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Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) 2015: Online Pilot

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

social research

Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle And Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) 2015: Online Pilot

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Contents

Executive Summary

Background and aims

The Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) is a continuation of a long established series of national surveys on smoking, drinking and drug use.

In the past the survey has always been administered on paper. However, as technology has advanced, the transition from paper to online administration is being considered for the 2015 wave of SALSUS. The move to a web-based survey is in line with other national surveys and reflects greater engagement with IT, particularly among young people.

In spring 2015, Ipsos MORI conducted an online pilot ahead of the potential move to conduct some of the SALSUS 2015 fieldwork online rather than on paper.

The overall purpose of the pilot was to:

- pilot the instructions given to both liaison teachers and class teachers

- ensure that the survey works as it is intended to (e.g. that the links work and that the data is submitted successfully)

- identify any problems and potential solutions

- identify any ways in which the survey processes can be improved and the burden for schools can be minimised.

The pilot was not intended to identify or measure any difference in response between the paper and online modes. This would be the purpose of the mode experiment. However, if there were major concerns (e.g. clear evidence of poor quality data), that would be highlighted.

Methods

Twelve schools, each in a different local authority, took part. The survey was piloted with four classes in each school. Eight schools administered the survey on PCs and four on tablets.

Researchers visited six schools to: observe a class completing the survey online; undertake a focus group with pupils; and undertake depth interviews with liaison teachers and class teachers who organised and administered the survey.

Researchers conducted telephone depth interviews with liaison teachers in the other six schools.

Key findings

Overall, pilot schools found that administering the survey online was relatively straightforward. Pupil reactions were positive and they would prefer to complete the survey online rather than on paper. There was only one major problem encountered: in two of the twelve schools the Local Authority (LA) firewall blocked the names of specific drugs so the survey was stopped at the drugs section. Now that this issue has been identified, we can liaise with LA IT officers to address this in advance of the main fieldwork.

Pupils were generally positive about their experience of completing the survey online and the dominant view was that an online survey was 'easier', 'more fun', 'less dull' and 'more modern' than a paper survey. In addition, they frequently mentioned the environmental benefits. Teachers also thought that pupils reacted better to an online survey because they found it easier and more engaging.

On balance, pupils tended to feel that an online survey would lead to more honest answers. However, they perceived advantages and disadvantages to each mode.

Overall, both liaison and class teachers were positive about administering the survey online and found it straightforward. The need to book ICT suites (or laptops or tablets) meant that aspect was more burdensome than administering a paper survey and required more advance planning – but it was do-able. However, they also reported that once that aspect was arranged, the actual administration of the survey with the class was much easier.

Topline analysis of the data suggests that there are no major problems with data quality. The responses relating to some key measures (regular smoking, drinking in the last week and ever taken drugs) are broadly in line with what might be expected given the 2013 SALSUS results.

On the basis that there were no unresolvable problems identified, our recommendation is to proceed past Break Point Two and undertake the mode experiment (i.e. undertake half the main fieldwork online and half on paper).

1 Background and aims

1.1 The Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) is a continuation of a long established series of national surveys on smoking, drinking and drug use. These were carried out jointly in Scotland and England between 1982 and 2000, to provide a national picture of young peoples' smoking, drinking, and drug use behaviours within the context of other lifestyle, health and social factors. Since 2002, Scotland has developed its own, more tailored, survey known as SALSUS.

1.2 SALSUS is currently paper-based. However, as technology has advanced, the transition from paper to online administration is being considered for the 2015 wave of SALSUS.

1.3 Moving from paper to online administration can bring cost efficiencies and improved data quality. However, previous research and experience suggests it can be harder for schools to administer online surveys and it can result in decreased response rates.

1.4 Ipsos MORI Scotland have been commissioned to undertake the 2015 wave of SALSUS and, as part of that contract, to conduct an electronic trial comprising a feasibility study (published), then (depending on the findings) an online pilot (this report) and then (depending on the findings) a mode effect experiment to assess whether the change of mode has any sizeable impact on results.

1.5 The feasibility study concluded that it did appear feasible to conduct SALSUS online in 2015 and that the online pilot should proceed. This report presents the findings from that online pilot.

   The overall purpose of the pilot was to:

- pilot the instructions given to both liaison teachers and class teachers

- ensure that the survey works as it is intended to (e.g. that the links work and that the data is submitted successfully)

- identify any problems and potential solutions

- identify any ways in which the survey processes can be improved and the burden for schools can be minimised.

1.6 The pilot also explored the extent to which the following potential problems, identified in the feasibility study, affected the administration of the survey:

- timetabling issues

- availability of computers

- connectivity issues

- software compatibility/website issues

- accommodating the requirements of pupils with additional support needs

- whether it was possible to administer the survey in exam conditions.

1.7   The effect on pupils was also explored, specifically:

- pupils' overall reaction to completing the survey online

- whether pupils took the survey seriously

- whether pupils appeared to be taking time and care over their answers

- whether there appeared to be much conferring over answers

- whether pupils had concerns about confidentiality.

