

# International Self-Report Delinquency Study (ISR3)

## England and Scotland

### Technical report, July 2016

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#### Abstract

The International Self-Report Delinquency study (ISR3) is an international, comparative, self-report survey of school children's experiences of crime and victimisation. ISR3 is a city-based survey targeting children aged 12 to 16 years. This technical report describes the study's research design and methods and the fieldwork procedures employed in England and Scotland. Data collection took place between September 2014 and December 2015 in Birmingham, Sheffield, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

#### 1. Background

The International Self-Report Delinquency Study (ISR3) is an international comparative survey of youth crime and victimisation among school children aged 12 to 16 years. The first wave of the survey (ISR1) took place between 1990 and 1992 and was a pilot project to chart variations in youth crime across 13 countries (Junger-Tas et al, 1994). The second wave of the survey (ISR2) was carried out from 2005 to 2007 and included a much larger number of countries (n=31) with a revised design and broader theoretical reach (Junger-Tas et al, 2010, 2012). The third wave of the survey (ISR3) encompassing 35 countries began in 2012 and is due to be completed in 2017 (for more information, see <http://www.northeastern.edu/isrd/isrd3/>).

England and Scotland participated in ISR3 from February 2014 to March 2017 under the project name, 'Understanding and Preventing Youth Crime (UPYC)', alongside four other countries – France, Germany, the Netherlands and the US – after receiving a collaborative grant from the Economic and Social Research Council under the Open Research Area programme. England had previously taken part in ISR1 carrying out a national survey with young people aged 14 to 21 (Barberet et al, 2004); ISR3 was the first time that Scotland had participated in study.

#### 2. ISR3 study objectives

ISR3 has two main objectives:

1. To look at the prevalence of self-reported victimisation and offending across countries.
2. To test the relative value of different criminological theories in explaining variation at individual and country level and to explore the possibility of integrating different theories, namely:

- Social bonding (or control) theory (Hirschi, 1969)
- Self-control theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990)
- Routine activities theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979)
- Situational action theory (Wikstrom, P-O. H., 2010)
- Institutional anomie theory (Messner & Rosenfeld, 1994)
- Procedural justice theory (Tyler, 2003, Hough et al, 2010)

UPYC included the additional objective of comparing the youth justice policies and structures of the six country participants.

### 3. Study design and method

ISR3 is a cross-sectional observational study of school children aged 12 to 16 years (equivalent to European grades 7 to 9), using a standardised self-report survey. ISR3 is primarily a city-based survey with a minimum of two large cities (with a population of at least 500,000 residents) in each country. The standard sampling unit is a school class and countries aimed to recruit 900 pupils per city, 300 from each grade.

#### 3.1 Study population and sampling frame

In England, the survey was administered to classes of pupils in year groups 7 to 9 and in Scotland in year groups S2 to S4. Birmingham and Sheffield were selected as two of the largest cities in England outside of London, and Edinburgh and Glasgow were selected as they are the two largest cities in Scotland (see table 1).

Table 1: Key statistics on UK ISR3 cities

	Birmingham	Sheffield	England	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Scotland
<b>Total resident population<sup>1</sup></b>	1,100,000	560,000	54,310,000	490,000	600,000	5,350,000
<b>Resident population aged 12 – 17 years<sup>1</sup></b>	88,000	36,000	3,690,000	26,000	34,000	340,000
<b>Ethnic groups (%)<sup>2</sup></b>						
<b>White</b>	57.9	83.6	85.3	91.6	88.4	95.9
<b>Asian</b>	25.4	6.7	7.0	3.9	6.3	2.0
<b>Black</b>	9.0	3.6	3.5	1.2	2.4	0.7
<b>Mixed</b>	4.4	2.4	2.3	0.9	0.5	0.4
<b>Chinese or other</b>	3.2	3.6	1.8	1.9	2.5	1.0

<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2015) <sup>2</sup> ONS (2013)

All mainstream secondary schools (including privately-funded independent schools) in the selected cities were included in the sampling frame; Pupil Referral Units and other alternative education providers for children with learning or behavioural difficulties were excluded, as were small schools with less than 25 pupils. Table 2 presents a summary of the study population and sampling frame.

