# Permanently Progressing?

## Building secure futures for children: Phase 2 Middle childhood

### Information Sheet for Parents

#### Research team

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We are inviting you to take part in an interview for the *Permanently Progressing?* research about care experienced children and their families in Scotland. To help you decide if you want to take part, this leaflet explains what the research is about, why we are doing it and what is involved.

#### About this research

The Permanently Progressing? study is about care experienced children and their families in Scotland. It focuses on all children who became ‘looked after’ in 2012-13 when they were aged five or under. We want to understand more about where children are living, how they are getting on, what sources of support are available for them and their families and how they keep in touch with family members they don’t live with.

This is the first major study of its kind in Scotland for many years. We are using a mixture of research methods, from national statistics to interviews with children and families. What we learn will provide important new information to help future policy and practice in Scotland and beyond.

The study is planned to have three phases. We carried out Phase One between 2014 and 2018, and you can read more about that on our [webpage](http://www.permanentlyprogressing.stir.ac.uk). In this second phase, we very much hope that parents who live separately from their children will agree to tell us about their experiences too. This phase has been funded jointly by a philanthropic donor and the Nuffield Foundation.

The University of Stirling General University Ethics Panel and Lancaster University’s Faculty of Social Science Ethics Committee have checked the research plans. They have given ethical approval for the study.

#### Why have I been invited to take part?

We are inviting you to take part because we understand that you are a parent of a child born between 2007 and 2013, and that you live separately from them. We are hoping to speak to around 10 parents.

#### Do I have to take part?

No - it is completely up to you. If you decide not to take part, no one will mind. Your decision will not affect any services you receive.

#### What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, we will arrange an interview at a time that suits you. We can come to your house, meet somewhere else or speak to you online or by phone. The interview should take between one hour and 90 minutes.

We would like to record the interview (with your permission) to make sure we have your thoughts in your own words. We might also make notes to help us remember when different things happened. We won’t write down your name in our notes.

#### What will you ask me about?

We will ask you some questions about whether and how you keep in touch with your child, and what helps with that or makes it more difficult.

We know that talking about these things might be difficult. The interviewers (Maggie or Helen) are all experienced researchers and have interviewed children, parents and carers for a range of studies. If you want, we can send you the main questions so you can think about them before the interview. During the interview, you can stop at any time or take a break.

#### What happens to the information I tell you?

We will listen carefully to the interviews. The interviews will be typed up by a member of the research team or a professional transcriber, with all identifying information removed (like names or places). Transcribers will follow the same roles about privacy and confidentiality as the interviewer.

We will produce a research report, briefings and other publications. Any quotes from participants used in reports, academic publications, conferences or training will be anonymised.

All personal information about you will be carefully looked after (following the UK General Data Protection Regulations). It will be stored securely in a password protected folder on the University’s computer system. Only the research team can access this information. We will keep the recordings and anonymised transcripts for 10 years. We hope there will be a third phase of the study, so we would like to compare interviews from different times to understand how things change over time.

#### Is the information confidential?

Yes. Information from the interviews will only be used for the research. The only exception, as with any study, would be if someone is hurt, or is at risk of being hurt. Then we will need to discuss this and decide whether we need to tell anyone else. We would talk to you before we do this.

#### What if I change my mind once we have started?

Just tell the researcher that you have changed your mind. You don’t have to give a reason, and no one will mind. It is your choice. You can change your mind up to two weeks after the interview and we will not use the information about you. We cannot guarantee to remove data after that date as the analysis may be underway and/or the results published.

#### What if there is a problem or something goes wrong?

Please tell us if you are worried about any part of this study, by contacting the head researcher Helen Whincup. If you want to make a complaint you can contact the Dean of the Faculty, Derek McGhee.

We can also provide details of support organisations if you think that would be helpful.

#### Data Protection

The University of Stirling is the ‘data controller’ for this study, which means they are responsible for the information we collect for the research. The research must have a good reason, which is known as ‘public interest’. For our study, the reason is to help improve support for children and their families, including parents they live separately from. If you have any questions about data protection, you can read this guide [here](https://www.stir.ac.uk/media/stirling/global-assets/documents/Data_Protection_Policy_and_Guidance.pdf) or ask Helen, Maggie or Ariane.

Thank you for reading this – please ask any questions if you want to.

You can contact us at 07716 483506 or by email at ariane.critchley@stir.ac.uk or margaret.grant@stir.ac.uk

More information about the research and alternative versions of this information sheet are available at the study’s [website](http://www.permanentlyprogressing.stir.ac.uk) ([www.permanentlyprogressing.stir.ac.uk](http://www.permanentlyprogressing.stir.ac.uk)).

