

PARENT / GUARDIAN INFORMATION AND CONSENT LETTER
2021 Student Attitudes to School Survey

Dear Parent / Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about the 2021 Student Attitudes to School Survey (AtoSS), that your child is invited to participate in.

About the survey

We value student voice as a means to improving student engagement, wellbeing and quality instruction and are conducting a survey to find out what your child thinks of your school.

The AtoSS is an annual student survey offered by the Department of Education and Training to assist your child's school to gain an understanding of students' perceptions and experience of school. Students will be asked about their thoughts and feelings in relation to their school, their learning, peer relationships, bullying and life in general.

This year, the AtoSS will be conducted at your school over the period 15 June to 25 June 2021.

What are the benefits?

In our experience, young people enjoy having their say. We have been running this survey for nearly 20 years and it has been invaluable in helping schools understand student views. Your school will use the survey results to plan programs and activities to improve your child's schooling experience.

What are the risks?

While we do not anticipate many risks of participation, some students may find some of the survey questions too personal and sensitive in nature. Should you agree for your child to participate, they are still free to skip questions or to withdraw at any stage if the survey makes them upset or uncomfortable.

The survey been approved by a Human Research Ethics Committee. The questions are selected from validated survey instruments, are strength-based, and tailored for each year level group.

What will my child be asked to do?

Your child will be invited to complete the survey **online during class time** using a purpose built secure online survey tool. It is important to note that we are not in any way "testing" your child. Please note:

- Student participation in the survey is voluntary and students may withdraw at any time.
- The survey will take around 20-45 minutes to complete.

How is my child's confidentiality protected?

Your child will be provided with a unique login to complete the survey from their teacher. The student login is an assigned identifier that may be used to link data for statistical and research purposes only. Personally identifiable data will not be recorded in the survey response file. This ensures that the confidentiality of your child's responses is protected at all times.

How will results be reported?

The survey results will be reported back to the school in an aggregate form throughout the survey period. All survey data that is made available in reports are for groups of students only so that no individual student can be identified. Data suppression rules are used for schools with low student numbers per year level.

Your school may share the results of the survey with parents, in documents such as the School Annual Report.

Options for participation

Participation in this survey is **voluntary**. If you **do not** wish for your child to do the survey, please opt out via email to your school: call the General Office on 54211100. Please do so 15 June, stating that you wish to opt out of your child's participation, along with their name and year level.

If your school does not receive a Refusal of Consent email from yourself before the survey commencement date mentioned within this letter, it means that you give your consent for your child to participate in the 2021 Attitudes to School Survey.

A copy of the survey that we are asking your child to complete is available from your child's school. Please contact the administration office if you would like to see the survey before making your decision about whether you would like your child to participate.

If you would like more information, please contact the Department at attitudes.school.survey@education.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

The Department of Education and Training Victoria