Inclusive Education and Early Years: Baseline Report

September 2023

Education4Everyone

Contents

Executive Summary

The National Association for Special Educational Needs (nasen) conducted an *Independent Review of Inclusive Education and Early Years* in 2021 on behalf of the Government of Jersey. The focus of the review was on how schools, settings and support services contribute to, or are barriers to, inclusion at a system level.

Following that, the Government conducted its own surveys and workshops with children, young people, parents, carers, and education practitioners in Jersey. They were asked what inclusion means to them, what can be done to make all children and young people feel welcome and included as well as make all schools and learning settings in Jersey more inclusive.

This research found that nearly half the number of parents and carers (49.6%) who responded felt that the education provided in schools today is reflective of the diversity of pupils on the Island. This view was echoed by half the number of the practitioners (51.3%) who participated in the survey.

Most education practitioners (79.6%) said that the school, nursery, college or setting they work in creates an inclusive environment that enables all children to thrive. However, 16.9% parents and 13.1% practitioners disagreed and stated that more should be done to make children and young people feel included.

13.1% of parents who responded also stated their child did not feel welcome and supported by their setting.

A quarter of practitioners who responded said LGBTQIA+ (26.5%), and disadvantaged pupils (25.3%) were not appropriately represented in resources, topics and material taught in schools on the island. A fifth of practitioners (19.2%) said that mental health issues (19.2%) and advantaged pupils (20.5%) were not appropriately represented.

Overall, both practitioners and parents rated primary and early years settings as more inclusive than secondary.

Children and young people were asked 'what it feels like to be included' or 'not included' and 'what schools can do to be more inclusive'.

They listed a range of issues including addressing bullying, support for mental health issues, wheelchair access, sensory rooms, celebration of diverse cultures and languages, group work, more time for play, autism awareness, safe environment and dealing with teacher favouritism.

Analysis of the responses from children and young people highlighted nine themes ranging from "Relationships and Friendships" to "Access to all Spaces."

Both parents and practitioners agreed that greater flexible and adaptive teaching to suit different ways pupils learn would most help children reach their full potential.

Practitioners sought more planning time, resources, budget, and trained staff to support children with special educational needs.

The results of this survey are being shared with parents, practitioners, and the Jersey community by way of this Inclusive Education and Early Years Baseline Survey Report. Children and young people will get to read a youth friendly version of the report and watch a short video of it.

This information is being used by the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) to co-design a Vision and Charter for Inclusive Education and Early Years in Jersey. Workshops are being conducted with a group comprising parents, carers, education, early years, and childcare providers and third sector organisations. They will be asked to shape the final Charter.

The aim is for the definition and principles of Inclusive Education and Early Years to reflect Jersey's whole community.

Methodology

Data was collected via two online surveys, which opened on 24 February 2023 and closed on 22 March 2023. One survey was for parents and carers. The second was for practitioners working in early years and education, and those working for services that support children and young people in schools.

The parents and carers survey was made available in Portuguese, Romanian and Polish.

The survey was promoted to parents and educational practitioners via the Government of Jersey website, social media channels, media announcement, internal newsletters, and through stakeholders' channels.

Views were gathered from 536 children and young people via 12 face-to-face workshops between November 2022 and March 2023 using a standardised set of questions. Workshops took place at primary and secondary schools, colleges, and at youth projects. A bespoke workshop was conducted with the elected home educator group. The Parent Carer Forum and Jersey Employment Trust also gathered inputs from young people.

The views of young children (aged 2 to 4) were also sought. The Best Start Partnership through Jersey Child Care Trust (JCCT) and Childcare and Early Years Service (CEYS) supported this work by collecting the views of young children, parents, and practitioners in three settings, which included both public and private sectors. (See appendix 3 for the Early Years case study report).

Views were gathered through a range of methods, including child conferencing, child led tours, puppets, and observations. Data was collected from three sources at each setting: children, parents, and practitioners.

Demographic of contributors

Children and young people

536 children and young people aged 3 to 19 provided their views. Data was not collated on children's ethnicity. In addition, early years case studies were collected by Best Start Partnership.

Parents and carers

A total of 676 parents and carers responded to the survey and commented on the experiences of 813 children.

- 68.8% of respondents had 2 or more children
- 95.1% of respondents said their child is currently attending a nursery, school or college on the Island
- 92.5% of respondents had lived in Jersey for more than 5 years
- A quarter (25.2%) of respondents lived in St Helier
- 41.3% of respondents held a religious belief or faith
- The majority of respondents to the survey (82.4%) were female
- Of the children reported on by parents, 27.8% attended a fee-paying school or nursery and about 66.2% attended a non-feepaying government school, college, or nursery.
- 39.1% of respondents reported that their child had a physical or intellectual disability or were neurodivergent. Of this group, 96.5% reported that they felt this impacted their child's ability to engage with learning.

The experiences of children and young people discussed by parents and carers in their survey responses predominantly related to children in primary school.

Figure 1 Age group of children as stated by parents/carers responding to the survey
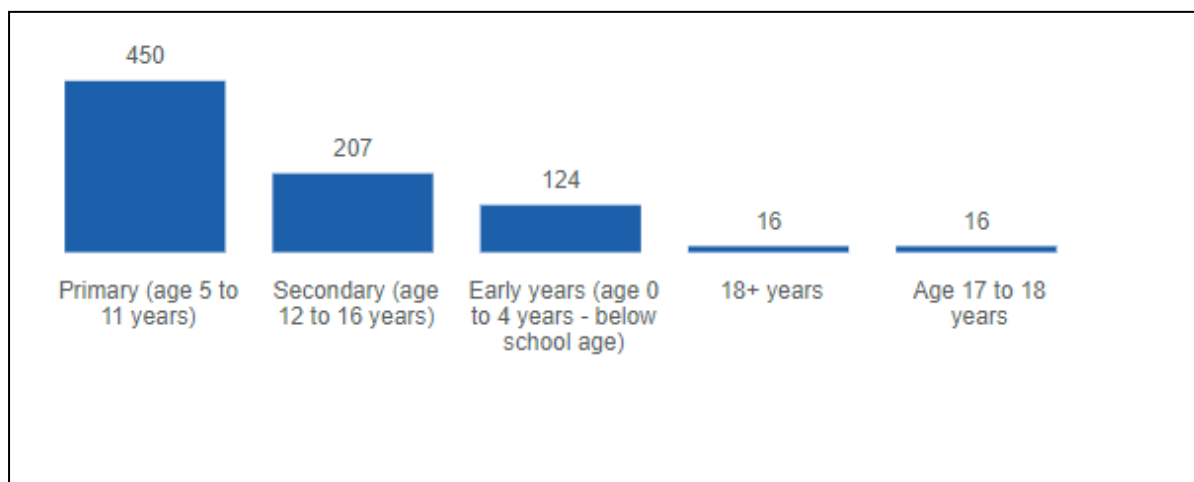
The survey asked parents and carers to identify their ethnic group. 21% of respondents chose not to disclose the information in the survey. Of those that did provide a response, most described their ethnicity as British, Jersey or British-Jersey.

Figure 2 Ethnicity selected by parents/carers who responded to the survey

Parents/Carers ethnicity groups	% of respondents
British	33.3%
Jersey	18.2 %
British/Jersey	6.3%
Irish	2.7%
Polish	2.0%
Portuguese	1.5%
Other (including Madeiran, Romanian, South African, African and more)	15%
Prefer not to say	21%

The survey also asked parents and carers what language was spoken most at home, with 13.75% saying that they spoke English *some of the time, hardly ever, or almost never.*

Parents and carers were also asked to identify the gender of the children and young people they were speaking about in the survey. The majority of children and young people discussed in the survey were male.