In England, the open access online resource Edubase was used to identify schools in the chosen cities and each school was contacted and asked for the number of form classes and class size in the specified year groups. Where schools had mixed year groups, the number of classes for a non-streamed subject, such as IT, was requested. In Scotland, a local authority Research Access Request Form was completed and approved for Edinburgh and

d Glasgow City Councils and each city provided data on schools and class numbers from the schools' information management system (known as SEEMiS). Where information on class numbers was unavailable in each city (for example, because a school was unwilling to provide it or the school was not on SEEMiS), class numbers and size were imputed based on the overall school size and the class size and numbers of remainder of the sample. Additional information was gathered on whether the school was a state or private school, the gender mix and whether the school had a religious denomination. Separate sampling frames were used for England and Scotland.

Each country's sample of classes was then randomly drawn using stratified sampling based on school size and grade, with an expected response rate of 30%, using an excel programme designed for the ISRD by the German team. The recruitment of schools and pupils based on the original sampling frame took place in Birmingham, England, between September 2014 and July 2015, in Sheffield, England, between September 2014 and December 2015, and in Scotland between January 2015 and June 2015.

*Table 2: Summary of the study population and sampling frame*

ISRD3 in UK	
<b>Cities</b>	England - Birmingham, Sheffield Scotland - Edinburgh, Glasgow
<b>Grade level inclusion</b>	England - Years 8, 9 and 10 (equivalent to European 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , and 9 <sup>th</sup> grade) Scotland - S2, 3 and 4 (equivalent to European 7 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> grade) <sup>1</sup>
<b>School type inclusion</b>	State and private schools
<b>School type exclusion</b>	Schools for children with learning, behavioural or social and emotional difficulties which make it difficult for them to cope with mainstream education, for example, Pupil Referral Units. Schools with less than 25 children on school roll.
<b>Sampling unit</b>	Class
<b>Sampling frame</b>	List of all classes in selected cities
<b>Sampling method</b>	Probability proportional to size
<b>Stratification</b>	City, grade
<b>Deviations from standard procedure</b>	England – second sampling frame for a reserve sample in Birmingham. Scotland - opportunity sampling during a second round of recruitment. Schools who had participated already were asked if they could provide additional classes
<b>Country weight</b>	No
<b>City weight</b>	City samples weighted by gender and grade

In July 2015, a second sampling frame was created for Birmingham, England, to establish a reserve sample. This sampling frame contained:

<sup>1</sup> A small number of pupils who were sampled in S4 were not interviewed until after they entered S5 (10<sup>th</sup> grade) and so the age profile for the Scottish sample is slightly older.

- All the secondary schools in the city from the original sampling frame which had not been selected,
- Six schools selected from the original sampling frame which had not directly refused participation in order to informally 'test' whether it was worth expending additional resources continuing to pursue schools from the original sample, and
- Seven schools from a neighbouring town, Sutton Coldfield, which was under Birmingham local authority.

Schools were then drawn again using stratified sampling based on school size and grade, this time with an expected response rate of 16%, based on the response rate from schools in the previous sample.

Additional sampling also took place in Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland, between August and December 2015. This time, opportunity sampling was used whereby schools which had taken part in the survey already were re-approached and asked if they would be willing to provide access to additional classes. Information on school response rates is contained in table 3 in section 3.2.

### ***3.2 Recruitment procedures***

This section details the recruitment methods employed for each city. Both countries experienced considerable difficulties in recruiting schools and were unable to achieve their intended sample sizes for each city. It is not possible to determine conclusively the reasons for recruitment problems, however, it was likely due to a combination of challenges: pressures of school time and resources; research fatigue in schools; pressure of school inspections; the low prioritisation of research on crime (as opposed to education) in school settings; lack of financial or resource incentives for schools to participate; and insufficient time to build strong relationships with local partners in each city and achieve local buy-in (particularly in England). These difficulties were not unique to the UK and appear to reflect a growing trend across educational systems in developed countries. The feasibility of international crime research in school settings will be the subject of a methodological paper from the project.

#### *Birmingham*

In September 2014, the Head Teacher of each selected school in Birmingham was sent a letter introducing the study and requesting participation, alongside a letter of recommendation from the Department of Education and an email from Education & Skills, Birmingham City Council. The letter also gave a website address set up for the project. Between two and four weeks later, telephone contact was made with the school and the letter was resent by email. Three further rounds of contact were made by telephone and email between November and April. Attempts were made to involve Birmingham police in the recruitment process but unfortunately they were not able to offer resources to this endeavour. 68 schools were contacted in Birmingham between September 2014 and July 2015: 11 schools took part (16%), 25 schools refused directly (37%), and 32 schools refused indirectly by not responding (47%).