1.8   The pilot was not intended to identify or measure any difference in response between the paper and online modes. This would be the purpose of the mode experiment. However, if there were major concerns (e.g. clear evidence of poor quality data), that would be highlighted.
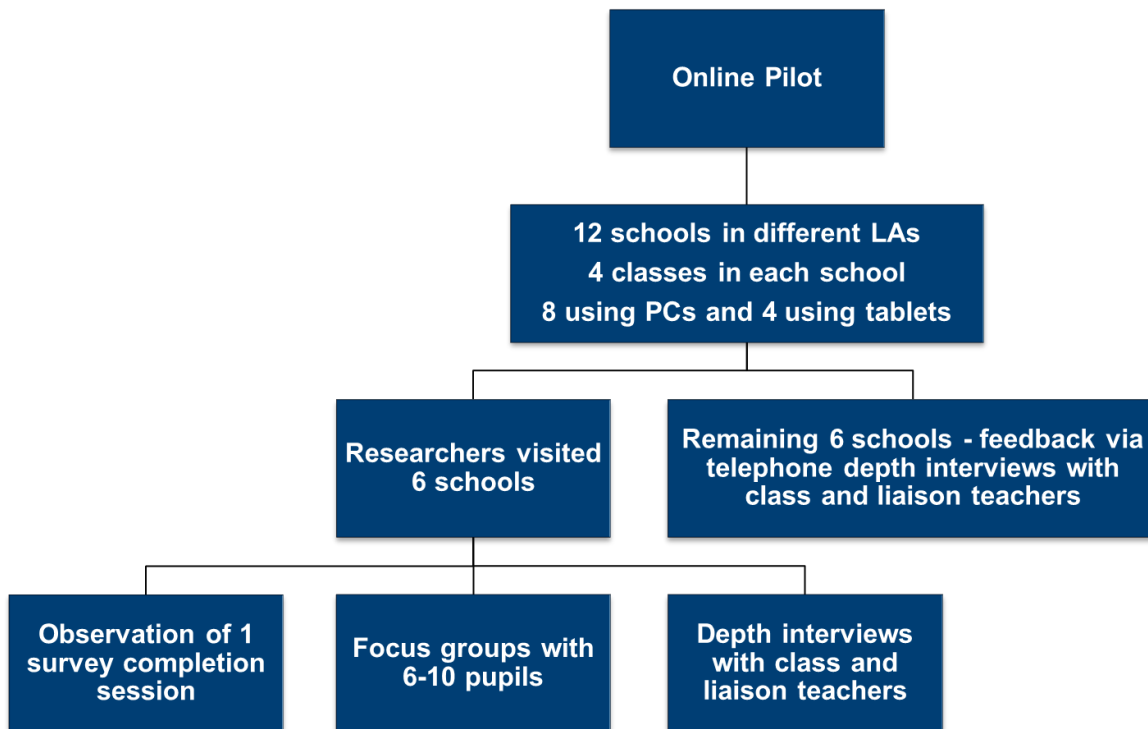
1.9   The pilot was also not intended to explore wider issues about the administration of surveys in schools which might apply regardless of the mode.

2 Methods

Overview

2.1 The online pilot methoidology is summarised in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1 Online Pilot Methodology