Figure 3 Children's gender as described by parents/carers responding to the survey

Gender description selected	% children
Male	52.8%
Female	39.5%
Non – Binary	0.9%
Other	2.5%
Rather not say	2.8%

Practitioners

A total of 230 practitioners responded to the survey.

- 86.5% practitioners work in the government/public sector. 6.5% work in the private sector and 7.0 % worked in the charity/third sector. The majority of

respondents worked as teachers, in leadership roles in schools or as teaching assistants and as classroom or early years support staff.

- 85.2% of practitioners who responded stated their ethnic cultural background as British, Jersey and Jersey/British.
- The majority (94.4%) have lived in the island for 5 years or more.

The below table provides a full breakdown of the roles of the practitioners who responded to the survey.

Figure 4 Roles of practitioners who responded to the survey

Job role	% practitioner respondents
Teacher/lecturer	34.4%
Other (health visitors, clinical psychologists, administrators in support services)	14.8%
School/Nursey or College Leader/Senior Manager	14.4%
Learning Support Assistant	11.7%
Teaching Assistant/Nursery Officer	11.3%
Specialist / Non-teaching role in school (e.g., ELSA, Counsellor, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Education Welfare Officer)	5.7%
Specialist role supporting children based in a school or nursery	3.5%
Administrative role in a nursery/school/college/ childcare provision	2.2%
Youth worker	2.2%

The below table provides a breakdown of which sector respondents worked in, with the majority of respondents working in government-maintained primary schools.

Figure 5 Sectors in which practitioners who responded to the survey work in

Sector	Respondents
Primary maintained school	53.6%
Secondary maintained school	14.8%
Specialist School /SEN provision in a school	8.2%
Nursery	4.9%
Secondary fee paying	4.9%
Further education provider	4.4%

Primary fee-paying school	2.7%
Other	6.6%

Key Findings

Key themes raised by Children and Young People

Children and young people were asked a series of standard questions during the workshops, including:

- What does it feel like to be included in your school?
- What does it feel like when you are not included?
- What would you change to make sure that all children and young people feel included?

Their answers were collected using a standard worksheet. Children and young people were able to answer using writing or pictures. For younger children, teachers and teaching assistants provided support and interpretation where needed.

Analysis of their responses highlighted several key themes.

Relationships and Friendships

Most children and young people who responded indicated that relationships and friendships with their peers was the key factor in making them feel included.

Many primary school children responded by drawing pictures of themselves playing with other children at break/lunch time and working with other children in the classroom.

Conversely, the main reason for not feeling included given was a breakdown of friendships or relationships between peers. Younger children highlighted stories about being left out at playtime. Older children highlighted concerns about inappropriate behaviour by peers.

> *"I feel included when my friends run up to me, say hi to me and even just smile at me."*
>
> *"I feel included when I play and make music with friends."*
>
> *"I felt excluded when I was in a group, and no one talked to me."*
>
> *"Sometimes not having someone to sit with when I have fallen out with my friends."*

Acceptance and belonging

When asked what could be done to make everyone feel included, children and young people highlighted the importance of accepting all people for who they are.

> *"I think acceptance is when you're not by yourself. It feels really nice to be able to talk with confidence around your friends and not be embarrassed about anything."*
>
> *"In my school everyone feels they belong because no one is treated differently".*
>
> *"In my school individuality is respected."*
>
> *"We celebrate Autism awareness day, and I can talk about what it is like to live with autism."*

Children and young people also highlighted examples where they felt that diversity was not accepted. In most cases, children and young people highlighted examples where they felt peers had treated them unfairly because of their difference.

> *"When people make fun of my nationality, and you tell an adult, but they don't do anything."*
>
> *"When I get called out for my brother having autism because he is seen as weird."*
>
> *"We have to stop mocking other languages in my school and instead learn to respect them."*

Younger children highlighted the importance of kindness. They were also more likely to say that support from staff when they found a task difficult helped them feel included. The youngest children in early years were accepting of difference and actively supported peers to ensure they were included in activities.

Where schools had buddy systems or peer support systems in place, children and young people said that this ensured that all felt included.

> *"Buddy system, older years buddy up with younger years to feel more included with other students across the school."*
>
> *"In school the teacher would sometimes come and see how well I am doing and ask if I need help."*

Celebration and understanding of diversity

When asked about things their schools/colleges did to support inclusion, children and young people gave examples of celebrations of different cultures and religions as examples of where they learnt about difference.

They highlighted that they enjoyed learning about these subjects in lessons, assemblies and during events.

> *"We are taught about different cultures in my school."*
>
> *"We have clubs at lunch for different languages."*
>
> *"In my school we often communicate and greet in various languages."*
>
> *"Our school celebrates different religious holidays, has a culture club, a 'lean in' club for women and a Just Be Club for LGBTQ+ students."*

Young people in secondary schools and colleges highlighted the need for more training and confidence from staff to talk about issues around gender and sexuality. They felt that the subject was not always addressed appropriately and highlighted the need for appropriate use of language and more support to explore the subject safely.

Fair and supportive system

Children and young people identified a link between being included and being treated fairly and shared many positive examples of this.

Conversely, many of the examples children and young people gave about when they hadn't felt included were instances where they felt that they had not been treated fairly by peers and adults.

Examples included: being told off for something they didn't do, not being listened to, or not given the opportunity to participate in an event that a peer had been included in.

> *"Unfair punishment and people not treated the same. An example would be two people fighting and one gets punished but the other doesn't."*

Students across all age groups gave examples about being treated differently because of their gender. These examples frequently related to sports with girls feeling left out by male peers or giving examples of schools prioritising sports opportunities for boys.

> *"Year 11 boys went on a school football trip to Manchester, but girls weren't included!"*
>
> *"When we play football, sometimes the boys don't pass to the girls."*
>
> *"They should make mixed football and netball teams for boys and girls, so girls can feel included in football and boys can feel included in netball."*

Older children also highlighted strict policies around uniforms. Uniform was a common theme raised by older girls who felt unable to express their individual identities due to strict uniform rules.

Some students felt that staff chose to prioritise uniform rules with sanctions that prevented them from attending lessons.

Some respondents identified the 14+ transfer to Hautlieu as a time when they did not feel included. This is due to their friends being offered a place at Hautlieu when they had not.

(A workshop was not held at Hautlieu so the views of students who did make the transition is not available.)

> *"I didn't feel included when friends went to Hautlieu and I was left behind."*
>
> *"People feel dumb if they haven't got into Hautlieu."*

Balance between academics and sport/play

Children and young people spoke about sports and extracurricular activities as a mechanism by which they felt included. While girls highlighted this area, boys in

particular, often drew on examples of playing team sports to describe a time when they felt included in school.

While many respondents said working in a group helped them feel included, a small/noticeable minority identified group work as something they felt uncomfortable with.

> *"We have lots of opportunities to play games and socialise. Playing games and getting to join in sports actives make me feel included."*
>
> *"Having after school clubs and everyone being able to play football."*

When asked what would make everyone feel included, respondents gave examples including opportunities to access sports, school trips and extracurricular activities (including informative assemblies and themed school events).

