Parent A web survey	Child face-to- face interview	Child teacher survey	Child Internet Use Study
Total (n)	670,270	8,195	6,792	7,811	1,988	369
	% of total	% of total	% of total	% of total	% of total	% of total
FSM- Eligibility						
FSM	28.2	45.9	45.8	45.3	39.1	33.3
Non-FSM	71.8	54.1	54.2	54.7	60.9	66.7
Sex						
Male child	51.3	51.1	50.6	51.0	51.0	48.8
Female child	48.7	48.9	49.4	49.0	49.0	51.2
Region						
East Midlands	8.8	9.2	9.3	9.1	10.1	8.7
East of England	11.3	10.1	10.7	10.4	11.7	13.8
London	14.3	13.9	13.2	13.9	10.8	11.7
North East	4.7	4.7	5.1	4.6	4.2	2.4
North West	13.8	14.9	15.1	14.8	13.7	13.6
South East	16.2	14.1	14.4	14.3	16.5	17.9
South West	9.4	9.4	9.3	9.4	11.9	11.9
West Midlands	11.4	12.2	12.1	12.0	10.5	9.8
Yorkshire and The Humber	10.1	11.5	10.8	11.5	10.6	10.3
Ethnicity						

	Population	Parent A face-to- face interview	Parent A web survey	Child face-to- face interview	Child teacher survey	Child Internet Use Study
Missing ethnic group for child	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.8	2.2	2.7
Asian child	12.5	13.9	12.4	14.0	12.9	8.9
Black child	6.1	7.5	7.1	7.5	5.8	6.0
Mixed child	6.9	7.1	7.1	7.0	7.2	8.9
White child	69.2	66.2	68.4	66.0	69.5	72.4
Other ethnicity child	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.4	1.1
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)						
Child with SEND	20.7	22.1	21.5	21.3	19.8	14.6
Child not with SEND	79.3	77.9	78.5	78.7	80.2	85.4

Data processing

This chapter describes the processes used to check data and produce the final datasets.

Data checks during fieldwork

Data checks during fieldwork included:

- weekly fieldwork reports to check on key metrics, including response rates, consent rates to each study element, sample composition, and interview lengths (see chapter 12 for more details)
- investigating feedback from interviewers, including queries about how particular questions worked or should be interpreted
- daily checks on the cognitive assessment data received
- a full check of the data for each question, including whether the base (number of participants answering the question) matched the expected base, to ensure that the routing was working as intended. This check also involved a manual sense-check of the distribution of answers

Data issues identified during fieldwork

The questions changed as a result of interviewer feedback or issues identified in field were:

- an interviewer instruction was added at the questions asking for consent for the self-completion section and the reason(s) why the interviewer was completing the self-completion section with the parent to clarify that interviewers should encourage parents to complete the self-completion section themselves where possible
- a question asked about whether the cohort child had access to a device to complete their school work at home. Interviewers told Ipsos researchers that many participants were querying whether mobile phones should be included here, so an instruction was added to clarify that mobile phones should not be included even if they are being used for school work
- interviewers found that a final question about who else was present in the room when the interview was completed was unclear. The pre-code list for the question was updated to include more options
- data linkage questions: a scripting error was identified during the data checks early in fieldwork which meant that carers who were not eligible to provide consent for data linkage (where children were looked after) were being asked to give consent.

The routing to these questions was amended so that carers of looked-after children were not asked to give consent to data linkage

Data editing

On some occasions, participants or interviewers answered questions in the survey, then used the 'back' button in the script to change a previous answer. In some of these instances, this meant that participants had answered a question originally which (after changing their earlier response) they were no longer routed to answer. This meant that the data sometimes showed participants answering questions that – based on their final set of answers – they should not answer.

Ipsos edited the data to remove these answers. A log of the edits made, and the number of answers affected is given in the User Guide.

Coding

Many questions in the scripts had “other (specify)” answer codes, where participants could provide answers that did not appear on pre-coded lists. These text answers were coded by Ipsos. Where the answer given reflected a pre-existing answer code, these were “back coded” to the pre-existing code; where it did not, new answer codes were suggested.

Ipsos used the Ascribe coding system to code all free-text answers. As standard, 5 per cent of coded answers were validated by a supervisor to ensure coding quality.

In the published dataset, original answer codes (including a numeric value for all those selecting “other (specify)”) are included, alongside separate variables for coded data and a combined variable containing data from both the original variable and the coded variable.

