

EDI Newsletter – Autumn 2023

The Raglan Nursery Class, learning about disability through their journeys and transport module.



Thank you to Mr Dalglish, a reception parent, who brought in his taxi for the children to explore. The children enjoyed sitting in the taxi seats and walking up the ramp used for wheelchair access.

Dear All Parents/ Carers,

Welcome to the Trust Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Newsletter "EDI".

This is our way of sharing the great work that has been done in this area and the EDI Survey results. Please also look at the Glossary which explains many of the terms used in the Newsletter.

Hope you find it both interesting and encouraging.

Feedback is welcomed.

The EDI Committee

c/o SPinder@crofton-jun.bromley.sch.uk

EDI Committee

School representatives:

- Liz Quayle, Crofton Schools
- Luna Shacklock, Cage Green
- Rachael Ezinwa, Raglan
- Stephen Jackson, Valley
- Suzanne Leader, River Mill

Trustees:

- Andrea Carter, CEO
- Brendan Collins, Trustee
- Devinia Curtis, Trustee, Vice-Chair EDI Committee
- Marie Powell, Trustee
- Naureen Khalid, Trustee
- Scott Pinder, Chair - Board of Trustees and EDI Committee

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EDI Training

EqualiTeach delivered a bespoke training session over a morning to nominated senior leaders from across all CSAT schools. The training sessions explored terminology and the reasons why terms are acceptable or unacceptable. Attendees considered what is required for a strategic whole school approach to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and discussed how policies and procedures can drive or undermine equality, diversity, and inclusion work in schools. Feedback from the session was overwhelming positive with 100% of attendees providing feedback that the session had greatly improved their confidence and knowledge to drive whole school approaches to promote inclusion diversity and inclusion. The Senior Leaders have since shared the learnings with their individual schools.

EDI Statement & Strategy

Our vision is to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to our Trust community, to achieve fair outcomes and an environment that is truly diverse and inclusive.

This means understanding and tackling the different barriers for different groups in our schools, striving for equity by offering varying levels of support dependent upon need, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of our Trust and wider community. In support of this we have revised the [Trust Equality Statement](#) and are currently finalising the Trust Anti-Discrimination Strategy to later be shared.

Valley's Coronation celebrations

Many of the children attended school dressed in traditional dress or clothing that represented them to celebrate their heritage. A street party style lunch and PTA cake sale also helped to mark the occasion.



Providing a positive and safe culture within our schools is a key priority for CSAT.

An important aspect to this is preventing and tackling any forms of bullying and discrimination.

The Parent/Carer EDI Survey included a question on this subject.

- 'My child knows how to report any bullying or discrimination'.

We received a positive response of 83%. The disagrees and don't know, however totaled 17% which highlighted an area for focus.

Anti-Bullying Initiatives

All our schools are taking part in national programmes to ensure the effectiveness of their approaches.

- Equally Safe- Crofton Schools and Raglan, River Mill and Valley
- Anti-Bullying Quality Mark - UK, Cage Green and The

Equally Safe - Led by Equaliteach is a 1-year Anti-Bullying Programme, to embed best practices to prevent and tackle identity-based bullying in schools. The programme includes.

- Auditing existing equalities and anti-bullying work to strengthen our policies and create an action plan.
- Staff training covering topics such as restorative justice, different types of bullying and taking a whole school approach to anti-bullying.
- Establishing the 'Agents for Change' initiative, working to empower Year 5 children to be ambassadors to implement and help to maintain positive changes within their schools.

Raglan- Anti-Bullying Assembly

The assembly was used to remind the children of Raglan's catchphrase to combat Bullying - that being TELL TELL TELL. The OFSTED Lead Inspector was really impressed that this phrase resonated across the school, especially when asking the younger children at random.

The assembly also discussed the notion of 'When is a joke not a joke?' When someone gets upset. Then, if that continues, this is bullying. It was revisited how easy it is for children and young people to inadvertently become involved in online bullying by agreeing to someone else's opinion or being asked to respond 'yes' or 'no' to a question they hadn't seen or heard. It was discussed how bullies very rarely act alone, and that in fact they are the weaker person. The children were urged to ensure they act bravely and always TELL TELL TELL if anyone is unkind or hurtful towards them.

The important role of the school's Agents for Change was also re-emphasised.

River Mill & Valley

Both schools are now participating in Equally Safe and are scheduled to complete the programme in July 2024. This will strengthen the work that both are doing in this area including hosting assemblies to reinforce how children can report incidents of bullying/ unkind behaviour and acknowledging Anti-Bullying week.