> *"We don't have enough activities and bonding trips like to the beach, cinema, parks and fields."*
>
> *"We did actives such as animal health checks, cleaning their enclosures and feeding them. I felt calmer and more relaxed when I was with animals."*
>
> *"We need more sports clubs which will provide wider variety for people with different passions and interests."*

Mental health and well-being

Children and young people said that they needed to feel safe to feel included. They also highlighted the importance of having the right access to support when needed.

Several young people said that they didn't feel included when they faced a lack of understanding or support for mental health.

> *"The school counsellor gives me a safe space. They turn off the lights and play school music. They have helped me integrate with my teacher and have advocated for me with the school when I have been unable to. If I am anxious to attend school I message them, and they let my school know".*
>
> *"Our headteacher arranges for people to come into school to help with the (children with) needs or for me being too hard on myself. I had a lady come to help me. I know others get help too and have people come in, it really helps."*
>
> *"The school has a therapist, and anyone can go there to talk about certain topics that may be uncomfortable."*
>
> *"Getting excluded for your mental problems and being told you are a danger due to high up staff not knowing anything and not wanting to learn about mental health."*

Secondary school students expressed concerns about high expectations and high volumes of work.

They also highlighted instances of bullying or inappropriate behaviour, and a perception that these were not being tackled effectively by their school. Some children and young people also felt that the policies or actions put in place to deal with these issues had a negative impact on their wellbeing. Some also expressed a perception that these issues had not been dealt with.

> *""They pile on too much homework when you need a rest and time to do things you like out of school, it gets too stressful."*
>
> *"When I had problems with my attendance, the action was punitive. I was shouted at and the reason behind my attendance issues was not looked into. I was not offered support when needed."*
>
> *"My teacher knows if I am not coping or need some time out. I can give her a card to say I need some space for a bit."*
>
> *"When at (name of school) I didn't receive support when I was bullied, support was not given even when it was promised"* (said in the context of non-attendance at a school)

> "I was bullied from year 7 to year 11 and teachers didn't do anything about it."

> "We had a different teacher help when my teacher was ill. She didn't know I didn't like being asked questions in front of the class she tried to make me answer and I got upset and had to take time out. If maybe teachers shared information with supply teachers that may have helped. "

> "For teachers and school staff to have a better understanding of ADHD and how it effects people. I wouldn't have got into so much trouble."

> "When boys do something non-consensual, and teachers say boys will be boys!"

Having a safe physical environment also supported wellbeing. See page 18.

Participation and co-production

Children and young people strongly expressed a desire to have their voice heard. Many groups identified times when they felt included because they were able to have their say and were listened to.

> "I would like the chance to talk to the teacher about what can make things easier for me to learn. My mum and I know what is best for me, I would love to be listened to more."

> "They listen to your ideas", and "it feels good to be included and listened to."

> "We have a diversity, equity and inclusion group of both teachers and students
>
> who work to sort out any underlying issues surrounding diversity."

> "We all listen to other people's opinions and respect everyone's way of doing this."

> "The school listens to all the pupils' ideas (school council) and helps to really improve it (the schools)."

> "When I was voted in as head girl, I felt like I was included and able to voice my own opinion whilst also including through and opinions from the student body."
> "On our prom committee, my thoughts are listened to."

Environment

Children and young people identified that feeling safe in their environment made them feel included.

When speaking about their environment, participants said that toilets enable bullying: this meant that some felt scared to go to the toilet, and avoided drinking water so that they would not need to use the toilet.

Children and young people identified that those with sensory needs feel included when they have access to a supportive environment. They highlighted time out spaces and headphones as things that could support them when they felt overwhelmed.

This was also identified by children in the Early Years stage, who understood that some children might use a sensory space.

> *"Our school has quiet rooms for students who need them."*
>
> *"Our school has a starry room, a sensory room, sensory garden."*
>
> *"You can go to the sensory room if you like. My friend goes when he is upset."*

They also spoke about things which can be done to ensure buildings are accessible to all. Examples including working lifts, slopes instead of stairs where possible, and accessible outside areas for all children.

They also said that where there are swimming pools, schools should make sure that the right equipment is in place so that children with physical needs can also use the pool.

Accessibility to learning

Children and young people said that support in the classroom, and adapting lessons and class materials were a means of ensuring inclusion.

Secondary students raised the importance of discussion and engaging ways of learning to help everyone be successful.

"I didn't fit in but there was one teacher who made lessons fun. They used games to help us learn and it felt fun and fair as everyone could win. We all felt equal."

"I didn't feel included when teachers aimed lessons for the smart people and made other people feel left behind. They aren't going to do well because the teachers don't focus on them."

"Introverts learn differently to extroverts. I think more talking helps me learn and understand than writing. There is too much writing."

"More staff in my class so everyone gets support when needed not just the loud kids."

"Our school adapts activities so everyone can be involved."

Inclusive and welcoming schools/settings

Responses were more positive from parents/carers with children in primary, early years age children or those with children 16+than those with children at mainstream secondary age.

Most parents and carers (87.9%) felt that they had a good understanding of the meaning of diversity and inclusion. Just under half (49.6%) felt that their child's education was reflective of the diversity of pupils on the Island.

Overall, most parents and carers (79.6%) reported that their child felt welcomed and supported by their school or setting. 13.1% of all parents and carers reported that their child did not feel welcome and supported in their school or setting.

However, there were differences reported by parents of neurodiverse children or those with disabilities.

Parents who reported that their child did not have a disability were more likely (89.3%) to say that their child was welcomed and supported by their school or setting. This is in comparison to a lower figure of 64.5% of parents whose child had a disability or was neurodivergent.

Parents of children with disabilities were less likely to feel that education was reflective of pupil diversity, and less likely to agree that their child's school or setting enabled all children to feel included and reach their potential.

Amongst parents of children with disabilities, 45.5% felt that education was not reflective of diversity (compared to 18.9% of parents of children with no disabilities). In addition, 30.2% felt that their child's school or setting did not enable all children to feel included and achieve their potential (compared to 9.7% of parents of children with no disabilities.) See figures 6a and 6b.

Figure 6a: Responses from parents/ carers who stated their child had no need.

The school/ nursery/college/setting my child attends is inclusive and enables all children to feel included and achieve their potential regardless of their difference or need.

- Strongly agree — 43.7%
- Slightly agree — 30.8%
- Neither agree or … — 13.2%
- Slightly disagree — 5.7%
- Don't know — 4.0%
- Strongly disagree
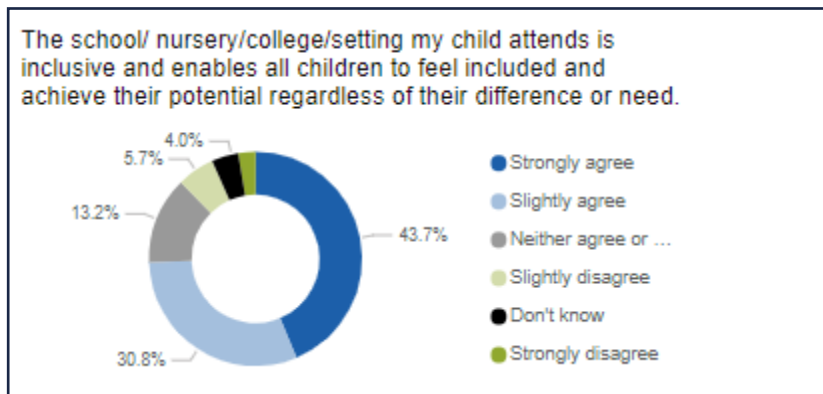
Figure 6b: Responses from parents/carers who stated their child had a disability or need.

The school/ nursery/college/setting my child attends is inclusive and enables all children to feel included and achieve their potential regardless of their difference or need.

- Strongly agree — 28.0%
- Slightly agree — 26.4%
- Slightly disagree — 15.1%
- Strongly disagree — 15.1%
- Neither agree or … — 11.0%
- Don't know — 4.4%
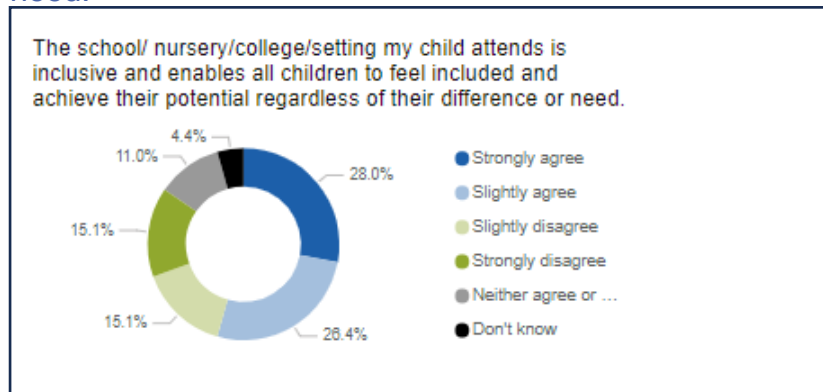
Interestingly parents/ carers who selected British and/ or Jersey to describe their ethnic background were slightly less positive when answering this question (see figure 6c), when compared to parents/carers who selected a different ethnic background. (see figure 6d).

Figure 6c: response from parents/carers who stated their ethnic background as British and/ or Jersey.
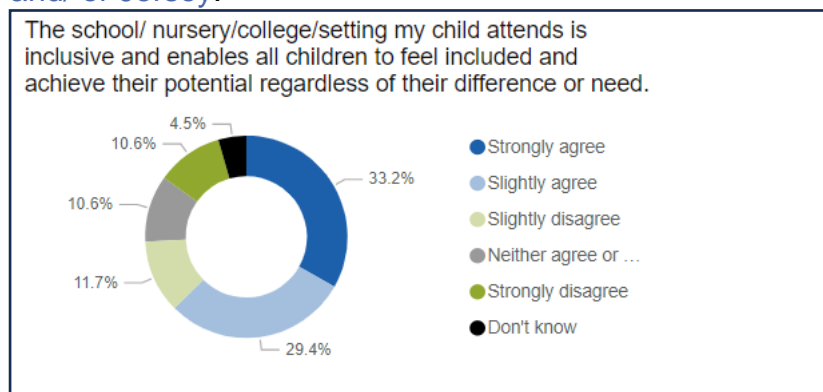
The school/ nursery/college/setting my child attends is inclusive and enables all children to feel included and achieve their potential regardless of their difference or need.

- Strongly agree — 33.2%
- Slightly agree — 29.4%
- Slightly disagree — 11.7%
- Neither agree or … — 10.6%
- Strongly disagree — 10.6%
- Don't know — 4.5%

The school/ nursery/college/setting my child attends is inclusive and enables all children to feel included and achieve their potential regardless of their difference or need.

3.8%
6.1%
14.6%
43.6%
28.7%

- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither agree or ...
- Slightly disagree
- Don't know
- Strongly disagree
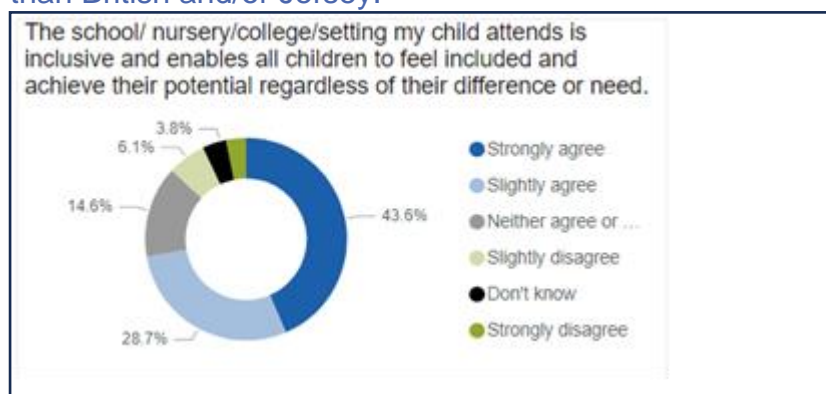
Parents of children in early years identified equality as a key theme: they spoke about the need to recognise difference to ensure that equal opportunities are available to all children. They said individual needs must be considered and that 'one size does not fit all'.

Participants also said that children should be able to access 'an environment free of discrimination' and that 'same privileges to education and support' must be made available to all children.

Parents emphasised the importance of communication between home and settings as a means of ensuring inclusion. This includes ensuring that all parties had a shared understanding of difference, and that messaging remained consistent.

Raising concerns

As part of the survey, parents and carers were asked whether they felt able to raise a concern about their child's experience. Responses differed depending on educational stage of the child, and whether they had a disability or an additional need.

Overall, 76.9% of parents and carers felt able to raise concerns about their child's experience at school or setting. However,15.5 % of respondents felt unable to raise a concern: this rose to 23.6% of parents and carers whose child had a disability or need.

In addition, parents and carers of older children felt less able to raise a concern. 67.2% of respondents who had a child of secondary age felt able to raise a concern. This compares to 82.2% in primary-aged children, and 80.5% of early years-aged children.

In the majority, parents felt confident that the school or setting would deal fairly with any concerns that are raised. Of all parents, 20.3% were not confident that their school or setting would deal fairly with a concern.

Figure 7a: Responses from parents/ carers who stated their child had no need.

I feel confident that my child's school/ nursery/college/setting will deal fairly and appropriately with any issues raised by me about unfair treatment of my child or another child.

4.9% — 2.8%
8.7%
44.9%
31.0%
7.7%

- Don't know
- Neither agree or disagree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly agree
- Strongly disagree
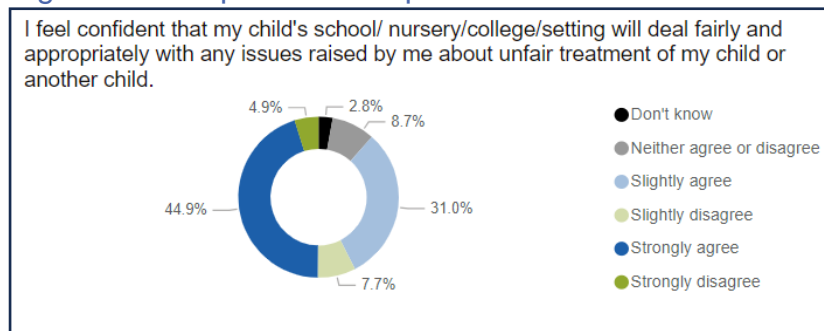
Figure 7b: Responses from parents/carers who stated their child had a disability or need.

I feel confident that my child's school/ nursery/college/setting will deal fairly and appropriately with any issues raised by me about unfair treatment of my child or another child.