National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC)

The National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) is a system used to classify individuals based on their occupation and employment status, providing an indication of their socio-economic position. It was developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to replace earlier classifications like social class based on occupation and Socio-Economic Groups. NS-SEC is used to analyse various social and economic trends and is based on factors like employment relations, conditions of occupations, and whether someone is employed or self-employed, and their supervisory role.

Participants answer a series of six questions which ask about their supervisory and managerial duties in their current (or most recent) job role, their employment status, and their organisation size.

Derived variables

The study team agreed with the DfE a set of derived variables to add to the final dataset. These included the NS-SEC variables alongside other measures, such as summary scores for the SDQ. Please see the data dictionary for a full list of variables and derived variables.

Weighting

The aim of the weighting was to make the characteristics of the weighted participating sample match those of the population as closely as possible, to reduce bias in the weighted survey estimates.

Parent A face-to-face interview weights

The weighting for the Parent A face-to-face interview data was comprised of 2 stages.

At the first stage of weighting, adjustment weights were applied to correct for the over-sampling of pupils eligible for FSMs in the original sample. The percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs) in the sampling frame, which defined the population for this study, was 28.2%. This was boosted so that 50% of the issued sample was eligible for FSMs. The adjustment weights adjust the achieved sample so that the weighted percentage eligible for FSMs matches the population estimate of 28.2%.

At the second stage of weighting, weights were produced using the Random Iterative Method (RIM), with the selection weights as the starting weights. They adjusted the achieved sample to match the population totals (calculated from information provided on the sampling frame) for sex, ethnicity, FSM-eligibility and Special Educational Needs (SEN) status, Key Stage 2 attainment and absenteeism rates, as well as additional geographical measures that were merged in to the dataset: urban/rural category, Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) decile and region [see Table 33]. These variables were selected because they were most likely to be correlated with a range of survey variables.

Parent A web survey weights

The approach for the Parent A web survey weights was to generate non-response weights for participation in the Parent A web survey for those that took part in the Parent A face-to-face interview. To generate the non-response weights, a logistic regression model was fitted with participation in the Parent A web survey as the dependent variable and covariates that consisted of the measures used in the RIM weighting in addition to some of the measures collected in the face-to-face interview which appeared likely to be associated with participation in the Parent A web survey. Those additional measures from the Parent A face-to-face interview were added to the model using a stepwise approach;

level of qualification and tenure were the 2 measures collected in the Parent A web survey that were added to the model.

The predicted probabilities of participation in the Parent A web survey were calculated from the model, and the non-response weights were calculated as the reciprocal of those predicted probabilities. The Parent A web survey weights were then calculated by multiplying these non-response weights by the Parent A face-to-face interview weights previously produced. Note that no trimming was required to produce these weights.

Child face-to-face interview weights

The Child face-to-face interview weights were produced using exactly the same approach as for the Parent A web survey weights. A non-response logistic regression model was fitted for whether the child participated or not. The covariates in the model were those used in the RIM weighting, with tenure and contact with a social worker added from the measures collected in the Parent A face-to-face interview, as these appeared likely to be associated with participation in the child face-to-face survey. The non-response weights were derived from that model and combined with the Parent A face-to-face interview weights to produce the Child face-to-face interview weights. Again, no trimming was required to produce these weights.

Parent B web survey weights

The same stages were used to produce the Parent B web survey weights. However, prior to the modelling stage, only households that included an eligible Parent B were selected. The non-response logistic regression model was therefore fitted for whether Parent B took part or not, but only for those households for which a Parent B was identified. The covariates in the model were those used in the RIM weighting, with tenure and qualification level added from the measures collected in the Parent A face-to-face interview, as these appeared likely to be associated with participation in the Parent B web survey. The weights from that non-response model were combined with the Parent A face-to-face interview weights to produce the Parent B web survey weights. Note that to reduce the variance of the weights, the weights from the non-response modelled stage were trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles.

Table 33 presents the population totals for RIM weighting, and the sample profile before and after weighting.

Table 33: Population totals for rim weighting and sample profile before and after weighting

