



Pearson

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child's class has been selected to participate in the **Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS)**. I am writing to you as the National Research Coordinator for the PIRLS 2021 study in England to explain a little more about the study, including the data protection arrangements.

### What is PIRLS?

PIRLS is an international study run by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) that takes place every five years. This would normally be in 2021 but because of the Covid-19 pandemic, England is administering PIRLS in May-June 2022.

PIRLS gathers data from over 50 countries, including England, and looks at the reading skills of 9-10-year-olds (Year 5 in England). The results are used by our government and governments from around the world to compare the strengths and weaknesses of our education policy to that of other countries and to enable others to hold the government accountable for providing our young people with a world-class education.

Your child's school is one of 170 schools in England that have been selected to participate in PIRLS 2021. The study will take place within the normal school day and involve reading short passages of fiction and non-fiction and answering questions, as well as a short questionnaire. If you or your child would like to see some examples of the type of questions asked, you can do so by visiting this website [www.pirls2021.uk](http://www.pirls2021.uk). Your child doesn't need to do anything to prepare, and it will not affect your child's results or progress in school. To thank them for their participation in this important study your child will receive a certificate from the Department for Education.

### What information will be collected and why?

The purpose of the study is to produce statistics on children's learning and development, in order to learn more about how best to support children in learning to read. The Department for Education (DfE) has commissioned Pearson UK and their partners at Oxford University to carry out the PIRLS 2021 study. The privacy and data security of the young people and schools we work with is very important to us and no individual child, parent, carer or teacher will be identified or identifiable in any reporting.

We will collect information on what your child has learnt about reading from their answers to the PIRLS assessment questions. We will also ask them for some contextual information, such as questions about their home life and interest in reading. All data from the study will be pseudonymised i.e. your child's name and anything else which could be used to identify them or their school will be removed and replaced with a code. This data will be combined with responses from other pupils taking part in England and compared with results of pupils around the world. If there are any questions your child does not wish to answer they may leave them blank. For the purposes of this research, the DfE and its approved contractors will link the information to other information DfE already holds (such as on the National Pupil Database) or that it is lawfully permitted to access from other sources. This is to avoid repeatedly asking participants to give us information that we already hold. We may

also share your child's pseudonymised data with other people and organisations who want to use it for research. A full privacy notice is available at [www.pirls2021.uk](http://www.pirls2021.uk).

### Participation in the study

We would like to thank you for your child's participation in this important project: we are only able to approach schools in the sample drawn by IEA and without the engagement of children in selected schools, our data is unlikely to be considered good enough to analyse or to provide valid evidence. Your child's participation in this project is voluntary: if you would not like your child to take part in this project or if you have any queries on any aspect the study, please do not hesitate to contact the **PIRLS Support Team** from Monday to Friday between 8am and 4pm on **020 7010 2010** or via email at [pirls2021@pearson.com](mailto:pirls2021@pearson.com).

Yours sincerely,



Associate Professor Grace Grima  
**National Research Coordinator, PIRLS 2021**  
**Director of Research - Pearson UK**

[www.pirls2021.uk](http://www.pirls2021.uk)