



More than Muscles - University of Gloucestershire research project - from the Deputy Head

Dear Parents

I hope you have had a restful summer break and that your child is enjoying their return to school.

At Sir Thomas Rich's, we are proud to have an expert, dedicated pastoral team comprising of Heads of Year, pastoral coordinators and the safeguarding team. We often work alongside other agencies and have close working links with the Navigation Hub, Young Minds Matter and Youth Support Team.

To further our pastoral provision, we are very fortunate to have been offered the opportunity by the University of Gloucestershire to participate in The Body Project '*More than Muscles*' research. The original Body Project is a body acceptance programme that is backed by over 20 years of research. It is shown to effectively reduce body dissatisfaction and have a positive impact on eating disorders. It has been delivered to over 3.5 million girls in 25+ countries, and we have previously run the programme here at school.

The Body Project '*More than Muscles*' (MtM) is an adaptation of the original project aimed at helping men and boys. Research on the effectiveness of the Body Project MtM is in its early stages with only one study previously conducted with university students in the USA. This is the first time this intervention has been adapted for use with boys in UK schools, so we are very excited to be able to contribute as a school to level the field and advance body image research from the young male perspective.

We would like to support the University of Gloucestershire in conducting focus groups at the start of this academic year. Researchers would like to hold two types of focus groups; one discussion-based around body image and pressures for young men, the other to help the University adapt the current materials for use with young men in the UK.

The research team would like to conduct the group discussions with around 8 pupils at a time and are looking for a range of ages. The focus groups will be video recorded. It may be that pupils would like to give feedback on the content but don't wish to be recorded; if this is the case then we will also be happy to arrange a way to collect their thoughts and input in writing if that would be of interest to you and your son. I have attached the parent information pack below for your information.

[This email has an attachment - click here to open](#)

To this end, we are looking for pupils to join and be part of this cutting-edge research. Interested pupils are welcome to join one or both focus groups and each focus group will be conducted in a single 90-minute session during the School day. Taking part in this research will not prohibit pupils from being able to take part in the intervention in the future.

To safeguard the wellbeing of pupils, if your child has received support for disordered eating within the last six months, they will not be able to take part.

We would very much appreciate you discussing this opportunity with your son, and if your child is interested in participating in a MtM focus group with the University of Gloucestershire, please complete this [brief form](#) to give your consent by **Monday, 15 September**.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to our pupils making a real difference in this sphere.

Kind regards

Miss Sarah Tapscott
Deputy Headteacher

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