



Ravenscote Junior School

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Wednesday 4th February 2026

Dear Parents,

Research Opportunity

Does imagining ourselves in the future change the way we feel and act now?

Please click here to view the video from Dan, explaining more about the research he is hoping to do at Ravenscote:
<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/limcwQ0LqCE>

Dan Hawkins is a trainee educational psychologist and used to be a teacher at Ravenscote between 2016 and 2022. He would be incredibly grateful if your child/children could help him with his doctoral research. For this, you will need to complete the following Google Form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScO2Dvk5YSGW5bz4Fn9n_Lue-UHBFvuZWIMXVPAv_5m9j2cQ/viewform?usp=dialog

Dan is looking broadly at the question, 'Does imagining ourselves in the future change the way we feel and act now?' and more specifically at, 'What is the relationship between future self-continuity and task engagement in primary aged pupils?'

Activities will take place in school hours, on a computer, with school staff. Your child will also be asked directly if they are happy to take part.

The activities include writing a letter, rating how connected they feel to their future self, answering questions about their beliefs in their ability to achieve their goals, and completing some tangram puzzles.

Data on the children's age, gender, and ethnicity will be shared with Dan, but he won't collect names or dates of birth. The school will not be named in his research report.

Dan would love it if as many Ravenscote children as possible could be involved and is incredibly grateful for your support.

Please have a look at the information sheet below. If you are happy for your child/children to be involved, please complete the Google consent form by Thursday 26th February 2026.

Best regards

Mrs Wells
Headteacher



Participant Information Sheet (Parents/Carers)

Study Title: What is the relationship between future self-continuity and task engagement in primary aged pupils?

Researcher: Dan Hawkins

ERGO number: 109075

Your child/children are being invited to take part in the above research study.

It is important that you (as a parent, guardian, or carer) understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information.

This information sheet is intended for parents, guardians, or carers. It contains some information that participants (i.e., your child) should not know prior to taking part.

Please do not share this information with your child/children before the study takes place.

What is the research about?

I am Year 3 Trainee Educational Psychologist, working towards a Doctorate in Educational Psychology at the University of Southampton. This research project will form part of my thesis towards this qualification. The project is being supervised by Dr Tim Cooke, one of the course tutors for the Doctorate in Educational Psychology and Dr Tim Wildschut, who also works at the University of Southampton. For my thesis, I am exploring the relationship between future self-continuity and task engagement in primary aged pupils. Future self-continuity (FSC) refers to the psychological connectedness people have with their future selves - the degree to which a person identifies their future self as being the same person as their current self. Prior research has demonstrated that French middle schoolers could be primed to feel more connected to their future self and performed better on a geometry task than those who were primed to feel less connected to their future self (Nurra & Oyserman, 2018). Writing letters to and from one's imagined future self has been shown to increase future self-continuity (Chishima & Wilson, 2021). In this study, I wish to explore whether future self-continuity can be increased by writing a letter from one's future self to one's current self. I also wish to explore whether this activity also leads to higher self-efficacy and persistence on a set of puzzles. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to act and achieve a goal. The puzzle task will use tangrams.

This study will use a comparison group. Some children will be asked to write their letter from the perspective of their future self, and some children will be asked to write their letter from the perspective of a different person. Children will only be told about the two groups afterwards.

Why has my child/children been asked to participate?

There has been limited research on future self-continuity with younger children and its potential benefits, so this study aims to address that gap as well as offer other novel contributions to research, such as the role of self-efficacy. We hope to recruit more than 600 participants as this will assist data analysis.

What will happen my child/children if they take part?

Children will be using an individual computer. This may be a laptop, or a desktop located in the school's computing suite. They will be accompanied by their regular class teacher and learning support assistants (if they regularly support the class). Participants will be provided a link to a Qualtrics survey. Children will be given information about the study written in a child-friendly way and will be asked to tick a box to confirm that they are happy to continue. Adults with them may be available to read this to them if needed. Some children will be asked to imagine themselves 10 years into the future, whilst some children will be asked to imagine themselves as a different person (e.g., a famous person of their choice). They will then be asked to write a letter to their current self. Sentence starters will be provided to help them access this task.