A reserve sample of schools was created for Birmingham in July 2015 (see section 2.1). Schools were sent another letter and flyer at the beginning of September 2015. In October 2015, a last attempt to encourage schools to take part was made – schools with three or more classes in the sampling frame

were offered £100 per class to take part in the survey. In spite of these efforts, no further schools were recruited in the city.

### *Sheffield*

In Sheffield, an introductory letter was also sent to the Head Teacher of each school with a letter of support from Children, Young People & Families at Sheffield City Council, and from South Yorkshire's Police and Crime Commissioner. Sheffield police agreed to actively support the project and in a number of schools, local police officers who regularly worked with particular schools approached them and brokered contact between the research team and the school. For schools without a designated police officer, the same contact was made by the research team as for Birmingham. 31 schools were contacted in Sheffield between September 2014 and December 2015: 8 schools took part (26%), 1 school took part but high level of technical failure on the day meant its data could not be included in the study (3%), 9 schools refused directly (29%), and 13 schools refused indirectly by not responding (42%).

### *Glasgow*

In Glasgow, formal research approval was sought from Glasgow City Council Education Services in April 2014 and approved in May 2014. In November 2014, an introductory letter was sent to the Head Teachers of 35 sampled schools, with details of the project (including website details) and a copy of the approval letter from Glasgow City Council. Over the following weeks, telephone contact was made with the schools and fieldwork arrangements were made with as many as possible. Some schools stated that were unable to take part due to limited computing facilities; therefore, all schools were offered the option of a paper survey. The Head Teachers of non-responding schools were contacted again formally in March 2015, May 2015 and October 2015. Additional telephone calls were made and emails were sent throughout this period, during which the fieldwork period was extended twice to encourage more schools to participate. In total, 10 schools (29%) participated in the research, 10 schools declined (29%) and the remaining 15 schools did not respond (42%).

### *Edinburgh*

A very similar procedure to that in Glasgow was followed in Edinburgh. Formal research approval was sought from the City of Edinburgh Education Department in April 2014 and approved in June 2014. In November 2014, an introductory letter was sent to the Head Teachers of 33 sampled schools with details of the project (including website details) and a confirmation of approval from the City of Edinburgh Council. Like the Glasgow schools, there were numerous attempts to encourage participation via telephone contact and those who were unable to use computer facilities were given the option of a paper survey. The Head Teachers of non-responding schools were contacted again formally in March 2015, May 2015 and October 2015. Additional telephone calls were made and emails were sent throughout this period, during which the fieldwork period was extended twice to encourage more schools to participate. In total, six schools (18%) participated in the research, 13 schools declined (39%) and the remaining 14 schools did not respond (42%).

Table 3: School-level response rates

	Birmingham	Sheffield	England	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Scotland
<b>School in original sample</b>	68	31	99	33	35	68
<b>Schools participating</b>	11	9	20	6	10	16
<b>Schools in reserve sample*</b>	29	n/a	29	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Schools in reserve participating</b>	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Overall school participation rate</b>	11%	29%	16%	18%	29%	24%

\* does not include the 6 schools in the second sampling frame which were also in the original sample

### 3.3 Measures

#### Child questionnaire

The ISRD3 child questionnaire consisted of a core set of questions employed by all countries, some optional sections which could be used by interested countries, and a country-specific module containing questions chosen by individual countries. The core questionnaire was made up of ten sections covering pupil's personal information (for example, age, ethnicity, religion, living circumstances), their relationship with their parents, their school life, any experiences of victimisation, leisure activities, attitude to offending and risk-taking, any participating in offending, substance use, perception of other people's attitudes to crime, and views of the police (for children in grade 9). Primary outcome variables were contained in the sections on victimisation and offending, however questions from each of the core sections will be used for theoretical analysis to test various crime theories (see background).

Two optional sections were employed by all the countries in the UPYC project (England, Scotland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the US): questions about children's security on their way to and from school, and a crosswise model question to check the likelihood that children had responded truthfully to the survey. Questions used by other ISRD countries on animal cruelty and gang membership were not included.