River Mill was originally enlisted to participate in Equally Safe during the 2022/2023 school year alongside The Crofton Schools and Raglan. The decision was taken however to postpone and enable staff who were on parental leave at the time to participate in the year-long programme the following year.

Cage Green- Anti-Bullying Quality Mark "ABQM"

The Anti-Bullying Quality Mark is a national scheme which endorses how good schools are at preventing bullying. It challenges them to establish effective, sustainable anti-bullying policies and strategies. Friendship and Justice Leagues have been introduced at play and lunch times, Year 5/6 children who are trained to mediate between children sort out low level problems. They are trained that if it is serious, they must involve an adult. They run games during play times and the children have particularly enjoyed the skipping games. The value is that the children have responsibility to support each other and begin to understand which problems they can deal with themselves, and which ones need an adult. There have been less play time problems since the introduction of the play time equipment and the Year 5/6 mediators.

We are hugely proud that Cage Green have now achieved the Bronze Award for 2023-2025. Feedback from the organisation said they had been successful because "Staff, students, parents and Governors demonstrated that anti-bullying has become embedded in life at the school. Children and parents/carers are actively involved in the development of positive relationships in the school, supported by staff who tailor bullying prevention to individuals and their circumstances." It was not an easy award to get, and a large team of children, staff, governors, and parents have been working towards the award for the past year. Well done, Cage Green!

The Croftons

Equally Safe

Mrs Quayle (Deputy Head) is the Equally Safe Project Lead and has continued to work with Equaliteach and complete all their 8 online workshop sessions. An EDI Team has been formed, with 5 members of the Senior Leadership Team "SLT" representing both schools. This team has reviewed policies and the EDI objectives, alongside other improvements, and tracked progress. The EDI Team has also completed the in person half-day training for Equally Safe.

All staff have completed the online training delivered by Equaliteach; the content was based on feedback received from a staff survey. In addition, Mrs Quayle has also delivered staff training on Protected Characteristics and Micro-aggressions to reinforce the online session.

Equaliteach have worked with Year 5 pupils, training 12 children to be Agents for Change. These children have won a £100 bid to revamp a Buddy Bench and have an area in the playground for other children to come and talk with them about any concerns around discrimination.

Anti-Bully Quality Mark

Crofton School has completed two cycles of training with the Diana Award training Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (ABAs). So far, the ABAs have won 2 award Badges - Respect and Wellbeing. They are currently working on an Online Safety Award. The ABAs had a great day out at the Lord Mayor's Parade.

Valley - EID celebrations



Projects at Crofton



Families joining the Family Learning Course 'Support English Language learning'.



Silver Sunday Coffee Morning at Crofton - pupils met elderly residents they had been writing to as Pen Pals as part of the Loneliness Campaign

River Mill - Hinduism

As part of River Mill's religious education curriculum, they have been learning about the Hindu religion through stories and artefacts, children in all year groups took part. It was a fantastic day, and the children were really engaged and excited to learn through the different stories.



Cage Green – More People Display

The below demonstrates how a simple display can spark a positive conversation about differences.

At Cage Green, one of our Curriculum Drivers is 'More People' and I recently had a wonderfully inspiring conversation with a group of children whilst sitting in 'Sunshine' nurture room.

One of the children was looking at a new 'More People' display and asked who Chris Packham was (he was on the display). I told them about his contributions to wildlife and children's TV, his achievements, and his autism diagnosis. I explained how he has worked hard to promote positive recognition for people with autism. We had a conversation about celebrating everyone for their own achievements and contributions and who inspired us. We looked at others on the board who represented diversity, including Bri Scalesse, a young, disabled author and model who advocates disability. One of the children spoke about a family member who has Downs Syndrome and all the things that he can do. This led to further discussion about Tommy Jessop, an actor/author with Downs syndrome and how he is leading his 'best life'!

A younger child approached the table and spoke about her older brother who had a brain tumour when he was younger. We spoke about how well he had done and that he was now 17, the child adding that he had gone to America for treatment with her dad and sister and that mum had stayed at home because she was "growing in mummy's tummy". It was a very open and positive conversation which all 3 children contributed to, their maturity, sensitivity and engagement was amazing.

Mrs Shacklock – Family Liaison Officer, Cage Green



Cage Green

Olive Caters prepared a special lunch in celebration.