	Population		Sample (unweighted)		Sample (weighted)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sex						
Female	326,670	48.7	4,006	48.9	3,994	48.7
Male	343,600	51.3	4,189	51.1	4,201	51.3
Ethnicity						
White	464,003	69.2	5,407	66.0	5,673	69.2
Indian	24,469	3.7	280	3.4	299	3.7
Pakistani	28,687	4.3	435	5.3	351	4.3
Bangladeshi	10,935	1.6	186	2.3	134	1.6
Other Asian	19,309	2.9	236	2.9	236	2.9
Black	40,595	6.1	611	7.5	496	6.1
Mixed	46,346	6.9	579	7.1	567	6.9
Other / Missing	35,926	5.4	461	5.6	439	5.4
FSM-Eligibility						
Not eligible	481,043	71.8	4,437	54.1	5,881	71.8
Eligible	189,227	28.2	3,758	45.9	2,314	28.2
Special Educational Needs						
EH&C Plan	42,112	6.3	528	6.4	515	6.3
SEN Support	96,795	14.4	1,325	16.2	1,183	14.4
None	531,363	79.3	6,342	77.4	6,497	79.3
Urban/Rural						
Urban + Missing	567,827	84.7	7,143	87.2	6,942	84.7
Rural	102,443	15.3	1,052	12.8	1,253	15.3
IDACI Decile						
Lowest + Missing	85,525	12.8	1,255	15.3	1,046	12.8
2nd	76,834	11.5	1,093	13.3	939	11.5
3rd	72,648	10.8	963	11.8	888	10.8
4th	69,133	10.3	749	9.1	845	10.3

	Population		Sample (unweighted)		Sample (weighted)	
5th	66,676	9.9	816	10.0	815	9.9
6th	64,506	9.6	776	9.5	789	9.6
7th	62,397	9.3	700	8.5	763	9.3
8th	60,173	9.0	643	7.8	736	9.0
9th	57,527	8.6	575	7.0	703	8.6
Highest	54,851	8.2	625	7.6	671	8.2
Region						
North East	31,195	4.7	385	4.7	381	4.7
North West + Missing	92,692	13.8	1,220	14.9	1,133	13.8
Yorkshire and the Humber	67,740	10.1	940	11.5	828	10.1
East Midlands	59,182	8.8	759	9.3	724	8.8
West Midlands	76,288	11.4	995	12.1	933	11.4
East of England	76,027	11.3	833	10.2	930	11.3
London	95,766	14.3	1,127	13.8	1,171	14.3
South East	108,560	16.2	1,170	14.3	1,327	16.2
South West	62,820	9.4	766	9.3	768	9.4
Key Stage 2 Score						
Above Expected	262,370	39.1	3,382	41.3	3,208	39.1
Below Expected	333,661	49.8	3,922	47.9	4,079	49.8
High	49,794	7.4	642	7.8	609	7.4
Missing	24,445	3.6	249	3.0	299	3.6
Absenteeism						
None + Missing	392,518	58.6	4,579	55.9	4,799	58.6
0% to 1%	93,392	13.9	1,165	14.2	1,142	13.9
1% to 5%	116,286	17.3	1,478	18.0	1,422	17.3
5% to 10%	36,316	5.4	504	6.2	444	5.4
10% to 20%	18,555	2.8	260	3.2	227	2.8
More Than 20%	13,203	2.0	209	2.6	161	2.0

Teacher weights

The teacher weights were produced using the same approach as for the Parent A web survey weights. A non-response logistic regression model was fitted for whether a teacher survey was completed or not. Note that because teachers could be selected by up to 2 children, some teachers completed the survey for 2 children. For the purposes of producing the weights, participation was considered to be at the parent/child level rather than at the teacher level. The covariates in the model were those used in the RIM weighting, with tenure and having no qualifications added from the measures collected in the Parent A face-to-face interview. The non-response weights were derived from that model. These were trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the variance of the weights. These trimmed weights were combined with the Parent A face-to-face interview weights to produce the teacher weights.

Internet Use Study weights

Because of the relatively small sample size for pupils completing the Internet Use Study, the sample of participants was weighted directly to the population profiles using calibration weighting, as was done for the Parent A face-to-face interview weights.

At the first stage of weighting, adjustment weights were applied to correct for the over-sampling of pupils FSM-eligible in the original sample (28.2%). At the second stage of weighting, RIM weights were produced, using the FSM-only weights as the starting weights. The range of measures that were used in the calibration was reduced from that used for the Parent A face-to-face interview weights, and some of the categories had to be collapsed, because of the smaller sample size. The measures included were: sex, FSM-eligibility, Special Educational Needs (SEN) status, Key Stage 2 attainment, absenteeism rates, and urban / rural category.

Data outputs

The full set of outputs for the study are listed below. A household serial number (unique to each address) can be used to link the datasets:

- core dataset, including the face-to-face and web survey question answers from Parent A participants (including partial households, where parent has completed but selected child did not take part), Parent B web survey answers and cohort child survey answers. In addition, it contains the child-level teacher data, and the Internet Use Study summary data for each child
- teacher dataset, containing the data provided by each individual teacher in the teacher survey
- internet Use Study day parts dataset, containing a more detailed breakdown of internet usage for each week/day part

- data dictionaries for each dataset

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