

Diversity and inclusion in schools



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Foreword

Sharon Hague Senior Vice-President for UK Schools, Pearson

At Pearson, we're passionate about inclusion and equal opportunity for all learners, whatever their ethnicity, background, ability or gender. We believe that everyone should have the same opportunity to achieve their full potential at school and beyond, flourishing in their own individual way.

While the journey to make this a reality for every learner may be complex and far reaching, we believe a key step to realising this is working together with schools, young people and experts to help build learning environments that reflect the diversity of the modern world and its people.

Our school population is becoming increasingly diverse, so, as a sector, we too must be ever-evolving to ensure that education reflects the changing demographic and experiences of today's society.



This report sheds light on diversity and inclusion in schools, drawing on the perspectives of academics, students and educators, as well as the views of over a thousand school leaders, teachers and assistants across the UK who took part in our two national surveys.

As you read on, you will see a hunger for change among the profession, with most educators believing that more can be done to celebrate diverse cultures, people and experiences in UK education. The Black Lives Matter movement and protests over the summer of 2020 has prompted many educators to pause and really reflect on the diversity of their curriculum.

As an education company and qualifications provider, we have a responsibility to ensure our resources and assessments are diverse and inclusive, and we are fully committed to making this a reality and supporting schools in every possible way we can.

We are proud of the steps we've taken as an organisation so far to help champion this - but there is more we can and must do. We are listening to the views, challenges and ideas shared by leaders, teachers and students through roundtables, surveys and interviews. We are working with experts like Stonewall, nasen, Runnymede Trust and The Fawcett Society as we critically review, and work to enhance, our qualifications and resources across the curriculum. We are sharing a host of guidance to support educators and build confidence in these often complex and sensitive areas. But this is just the beginning.

Foreword

While we do not have all the answers, we are committed to listening, learning, and helping to drive change. There is a long way to go until we can say that our country's education is truly diverse or inclusive, however, the positivity and passion that comes through in the findings should give us all great hope and optimism as we look ahead and work together to build a system where every student feels that they belong.

About the survey

Pearson surveyed 1,003 teaching staff between 10-17th December 2019 and 1,000 teaching staff between 31st July - 17th August 2020 to capture their views on education. Responses were collected via online surveys, with the fieldwork completed by research agency Opinium. Teaching staff include school leaders, middle leaders, classroom teachers and teaching assistants working in UK primary and secondary schools.

Suha Yassin Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Lead Products & Services for UK Schools, Pearson



At Pearson we are committed to ensuring our products and services are representative and inclusive for the learners, teachers, educators and communities that we work with and support.

In this report, we are sharing with you our findings from surveys which explored how diverse education is today, how diverse school topics, materials and resources are and how well they reflect students and educators. We delve into why feeling included matters, sharing the latest research and expert views. Drawing on all this, we then outline some headline recommendations for building greater diversity into education, shining a light on some of the pioneering initiatives taking place in schools and organisations across the sector. As you come to the end of the report you can also learn about what Pearson are doing to champion diversity. We hope that by reading this report, it will give you the opportunity to reflect and help work together with us to make education inclusive for all.

This report is just one of the many ways that we are inviting students, teachers, parents and experts to share their views and suggestions with us. We will continue to listen, learn and take action.

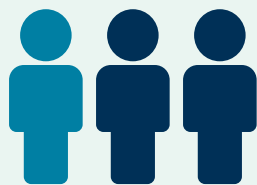
Findings at a glance

1 How diverse is education today?

On the whole, teaching staff believe that more can be done to celebrate diverse cultures, people and experiences in UK education, with the Black Lives Matter movement prompting many to think about how diverse their curriculum is.

Three in five (61%) leaders, teachers and assistants believe that the education provided in UK schools today reflects the diversity of pupils and the world around them. However, there has been a rise in the number of teachers who think otherwise. Where a quarter (26%) of teaching staff felt that education did not reflect the diversity of their students in our December 2019 survey, fast forward to August 2020 and this increased to one in three (32%).

1 in 3
teaching staff

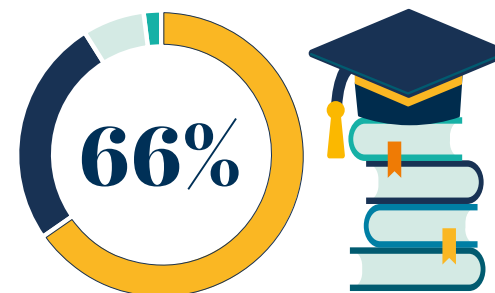


think that the diversity of pupils and the world around them is not reflected in education provided in UK schools today.

Could this increase be linked to the racial equality protests that made the headlines in the summer of 2020? We asked teaching staff whether the Black Lives Matter movement had prompted them to think about the diversity of their curriculum. Two in three (66%) agreed that it had made them evaluate what they teach in schools,

with teaching staff aged between 18-34 more likely to report this than those aged over 55.

“The Black Lives Matter movement prompted me to think about the diversity of our curriculum and what is taught in schools.”



66% of teaching staff agree with this statement

When it comes to celebrating diverse cultures, people and experiences in schools, teaching staff are agreed that more can be done, with four in five (80%) stating this. Encouragingly the majority also feel confident talking to their students about topics such as gender equality, the Black Lives Matter movement and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Younger staff members and those who work in secondary schools tend to feel more comfortable discussing LGBT+ and non-binary definitions than their older colleagues or those teaching at a primary level.