In terms of country-specific modules, both England and Scotland asked children in grades 8 and 9 about their views of the police, their experiences of police stop and search, and their experiences of online victimisation and offending. Table 4 presents an overview of the child questionnaire to enable easy comparison to other ISRD3 countries.

The questionnaire was available in either an online format or in paper form depending on the preferences of, and resources and space available, in schools. The online version was identical to the paper one, with the addition of follow-up questions at the end of the survey triggered by positive responses to questions about victimisation or offending. For the online version, Unipark online survey software was used ([www.unipark.com](http://www.unipark.com)). Paper questionnaires were input into digital form using EpiData software ([www.epidata.dk](http://www.epidata.dk)).

Minor adjustments were made to the survey after it was administered for the first time in a school in England and Scotland.

Table 4: ISRD3 child questionnaire

ISRD3 in UK	
Questionnaire	
<b>Survey type</b>	Online survey and paper survey
<b>Software</b>	Unipark
<b>Data entry software</b>	EpiData
<b>Questionnaire used</b>	Standard ISRD3 online
<b>Optional modules included</b>	Neighbourhood and crosswise response integrity questions
<b>Optional questions &amp; modules excluded</b>	Gangs
<b>National module</b>	Procedural justice questions asked of both grades 8 and 9. Sections on police stop and search, and online behaviour included.
<b>Translation</b>	N/A
<b>Translation precedents</b>	N/A
<b>% schools using online version</b>	England – 75% (n=15) Scotland – 25% (n=4)
<b>% schools using paper version</b>	England – 15% (n=3) Scotland – 38% (n=6)
<b>% schools using a mix of online and paper versions</b>	England – 10% (n=2) Scotland – 38% (n=6)

#### *Teacher questionnaire*

In each UPYC country, a short questionnaire was given to the teacher of each class to complete (either online or on paper). The questionnaire consisted of: background questions, for example, on role and length of service; questions about the number of pupils and behaviour/characteristics of the participating class; a section about the school environment and school policies; questions about parental involvement; contact with specialist organisations; and questions about pupils' and the school's neighbourhoods.

#### **3.4 Ethics and consent procedure**

In England, permission for the survey was sought from each Head Teacher and endorsement for the project was received from the central government Department for Education, the Department for Education and Skills in Birmingham City Council and the Department for Children, Young People and Families in Sheffield City Council. Additional endorsement letters were received from the West Midlands Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner. The study was approved by the ethics committee at Birkbeck University of London.

In Scotland, permission for the survey was sought from the local authority education departments (City of Edinburgh Council and Glasgow City Council) and from each individual Head Teacher. In addition to the ethical approval given by Birkbeck University of London, the study was approved by the University of Edinburgh's School of Law ethics committee.

Both countries adopted an opt-out consent procedure for parents. The research team composed a consent letter (appendix 1) and information sheets for children and parents of children (appendices 2 and 3) who were invited to take part in the study. Schools were asked to put their details on and

send them out. The consent letter asked parents to let the school know if they would prefer their child to be excluded from the study. The letter also contained details of the study’s website where information could be found with information about the research team. On the day of the survey, the survey’s administrator(s) re-affirmed to children that their involvement was voluntary and also that they could skip any questions that they did not wish to answer. Each class was given a numeric class ID to anonymise all responses.

*Table 5: Consent and permissions*

ISRD3 in UK	
Respondent consent	
<b>Research participation</b>	Voluntary, informed consent
<b>Possibility to skip individual questions</b>	Yes
Research permissions	
<b>Research permission by</b>	Department for Education, City of Edinburgh Council, Glasgow City Council, Sheffield City Council, Birmingham City Council. Each school Head Teacher.
<b>Parental consent policy</b>	Opt-out
<b>Parental pre-information</b>	Yes
<b>Number of students excluded by parents</b>	England – 10 Scotland – 4

### **3.5 Project management and fieldwork procedure**

The Principal Investigator for the UK part of the ORA project was Professor Mike Hough. Lauren Herlitz, Research Fellow, co-ordinated the project in England and Scotland and was responsible for its day-to-day running in England, including the supervision of research assistants who administered the survey in schools. Professor Susan McVie led the survey in Scotland and, with the assistance of Dr Kath Murray, co-ordinated and administered the survey in Scottish schools.