2.5%
17.9%
10.4%
25.2%
29.6%
14.5%

- Don't know
- Neither agree or disagree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly agree
- Strongly disagree
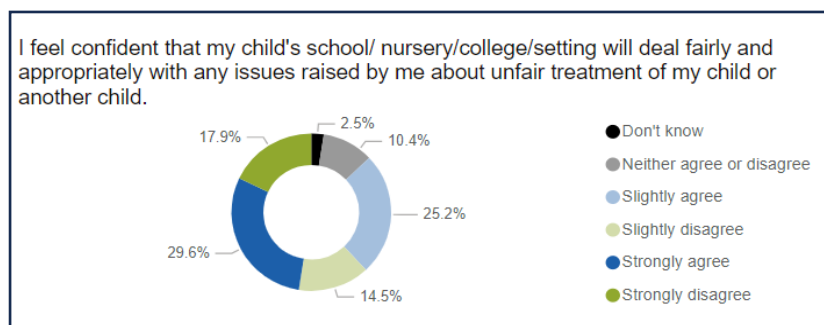
Parents of secondary-aged children were less positive with 28.5% saying they did not feel confident that their child's school or setting would deal fairly with a concern. This figure rose to almost a third amongst those parents whose children had a disability or additional need (32.4%).

The response to this question was consistent across parents of all ethnic origins.

Practitioners' responses

Understanding government commitment

Nearly three-quarters of practitioners (73.9%) were aware of the government's commitment to promoting inclusion in schools, with practitioners from early years and primary schools reporting greater levels of awareness. 10% reported they were unaware of this commitment.

In general, around three quarters (74.8%) of practitioners were aware of the government's policy regarding inclusive education and 12.2% who responded were unaware.

Inclusive and welcoming schools/settings

The early years case study (see appendix 3 for Jersey Child Care Trust report) found that 94% of practitioners and parents stated that they felt their settings were either inclusive or totally inclusive. Overall survey reports show that practitioners (79%) were more likely to agree that their setting was inclusive or totally inclusive compared to parents (60%).

No practitioners or parents, in the early years case study (see appendix 3), said that they felt their setting was 'not at all inclusive' or 'not very inclusive'.

When asked if they thought that education provided in schools today was reflective of the diversity of pupils on the island, practitioners' response was similar to parents, with half (51.3%) of respondents agreeing. A further 28.2% reported that they did not agree (Fig 8a).

As with responses from parents, there were differences in responses between different settings: practitioners in secondary settings 48.1% agreeing with the statement, compared to 69.1% of practitioners in primary settings, and 77.7% in nursery setting.

Figure 8a: Practitioner responses to the question 'Is education provided today reflective of the diversity of pupils on our island?'
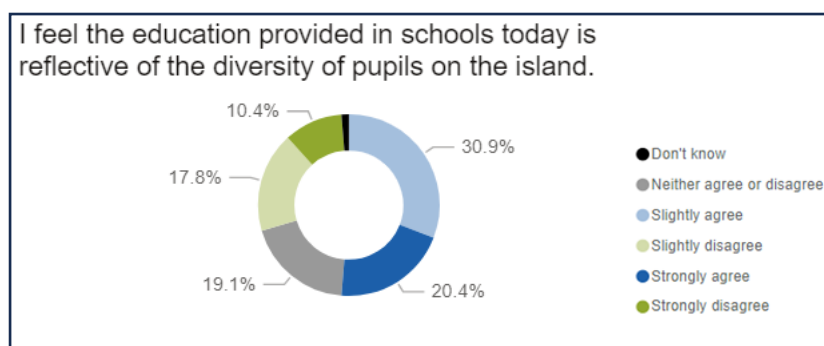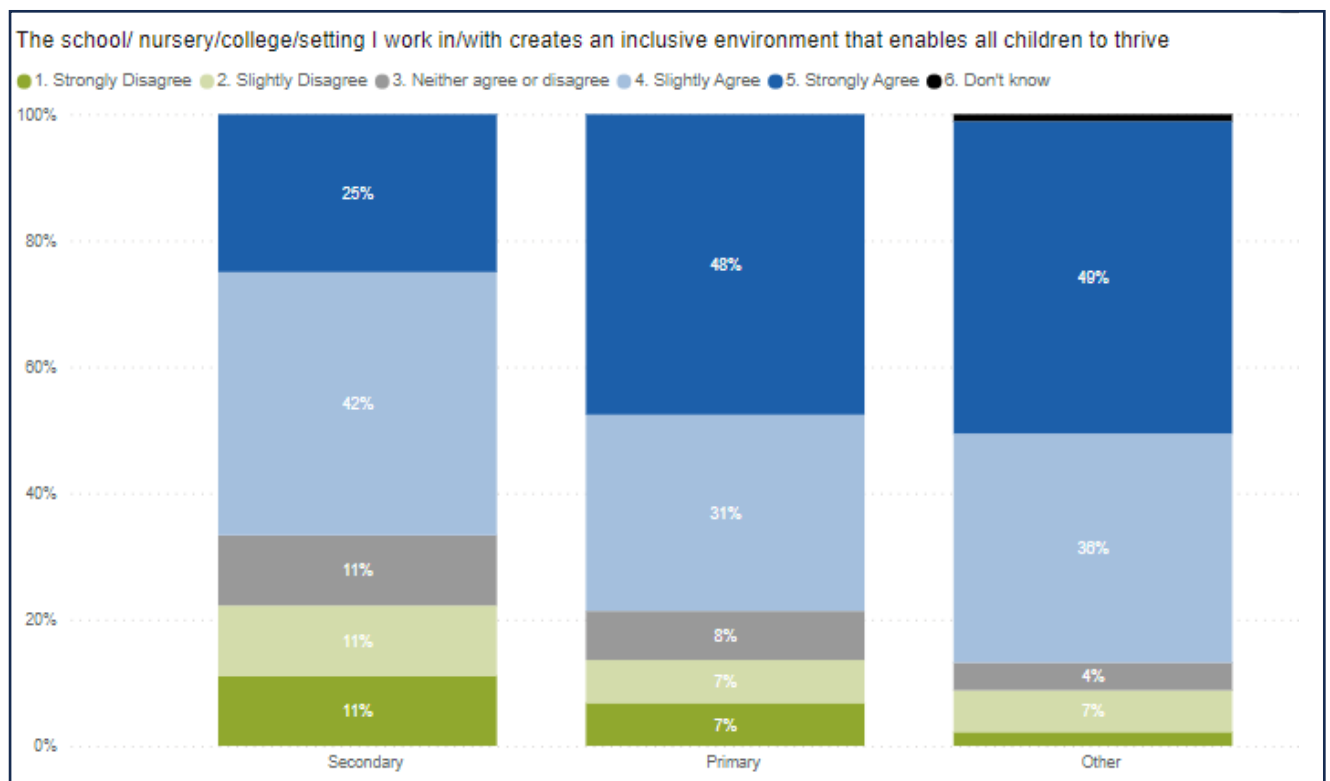

Nearly all (94.8%) of practitioners who responded felt they had a good understanding of what diversity and inclusion means in relation to early years and education.

This was reflected in the widely-reported use of adaptable teaching and learning methods: 83.9% of respondents agreed that their school or setting made use of some form of adaptable teaching and learning methods.

Practitioners' views on whether their setting creates an inclusive environment varied depending on type of setting. 85.7% of further education providers agreed that their school created an inclusive environment that enables all children to thrive. This dropped to 79.6% for practitioners in primary schools, and to 67% for practitioners working in secondary schools.

Figure 8b: Practitioners' response to the question – 'The setting I work in creates an inclusive environment that enables all children to thrive' shown by sector. (Note:' Other' includes early years, further education and support services who work with schools)

The school/ nursery/college/setting I work in/with creates an inclusive environment that enables all children to thrive

● 1. Strongly Disagree ● 2. Slightly Disagree ● 3. Neither agree or disagree ● 4. Slightly Agree ● 5. Strongly Agree ● 6. Don't know

Despite these differences, the majority (93%) of practitioners said their school/setting values the diversity of all their children and young people.