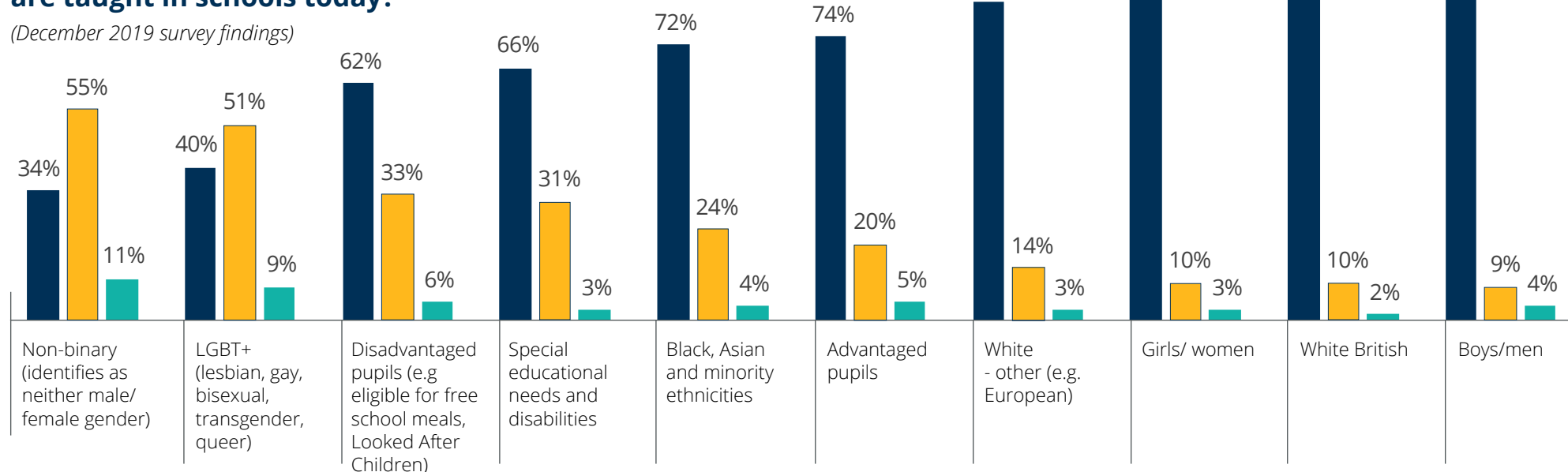
Findings at a glance

2 Diversity in school topics, materials and resources

In our 2019 survey, we asked teaching staff for their views on how represented certain groups are in the resources, topics and materials that are taught in schools. While white British were considered to be the most represented group in school resources, people who are non-binary, LGBT+, from disadvantaged backgrounds or have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were thought to be the least represented.

“How much do you feel that the following groups are represented in the resources, topics and materials that are taught in schools today?”

(December 2019 survey findings)



More than half of UK teaching staff say that non-binary and LGBT+ groups are not represented in the resources, topics and materials that are taught in schools. Around a third say the same for disadvantaged groups and those with SEND or additional needs. At the other end of the scale, the most represented groups in school resources, topics and materials are white British; women / girls and men / boys.

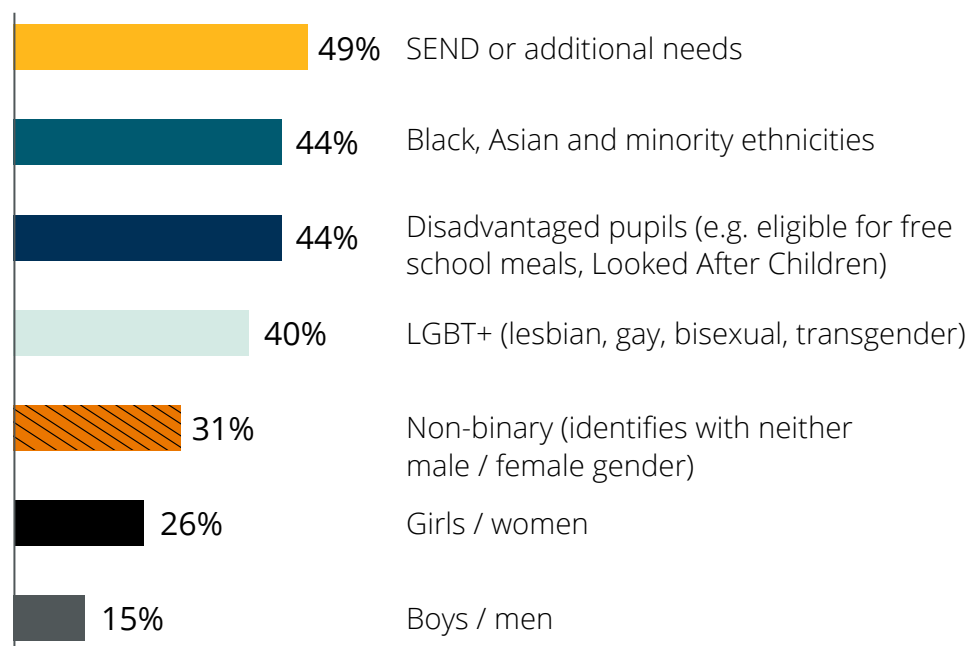
■ Represented % ■ Not represented % ■ Don't know 3%

Findings at a glance

3 Reflecting students and educators

Championing greater diversity in education extends beyond the number of times students may see themselves in what they learn. So, in our 2020 survey, we asked teaching staff what groups could be more 'thoughtfully' included in the content taught in schools, as well as how reflected educators felt themselves.

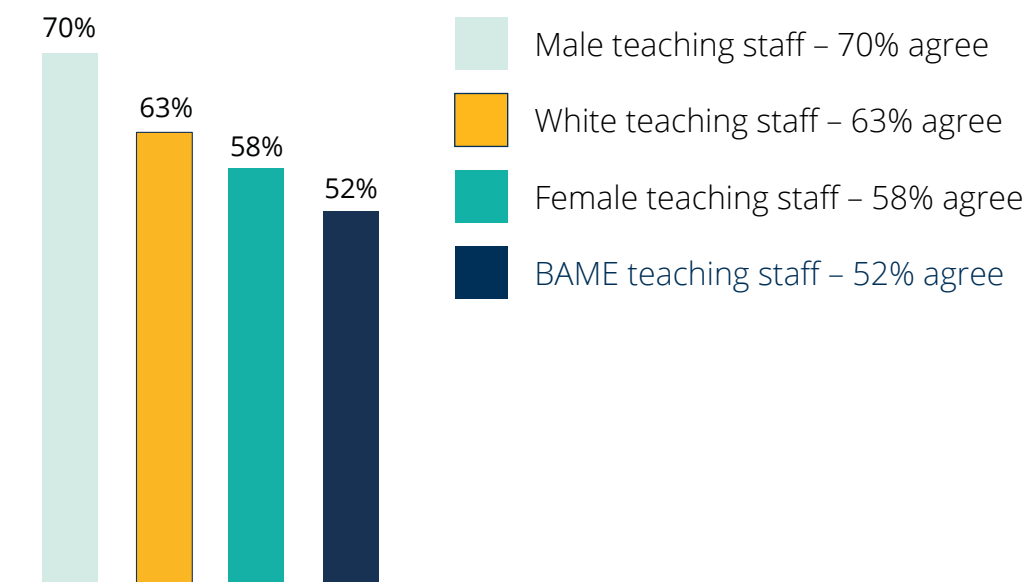
Top seven groups that could be more thoughtfully included in the resources, topics and materials that are taught in schools



Half (49%) of UK teaching staff feel people with SEND or additional needs could be more thoughtfully included in the resources, topics and materials that are currently taught in schools. This was followed by BAME (44%) and disadvantaged (44%) groups.