After this, measures of future-self continuity (Venn diagram measure of FSC; Ersner-Hershfield et al., 2009) and self-efficacy (Self-Efficacy Scale for early school-aged children; Gambin & Świącicka, 2012) will be completed. Then children will be given a link to a University of Southampton hosted web server to complete a series of tangram puzzles. When this task is complete, they will be automatically directed back to their Qualtrics survey. They will be given some questions asking them about how much they enjoyed the task, how hard they felt they worked on the task, how relevant they feel this task was to what they what to do in the future. Children will be given another link to a University of Southampton hosted web server to complete more tangram puzzles. This time they will be able to ask for hints to assist them. When this task is complete, they will be automatically directed back to their Qualtrics survey.

Finally, they will be provided with debriefing information which will provide the full details of the study written in child-friendly, accessible language.

Are there any benefits in my child/children taking part?

There may be some small benefits to your child taking part such as reflecting on their future (if allocated to that group) and practising their writing and problem-solving skills. Your child/children will be providing the research team with information that may help us understand the role of future self-continuity in primary aged pupils.

Are there any risks involved?

There is the potential that your child/children may experience temporary feelings of discomfort when completing the tangram puzzles. We will therefore make sure that they finish the series of tangram tasks with three puzzles where we will provide hints to enable them to complete each tangram so they will finish this phase with a feeling of success. After the study, they will be given a debrief form which will explain the purpose of the study in more detail and invited to speak to their teacher or trusted adult in school for support if needed.

What data will be collected?

In this study, no personal information (i.e., name, date or birth, address etc.) will be collected from participants. Data will include demographic data (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity), typed letter entries, selected responses to the scale questions, and performance on the tangram puzzles (e.g., time taken on each puzzle).

Will their participation be confidential?

Their participation and the information we collect about them during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Demographic data (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity) will be collected from the school. This will not include names or dates of birth. Unique identifier codes will be used so that the research team can match demographic data with participant responses to the task.

The university's OneDrive secure system will be used to store study data. Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about participants for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to the data. All of these people have a duty to keep participant information strictly confidential.

Does my child/children have to take part?

This study is using opt-in consent. This means that parent/carer consent must be given for your child/children to take part. If you are providing consent for your child/children to take part, please complete the following Google consent form by 26th February: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScO2Dvk5YSGW5bz4Fn9n_Lue-UHBFvfuZWIMXVPAv_5m9j2cQ/viewform?usp=dialog

Before taking part in the study, your child/children will be given a similar, though not identical, information sheet and will be asked for their assent to take part. After the study, they will be given a debrief form which will explain the purpose of the study in more detail.

What happens if my child/children change their mind?

They have the right to change their mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without their participant rights being affected. They will need to inform their teacher or school staff who is with them during the study activities. If your child/children wish to withdraw after the study activities have finished, you would need to

contact the school who will liaise with the researchers to identify and remove their data. You can withdraw your child's data from the study up to the point at which the data is used in the analysis of the study.

What will happen to the results of the research?

I will be writing up the results of the research as part of my doctoral thesis. It is likely that I will present research findings at a conference or publish them in an academic journal. Any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify participants.

Where can I get more information?

If you have any questions about the research after reading this information sheet, you can contact the researcher via email: Dan Hawkins: D.Hawkins@soton.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Head Research Ethics and Governance (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected.

How will we use information about participants?

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research. Personal data will be handled according to the University's relevant policies.

The University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for the personal information we collect from you, your child/children, or the school for this research project.

We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that your child/children took part in the study.

To safeguard their rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Their data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with their personal data that you would not reasonably expect. We will keep all information about them safe and secure.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You or your child/children can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason.
- We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about your child/children.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how we use your information:

- by sending an email to University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).
- by asking one of the research team or from our general privacy policy.

How long do we keep your data?

The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet.