**Census 2021 Education Programmes**

Residents in Slough will be asked to complete the 2021 Census and for the first time it will mostly be completed online instead of with pen and paper.

The 220-year-old survey of all house-holds information will have to be completed in March 2021 providing a detailed snapshot of society on a single day.

The data collected helps central and local government, health authorities, and many other organisations target their resources more effectively and to plan services such as housing, education, health and transport. Businesses use the information to evaluate whether a new store would be used in a local community, voluntary organisations can rely on census information to assist the communities and their funding. Academics use the information in research and it  has proved invaluable for those researching family history.

The census asks questions about individuals, their household, homes, employment, and religious beliefs. This year how homes are heated and sexuality will be new questions asked.

All information is anonymised and the actual census records are kept secure for 100 years. The information will be statistically analysed and the results published two years later.

Lots of companies use census information to help them understand their customers. For example, a supermarket chain might use census population data to help decide where to open a new store.

The census is overseen by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and is an independent, non-ministerial agency that reports directly to Parliament. It has a strict security regime that follows government standards. This includes physical and IT security measures to protect your information, covering people, processes and technology. The statistics will not show who revealed the information.

To inspire the next generation to get involved in Census 2021, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has developed two new, engaging education programmes for primary and secondary schools across England and Wales.

The primary school programme, Let’s Count!, aims to excite and engage both children and families with the census. With maths and statistics at its core, this cross-curricular initiative provides lesson plans and interactive activities. These resources will help pupils learn about the relevance of statistics to a range of other subjects.

The secondary school programme aims to engage young people, empowering them to use their voices to encourage their families and community to complete the census. Co-created with teachers and students alike, the programme will use real-world tasks to explore how information is used and influences decisions across society. The lesson content will inspire whole-school participation and link to curriculum subjects, such as citizenship, PSHE, maths and history.

Schools in Slough can now sign up for these free education programmes. Go to census.gov.uk/education for more information on how to get involved.