82.6% of respondents were confident that they knew how to obtain additional information or specialist advice to support inclusion in their role or setting. However, 10.9% reported that they did not know where to obtain information or advice on the topic.

The majority of respondents (76.5%) agreed that their school or setting had a process to engage with hard-to-reach children and families with 7.4% stating that they did not have any such process.

Practitioners raised the issue of not enough resources, lack of access to professional support and lack of capacity as being barriers to achieving an inclusive setting.

Practitioners highlighted a range of barriers to achieving inclusion in their setting. They highlighted issues including a lack of resources, a lack of access to professional support, and a lack of team capacity.

Topics and Themes

Parents/carers and practitioners' confidence to discuss a range of topics with children and young people

We asked parents/carers whether they felt confident about discussing a range of topics with their children and for practitioners with children in their care.

The vast majority of parents had some degree of confidence to talk to their children about all the topics listed (see figure 9a). Their confidence varied depending on the topic: parents felt most confident talking about physical disabilities and hidden disabilities (95.6%), and least confident talking about LGBTQIA+ (78.8%)

Figure 9a: Parents'/carers' responses to the question 'I feel confident about talking to my child about named topics.
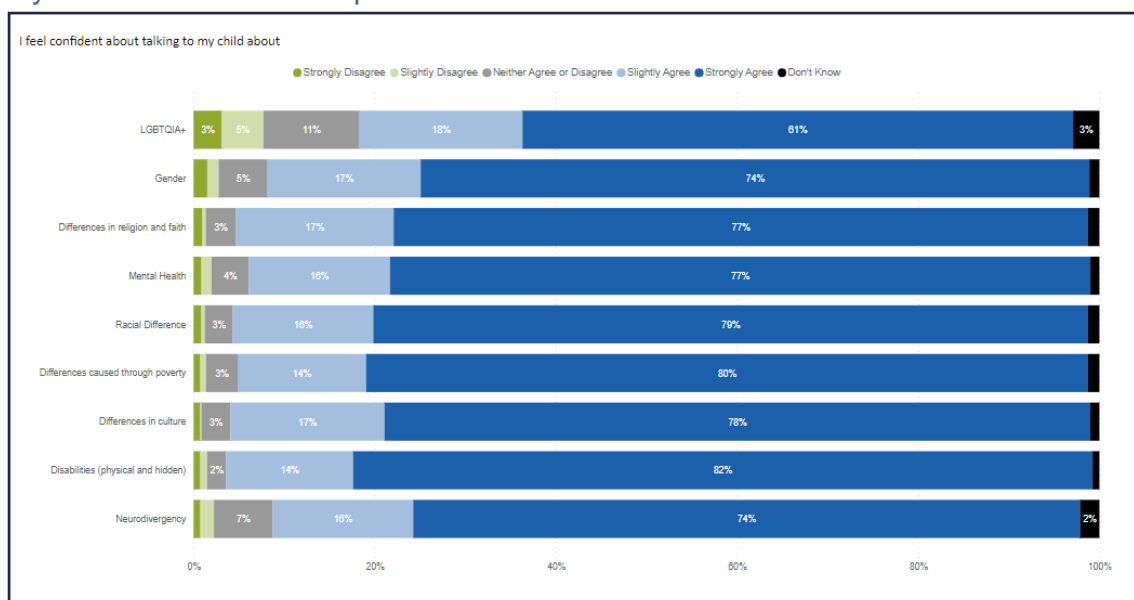
Overall, practitioners felt less confident than parents and carers about talking to children and young people about these topics, with fewer overall 'strongly agreeing' that they felt confident in speaking to children about these topics. (See figure 9b).

The topics practitioners felt most confident discussing were disabilities-physical and hidden (89%), differences in culture (88%), racial difference (87%) followed by differences in religion and faith (85%).

The topics practitioners felt least confident discussing were LGBTQIA+(60%) and gender (77%).

Figure 9b: Practitioners' responses to the question 'I feel confident about talking to my child about named topics.

I feel confident to talk to children in my nursery/school/college/setting about topics and issues around

● Strongly Disagree ● Slightly Disagree ● Neither Agree or Disagree ● Slightly Agree ● Strongly Agree ● Don't Know

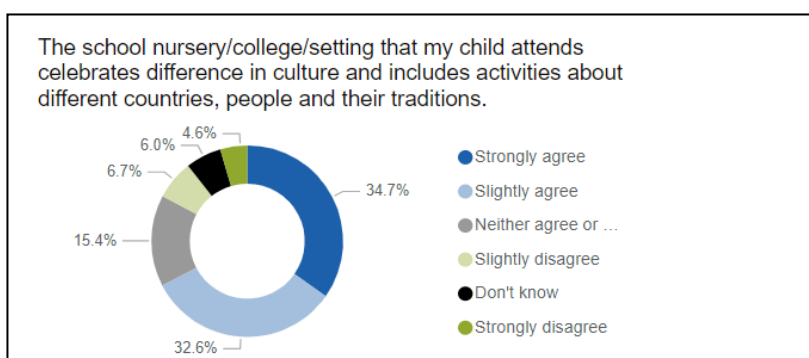| Topic	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
LGBTQIA+	4%	14%	20%	24%	36%	
Neurodivergency	3%	2%	12%	28%	52%	3%
Gender	5%		15%	28%	51%	
Mental Health	5%		11%	26%	57%	
Differences in religion and faith	3%		11%	27%	58%	
Disabilities (physical and hidden)	2%		7%	29%	60%	
Differences and injustice due to poverty	4%		11%	33%	52%	
Differences in culture			10%	34%	54%	
Racial Difference	5%		7%	30%	57%	

Celebration of cultural differences and language

Most parents agreed (67.3%) that their child's school or setting celebrated difference in culture and included activities about different countries, people, and their traditions.

Just over 1 in 10 parents (11.3%) who responded disagreed with this statement.

Figure 10a: Parents' responses to the question about celebration of difference in culture

The school nursery/college/setting that my child attends celebrates difference in culture and includes activities about different countries, people and their traditions.

- 4.6%
- 6.0%
- 6.7%
- 15.4%
- 32.6%
- 34.7%

- ● Strongly agree
- ● Slightly agree
- ● Neither agree or …
- ● Slightly disagree
- ● Don't know
- ● Strongly disagree

Practitioners were also asked whether they felt their school or setting celebrated diverse cultures and people and ensured this is considered in resources, teaching, social practice and material taught. Overall, 87.4% agreed with this statement with 95% of practitioners in primary schools agreeing. However, practitioners in secondary

schools were less likely to agree with this statement: with a lesser 75% agreeing that this was the case in their school.

Both parents and practitioners were asked whether their school or setting encouraged the visibility, use and development of all languages spoken by the children who attended. Amongst practitioners, 63.5% strongly or slightly agreed that this was the case.

Amongst parents and carers, there was a difference in response from parents depending on their ethnic background. Of those who selected British and/or Jersey as their ethnicity, 46.2% either did not know or were neutral on whether this was the case in their child's setting.

Amongst parents and carers who selected an ethnic background other than British and/or Jersey, 36.2% either did not know or were neutral. However, 47% agreed that that different languages were supported, while 16.8% disagreed that this was the case.