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │    Online Pilot     │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                              │
              ┌───────────────────────────────────┐
              │   12 schools in different LAs      │
              │   4 classes in each school         │
              │   8 using PCs and 4 using tablets  │
              └───────────────────────────────────┘
                    │                      │
      ┌──────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────────────┐
      │  Researchers visited │   │ Remaining 6 schools - feedback │
      │      6 schools       │   │ via telephone depth interviews │
      └──────────────────────┘   │ with class and liaison teachers│
                                  └────────────────────────────────┘
        │            │            │
┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│ Observation  │ │ Focus groups │ │    Depth     │
│ of 1 survey  │ │ with 6-10    │ │ interviews   │
│ completion   │ │   pupils     │ │ with class   │
│   session    │ │              │ │ and liaison  │
└──────────────┘ └──────────────┘ │   teachers   │
                                   └──────────────┘
```

2.2 A total of 12 schools took part in the pilot – 11 were local authority schools and 1 was independent.

2.3 The schools were in 12 different Local Authorities (LAs). The results of the feasibility study conducted in the autumn of 2014 were used to determine which LAs to target. In order that the pilot was not biased towards those authorities which seemed best placed to carry out online research, and to increase the chances of identifying problems, the sample was skewed towards those which the results of the study suggested would be more problematic.

2.4 The geographic spread included rural authorities where broadband coverage/connectivity might be problematic.

2.5 Schools were recruited by the research team at Ipsos MORI by way of a letter then a follow-up telephone call with the headteacher. Subsequent arrangements were made through a nominated liaison teacher.

2.6 The fieldwork replicated the intended main-stage fieldwork process as closely as possible. Recruited schools were sent packs containing instructions for liaison and class teachers, parent opt-out letters, pupil information sheets, and

a sheet of 30 stickers per class (each with the survey web address and a unique, anonymous log-in code) for pupils to select at random. Eight of the schools administered the survey on PCs and four used tablet devices. Two Secondary 2 and two Secondary 4 classes took part in the survey in each school.

2.7 Researchers from Ipsos MORI visited six of the schools to carry out observations and interviews. Class teachers at the remaining six schools were sent feedback forms, and their liaison teachers were interviewed by telephone.

2.8 In each of the schools visited by a researcher, the pilot comprised five strands:

- observation of one class completing the survey

- a focus group with 6-10 pupils

- interviews with class teachers who administered the survey (which in some cases was also the liaison teacher)

- an interview with the liaison teacher

- feedback forms from class teachers.

2.9 In the schools which were not visited, a researcher conducted a telephone interview with the liaison teacher after the participating classes had completed the survey. To feed into this, liaison teachers sought feedback from the teachers who administered the survey. In addition, the liaison teacher at one school held a feedback session with pupils.

2.10 All discussion guides were designed by Ipsos MORI, and can be found in Annex A.

Limitations

2.11 Although the sample was designed to avoid any bias, the profile of schools which participated may have led to fewer problems being identified. The reasons for this were that:

- it is possible that the schools which agreed to take part in the pilot may have been those more likely to consent to participating in online surveys, and/or those more able to administer a survey in this way

- schools were free to choose which classes would take part in the pilot (rather than classes being selected at random as would happen for the main-stage fieldwork). This could have led schools to choose classes which had Personal and Social Education (PSE) time at the same time as the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) suite was vacant, or on the basis that certain classes may face fewer problems than others (e.g. in terms of behaviour or support needs)

- one teacher who was interviewed said that she thought that she, and the other colleague who administered the survey in the school, were more comfortable with technology than the other two PSE teachers - and she wondered if this was why her class had been selected (by the liaison teacher). This may also have happened elsewhere.

2.12 On the other hand, the pilot was conducted at a busier time of year for schools than the main-stage fieldwork (i.e. the spring rather than the autumn term) and the fieldwork period was also significantly shorter than the main-stage fieldwork period. This is likely to have exacerbated some of the problems of booking ICT suites and equipment.

3 Key Findings

- Overall, pilot schools found that administering the survey online was relatively straightforward. Pupil reactions were positive and they would prefer to complete the survey online rather than on paper. There was only one major problem encountered: in two of the twelve schools the Local Authority (LA) firewall blocked the names of specific drugs so the survey was stopped at the drugs section. Now that this issue has been identified, we can liaise with LA IT officers to address this in advance of the main fieldwork.

- Pupils were generally positive about their experience of completing the survey online and the dominant view was that an online survey was 'easier', 'more fun', 'less dull' and 'more modern' than a paper survey. In addition, they frequently mentioned the environmental benefits. Teachers also thought that pupils reacted better to an online survey because they found it easier and more engaging.

- On balance, pupils tended to feel that an online survey would lead to more honest answers. However, they perceived advantages and disadvantages to each mode.

- Overall, both liaison and class teachers were positive about administering the survey online and found it straightforward. The need to book ICT suites (or laptops or tablets) meant that aspect was more burdensome than administering a paper survey and required more advance planning – but it was do-able. However, they also reported that once that aspect was arranged, the actual administration of the survey with the class was much easier.