MAINS

Caribbean Chicken Curry and Rice

Or

Vegetable Curry and Rice

DESSERTS

Jamaican Ginger Sponge Cake

Or

Fresh Fruit with Mango Sauce

The children were set different 'challenges' as part of learning linked to BHM, including the below on Harriet Tubman.



Raglan

BHM has been celebrated across the curriculum, in assembly and within each year group, including.

Year 6 painting murals of influential black people and learning about their legacies.

Year 5 researching famous black physicists, (past and present), following the work they completed on Maggie Aderin-Pocock.

Year 4 learning about the black author Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o. Story of self-discovery and self-identity.

Year 3 learning about Mae Jemison who was the first Black female astronaut and her journey.

Year 2 learning about Florence Price and the styles and influences of other Black musicians.

Year 1 explored black inventors, designing spaceships inspired by Mae Jemison, and made African jewellery.

All Key Stage 1 learned traditional African songs and performed.



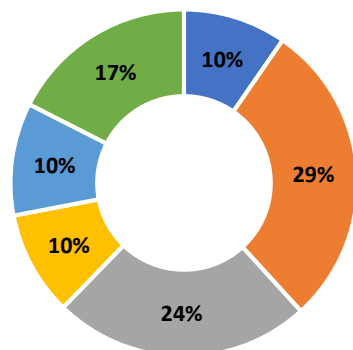
Parent/ Carers EDI Survey

We are proud to share these survey results with you alongside what we have done in response. The survey went live July 2022 and remained open until October 2022. In total 955 responses were received a response rate of 73%, based on the number of families (1312)

The Trustees and senior leaders within each school reviewed the results and looked for further insights. We promised that the survey would be anonymous and so where there was the potential to identify by combining characteristics, this was addressed so it remained anonymous on review.

Thank you for completing the survey, as a Trust we are committed to maximising the life opportunities for all our children, obtaining your views is important to help us continue this journey.

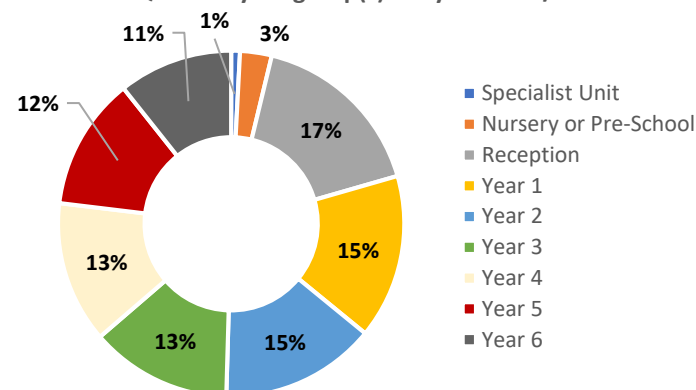
Q1: Which school do your child/children go to?



Percentage of completed responses per school, approximately correlates to the percentage of children in each school across the Trust.

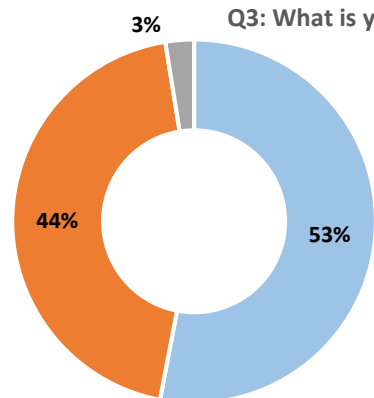
■ Cage Green ■ Crofton Infants ■ Crofton Juniors ■ Raglan ■ River Mill ■ Valley

Q2 What year group(s) are your child/children in?



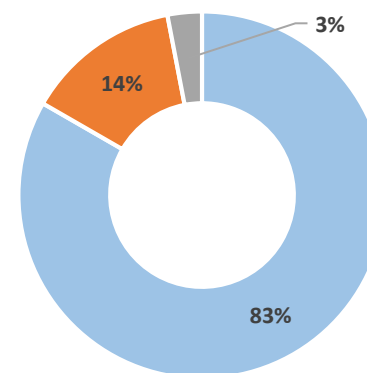
■ Specialist Unit
■ Nursery or Pre-School
■ Reception
■ Year 1
■ Year 2
■ Year 3
■ Year 4
■ Year 5
■ Year 6

Q3: What is your child's gender?



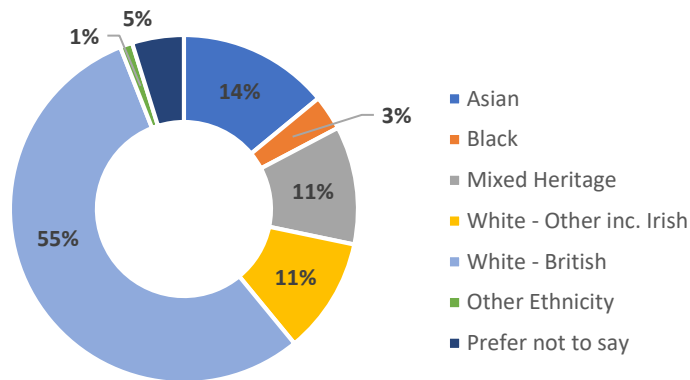
■ Male
■ Female
■ Prefer not to say / non-binary or other

Q4: Does your child have a disability or additional learning needs?



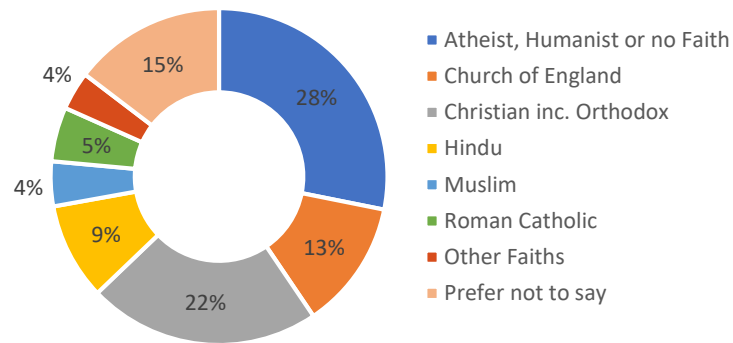
■ No
■ Yes
■ Prefer not to say

Q5: What ethnicity is your child?



Over 15 different ethnicity categories were selected in response to this question. Broader groups have therefore been used to help analysis the data and make it more meaningful.

Q6: What is your child's faith?



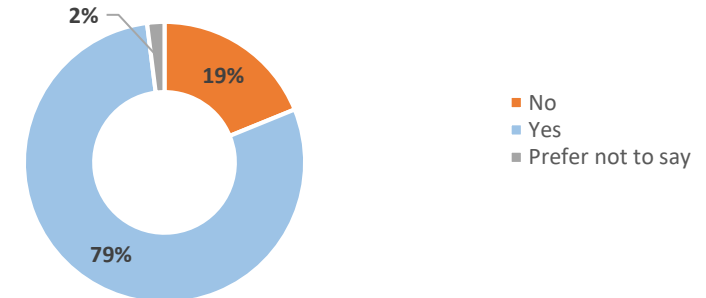
18 different faith options were selected. Broader groups have been used as low responses were received for some of the categories e.g., Christian inc. Orthodox includes Greek and Russian Orthodox, Baptist, Jehovah's Witness and Methodist. Other Faiths, includes the Other Faith option, Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist.

Some respondents selected multiple faiths; these were included in the count for each individual faith selected. For example, if a respondent selected Sikh and Hindu, Sikh has been added to 'Other Faiths' and Hindu added to the 'Hindu' category.

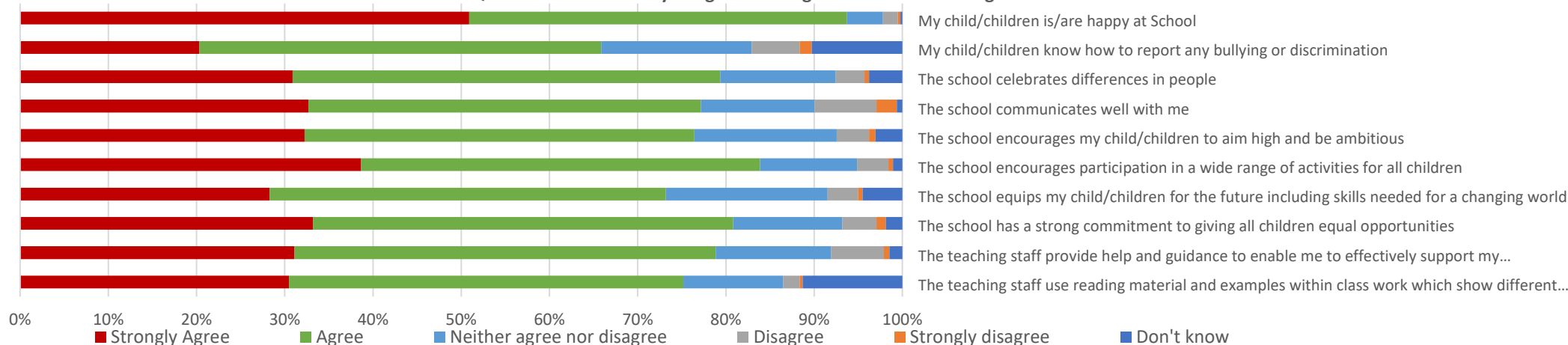
Q7: Does your child identify as LGBTQ+?



Q8: Is your child's first language English?



Q9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Statements not fully displayed in the chart are, 'The teaching staff The teaching staff provide help and guidance to enable me to effectively support my child/children's learning', 'The teaching staff use reading material and examples within class work which show different cultures and identities'.

Your responses identified four main areas of focus.

1. My child / children know how to report any bullying or discrimination, the disagrees and don't knows totaled 17%

- The schools have actively been sharing and reminding parents/ carers and children of the process to report bullying. All the schools are also taking part in anti-bullying initiatives to deploy best practices and strengthen their positive to tackle any bullying or discrimination.

2. The teaching staff use reading material and examples within class work which shows different cultures and identities, the disagrees and don't knows totaled 14%

- Across the schools all subjects leads have or are reviewing the delivery of subjects, the content, text and images being used to assess the coverage of different cultures and identities including under-represented groups.
- As there are no longer specific restrictions relating to Covid-19, all the schools are actively encouraging parent / carer participation in the schools, Open sessions to view children's work, coffee mornings/ information sessions, regular parent/ carer led assemblies or classroom sessions (Raglan).
- Schools are reviewing their calendar of cultural celebrations, to ensure it is multicultural, taking a cross-curricular approach and including external visitors where feasible. E.g., Valley's Baba Marta & Mărțișor days (Eastern European celebrations) and Eid al-Fitr (Islamic celebration).
- Social platforms are also being used to upload samples of work, plus provide information on planned classroom activities.

3. Communication with Parents/Carers

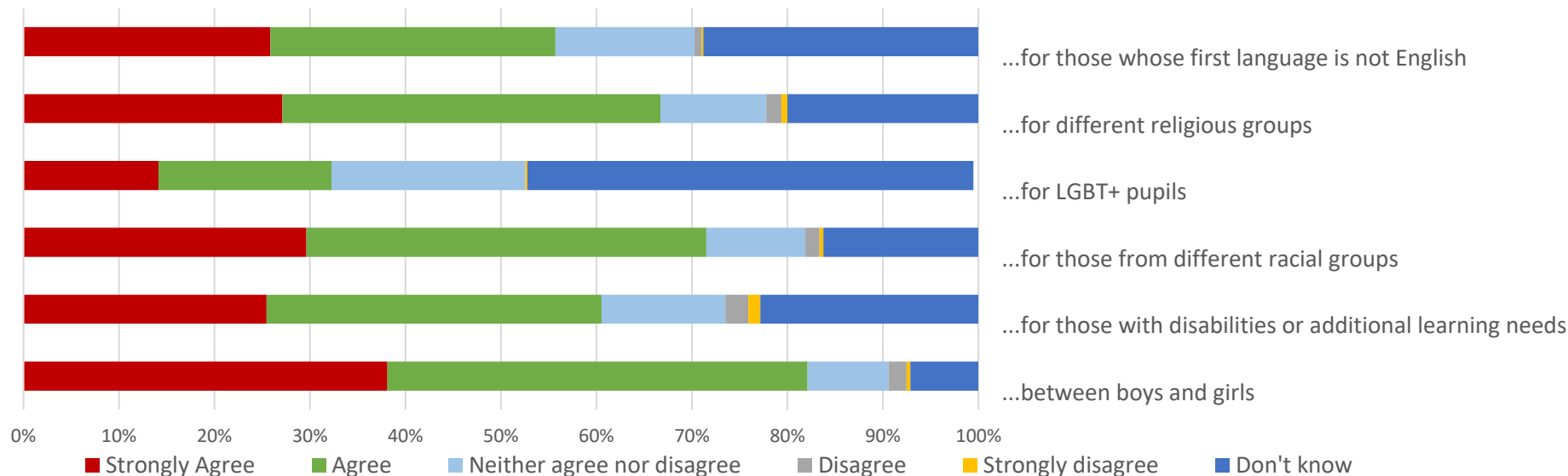
10% disagreed or answered don't know for the statement 'My school communicated well with me'.