Figure 10b: response from parents/carers who stated their ethnic background as British and/ or Jersey.
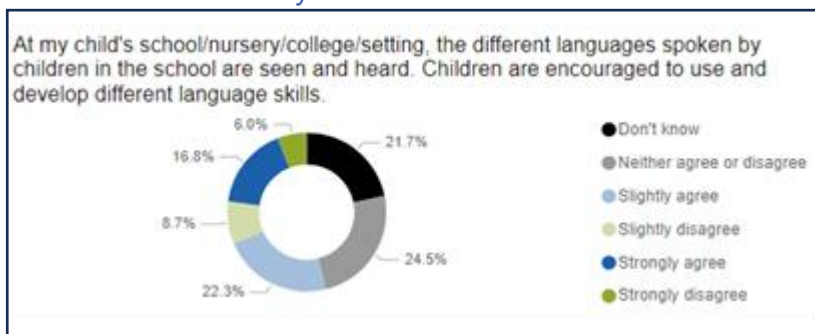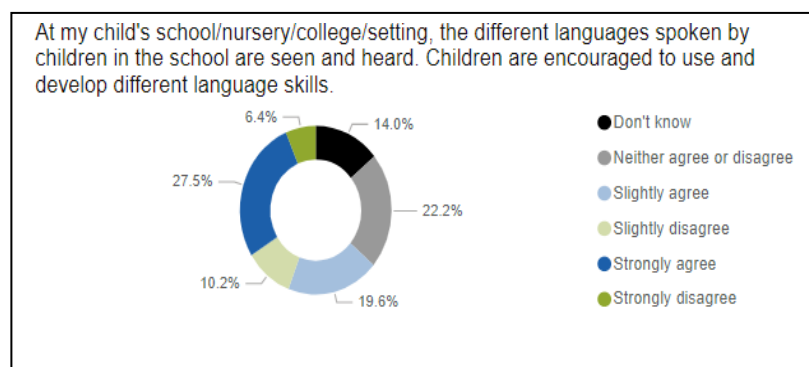

Figure 10c: responses from parents/carers who stated their ethnic background as other than British and/or Jersey.

Parents were able to give a range of examples of positive practice in this area.

> *"Festivals of different cultures are spoken about in my child's school."*
>
> *"The school celebrates different cultural days such as Chinese New Year."*
>
> *"The school celebrates different world days."*
>
> *"The Christmas play was sung in different languages."*

Diversity topics explored in teaching and learning

Both practitioners and parents and carers were asked whether a named set of diversity topics were considered and explored in a positive way through teaching and learning in schools and settings.

Parents and practitioners expressed different views on whether neurodiversity was explored in schools. 69% of practitioners agreed that neurodiversity was explored while 21.8% of parents disagreed that this was the case. However, 41% of parents thought this subject was considered and explored in a positive way through teaching and learning activities. (See figure 11a and 11b).

Figure 11a: Practitioner responses

The nursery/school/college/setting I work in works hard to ensure the following topics are considered and explored in a positive way through teaching and/or learning activities

Legend: ● Strongly Disagree ● Slightly Disagree ● Neither Agree or Disagree ● Slightly Agree ● Strongly Agree ● Don't Know

Topic	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Disabilities (physical and hidden)	6%	5%	12%	32%	44%	
Differences and injustice due to poverty	5%	9%	22%	30%	31%	3%
Neurodivergency	4%	9%	16%	30%	39%	3%
LGBTQIA+	3%	13%	26%	27%	27%	4%
Mental Health	3%	7%	15%	28%	45%	
Differences in culture	2%	0%	11%	37%	42%	
Differences in religion and faith	2%	6%	14%	34%	42%	
Gender	2%	7%	24%	30%	35%	
Racial Difference		5%	13%	39%	40%	2%

Figure 11b: Parent/carer responses

My child's nursery/school/college/setting works hard to ensure the following topics are considered and explored in a positive way through teaching and learning activities

● Strongly Disagree ● Slightly Disagree ● Neither Agree or Disagree ● Slightly Agree ● Strongly Agree ● Don't Know

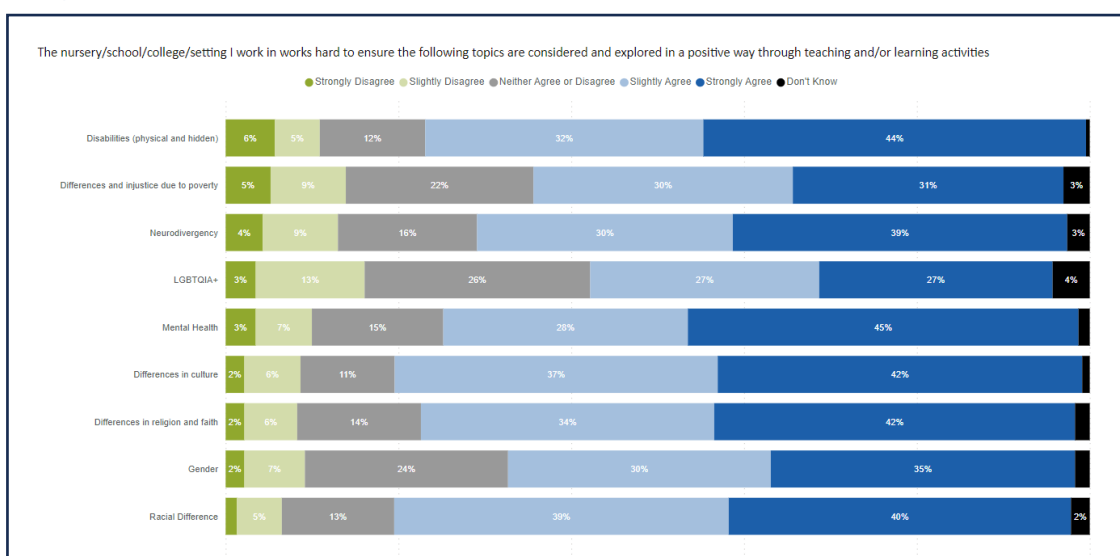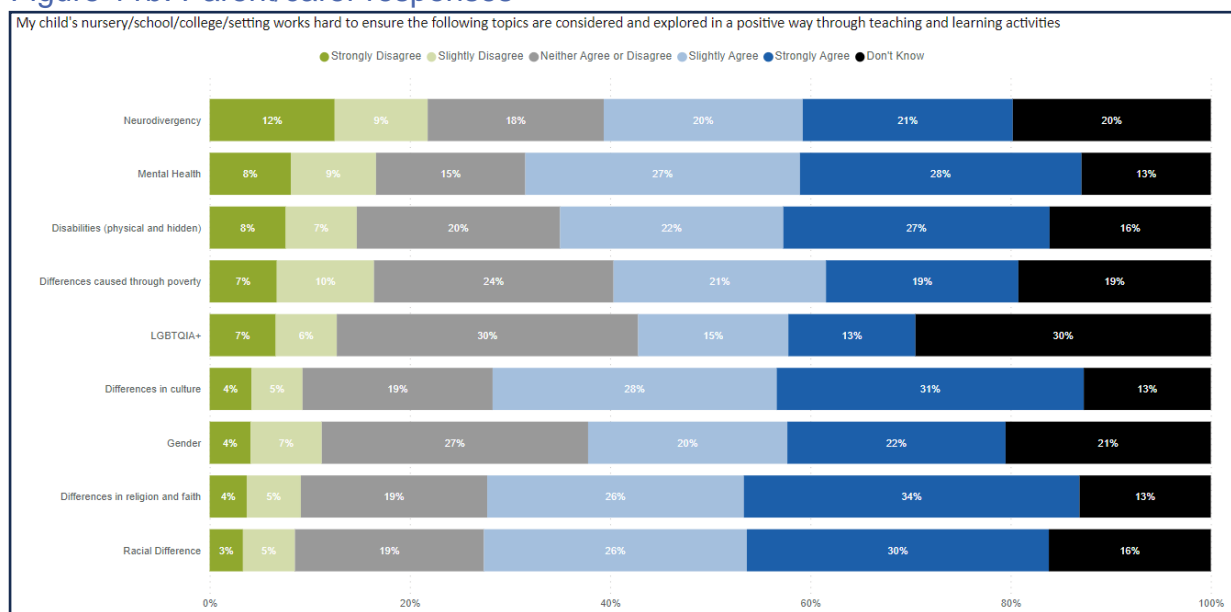| Topic	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Neurodivergency	12%	9%	18%	20%	21%	20%
Mental Health	8%	9%	15%	27%	28%	13%
Disabilities (physical and hidden)	8%	7%	20%	22%	27%	16%
Differences caused through poverty	7%	10%	24%	21%	19%	19%
LGBTQIA+	7%	6%	30%	15%	13%	30%
Differences in culture	4%	5%	19%	28%	31%	13%
Gender	4%	7%	27%	20%	22%	21%
Differences in religion and faith	4%	5%	19%	26%	34%	13%
Racial Difference	3%	5%	19%	26%	30%	16%