In England, students at Master’s level from the University of Birmingham and Sheffield University were employed to administer the survey. All researchers involved in administering the survey completed a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to fieldwork. Each research assistant received fieldwork training, three co-administered the survey with the project co-ordinator for the first time and one co-administered the survey with a trained research assistant for their first time. Research assistants completed an administration form and field notes after each school visit, detailing the school and classroom environment and any difficulties experienced in setting up or during the survey. Contacting schools, arranging a date for the survey, and ensuring schools had the information they needed on the consent process and the survey remained the responsibility of the project co-ordinator.

In Scotland, the survey was co-ordinated (contacting schools, arranging dates, providing information) and administered by Dr Murray and Professor McVie, with some additional fieldwork support from Dr Paul McGuinness (then based at University of Glasgow). All three researchers received a criminal records check and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) approval from Disclosure Scotland prior to fieldwork. In the majority of cases, each class was led by one researcher and a

teacher remained present in the classroom at all times. In a small number of cases, a teacher was not present in the classroom during fieldwork. Where necessary, two or more researchers were present to support children with additional learning needs. An administration form for each class was completed during fieldwork, detailing pupil attendance and conditions within the classroom. It was not possible to collect detailed field notes due to lack of time.

*Table 6: Descriptive information on the UK ISRD3 data collection*

ISRD3 in UK	
Fieldwork	
<b>Fieldwork started</b>	October 2014
<b>Fieldwork ended</b>	December 2015
<b>Supervision of data collection situations</b>	Research Fellows/Research Coordinators
<b>Deviations from standard procedure</b>	N/A
<b>Data collector training</b>	Yes
<b>School contacts organised by</b>	Research co-ordinators (LH, SM, KM)
<b>Administration form used</b>	Yes

At the outset of the project, it was envisaged that all schools would complete the survey online. However, it became clear that a paper version of the survey should be available for schools with limited computer facilities or with high demands on those facilities, and also for technical difficulties which arose on the day. The most common technical failure was the slow loading of each survey page on computers; this problem was so severe in one school that the survey could not be continued. Firewall issues could usually be anticipated before the day of the survey with a test link sent to teachers. Fieldwork was affected by some issues on the day (e.g. insufficient computers or system failure) which necessitated having paper copies as a backup on all fieldwork visits.

Table 7: Data collection situations based on data from administration forms<sup>2</sup>

	Birmingham	Sheffield	England	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Scotland
Number of classes participating	18	25	43	26	46	72
Teacher presence (% of classes)						
<b>Not at all</b>	0%	0%	0%	4%	38%	25%
<b>During introduction only</b>	0%	0%	0%	22%	5%	11%
<b>Present during data collection</b>	100%	100%	100%	74%	58%	64%
Noise disturbance reported (% of classes)						
<b>None</b>	24%	0%	10%	4%	16%	12%
<b>A few remarks</b>	41%	36%	38%	52%	38%	43%
<b>More than a few remarks or quite a lot</b>	35%	36%	36%	39%	38%	38%
<b>Very much or constantly</b>	0%	28%	17%	4%	8%	7%
Technical problems reported (% of classes who completed the survey online)						
<b>None</b>	36%	55%	47%	57%	44%	52%
<b>A few</b>	57%	25%	38%	36%	11%	26%
<b>More than a few or quite a lot</b>	7%	10%	9%	0%	11%	4%
<b>Very much or constant</b>	0%	10%	6%	7%	33%	17%

<sup>2</sup> Administration forms were collected for 94% of classes in Birmingham, 100% of classes in Sheffield, 92% of classes in Edinburgh and 91% of classes in Glasgow.

Table 8: Sample characteristics, individual respondent level, ISRD3 in UK

	Birmingham	Sheffield	England	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Scotland
Student population (grades 7 to 9)	37,318	16,405	53,723	12,391	15,827	28,758
<b>Registered students in sample classes</b>	435	629	1,064	522	1,090	1,612
Number of students excluded by parental decision	4	6	10	2	2	4
Number of students absent for other reasons <sup>a</sup>	37	46	83	73	228	301
Number of additional students who took part who were registered with another class <sup>b</sup>	2	22	24	1	13	14
<b>Total students present during data collection</b>	396	599	995	448	873	1,321
Students present but did not respond <sup>c</sup>	29	66	95	3	32	35
<b>Final sample size</b>	367	533	900	445	841	1,286
<b>Response rate (%)</b>	84%	85%	85%	85%	77%	80%

<sup>a</sup> Other reasons include children taking part in other school activities on the day of the survey, children away from school due to illness or truancy.