When it comes to educators themselves, where 63% of teaching staff of white ethnicity feel their personal background is reflected in what they teach, just over half (52%) of BAME teachers said the same. There is also a notable gender difference here, with 70% of men feeling included compared to 58% of women.

"I feel my personal background is reflected in what is taught in schools today"



Findings at a glance



"The Black Lives Matter movement has really made me realise how black history is not taught. For example, in my own teaching of inventors I did not realise that out of all the inventors we study, not one was black and that this should not be the case."

Teacher survey respondent

"I think some work in school reflects the modern world and some doesn't. It depends on the subject. I don't feel like some of the books taught in school reflect me."

Grace, age 11

"I think the things we read and learn at school reflect the modern world to some extent but we still have a long way to go before we make sure all voices are heard and all children are given the education they need in order to treat people equally."

Samantha, age 15

"We have a number of minority ethnic groups in our schools (Bangladeshi, Somali, Turkish, North African, Eastern European), as well as a variety of SEND needs - these groups are well represented in the topics, materials and resources that are taught in school. However, children who are Looked After Children, young carers and have experienced significant trauma or are living in poverty are difficult to represent visually."

Siobhan, Teacher

"I feel reflected in what I read and learn about in school. For example, in History we are currently learning the Abyssinian Crisis. Abyssinia was the old name for Ethiopia which is where I was born and where I am originally from."

Salem, age 14

"In more diverse schools, usually the curriculum has been designed to ensure inclusivity. In areas where attainment is high and there is less diversity, I have seen poor curriculum design. There can often be an emphasis on academic attainment, not the whole child and certainly not preparing them for the diverse world we live in. I am seeing gradual changes, sadly as a result of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework, which places a large emphasis on curriculum design being suitable for the children in the school. I am glad this is happening, but also sad that it has taken the Ofsted criteria to change before some schools realise its importance."

Emma Day, Teacher educator and Psychotherapist

Why feeling included matters



1 Preparing pupils for life in the modern world

"The value of reflecting realities, individuals, identities, cultures and communities is rooted in the importance of elevating all lived experiences and recognising them as worthy of note and exploration. To understand and be understood is at the heart of the human experience. The space between what is written and what is read is often a safe space in which we can make sense of our lives and the world around us."

Farrah Serroukh, Learning Programme Leader in CLPE's Reflecting Realities report

The purpose of education goes further than just educational attainment. As the Department for Education (DfE) highlights in its five-year strategy goals, it is about "ensuring young people are prepared for adulthood, the world of work and to be a fulfilled and active participant in society".¹

As part of preparing children for life and society beyond the school gates, education should reflect the diverse world they live in, helping to promote greater understanding and acceptance of different cultures, abilities, families, and people. But is education reflecting today's society effectively? One in three teaching staff in our last survey thought not. Four in five said more can be done.

In England, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds continues to increase.² Likewise, the number of children with a registered SEND³ or eligible for free school meals (FSM) has also risen.⁴ Yet these groups came out as the top three who could be more thoughtfully included in education. The percentage of teaching staff who felt these groups were 'very represented' in the content taught in schools was also reasonably low.

Despite a third of all school age pupils being of minority ethnic backgrounds⁵, only two in 10 (20%) teaching staff who completed our December 2019 survey felt that Black, Asian and minority ethnicities were 'very represented' in the content that is taught in schools. Indeed, more than a third (34%) of senior and middle leaders went as far as to say that BAME groups were not reflected in school topics, resources and materials.

While 19% of teaching staff think their disadvantaged students are very represented in the topics and materials that are taught in schools, in the UK today, 33% of children are living in poverty⁶. Likewise, while 20,000 young people in Britain are growing up with same-sex parents, and many children have lesbian, gay, bi and trans parents or family⁷, only one in 10 teaching staff say LGBT+ people are very represented in what they teach.

Why feeling included matters

Why does this matter?

Research suggests that children and young people are more likely to be bullied in schools because of their race, faith, gender, disability, sexual orientation or trans status.⁸

Moreover, “education is the key” to helping end racism, as Sue Schofield, education team manager at charity Show Racism the Red Card, declared in an interview with the Independent. She explained that what is taught in schools and homes is crucial to tackling discriminatory attitudes and helping children to develop anti-racist instincts.⁹

Ultimately, by building more authentic portrayals of the diverse experiences, backgrounds, contexts and communities that make up modern Britain into our classrooms, we can work to prepare pupils for the modern world and stamp out prejudice, building a more tolerant and educated society, where all walks of life are not only accepted, but celebrated.

LGBT+

Only **10%** of teaching staff say this group is ‘very represented’ in the content taught in schools.

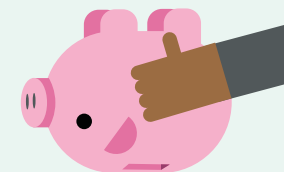
1.2 million people aged 16 years and over identify as LGB in the UK¹³. 20,000 young people in Britain are growing up with same-sex parents and many children have lesbian, gay, bi and trans parents or family.¹⁴



Disadvantaged

19% of teaching staff say this group is ‘very represented’ in the content taught in schools.

33% of all children are living in poverty – that’s 4.5 million children in the UK.¹¹



SEND

19% of teaching staff say this group is ‘very represented’ in the content taught in schools.

15.5% of all pupils in England have SEN – that’s 1,373,800 children.¹²



BAME

20% of teaching staff say this group is ‘very represented’ in the content taught in schools.

A third of the total school population are from minority ethnic backgrounds.¹⁰



Why feeling included matters



2 Impact on mental health and wellbeing

"In many ways, what happens in our schools directly informs how society changes. If we do not feel included and represented in school, the risk is that this becomes the norm in society, and there is a growing body of evidence linking isolation and loneliness to poor mental wellbeing. From a SEND perspective, there is certainly more that can be done. The fact that we still need to actively include content on SEND as an aspect of PSHE curricula suggests that SEND is not yet representative enough in general day-to-day content."

Adam Boddison, CEO, nasen

How reflected and included pupils feel in what they read, digest and learn can have significant implications for their mental health and wellbeing, as well as a school's overall health and happiness.