- Communication was also repeatedly mentioned in the survey comments, regarding the frequency or not enough, or concerns with the quality.
- In response the schools have reviewed their communication approach, for example.
 - River Mill now targets Fridays to send out all email updates and news to ensure recipients do not feel over-whelmed. Only critical emails are sent outside of the Friday mailing.
 - Crofton Junior School held a Parent / Carer Forum on Communications, feedback has been scrutinized and a follow up forum has been booked for Autumn 2023. Crofton Infant School will also have a forum following the Junior Review Forum
 - Raglan are publishing weekly school letters online and have been hosting parent/ carer forums.

4. How we provide the children with the skills necessary for the future and encourage them to aim high and be ambitious

- For these two statements the disagrees and don't knows totaled,
 - ***Equips my child/ children for the future including skills needed for a changing world - 8%***
 - ***Encourages my child/ children to aim high and be ambitious - 7%***
 - All schools are participating in the Trust's 'I Can Do It!' award, giving all children the opportunity to participate in a variety of experiences to learn new and varied skills on their own as these nurtures feelings of self-esteem that translate into a 'can-do attitude'.
 - Ambition is woven through curriculum drivers of all CSAT schools, these are key threads that are relevant to the community the school serves. For example, a school in a predominately white British area may have a knowledge of cultural diversity as a driver, to ensure children are prepared for their place in a diverse British society.
 - This will be further strengthened this academic year with planned focus on uplifting curriculum drivers across all schools. Our curriculum is ambitious as it is in line with National Curriculum and in some places above and beyond National Curriculum expectations.
 - Ambition comes through the high expectations that are delivered daily in CSAT schools and the non-negotiables that enable high standards to be achieved, these will be detailed in each School's Development Plans "SDP" Driving ambition is also enhanced through 'Career Weeks', Educational visitors, including from Parents / Careers and trips.

Q10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? The school ensures the same opportunities and ambitions...



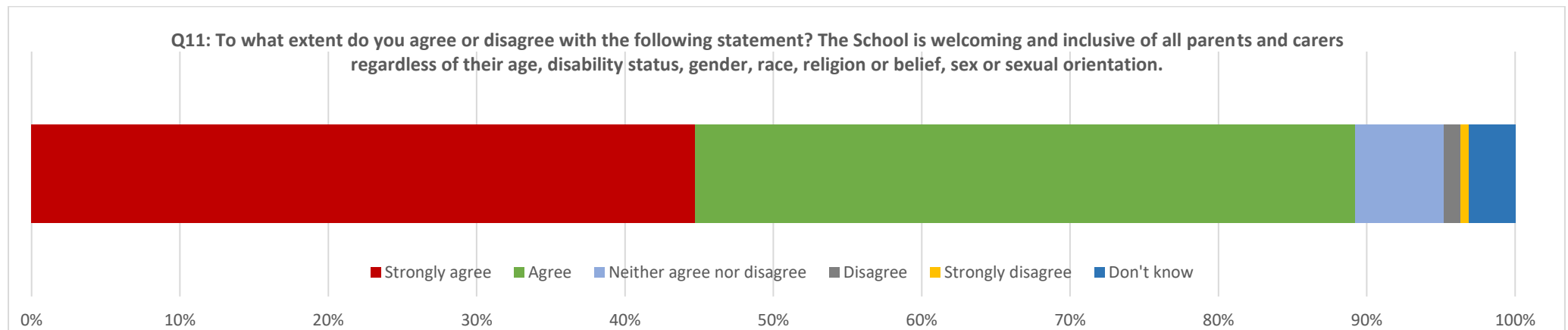
The responses did indicate the need to share how our schools ensure the same opportunities and ambitions for all children. The schools have been active in increasing the engagement with parents/ carers. In addition to improved communication many of the schools (The Croftons, Raglan and River Mill), have created Parent Forums and/or EDI Groups to ensure wider participation and representation in school life.