<sup>b</sup> On occasion, schools included children from additional classes to those in the sampling frame.

<sup>c</sup> This figure includes students who were in the class who did not respond, who submitted joke answers, who completed less than 80% of the survey, or where severe technical problems meant that less than 80% of the survey was completed (data from one school in Sheffield were excluded for this reason).

### 3.6 Data management and cleaning

None of the online or paper surveys contained children's or teacher's names, date of birth or address, nor individual ID codes. Anonymised data from the online surveys was held on the Unipark server and could only be downloaded by the research co-ordinator through a password-protected login. The paper surveys were sent to the project co-ordinator in England via recorded delivery and entered into the EpiData software package by data entry assistants.

The German team at the University of Hamburg were responsible for merging the paper and online versions and for cleaning the dataset (in liaison with the UK project co-ordinator).

## 4. Concluding notes

The research team achieved samples of 900 school-children aged 12 to 16 years from 20 schools in England and 1,286 children from 16 schools in Scotland. Recruiting schools in the UK proved very difficult with a school response rate of 16% for England and 24% for Scotland, and consequently it was not possible to achieve the desired sample size of 1,800 for each country. Pressure on school time and resources and schools feeling over-researched were some of the frequent reasons given by staff for non-participation, reasons which are unlikely to be linked with the primary outcomes variables of young people's victimisation and offending. Participation at the level of individual students was high, with few parents excluding their children from taking part and few students opting-out of the

survey. Sufficient data was collected to meet the study's objectives to compare prevalence rates of victimisation and offending between samples, though with caution that samples may not be representative at city or country level, and to test the relative merit of different criminological theories in explaining variation in crime.

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**Appendix 1: Consent letter**

School headed paper

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our school has agreed to take part in the survey – **Understanding and Preventing Youth Crime (UPYC)** – with Birkbeck University of London. This research study is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and has the full support of Birmingham City Council and the Department for Education.

The survey forms part of a much larger international survey of school children’s experiences of crime and related behaviour, taking place in around 35 countries mainly in Europe but also in other continents. The study aims to test different theories of why some children commit crime and also why some children become the victims of crime. You can read more about the study on the UPYC website – [www.upyc-uk.com](http://www.upyc-uk.com).

Your child’s class has been selected to take part in the survey. The enclosed information sheet explains what is involved in taking part. No information is being collected that will enable individuals to be identified, and the survey is being completed anonymously.

If you are happy for your child to take part, then you do not need to do anything. However, if you do not want your child to take part in the study, please return the attached slip to [insert named person] by [insert date]. Where parents have agreed, children will then be asked if they want to take part, and the final decision will be up to them.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]  
Head teacher

- 
- I do not want my child to take part in the Understanding and Preventing Youth Crime study.

Date:

Parent/guardian’s name (please print): .....

Child’s name: .....

Child’s form tutor: .....

## Appendix 2: Information sheet for parents



### Information sheet for parents and carers Understanding and Preventing Youth Crime (UPYC)

#### What is UPYC?

UPYC is a research study about school children's experiences of crime and victimisation, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

Children aged 12 to 15 in Sheffield, Birmingham, Glasgow and Edinburgh are being asked to take part in a survey. The survey asks children about their experiences of and attitudes towards crime and the police, whether they have been a victim of crime and feel safe in their neighbourhood, and about any experiences they have had of using alcohol or drugs. It also asks children about their everyday lives – how children spend their leisure time, how they feel about school and learning, and how they get along with their parents/carers. You can find more details at [www.upyc-uk.com](http://www.upyc-uk.com).

There are four other countries taking part in UPYC – France, Germany, the Netherlands and the US. UPYC is part of a much larger international study – the International Self-Report Delinquency survey – in which 30 countries are taking part. Each country will be carrying out the survey in two of their own cities. This is so that we can test out different theories of why young people offend or become victims of crime.