Pupil wellbeing

As the charity Mind explains, some research suggests that loneliness and feelings of isolation can be associated with an increased risk of certain mental health problems, including depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.¹⁵ While there are many different causes of loneliness, the charity describes how some research suggests that

you are more vulnerable to loneliness if you:

- ▶ belong to minority groups and live in an area without others from a similar background
- ▶ are excluded from social activities due to mobility problems or a shortage of money
- ▶ experience discrimination and stigma because of a disability or long-term health problem, including mental health problems
- ▶ experience discrimination and stigma because of your gender, race or sexual orientation¹⁶

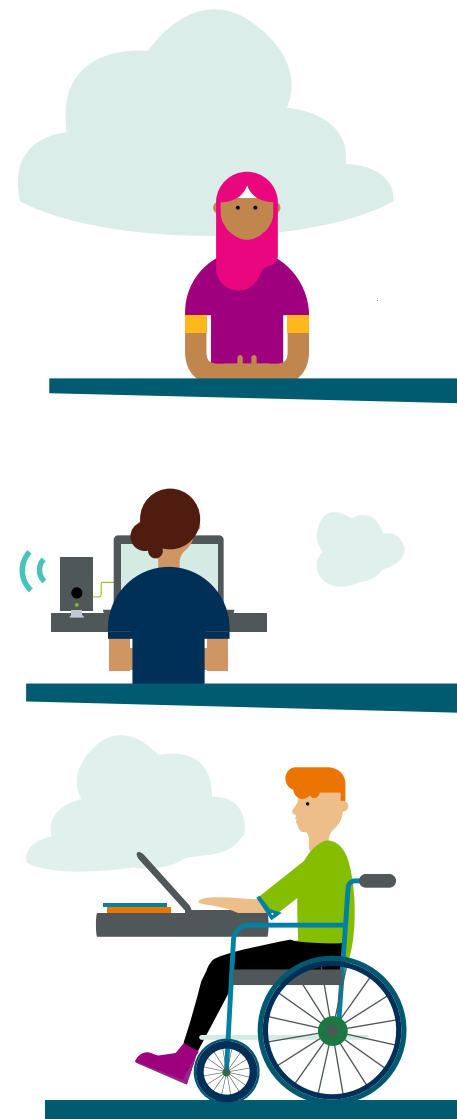
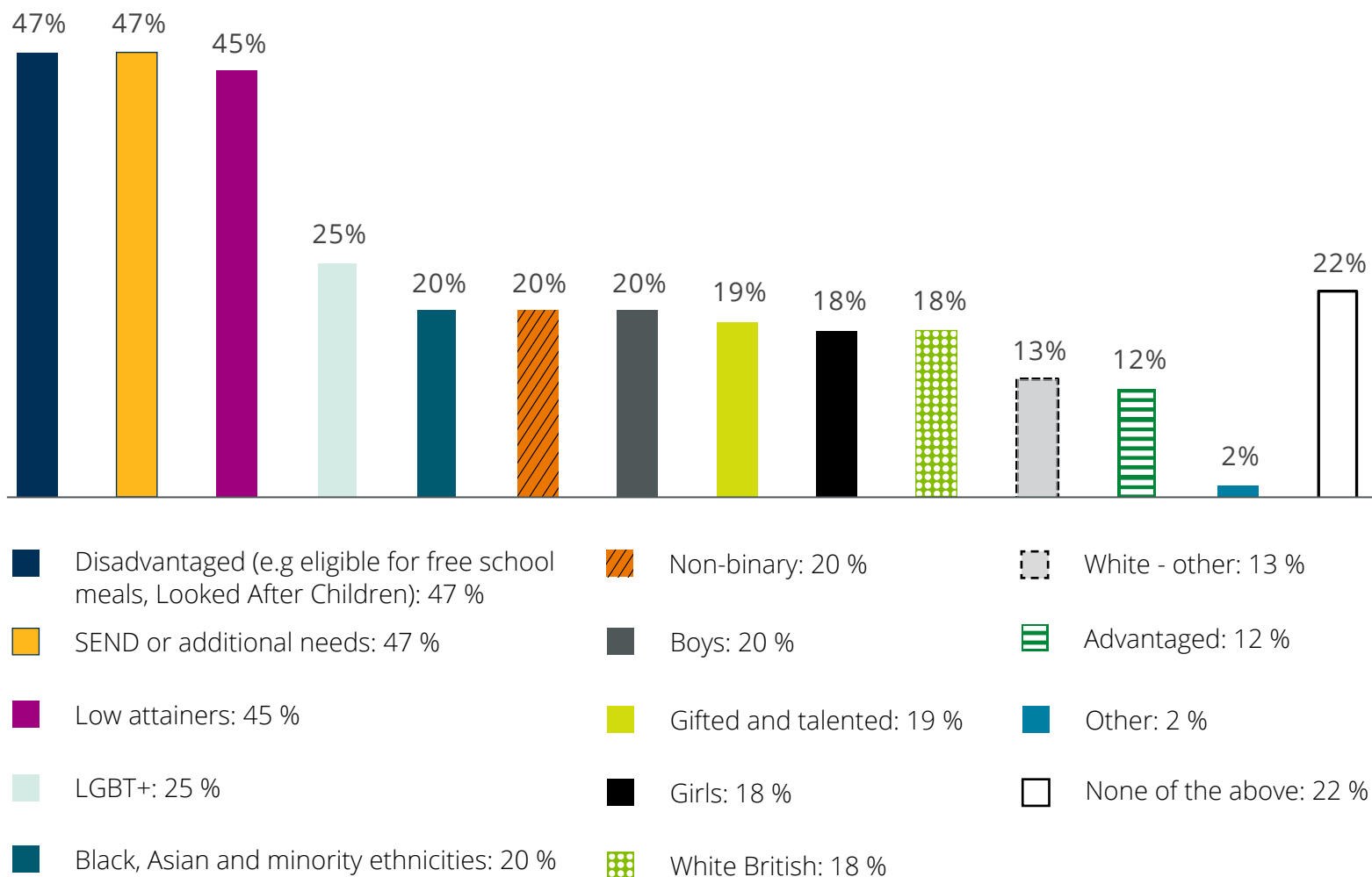
As well as the links to bullying previously mentioned, it is feasible to believe that feeling under-represented in what you see and learn about in school can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and impact your mental health.

When we asked teaching staff in our 2019 survey whether they were concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of any specific groups of pupils in their school, they were most worried about their pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, and those with SEND or additional needs (47% concerned). One in four (25%) were worried for their LGBT+ pupil's mental health, while one in five (20%) were concerned about their BAME and non-binary pupils.

While there can be many reasons and contributing factors for teachers to be concerned for the mental health of these groups of pupils, it is worth noting that those groups were among those considered to be less represented in school resources and topics.

Why feeling included matters

“Are you concerned for the mental health and wellbeing of any of the following groups of pupils?” (% concerned, December 2019 survey findings)



Why feeling included matters

"If we don't see ourselves represented in what we learn, we feel excluded or that it does not refer to us. If we feel excluded, we feel marginalised, and I've seen first-hand as a teacher and a psychotherapist in a pupil referral unit, how this negatively affect's pupil's mental health.

As someone who is now in a same-sex marriage, I also didn't feel at all reflected in what I learnt at school.

I grew up and started teaching when Section 28 was still alive and kicking, so I very much grew up feeling like hiding was the best way, or that I was wrong. I also had to teach under this legislation, which meant my family was not seen to be a 'real' one. Being treated in this way has absolutely been my driver for the work I do in supporting schools and people now, and for the family life I have created".

Emma Day, Teacher educator and Psychotherapist

Whole-school wellbeing

Feeling included also has whole-school health and wellbeing implications. When we asked teaching staff to rate the overall health and happiness of their school community, those who feel that their personal background is not reflected in education were slightly less likely to describe their school as happy and healthy than their colleagues who feel included. 89% of teachers who feel included rate their school as happy and healthy, in comparison to 79% of teachers who do not feel reflected in education.

Teachers who feel that their personal backgrounds are not reflected in education, are less likely to describe their school community as **'happy' and 'healthy'.**



Taking a whole-school approach to inclusion and celebrating diversity in local contexts and communities is likely to have a positive effect not only on pupils, but teaching staff, parents and carers, building a place in the community where everyone feels that they belong.

Why feeling included matters

3 A barrier to achievement

"Feeling included in what you learn helps you connect with the content, making it easier to learn for exams. If the subject is completely unrelatable then it makes it harder to find the motivation to learn and limits your accessibility to the higher grades."

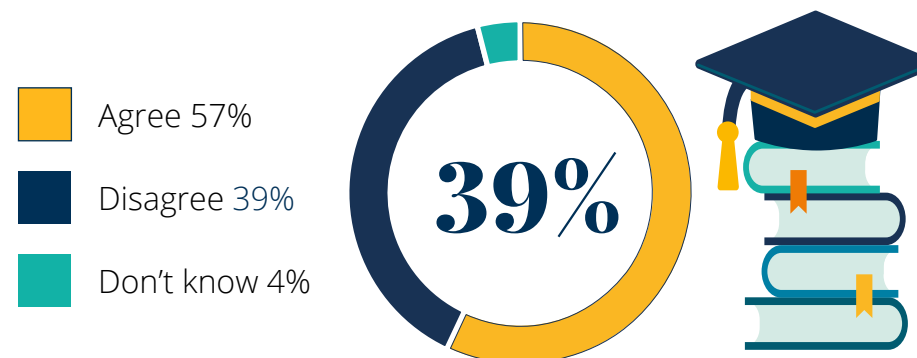
Samantha, age 15

"Feeling included in what you learn at school matters because I think you learn better when you feel a part of the lesson."

Salem, age 14

We asked teaching staff in 2020 if they were confident that the education system provides the best outcomes for all pupils, and while over half said yes, two in five thought otherwise.

"I'm confident the current education system provides the best outcomes for all students"



39% of teaching staff disagree with this statement

Teaching staff who responded to the survey in 2019 were particularly concerned for their pupils with SEND or additional needs, as well as those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with 46% and 45% stating that the system is not providing the best outcomes for these groups respectively.

At the other end of the scale, the pupils with the best outcomes from the system were considered to be those who are advantaged, white British and gifted/talented - two of the groups who were found to be most represented in school topics, materials and resources.

Why feeling included matters

While there are a number of factors that can impact pupil outcomes, not being able to see yourself or your context reflected in what you learn, or seeing negative portrayals of yourself, can act as a significant barrier to learning. Research commissioned by National Education Union (NEU) found that pupils who have a 'sense of belonging' in schools tend to perform better academically, as well as be happier and more confident.¹⁷

A report from the think-tank, the Centre for Education and Youth (CfEY), also explained how black Caribbean boys and working-class white boys were two of the largest underperforming groups in London schools. They were also disproportionately portrayed negatively, with a focus on crime and antisocial behaviour.¹⁸ Mental health was considered one of the areas to address in order to improve their outcomes.¹⁹

Moreover, as writer and author of *The Edvocate*, Dr Matthew Lynch, explains:

"If a student cannot relate new information to his own experiences, or connect the new material to a familiar concept, he may perceive the new information as frustrating, difficult or dismiss it completely, believing it to be in conflict with his already tenuous understanding of the world. Teachers have the responsibility to seek out cultural building blocks students already possess, in order to help build a framework for understanding."²⁰

As well as having the potential to impact pupils' ability to understand new subjects and topics, a lack of representation can also mean pupils have limited access to role models, which can affect their

aspirations and achievement. For instance, Art Council England's Time for Change report, which explored the representation of people from BME backgrounds across the UK children's literature sector, found that a lack of representation in children's texts and role models meant that people from BME backgrounds are less likely to aspire to become writers or illustrators.²¹

"Not seeing yourself reflected in what you learn can have an impact on aspirations and outcomes. Many of our children don't have parents that work in skilled work, that have studied to a higher level or achieved success in the arts for example, so it is essential children see role models being successful in all areas of the curriculum."

Siobhan, Teacher



Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



Recommendations

We've seen why feeling included matters, but how can greater diversity be built into education today? Here we outline some headline recommendations and shine a light on some of the pioneering initiatives taking place in schools and organisations across the sector, as well as within Pearson, to help all young people feel included and that they belong.

1 More authentic portrayals of diverse communities, experiences and people should be included in the topics, materials and qualifications that are taught in schools

An important step in supporting children and young people to feel more reflected in what they see and learn is to work to diversify the curriculum, ensuring that the topics, materials and resources that are taught in schools champion a range of backgrounds, abilities, experiences and identities in a thoughtful way.

From the subjects with the most diverse curriculum to the least, there is no doubt that more can be done in every facet of education to champion diversity. But this involves schools, exam boards, charities, government, publishers and wider sectors showcasing a combined and longstanding commitment to inclusion. This can pave the way for more diverse authors, texts, topics and schemes of work across the curriculum and beyond and open the door to more authentic and quality depictions.

"Schools have always had Drop Down Days or Celebration Weeks with specific celebrations of different communities, people and experiences. This is a start. However, it is also an add on. It's important we ensure that the curriculum is designed for specific cohorts with their needs in mind, and this needs to be embedded and not treated as something that's bolted on."

Emma Day, Teacher educator and Psychotherapist

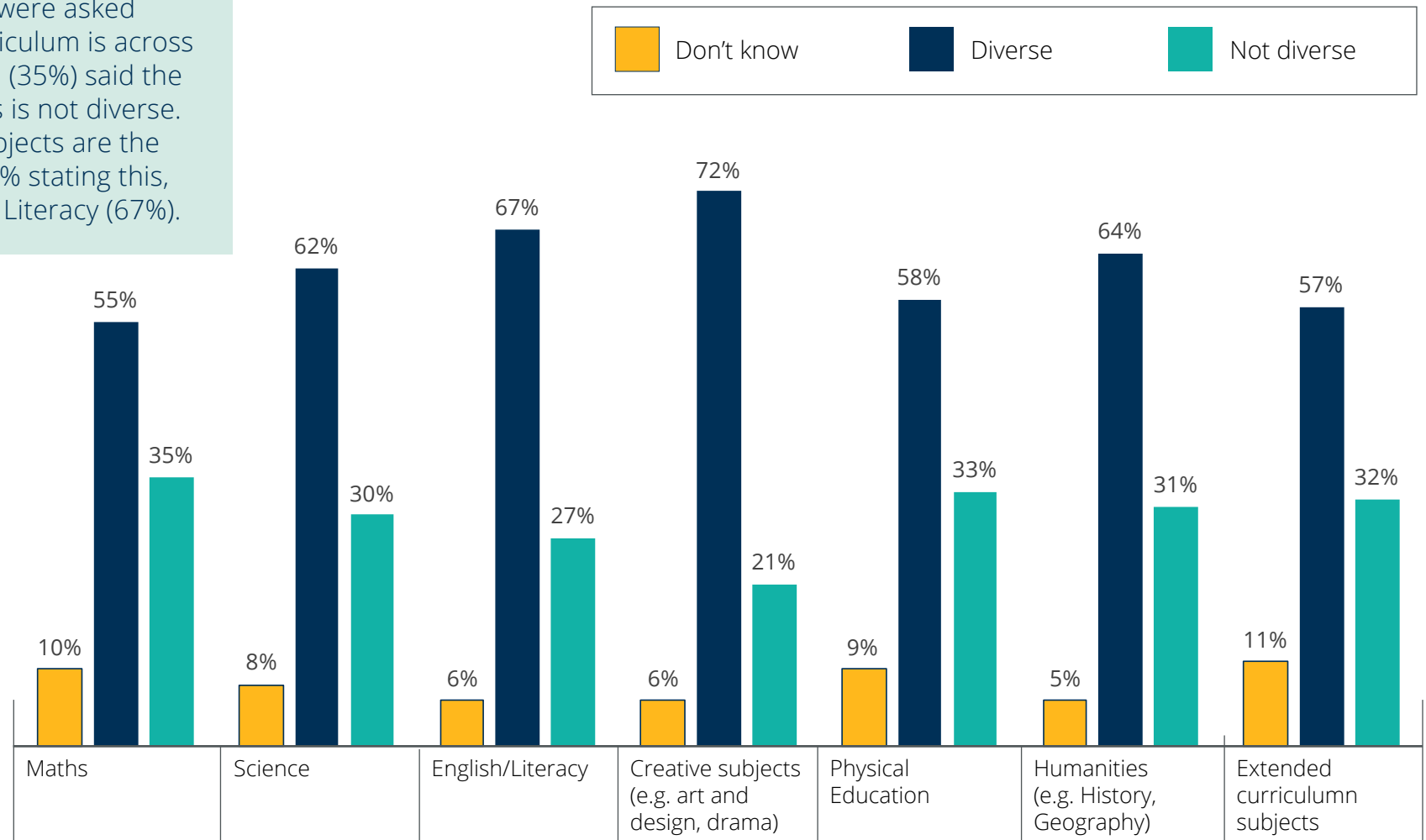


Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



How diverse is the curriculum that is taught in the following subjects? *(August 2020 survey findings)*

When teaching staff were asked how diverse the curriculum is across subjects, over a third (35%) said the curriculum for maths is not diverse. The most diverse subjects are the creative arts, with 72% stating this, followed by English / Literacy (67%).



Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



Sector insights and activity

Rethinking children's literature

CLPE are pioneering research into the diversity of children's literature through their *Reflecting Realities* reports. The 2020 report²² finds that while there has been an increase in books that feature characters of colour - from 4% in 2017 to 10% in 2019 - there is still a long way to go to achieve representation that reflects the UK population. They highlight high-quality, representative and inclusive texts, including:



- ▶ Look up! - Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola
- ▶ Son of the Circus: A Victorian Story - E.L. Norry
- ▶ High Rise Mystery - Sharna Jackson
- ▶ My Pet Star - Corrine Averiss

"Even modern day stories contain too many stereotypes and as a result, minority groups are left unnoticed with their voices unheard."

Samantha, age 14



Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



Celebrating diverse role models and content across the curriculum

SEND aspirations

"If you are learning about people like you then you have positive role models and this can be a driving force in growing aspiration in children and young people with SEND."

Events like the Paralympic Games, people in history like Helen Keller or modern-day activist and actor Liz Carr can be a positive force in providing inclusive content for classroom practice."

Adam Boddison, CEO, nasen

LGBT role models

"When building an LGBT-inclusive school, think about how you can include LGBT role models and references in your classes, for example, you could explore Frida Kahlo in art, or Alan Turing in Science. Refer to diverse families in class questions too – for example in Maths you could ask: 'Mark's dads increase his pocket money by 10%. If Mark had £2 before the increase, how much pocket money does he have now?'"

Sidonie Bertrand-Shelton, Head of Education and Youth Programmes at Stonewall

Drawing on business and academic networks

"We invite business partners in to school to support children in greater need of positive learning role models. They support in reading in maths. Some of our older children also visit Cambridge University each year as part of our Scholars Project run by a local secondary school."

Siobhan, Teacher



Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



People and topics of the month

Enjoy Pearson's [Scientist of the Month](#) campaign, highlighting a diverse range of scientists to be celebrated in schools from inspirational female astronaut Mae Jemison to early physicist and polymath Alhazen.

Don't miss the [History Topic of the Month](#) series too, which is shining a light on significant moments of diversity and inclusion throughout history, including Windrush, Women's Suffrage and Mansa Musa and the Mali Empire.

Getting creative with maths

While maths was considered to have the least diverse curriculum in our survey, its cultural origins are far from mono-cultural. As a student explains in the *Black Mixed-race Male Experiences of the UK Secondary School Curriculum* report:

*"The fundamentals of math actually developed from Arabia, from Asia, not from England, it wasn't Caucasian based, they didn't just make everything themselves actually there was a history and it came from the Middle East... the fact that the number naught was created by an Indian, you know, how many children actually know that? Is it important for them to know that? Yes because it means mathematics becomes culturally diverse..."*²³

History all students can connect to

"The first time I encountered someone like myself in the history curriculum was the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. I hated it. It was so painful because for such a long time I had been presented with figures who are powerful and made significant changes and then I was suddenly presented with people who looked like me, but were nameless and who seemed like they had no agency or power. It didn't give me anything to be proud of."

Way before we teach our students about the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade, we explore African civilisations like Mansa Musa and the Mali Empire. We also look at how BAME communities contributed to the development of Britain. Migration is a key topic, as it helps students to understand that being British isn't inextricably linked to being white. There were Africans in Britain before the English came."

It's not just about race though, I feel that women, working class and LGBT+ communities could also be way more represented in the history curriculum."

Josh Garry, Teacher



Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



2 More guidance & support to help build confidence and understanding in schools

"A good way to raise the profile of inclusion is through education, widening our teachers' perspectives on why this is important, even if the school they work in is monocultural. We are not a monocultural society. We are working to create a workforce for the future that needs to feel valued and included, so we need to think about what future we are preparing our children for."

Emma Day, Teacher educator and Psychotherapist

While teaching staff felt relatively confident speaking to their students about the Black Lives Matter movement and gender equality, exploring sensitive issues like disability, race and sexual identity can be a daunting prospect for many teachers and the wider sector. So, to achieve meaningful representation and avoid reinforcing stereotypes or caricatures, more guidance and support is needed.

This may take the form of specific in-school CPD, drawing on the range of guidance and resources that are available across the sector, capitalising on wider opportunities to collaborate and collectively agreeing how to tackle these important issues.

Guidance to build an LGBT-inclusive school



- ▶ LGBT-inclusive education is about teaching that some children have two mums or two dads. Learning about different kinds of families from a young age helps create inclusive environments where everyone feels that they belong.
- ▶ LGBT charity Stonewall has produced free guidance with Pearson including practical tips, lesson ideas and glossaries so that teachers can easily and confidently incorporate LGBT people and families into their curriculum.

To read the guides, visit:

"A lot of the diverse content I'm trying to deliver, I was never taught about in school. I'm having to go and research it myself. We need more diverse resources and support to deliver these topics more widely and increase teacher confidence."

Josh Garry, Teacher

Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



Sector insights and activity

The Black Curriculum

- ▶ The Black Curriculum is a social enterprise championing greater diversity in the national curriculum, with the aim to build a sense of identity in every young person in the UK. They offer school programmes, curriculum audits and teacher training to support educators with racial literacy, decolonising pedagogy, teaching intersectionality and more.

Gender equality in education

Pearson's first-of-its-kind Gender Equality Guidelines are formally endorsed by The Fawcett Society, the UK's leading gender equality foundation. The guidelines are designed to tackle gender bias and challenge stereotyping in educational resources.

To learn more about The Fawcett Society's campaign to 'Smash Stereotypes' visit [The Fawcett Society's website](#)

Building a sense of belonging - case studies

- ▶ Learning from other schools about what works can be invaluable. As part of NEU's commissioned research inquiry into schools as places of belonging, case studies are highlighted from across the country. One such case study is about a school in Fleetwood, an area of high deprivation, which has worked to ensure all students feel that they belong and can achieve, irrespective of their background. Through changes to the school's approach to leadership and its culture, students are now engaged and feel included, results are rising and the school even made it onto Britain's Got Talent.

Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



Talking about SEND

"In my view, one of the biggest issues in relation to including pupils with SEND is not intentional exclusion, but rather avoidance due to fear of causing offence. Children are curious and open-minded and we as adults should support every child to explore the similarities and differences that make us all individual, and ultimately feel included."

Some key things to consider when thinking about authentic portrayals of people with SEND, their experiences and issues, include:

- ▶ *'Rather than thinking of SEND as a deficit, think of it as a difference. We are all unique and our differences may well be strengths.'*
- ▶ *Beware of unconscious bias and stereotyping. The fact that somebody has SEND does not define who they are as a person or what they can achieve.*
- ▶ *Take the time to find out more about SEND to ensure you are using appropriate terminology. And if you're not sure, it's better to ask, than to create awkwardness through avoidance.*

Adam Boddison, CEO, nasen

Opportunities to collaborate

At Pearson, we have held free Roundtables, webinars and events with educators, businesses and experts to help fuel collaboration and identify recommendations to achieve greater inclusion in education, and there are more on the horizon.

While we're working hard to create content that is representative and inclusive, we also want to ensure that students, teachers and parents have a way of getting in touch and feeding back to us if they come across anything that they feel lacks diversity, perpetuates stereotypes, or presents any bias.

Our new Pearson Reporting Bias form will enable this and allow us to investigate and address any issues as quickly as possible.

Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



3 Make sure pupil voice is at the heart of education

It's children and young people who are growing up in the world and travelling through their education, so it is crucial to get their views on inclusion and representation. Find out what they want to study, learn and see in school, as well as how they can be made to feel more included and prepared for life beyond the school gates.

Whether it's through pupil surveys, working groups or committees, don't hesitate to tap into the views of this invaluable group.

Empower pupils to make a difference

Schools can draw on young activists to help inspire children and young people to champion the issues that are important to them, driving greater inclusion and diversity. For example, the American teen activist, Marley Dias, launched the #100BlackGirlBooks campaign when she was in the sixth grade after feeling like she wasn't reflected in the books she read and studied at school.

Since its launch in 2015, the campaign has helped to collect and distribute tens of thousands of books featuring black female protagonists to libraries, schools and organisations around the world. She has also published her own book.

"Feeling included in what I learn at school matters to me because I love learning and it's important that we have a voice in our education."

Grace, age 11

"I'm passionate that there should be more diversity in the curriculum. So I wrote to my principal about this and I am now working with teachers and peers to explore and agree what topics we should be learning about, from Windrush to African Kingdoms."

Diego Bartolomeu age 13



Achieving greater diversity & inclusion in education



Tips to champion the pupil voice:

- ▶ Make use of school councils, prefects, or any other student leadership group and involve them in surveying peers or leading assemblies on the issues that matter to them.
- ▶ Celebrate students' work and passions through displays. Can classroom walls be spaces that belong to students? Think about how you can give students the freedom to apply their creativity on topics they care about in a visual way.
- ▶ Help to facilitate participation in community projects and look at forming connections with local charities or businesses who can support this. For example, organisations like [ACTV8](#) help to foster connections between companies and local communities through co learning programmes where participants work in teams to create a solution to a posed community challenge.
- ▶ Some schools have classroom ideas or post boxes where students can share anonymous letters on issues they care about and feedback on what they want to learn about in school.
- ▶ Consider using national awareness days or months, like Black History Month or LGBT History Month as stimuli for student-led projects or schemes of work. Remember to build both the pupil voice and these issues into your curriculum thoughtfully, not just as part of 'add on' activity.

Look out for opportunities where students can express themselves beyond the classroom

"Diversity, inclusion and relatability matter. At Pearson, we believe that at whatever age – from early stages to adulthood – people should feel included in the literature they read and the stories they write.

Our free national writing competition, My Twist on a Tale, empowered children and young people to put themselves at the heart of their own stories, as they asserted their modern-day stamp on classic tales and sought to better reflect their personal interests, background and experiences. The 2019 collection celebrates a diverse and modern Britain, with winning stories including Cindermedia, The Eco-Friendly Wolf and Little Brown Riding Hood whilst the 2020 collection looks at these perspectives and our nation's take on Every day Heroes."

Katy Lewis, Head of English, Drama and Languages, Pearson

Conclusion

The issue of diversity in education is not one that can be tackled by one group alone.

Schools, businesses, academia, government, publishers and the wider sector must continue to build on the passion and commitment for change by working together to create a system that has diversity and a sense of belonging at its core. And we are committed to doing everything in our power to support and achieve this.

Thank you to all of the leaders, teachers and assistants in schools across the UK who shared their views on education in our national surveys and helped to shape this report, as well as our partners and experts. While this is a complex area and there is so much more to be explored, we hope this report helps to highlight how, when done authentically, the positive impact of pupils seeing themselves and greater diversity in what they learn can last a lifetime and has consequences that extend far beyond the classroom.

At Pearson, we are excited to continue our work here. We will go on seeking and listening to the views of teachers, pupils and experts on how we can best support them, while also taking action and playing our part in building a system that includes every child.

To find out more about our campaign for diverse and inclusive education, visit go.pearson.com/inclusiveeducation

► Share your views and follow the conversation on Twitter **@PearsonSchools** **#inclusiveeducation**



How is Pearson championing diversity in education?



Examples of how Pearson is working to promote greater diversity and inclusion in education and beyond, include:

- ▶ Committed to championing diversity, equity and inclusion in all it does, Pearson has established a Global Task Force dedicated to identifying concrete actions to improve recruitment, retention, and inclusion, and to ensure its products and services build a more inclusive society.
- ▶ The development of editorial guidelines and checklists that drive the inclusiveness of all its resources, qualifications and services, ensuring they challenge stereotypes, broaden perceptions, promote equality and represent today's world. These include, Race & Ethnicity Diversity, Equity and Inclusion guidelines, LGBTQ+ guidelines, Gender Equality guidelines and a Principles of equity diversity and inclusion policy for the UK that ensures all learners, including children with SEND, can access their content
- ▶ Providing a Reporting Bias form where students, teachers and parents have a way of getting in touch and feeding back if they come across any Pearson content that they feel lacks diversity, perpetuates stereotypes, or presents any bias.
- ▶ Diversifying its Pearson Edexcel GCSE English Literature text list to include authors like Tanika Gupta MBE and Jamila Gavin. 27% of its English Literature titles, including novelists, playwrights and poets, are written by authors from ethnic minority backgrounds and the organisation is committed to expanding this range at A level English Literature and GCSE Drama.
- ▶ Introducing new diversity guides for Pearson Edexcel A-level English Literature that introduce students to work from a diverse range of British writers, and which raise contemporary issues that they can engage with and relate to. The guides cover Black British Literature, LGBTQ+ Literature and British Asian Literature.
- ▶ Partnership with LGBT charity, Stonewall, to sponsor their LGBT-inclusive curriculum guides for primary and secondary schools, to help create learning environments where LGBT students feel included and accepted.
- ▶ Launching the UK's first BAME Apprenticeship Awards with partner Thinkfest, to showcase the outstanding work and achievement of apprentices from black and minority ethnic groups.

How is Pearson championing diversity in education?



- ▶ Promoting diversity in science through its Scientist of the Month campaign, which highlights a diverse range of scientists to be celebrated in schools from pioneering female astronauts to Indian scientists, and mentoring girls to engage them with STEM careers. A wide-scale review of its resources so that they reflect the diversity of the Scientific workforce is also taking place.
- ▶ The launch of a new Migration topic to the GCSE History specification, where students have the opportunity to explore inspiring people like Dr Harold Moody, one of Britain's first black civil rights civil rights activists, The Suffragettes and events like Notting Hill Carnival and the Bristol Bus Boycott. Textbooks, revision materials and free teacher resources are being developed to support the new topic too.
- ▶ Pearson is a corporate partner of DisabilityIn and is a member of the Valuable500 to help drive inclusion internally and within its products and services.
- ▶ Roundtables, webinars and events that bring together key influencers from across education, business and academia to encourage conversation and help shape its commitment to achieve more authentic representation and inclusion in education.
- ▶ Continuing to seek and share the views of teachers, leaders and experts through its national surveys and research reports exploring accessibility to aspiration and achievement.
- ▶ Pearson is currently striving to increase diversity in its images so that children with SEND feel represented in their learning through its illustrators' guide and updates to its global photo libraries. Teams are also working to increase and improve customer testing of products with pupils with SEND.



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