- Topline analysis of the data suggests that there are no major problems with data quality. The responses relating to some key measures (regular smoking, drinking in the last week and ever taken drugs) are broadly in line with what might be expected given the 2013 SALSUS results.

Overview

3.1 Overall, pilot schools found that administering the survey online was relatively straightforward. Pupil reactions were positive and they would prefer to complete the survey online rather than on paper. There was only one major problem encountered: in two of the twelve schools the LA firewall blocked the names of specific drugs so the survey was stopped at the drugs section. Now that this issue has been identified, we can liaise with LA IT officers to address this in advance of the main fieldwork.

Pupil reactions

3.2 Pupils were generally positive about their experience of completing the survey online and the dominant view was that an online survey was 'easier', 'more

fun', 'less dull' and 'more modern' than a paper survey. In addition, they frequently mentioned the environmental benefits (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Pupil reactions - advantages of online
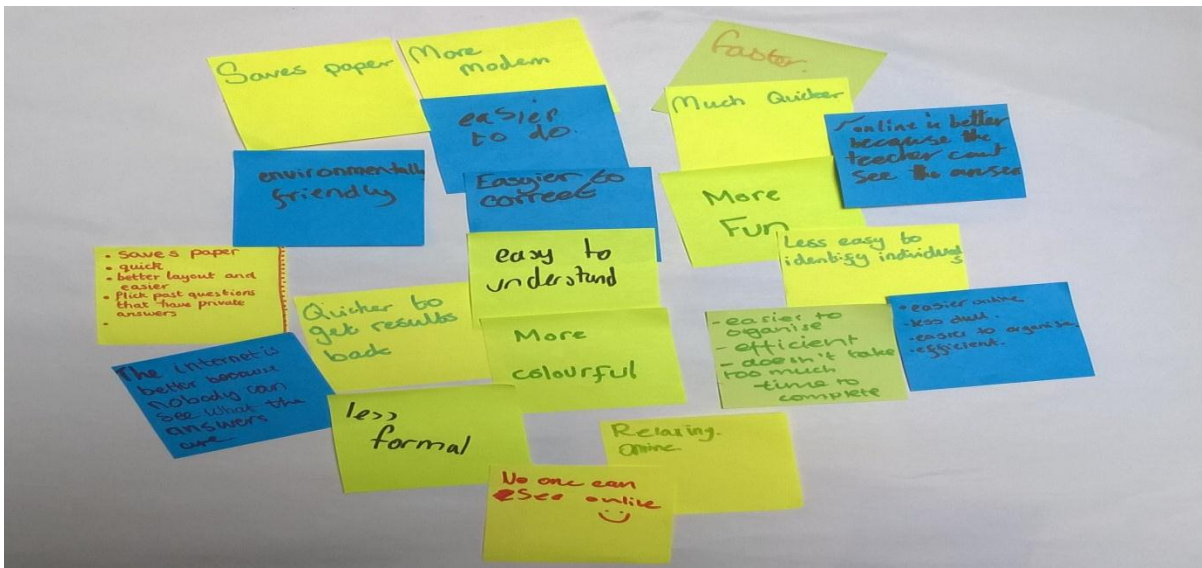
3.3 Teachers also thought that pupils reacted better to an online survey because they found it easier and more engaging. There were mixed views on whether pupils took it more or less 'seriously' than on paper: one view was that they did take it more seriously because they were more engaged; another view was that they took it a little less seriously because it was 'less like an exam'; others thought it made no difference.

Perceptions of anonymity

3.4 If reported levels of substance use differ significantly depending on whether the survey is completed online or on paper, this is most likely to be because there is a perceived difference in anonymity. We would predict that pupils would provide more honest answers in the mode that they perceive as more anonymous. In relation to self-reported substance use, more honest answers are generally assumed to mean higher levels of reported use.

3.5 On balance, pupils tended to feel that an online survey would lead to more honest answers. However, they perceived advantages and disadvantages to each mode.

3.6 Although pupils place their completed paper surveys in blank envelopes and seal them before they are collected by the teacher, there was a concern that teachers might open the envelopes and look at the answers (and be able to identify who had completed the questionnaire from handwriting, specific responses or some other means) (see Figure 3.2). Concerns were also raised about envelopes getting lost and about the paper questionnaire being more of a 'permanent record' than an online survey.

Figure 3.2 Pupil reactions – disadvantages of paper
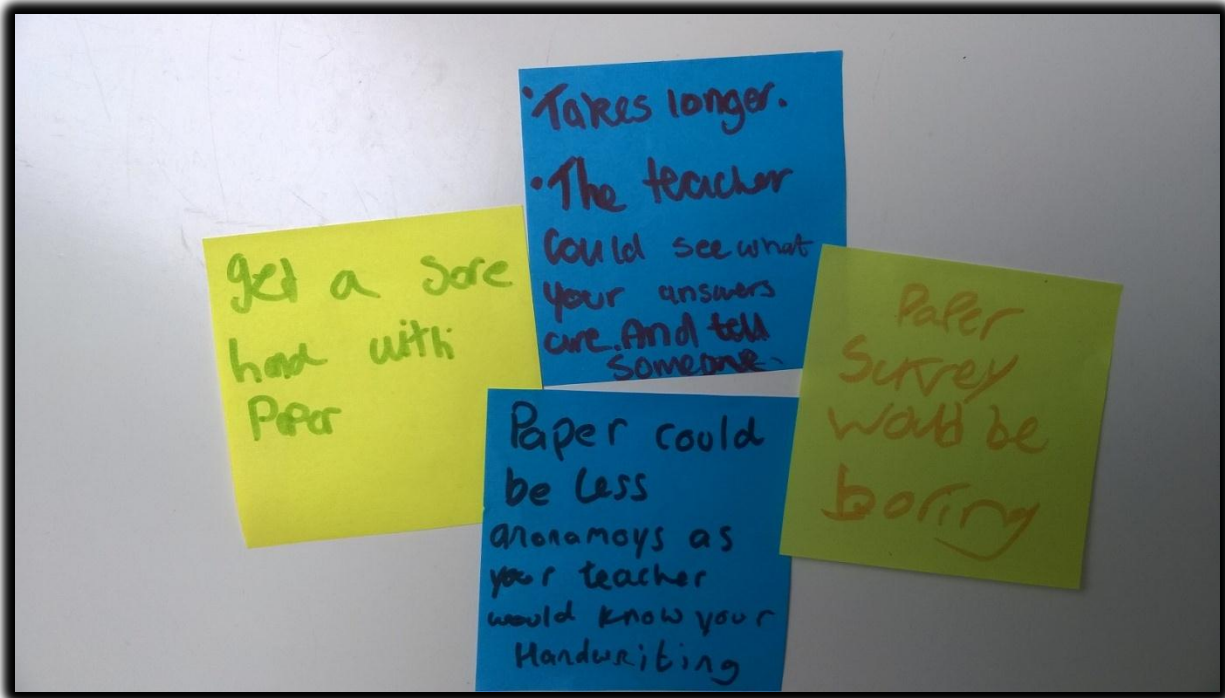
3.7 On the other hand, it was generally felt that pupils could see the screens of those next to them (if they wanted to) and teachers could see screens some of the time if they were moving round the room. However, there appeared to be less concern about this than about the possibility of teachers opening the envelopes and being able to read through the whole paper questionnaire. There was also a feeling that, although someone might be able to see one question at a time on the screen, a pupil could answer quickly and move on to the next screen. In contrast, although they might be less easy to see in general (and easier to 'hide'), responses on a paper questionnaire are potentially visible for longer.

Figure 3.3 Pupil reactions – advantages of paper
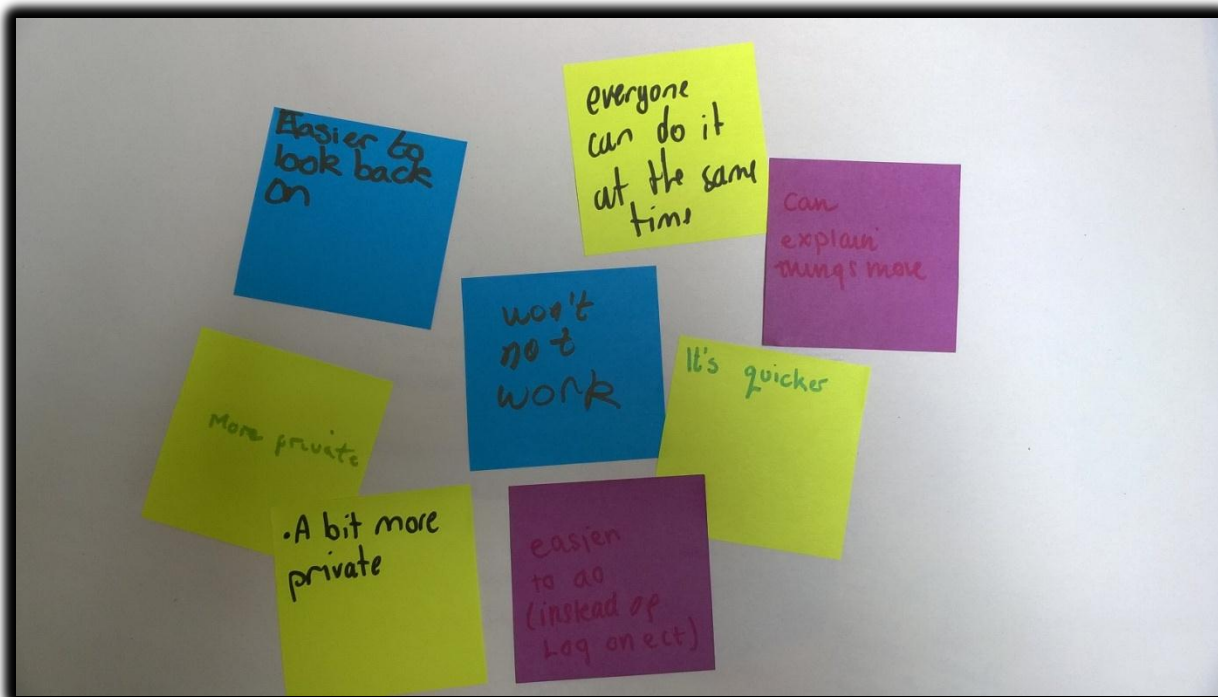
3.8 The use of a sheet of sticky labels with the web address and unique log-ins (which teachers handed round for pupils to choose and peel off a label at random) worked well. Pupils generally understood that they could not be identified from their log-in code. However, there were still a few who were concerned that their online responses could be linked back to them (either through the log-in or through the tablet/PC that they used).

3.9 It is not possible to assess from the pilot what impact these perceptions might have on responses. However, if they lead to a sizeable difference, this will be identified in the mode experiment.

3.10 It should be noted that pupils' main concern in this regard was not about teachers or other pupils seeing their responses, but about the potential to be identified by their postcode. Although this also applies to paper and is therefore not directly related to the move to online, it is discussed in sections 3.18-3.22 below as it appeared to be a significant issue which may be affecting responses.

Teacher reactions

3.11 Overall, both liaison and class teachers were positive about administering the survey online and found it straightforward. The need to book ICT suites (or laptops or tablets) meant that aspect was more burdensome than administering a paper survey and required more advance planning – but it was do-able. However, they also reported that once that aspect was arranged, the actual administration of the survey with the class was much easier: there were fewer materials to deal with; it was quicker; pupils were more engaged and

found it easier; and once pupils had completed and submitted their surveys, the class teacher did not need to do any more (with a paper survey, they need to ensure they have collected them all in and then take them to the office for courier collection).

Aspects that worked well

3.12 The data from the pilot was not cleaned and was not analysed in detail: any meaningful comparisons with paper would require the robust sampling and analysis that would be undertaken in the mode experiment. However, a topline analysis of the data suggests that there are no major problems with data quality. The responses relating to some key measures (regular smoking, drinking in the last week and ever taken drugs) and demographics (age and sex) are broadly in line with what might be expected given the 2013 SALSUS results.

3.13 Aspects of the process that worked well and require little or no change in advance of the main fieldwork were:

- the use of sticky labels to randomly distribute unique log-ins

- the overall look of the questionnaire

- the instructions in the questionnaire

- the instructions for liaison teachers and class teachers (some did comment that they were rather long - but others felt they were comprehensive and it was better to provide more rather than less information).

Main problems

3.14 The biggest problem identified was that, in two schools, the LA firewall blocked the names of specific drugs. This meant that the survey stopped at the first drugs question and pupils could not go any further. In one school, a LA IT officer was able to unblock the terms and pupils in the later classes were able to complete the survey. In the other school, the school-based IT officer attempted to unblock the page but was unable to do so.