Further strategies to support and show positive representation of the diverse school community have been introduced, for example,

- Cage Green have been working hard on increasing diversity in the books they use and have many in the 'Little People Big Dreams' series, as well as some great new picture books focusing on diversity.
- Crofton Schools have promoted Bromley Local Authority's 10-week course for families in need of language support, where English is an additional language (EAL). Support for Ukrainian Refugee families included an assigned translator and Duolingo and Book Start equipment given to each child.
- Raglan has received positive feedback about the parent/ carer led assemblies, the adults represent different cultures, ethnics and genders and inspire the children by sharing the life stories, achievements and how they overcame challenges and barriers. Girls are being encouraged to play sport with the provision of netball and football clubs and a Promotion Sports Board communicating their accomplishments.
- River Mill have provided additional provisions for EALs, meetings are held with parent/ carers outlining what support is available both within and outside of the school. A Family Liaison Officer is available to respond to parent/ carer's specific needs ensure they are heard and to remove any barriers to children's learning.

- Valley have increased the diversity of their events with help from the PTA, this included having a Caribbean themed Summer Fair with a Steel band and related food stalls. The celebration of Disability Awareness Week included raising funds for Wheels of the World charity and an assembly being hosted by a parent, who is also a wheelchair user. The use of technology to support the translation of key school documents on the school's website is also being looked at.

We received responses that raised concerns about the teaching of relationship and sex education (RSHE), this is part of statutory learning in primary schools to include healthy and respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. We are currently reviewing our approach and lesson plans at a Trust level and are waiting to receive revised guidance from the Department of Education. Once received, we will continue to keep parents/ carers informed, alongside providing the opportunity for engagement and feedback.



89% of responses were either Strongly Agree or Agree to this question. Cross-analysing the results by the different schools or, against demographic categories i.e., gender, faith, ethnicity, disability/ additional learning needs, first language, sexual orientation, we found there were no significant differences compared to the total number of responses. We however acknowledge that 5% of respondents either answered Strongly Disagreed, Disagree or Don't Know and recognise whilst we have made formidable improvements, much remains to be done.

Our EDI strategy for 2023/24 takes this into consideration and includes the development and monitoring of key performance indicators to identify areas of focus, including analysis of achievement broken down by specific protected characteristics. We also continue to welcome feedback either via the relevant school's Headteacher or to the Trust's EDI Committee care of [Scott Pinder - Chair of the Board of Trustees](#). If you however have a concern or complaint of a serious nature we remind you of the [Trust's Complaints Handling Policy](#).

Comment from the Chair of Trustees, Connect Schools Academy Trust: "The survey results show strong positive feedback across all schools and across different cross-sections of respondents. We thank the participants for the great response rate. Even given these results, we are not complacent. We remain vigilant and the tangible actions set out here are testament to this. The fundamental mission of fairness for all in our Trust continues."

Glossary

These terms have been used in the newsletter.

Baba Marta: Is the name of a Bulgarian mythical figure who brings with her the end of the cold winter and the beginning of the spring. The holiday of the same name is celebrated in Bulgaria on 1 March with the exchange and wearing of martenitsi red and white coloured bands or figurines that symbolise health and happiness.

Diversity: Appreciating and recognising all individuals for their uniqueness and accomplishments. Reviewing and diversifying our Trust academic sources and content of our curriculum to reflect both the communities we serve as well as the wider society.

Eid: The word 'Eid' means 'feast' or 'festival'. Each year Muslims celebrate both Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha - but the names often get shortened to just 'Eid'. Eid al-Fitr - which means 'festival of the breaking of the fast' - is celebrated at the end of Ramadan, a month when many adult Muslims fast. Eid al-Adha - which means "feast of the sacrifice" - is celebrated just over two months after Eid al-Fitr and lasts for four days. It coincides with the end of the Hajj - the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Equality: Addressing imbalance, advocating fairness, providing access to participation to all individuals and taking action to protect those at risk of being discriminated against.

Inclusion: Creating an inclusive working and learning environment, one where every member of our Trust community feels respected, valued, has a sense of belonging, can be themselves and do their best work.

INSET Day: Short for in-service training day, when teachers go into school without any students present, in order to do training, planning, etc.

Mărțișor: The Romanian name of a tradition celebrated at the beginning of spring, in the month of March, and the name of the associated object made from two intertwined red and white strings with hanging tassel in Romania and Moldova, very similar to Martenitsa tradition in Bulgaria.

Micro-aggressions: Hostile, derogatory, or negative words or actions that communicate people's biases against particular groups of people.

Protected characteristics: Are types of discrimination listed under the Equality Act 2010. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation