

Dear Parents,

At Abbey College we encourage students to actively pursue their dreams and aspirations and to seek to overcome challenges and difficulties. As parents we know that life isn't always straightforward, but if the young person has the tools to cope with adversity it can help them develop positive character traits and priceless life-skills as a result.

As such, we are pleased to be able to announce that we are working with psychologists from the University of East London led by Dr Aneta Tunariu (Head of Subject for Psychological Interventions) to build on and expand our pastoral programme aimed at enhancing students' motivation and determination to learn and develop personally.

As mentioned back in our November letter, we are introducing series of 7, one-hour resilience building lessons – known as the iNEAR programme (Tunariu, 2015). Like the capacity to learn, resilience is a capacity that can be grown and enhanced. It can be developed through reflection, guided activities and interactions designed to deliver a better understanding about oneself, about one's strengths, and about the application of creativity, choice and responsibility for that choice. The new lessons will also help equip students with critical thinking skills and personal agency in the adoption of values and views relating to social justice and engaged citizenship.

iNEAR programme will focus on activities and skills relating to the following four areas:

- N** New knowledge about myself
- E** Emotional resources and emotional intelligence
- A** Awareness of values, of options, of choice
- R** Responding with growth 'in spite of ...'

We aim to begin with a pilot of the iNEAR programme and its research evaluation in mid-January 2016 with years 7 and 8, and hope to incorporate it across the form time curriculum in the near future. We will shortly be in touch with parents individually with more information about the initiative and to offer an opportunity for further questions.

Long-life learning and the adoption of a growth-mind set (where everyone can achieve if they are given the skills to learn) are key drivers for delivering the commitment we have made to your children with our 2020 Vision. The iNEAR programme echoes our values and will help expand our teaching practices towards achieving this goal.

We would appreciate your support in our programme to help teach our young people how to cope better with frustrations and difficulties, to enable them to achieve their full potential.

Should you not wish your child to be part of the research evaluation component of the iNEAR pilot, please contact the House Office.

Thank you!

What would the research evaluation study involve?

There will be two components to the study: completion of questionnaires and two focus group interviews. The completion of questionnaires component of the evaluation involves the administration and collection by the school teachers of anonymized self-report questionnaire responses from participating students to standardized research questionnaires (such as the Resilience and Environmental Mastery scales). A small group of randomly selected students (10 - 12), will be invited to a one-hour focus-group interview, about their views and experience of the iNEAR programme. The group interview conversations will be audio recorded for the sake of accuracy, which will then be transcribed and anonymized to ensure confidentiality at all times. The focus interview will be conducted by a teacher from Abbey College and the UEL researcher

together, or by a teacher from Abbey College alone. Anonymized data that Abbey College is routinely collecting as part of our monitoring of student learning, such as gender, and average points in Math and English, will also be included in the data set. Further information of about the nature of the data is available on the e-learning platform internal to the Abbey College website.

Confidentiality of the Data:

All responses to the questionnaires and the two focus interviews will be and remain completely confidential. At no point the student name or any other information that could potentially identify him/her be disclosed or required in the study other than signing the consent form (see below). If you consent to your child taking part in the research service evaluation but then change your mind and do not wish to continue, you can withdraw from the study without having to give a reason and with no disadvantage to the child.

The information is being collected for the purpose of the current study only and will not be disclosed or shared beyond the research team. Those taking part in the study will be assigned identity numbers and, for the qualitative data, a fictitious names. There is a chance that the results will be published, but again at no point will personal details be disclosed. All responses will remain completely confidential at all times. Presentation of results will refer to cohort, group data.

All the data – numeric and textual and the transcriptions of the audio recorded group interviews – will be placed on a password-protected personal desktop computer. Only the research team will have access to the data. And all raw and anonymised data and related materials will be destroyed after 5 years.



CONSENT FORM

Parent / Guardian consent to their child to participate in a research study

Project Title: **The iNEAR – a resilience intervention for school children: service evaluation study**

- 1. I have read the information sheet relating to the above research study and I find it satisfactory.
- 2. I understand what is being proposed for the study and the procedures in which my child will be involved.
- 3. I was made aware of the opportunities available to discuss further the details and to ask questions about this information.
- 4. I understand that all the data collected will remain strictly confidential, and that only the researchers involved in the study will have access to data.
- 5. I understand what will happen once the research study has been completed.
- 6. I understand that participation in the study is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw my child from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself or my child and without being obliged to give any reason.
- 7. I thereby consent for my child to take part in this study.

Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of researcher: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

CONSENT FORM

[Student consent to participate in a research study](#)

Project Title: **The iNEAR – a resilience intervention for school children: service evaluation study**

Dear students,

We are happy to announce that your class will have some new lessons on resilience starting this January. These lessons were written by a lecturer from the University of East London and have been designed to help you get better at bouncing back from tricky situations in your lives. We would like to carry out an evaluation to find out how you found these lessons and whether they help you understand yourself and your strengths a bit better. In order to do that, we ask you to answer a few questions. You will be asked the same questions again in February and in May. The questionnaires will be given to you by your teacher.

All your answers will be strictly confidential. This means that no one will know what you have said. You will be given a participant number that you must enter it in the box indicated on the top the questionnaire before you complete it. Only teachers/researchers involved in the study will have the access to your answers, but they would not know which responses belong to whom. Their interest are in your and your colleagues views not in who said what.

You have the right to stop answering at any time, without giving a reason and without any negative consequences.

- 1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information above.
- 2. I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- 3. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to stop at any time without any negative consequences.
- 4. I understand that all my responses will at all times remain confidential.
- 5. I agree to answer the questions asked in the questionnaires.
- 6. If I will be invited to, I agree to take part in the focus group interviews. I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded to make sure the responses are recorded accurately.

Your name

Date

Signature