3.15 Now that this problem has been identified, we can raise the issue when we contact LA IT officers in advance of the main fieldwork. We will also ask liaison teachers to check the survey in advance (and will provide spare log-ins for this purpose).

3.16 In a couple of the schools which piloted the survey with tablets, there were problems with iPads not being charged and with a poor Wi-Fi connection (see Figure 3.4). However, both these schools indicated that they would have chosen to administer the survey on PCs, and only used tablets because they had been asked to do so for the purposes of the pilot. We will warn schools about these issues. In the main fieldwork, it is likely that the few schools which

choose to administer the survey on tablets will do so because they use tablets quite frequently and do not anticipate problems.

Figure 3.4 Pupil reactions – disadvantages of online
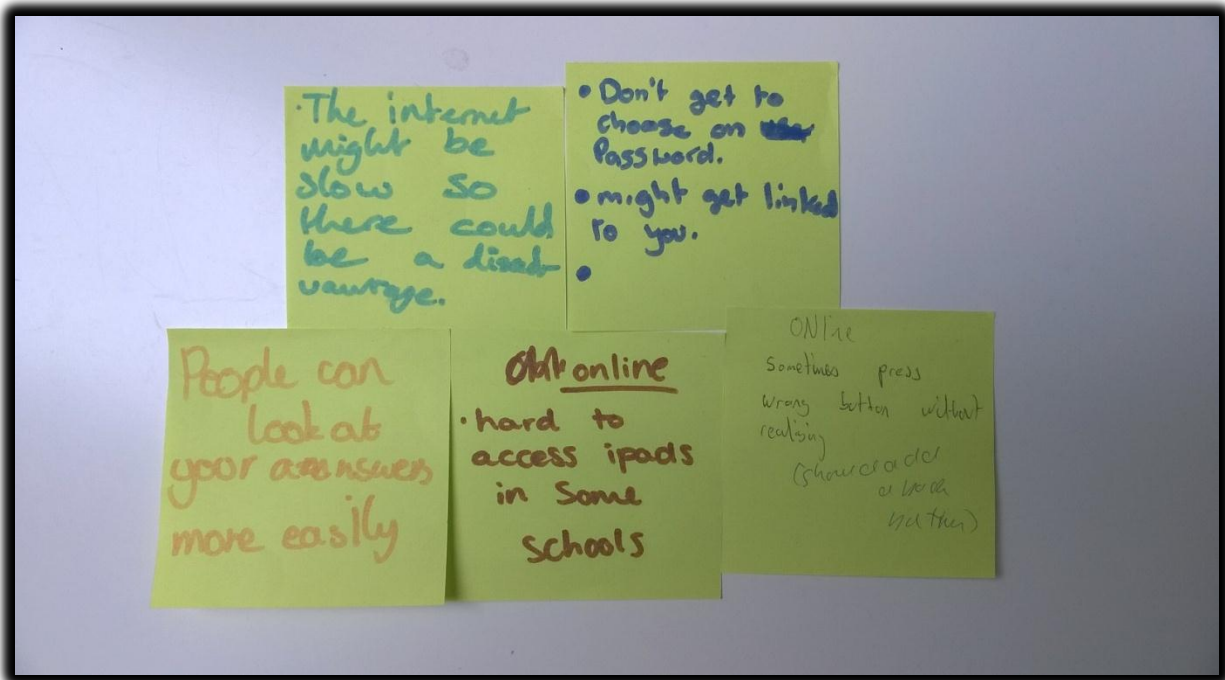
Postcodes

3.17 The questionnaire asks pupils for their home postcode. It was clear from the focus groups with pupils that there was considerable concern about this because they felt it made them identifiable (particularly in combination with their month and year of birth). They did not understand why it was necessary. There is the option to click 'prefer not to say' (and 39% selected this option) but it appeared that many did provide their postcode despite their concerns and suspicions about it – and this may have affected their subsequent responses. One girl said that she gave her postcode but, because she had done so, she did not answer one of the subsequent questions (on drinking) truthfully.

3.18 While this issue also applies to the paper survey (and the aim of the pilot was to identify issues relating to the move to online), we have raised it here because it emerged as the biggest concern around anonymity and it seems likely that, to some extent at least, it is affecting responses. There are a number of ways this could be addressed (or explored further) and we recommend that this issue is given further consideration. Options include:

- adding a short explanation at the postcode question of why the information is useful e.g. 'We ask for your postcode so we can compare results from different types of area. For example, we can compare rural areas with cities and richer areas with poorer areas

- adding a further reassurance that we will not use it to identify people e.g. 'Only the research team at Ipsos MORI will see your postcode and we have no way of using your postcode to identify you'

- removing the question on month of birth (since this is little used in analysis)

- separating the postcode question from the other demographic questions (e.g. school year, year of birth, sex) so pupils are not misled into thinking they might be linked with postcode in order to identify them.

3.19 All of these amendments could be applied to both the paper and online questionnaires and so would not affect the mode experiment.

3.20 Consideration should also be given to undertaking a split sample experiment in a future wave (not at the same time as the mode experiment) where half the sample are asked for their postcode and half are not and any differences in responses are measured.

3.21 Pupils concerns about providing their postcode also raises questions about the impact that data linkage (which is being considered for future waves of SALSUS and for other surveys) might have on their perceptions of confidentiality. Overall, pilot schools found that administering the survey online was relatively straightforward. Pupil reactions were positive and they would prefer to complete the survey online rather than on paper. There was only one major problem encountered: in two of the twelve schools the LA firewall blocked the names of specific drugs so the survey was stopped at the drugs section. Now that this issue has been identified, we can liaise with LA IT officers to address this in advance of the main fieldwork.

Specific issues identified

3.22 The list below outlines the list of specific issues that were highlighted by participants in the online pilot.

1. Confidentiality concerns:

   o Teacher seeing the screen

   o Other pupils seeing the screen

   o Where the data goes.

2. Changes in pupil reactions:

   o More enjoyable/engaging

   o More talking/conferring

   o Quicker to complete.

3. Technical issues:

   o Firewall blocking drugs questions

   o Problems with Wi-Fi connection

   o Tablets/laptops not being charged

   o Scrolling at long lists/questions running over two pages.

4. Logistical

   o Support for pupils with Additional Support Needs

   o Difficulties in following up on absent pupils.

3.23 For full details of the issues identified by pilot participants and our recommended actions please see Annex B.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

4.1 Overall, pilot schools found that administering the survey online was relatively straightforward and both liaison and class teachers were positive about the process. Pupils were generally positive about their experience of completing the survey online and the dominant view was that an online survey was 'easier', 'more fun', 'less dull' and 'more modern' than a paper survey.

4.2 There was only one major problem encountered: in two of the twelve schools the LA firewall blocked the names of specific drugs so the survey was stopped at the drugs section. Now that this issue has been identified, we can liaise with LA IT officers to address this in advance of the main fieldwork.

4.3 The pilot was also useful in identifying several aspects of the survey method that can be 'fine-tuned' to improve the process. These changes will help to make administering the survey online run as smoothly as possible, and reduce burden, for the schools involved in SALSUS 2015.

4.4 Topline analysis of the data suggests that there are no major problems with data quality. However, it must be borne in mind that the pilot was not intended to identify or measure any difference in response between the paper and online modes. This will be the purpose of the mode experiment.

Recommendation

4.5 On the basis that there were no unresolvable problems identified, our recommendation is to proceed past Break Point Two and undertake the mode experiment (i.e. undertake half the main fieldwork online and half on paper).

Annex A: Topic guides

CLASS/LIAISON TEACHER GUIDE

Introduction

Introduce self, Ipsos MORI, thank for taking the time to speak to us

As you probably know, SALSUS is a Scottish Government survey which has been running since 1982. The survey asks pupils in S2 and S4, in schools all across Scotland, about their health and lifestyle, including their smoking, drinking and drug use.

In the past the survey has always been completed on paper but we now want to see if it can be run online. So, today I want to talk to you about your experience of piloting SALSUS 2015 online. This will help us to advise the Scottish Government on whether or not it is feasible to move the survey online in 2015. Can I just double check, have you administered one of the online pilot classes?

The interview is confidential to the research team. While we might quote what you say (assuming you give your permission) no school or individual will be named in the research report.

Names

Permission to record

General reactions

- Overall, how did you find the process of administering SALSUS online?

- What problems did you face administering the survey online?
    - o How serious were the problems?
    - o How, if at all, were they overcome?

- What, if anything, do you think worked well about the online methodology?

- Have you administered the paper version in the past? How does administering it online compare? What's better/worse?

Pupil reactions

- What was the pupils' reaction to completing the survey online?
    - o How easy or difficult did they find it? (vs. paper)
    - o How seriously did they take it? (vs. paper)
    - o Was there any conferring over answers? (vs. paper)
    - o Were there any concerns about confidentiality? (vs. paper)

Administering the survey

What did you think about the class teacher/liaison instructions?
    - o Was there any information missing?
    - o How could they be improved?

IF YOU NOTICED SOMETHING IN THE CLASS OBSERVATION THAT HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED

- When I observed one of the classes complete the survey, I noticed … What are your views on this?

IF NOT ALREADY COVERED

- Our feasibility study highlighted some possible issues that might occur while administering an online survey. When the pilot took place did you encounter any of these things?

IF ANY OF THESE THINGS WERE A PROBLEM, WAS IT A SERIOUS PROBLEM AND HOW, IF AT ALL, WAS IT RESOLVED.

   o Not having enough computers for the whole class.

   o Problems with computers not working.

   o Problems with software compatibility or out-of-date browsers.

   o The survey site was blocked by a filter or firewall.

   o Timetabling difficulties

   o Problems with bandwidth or connectivity

   o Problems creating exam conditions in the classroom

   o Accessibility issues for Additional Support Needs pupils

- Could anything be done to make it easier for school to administer the survey online?

- Do you have any other suggestions on how to improve the way the survey is administered online?

Thank you very much for your time.

PUPIL TOPIC GUIDE

Introduction

Introduce self, Ipsos MORI

SALSUS is an important survey which has been running since 1982. The survey asks pupils in S2 and S4, in schools all across Scotland, about their health and lifestyle, including their smoking, drinking and drug use. The results of the survey will help provide information and advice for young people on smoking, drinking and drug use.

In the past the survey has always been completed on paper but we now want to see if it can be done online. We asked your school to test out the online SALSUS survey for us. Can I just confirm that all of you have actually completed the survey online in the last week, it might even have been today?

So, in this group, I want to talk to you about how you found filling in the survey. I'm not so much interested in what your actual answers are as how you found the experience of answering the questions.

As you probably remember, some of the questions are about smoking, drinking and drug use and things you might not want teachers or your parents to know about. But just to reassure you, your answers to the questions and anything you say to me, are completely confidential. I won't say anything to your parents, teachers or anyone else in the school about what you say.

And please don't say anything to anyone else about what the other people have said.
So please be as honest as you can. If there is anything you don't want to answer, you don't have to.

Now you know a bit more about it, are you happy to take part? Any questions before we start?

Names

Permission to record

Warm up exercise

The last time we ran SALSUS was in 2013 and when we did it was on paper rather than on the computer like you did it. (HAND OUT QUESTIONNAIRES). Here is the questionnaire in paper format. When we run the survey on paper, pupils complete it in their PSE class. The classroom is set up in 'exam conditions' and the teacher stays at the front of the class. Once a pupil completes their questionnaire, they put it in blank envelope and seal it. They do not put their name on the questionnaire or envelope at any point. The sealed envelopes are then handed back to their class teacher who puts them into a return bag that gets sent straight to an Ipsos MORI office.

To begin with we're going to play a game. I'm going to ask you to guess some of the results from the 2013 survey, don't worry if you get it wrong it's just for fun. Let's start with smoking, what % of 13/15 year olds (ONLY ASK FOR PUPILS OF THEIR AGE) in Scotland *do you think* smoke at least one cigarette a week. Who wants to go first?

WHEN A GUESS IS GIVEN WRITE IT DOWN ON A STICKY AND GO TO THE NEXT PARTICIPANT.

OK, who's next? Do you think it will be higher or lower? Write down the number and stick it above or below the last guess.

REPEAT UNTIL EVERYONE HAS GUESSED.

Great, so the number that we got from the survey was 2% (if S2)/9% (if S4). POINT OUT WHICH GUESS WAS CLOSEST.

So most of you thought it was higher/lower/about that. We're going to talk about that a little more in a minute.

This time we're going to be guessing about drinking, what % of S2/S4 pupils have ever had an alcoholic drink?

REPEAT EXERCISE.

Based on what pupils said in the survey in 2013 the figures are 32%/70% S2/S4. POINT OUT WHICH GUESS WAS CLOSEST AND IF THERE IS A SIMILAR TREND IN GUESSES BEING HIGHER OR LOWER THAN THE ACTUAL RESULT.

And finally drug use, what % of S2/S4 do you think have taken drugs in the last month?
As above. Correct answer 2% and 9%.

So now that you've seen everyone's guesses and the survey result, do you think the findings from the survey are right? Why/why not?

How much do you think young people lie when they complete a survey like this?

Would they say they do things (like smoking a cigarette) more or less than they actually did?
- o Less because they're worried their teacher will see it?
- o More because their friends can see and they want to look cool/exaggerate?

Do you think they would lie more or less in an online survey than in a paper survey, or would it make no difference?

Would anything help make pupils more likely to tell the truth?

So now we're going to have a chat about the survey session that you took part in earlier this week/today.
- What was completing the survey like?
  - o What was good about it?
  - o What was bad about it?

- How easy or difficult was it to complete the survey on the computer/tablet?
  - o Was anything difficult or hard to understand?
  - o Did anything not work?

- Were there any questions you didn't know how to answer?
  - o What was the problem?
  - o Were the instructions were clear enough?
  - o Probe for difference between technical issues and comprehension issues.

- Was the information given to you before you completed the survey enough to help you decide whether or not to take part? Why/Why not?

22

- Is there anything else would you like to know?

- Can you tell me what you thought about how the survey looked on the screen?
  - What was good? What was bad
  - What improvements could be made?
  - Could you see the entire question in every questions/was scrolling a problem?
  - Does the way the survey looks make any difference to how you complete it? Why/why not?

- Where there enough computers to go round all the pupils? If so, how did the teacher get around this problem?

- What did you think about being able to choose your own log-in?

<u>Second exercise</u>

Now that we've talked about completing the survey a little more, I want to do another exercise with you. So, I'm going to put up two bits of paper on the wall. One for online surveys, and one for paper surveys. I want you to write down on the post-it notes, what you think is good or bad about each method and when you're finished, come up and stick them on the bits of papers.

ONCE COMPLETED GO THROUGH POST-ITS AND DISCUSS WITH THE GROUP – CHECK TO SEE IF PEOPLE AGREE OR DISAGREE.

I now want you to go through these cards as a group and decide if the statements on the cards apply more to online survey or to paper surveys.

PROBE ON PLACEMENT OF CARDS AND DISCUSS ANY DISAGREEMENTS/DIFFICULT DECISIONS

IF NOT COVERED IN FIRST TWO EXERCISES

- Was anyone in the classroom talking while filling in the survey? Why/why not?
  - Was the room under exam conditions?
  - Did you talk about any of your answers?
  - If they did, did it change how you answered any of the questions?

- Did you feel like anyone else in the classroom could see your answers? Why/Why not?
  - Could the teacher see?
  - Could other pupils see?

- o If so did it change how you answered the questions?

- Were you worried whether anyone could get access to the answers you typed into the computer?
  - o Would that have worried you if the survey was on paper?
  - o Who were you worried about seeing your answers?
  - o Did it change the way you answered the questions?
  - o What would help to reassure you that someone could not access your answers?

- Would you change anything about how the survey is run?

Thank and close.

FEEDBACK FORM FOR CLASS TEACHERS

Overall, how did you find the process of administering SALSUS online?

Where there any problems? What were these? How, if at all, were they overcome?

Was there anything that you thought worked well about the methodology?

What was the pupils' reaction to the survey?

How helpful were the class teacher instructions? How could they be improved?

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Could anything be done to reduce the burden on you/the school?

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Our feasibility study highlighted some possible issues that might occur while administering an online survey. When the pilot took place did you encounter any of these things?

1. **There were not enough computers**   Yes ☐   No ☐

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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2. **There were problems with computers not working**   Yes ☐   No ☐

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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3. There were problems with software Yes ☐ No ☐
compatibility

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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4. The survey site was blocked by a Yes ☐ No ☐
filter or firewall

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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5. There were timetabling difficulties Yes ☐ No ☐

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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6. There was a problem with bandwidth Yes ☐ No ☐
or connectivity

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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7. It was difficult to manage the survey under exam conditions Yes ☐ No ☐

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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8. There were accessibility issues for Additional Support Needs pupils Yes ☐ No ☐

If this was a problem, how, if at all, was this resolved?

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Thank you very much for your time.

Annex B: Specific issues and recommended actions

Issue	Description	Impact	Risk to survey[1]	Recommended action
Confidentiality				
Teacher seeing the screen	There was an awareness among pupils that when their teacher moved around the room (e.g. responding to pupils' requests for assistance or checking on progress), s/he could potentially see their screen.	In general, there did not appear to be a great deal of concern about this but it may lead to under-reporting. If this has a sizeable impact, it will be detected in the mode experiment.	Medium	Highlight in teacher instructions and ask them to walk around as little as possible.
Other pupils seeing the screen	PCs were close together and pupils were aware that those seated next to them could potentially see their screen.

To a lesser extent, this also applied to tablets: it would be easier for a pupil to position their tablet so the screen was not visible to another pupil but, in practice, many did not. | There appeared to be even less concern about other pupils seeing their screen than teachers (particularly because pupils often sat next to their friends). However, it may lead to under- or over-reporting. If this has a sizeable impact, it will be detected in the mode experiment. | Low | There is nothing that can realistically be done about the set-up.

We will explore the option of making the responses less obvious (e.g. by using a paler font) but this needs to be balanced by clarity for the pupil completing the survey. |
| Where the data goes | Some pupils would like more explicit information about where the data goes and what it is used for. | Potential impact on informed consent and willingness to participate. | Low | Provide information about the data being held securely by Ipsos MORI.

Give more information about the types of services the results from the survey help to shape. |

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[1] This is our assessment of the overall risk to the survey as a whole, taking into account the likelihood of it happening and the number of schools/classes/pupils affected

Issue	Description	Impact	Risk to survey	Recommended action
Pupil reactions				
More enjoyable/engaging	Pupils enjoyed taking part online and said that they enjoyed it more than they would have done had it been on paper. They said they found it easier to engage with and had a generally positive reaction to it. Teachers also felt that pupils were more engaged than they would have been with a paper survey.	Unknown, but presumably a positive impact. If pupils are more engaged, they may think about their answers more and provide more accurate information. If this has a sizeable impact, it will be detected in the mode experiment.	Low	N/A
Talking/conferring more	There was a degree of talking/conferring in each observed class, however the extent to which it happened varied – in some classes it was more or less continuous, whereas in others it only happened at the start, before everyone settled down, and again towards the end once the first few pupils had finished. We have not observed classes completing the survey on paper. However, teachers felt that there was likely to be more talking with an online survey – at least in part because pupils are more engaged.	Has the potential to influence the way in which pupils respond or can serve as a distraction to other pupils – particularly those who take time over their responses. However, teachers' perceptions were that pupils were more likely to be discussing the questions rather than their responses. If this has a sizeable impact, it will be detected in the mode experiment.	Medium	We already indicate in the instructions to teachers that pupils should not confer and the survey should be completed under 'exam conditions'. Giving pupils an interactive task at the end of the survey (with a balance between educational and fun) should help keep pupils occupied once they have finished and allow others to complete the survey.
Quicker to complete	Once they had logged on, many pupils were able to complete the survey within 25 minutes. We do not have accurate data on the average time it takes pupils to complete the survey on paper, but from the cognitive testing exercise and from previous feedback from teachers, we know it takes longer (perhaps around 5-10 minutes longer).	Makes the survey easier logistically: it can be completed in shorter periods; if schools have to use rooms where there are slightly fewer computers than pupils, some pupils could do something else until the first few pupils are finished (as happened in some classes in the pilot)	No risk – positive impact	If schools are concerned about capacity in their ICT suites, reassure them that some pupils will complete the survey within a relatively short space of time. This information would be included in the instructions.

Issue	Description	Impact	Risk to survey	Recommended action
Technical				
Firewall blocking drugs questions	At two schools, the survey was stopped when pupils reached the drugs questions. In one school, their LA IT department was able to unblock the survey within 24 hours. In the other, the school IT officer was unable to unblock it (they did not immediately contact the LA IT dept.).	If the survey is blocked, pupils can't complete the remainder of the questions unless the firewall is re-set to allow the blocked words to pass through.	High	Raise the issue in advance with all LA IT contacts. Request that liaison teachers test the survey in advance and notify their LA IT department about any problems with the survey being blocked, allowing good time before pupils are due to complete the survey.
Problems with Wi-Fi connection	Slow Wi-Fi connectivity; not coping with a whole class taking part at once; drops in connection.	Disruption to participation. Pupils can't take part/complete.	Low	Inform schools about potential issues with Wi-Fi coverage if they administer the survey via portable devices.
Tablets/laptops not being charged	One school had problems with iPads which were not charged before the survey was administered. There was disruption while fully charged devices were found or iPads were plugged in.	Hold ups and disruption while devices are charged/plugged in; pupils might not be able to complete survey.	Low	Reminder to teachers to ensure such portable devices are charged.
Scrolling at long lists/Questions running over two pages	Some pupils were selecting 'No' automatically without reading the list item at the drugs questions, although this was because they knew that they hadn't been offered/taken any drugs. Although most questions with long lists were split over more than one page, there were instances when the question and answer options were not visible on the second page. Others couldn't see the response options further down the page with the Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire.	If pupils forget or get confused about what the response options were, this could affect the accuracy of the data.	Low	Ensure any remaining questions like this are split over more than one page so that response options stay visible.

Issue	Description	Impact	Risk to survey	Recommended action
Logistical				
Pupils with Additional Support Needs	Teachers said that there could be some difficulties enabling pupils with Additional Support Needs to participate, depending on the number of pupils involved and the type of support they require. Those who require a Personal Support Assistant would need to have a private room with a computer in order to complete the survey. This creates additional logistical issues for the school.	Fewer children with Additional Support Needs take part.	Low	Encourage schools to allow children with Additional Support Needs to participate, perhaps by staggering the days on which they are given the survey to do if there are pressures on resources or staff. Administer the survey via Support For Learning. Remind them that survey can be completed on tablet or laptop (even if most pupils doing on PC). Remind schools of the importance of representative data.
Following up on absent pupils	Some teachers raised potential logistical difficulties posed by following up with absent pupils given the need to book ICT facilities.	Reduced pupil response rates; source of bias. If this has a sizeable impact, it will be detected in the mode experiment.	Medium	Add the following suggestions to the instructions: group absent pupils together and book a room for them to take part; have individual absent pupils take part in the library when they return to school; remind schools that the survey could be undertaken by individual pupils on a lap-top or tablet (even if most pupils are completing the survey on PC).

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this social research publication:
☒ may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact salsus@scotland.gsi.gov.uk for further information.

social research