#### Why was my child invited to take part?

Your child's class was selected at random from a list of all form classes in year groups 8, 9 and 10 in your city. Classes were randomly chosen using a computer programme to ensure there was a no bias in the selection of schools – each class had an equal chance of being chosen. In total, 900 children in each city will take part. Using this method, we will be able to understand how well the sample represents all children aged 12 to 15 in each city.

#### What will my child do if they take part?

They will be asked to complete a survey, which can be carried out online or on paper. The survey takes about 50 minutes to complete and all children in the class will complete the survey at the same time. The research team will liaise with the school to decide the most

convenient time and setting for the survey. The survey will not interfere with your child's learning.

### **Will anyone know what answers my child has given?**

No. No one will be able to identify your child's answers to the survey. We will not ask for any information that could identify your child – e.g. name, date of birth, address. It will not be possible to identify any individual child or school in any report on the survey.

Only the research team will be able to see the data that is collected from the survey, and this will be held anonymously. All data will be held securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Who are the individuals responsible for the project?**

Professor Mike Hough, Associate Director, and Lauren Herlitz, Research Fellow, from the Institute of Criminal Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck, University of London, lead the project in the UK, in consultation with Professor Susan McVie at the University of Edinburgh.

### **What do I do if I don't want my child to take part?**

Participation in UPYC is completely voluntary. If you do not want your child to take part, please return the slip at the bottom of the letter to the school. You do not need to give a reason for not taking part.

### **What if my child does not want to take part?**

Participation in UPYC is completely voluntary. We will explain the project to all children whose parents have agreed for them to participate and we will ask children if they would like to take part, emphasising that it is their decision. If they do not want to take part, they will be asked to tell their teacher or a member of the research team.

### **Will I be able to find out about the findings of the study?**

A summary of the overall findings for the city will be sent to schools who take part. There will not be any reports on individual schools to protect the anonymity of the participants.



## Appendix 3: Information sheet for young people



### Information sheet for young people Understanding and Preventing Youth Crime (UPYC)

#### What is UPYC?

UPYC is a study about young people's experiences of crime – we are inviting you to take part, as well as other children from your city.

Your views are important to us and we are interested in learning more about young people's lives. We would like to ask you about:

- How you get along with your parents or carers
- How you feel about school and learning
- Your experiences of and views about crime and the police
- How you spend your free time outside of school
- Whether you have been a victim of crime and feel safe in your neighbourhood
- Whether you have tried drinking alcohol or ever taken drugs

Young people aged 12 to 15 in your city, in Sheffield, Glasgow and Edinburgh have been invited to take part. There are four other countries taking part in the study – France, Germany, the Netherlands and the US.

The study will help us to learn why some children commit crime and also why some children can become victims of crime.

#### Why was I asked to take part?

Your class was chosen at random from all form classes in year groups 8, 9 and 10 in your city. All of the students in your form class have been asked to take part. Choosing classes at random is similar to how the national lottery works – lottery numbers are chosen at random out of 49 possible numbers and each number has an equal chance of being chosen.

In total, 900 children from each city will take part from about 20 to 30 different schools.

## **What will I be asked to do if I take part?**

You will be asked to complete a survey. The survey takes about 50 minutes to complete and all children in the class will complete the survey at the same time. The research team will arrange with the school the best time and setting for the survey.

## **Will anyone know what answers I have given to questions in the survey?**

No. No one will know how you have filled in the survey – not your teachers, parents, friends or even the research team. We will not ask you to put your name or any other information in the survey that could identify you.

Only the research team will be able to see the data that is collected from the survey. They will not be able to identify any child, and their reports will not identify children or schools that take part. All data will be kept safely, following the laws in the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Do my parents or carers know I have been asked to take part?**

Yes. We have sent your parents/carers information about the study and they have agreed that we can ask you whether you would like to take part. It is up to you whether you would like to complete the survey.

## **What do I do if I don't want to take part?**

Taking part is completely your decision. If you do not want to take part, tell your teacher or a member of the research team. You do not have to give a reason for not wanting to take part.

## **If I take part, is it ok for me to talk to my friends, parents or teachers about the survey afterwards?**

Yes – only if you want to. After you have completed the survey, you can speak to your friends, parents or teachers about the survey.

But remember that some of your friends might not want to talk about their answers and that is ok too. If anything you have been asked in the survey worries you or you have a question, talk to a teacher that you trust.