LGBTQIA+ subject area prompted some contradictory viewpoints with some parents raising concerns about this topic being included and others believing it should have more prominence.

Both parents and practitioners gave examples of how neurodiversity topics were considered and treated positively in schools.

Examples given by parents:

> "Accommodating speech therapy courses and assisted learning."
>
> "Plays and performances that are inclusive of all."
>
> "Child in class with ASD diagnosis is encouraged to share content of extra support sessions and additional TA support provided."
>
> "I don't feel the school actively supports differentiation which means that children who struggle will not succeed. The school actively treats children the same which means that they are not given equal opportunities for success and achievement. Having said that, when I reach out to the school, they are generally open to suggestions and approaches. However, experienced, trained staff who can promote an inclusive culture is sadly lacking. Often success for children to reach their potential is attributed to single staff as opposed to the culture of the school. Also, it is down to the relationship with parents and individual staff."

Examples given by practitioners:

> *"We have world cultures week celebrations."*
>
> *"We welcome cultural differences and provide adapted curriculum for their needs."*
>
> *"We would never exclude any child from any outing/activity regardless of their race, SEN, behavioural needs."*
>
> *"We ask parents of different ethnicity groups to come in and speak to the children and tell them their beliefs and cultures."*
>
> *"The Science Department prints out topic booklets which have been translated into students' own language."*
>
> *"We have a LGBTQ Youth project in our school."*

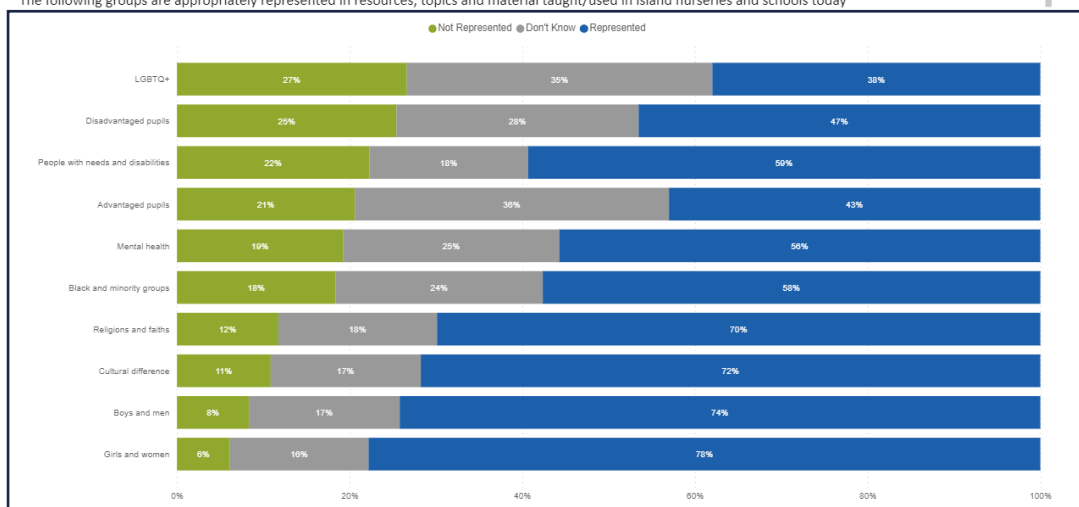## Diverse groups represented in resource and materials

Practitioners were asked about diverse groups and whether they were appropriately represented in resources, topics and material taught and used in island nurseries and schools. (see figure 12a)

Respondents felt that girls and women (77.5%) and boys and men (73.9%) were appropriately represented. Cultural difference (71.4%), religion and faith (69.6%) were also topics that practitioners felt were appropriately represented.

More than a quarter of respondents felt that pupils who were LGBTQIA+ (26.6%) and disadvantaged (25.4%) were not appropriately represented in resources, topics, and materials.

Figure 12 a Practitioners' responses

The following groups are appropriately represented in resources, topics and material taught/used in island nurseries and schools today

Legend: ● Not Represented ● Don't Know ● Represented

Group	Not Represented	Don't Know	Represented
LGBTQ+	27%	35%	38%
Disadvantaged pupils	25%	28%	47%
People with needs and disabilities	22%	18%	59%
Advantaged pupils	21%	36%	43%
Mental health	19%	25%	56%
Black and minority groups	18%	24%	58%
Religions and faiths	12%	18%	70%
Cultural difference	11%	17%	72%
Boys and men	8%	17%	74%
Girls and women	6%	16%	78%

What would most help children and young people reach their potential

Two slightly different questions were prepared for parents and carers and for practitioners. Parents were asked what would most help their child reach their full potential. Practitioners were asked what would most help raise aspirations and outcomes for all children and young people.

Both parents and carers and practitioners favoured measures that would allow materials and methods to be adapted to suit how students learn. This process of adaptive practice was emphasised by practitioners (31.78%). Furthermore, 18.2% identified additional training on adaptive practice as something that would support outcomes.

Practitioners also felt a greater understanding of special educational needs would be beneficial. (See figure 13a and 13b).

Figure 13a: Parents'/carers' responses:

Which of these would most help your child to reach their potential?

Options	*% who selected*
Adaptable teaching methods to suit how students learn	*44.6%*
Extension of activities and events outside the usual school lessons, subject or school day	*13.1%*
Role models that reflect all pupils and differences across the population	*7.4%*
Changes to what is taught to better meet the needs of my child	*6.3%*
A better understanding of special educational needs and differences amongst staff or teachers	*15.4%*
Support and more use of different languages in the nursery, school, or college	*1.7%*
Other	*11.5%*

Which of the following things would help the most to raise the aspirations and outcomes for all children?

Options	% who selected
Greater flexibility to adapt teaching to suit different ways pupils learn	*31.7%*
Increased training for adaptive practice	*18.2%*
Greater understanding of special educational needs	*17.8%*
Role models that all pupils can identify with	*12.6%*
More diversity in curriculum and/or learning resources	*11.3%*
More diversity in materials, options and support for different languages	*8.3%*

In addition, 1 in 10 parents opted to identify other things that would help their child reach their full potential. These include:

- All of the above – here parents felt all the listed options should be considered.

- A better understanding of SEN, especially neurodiversity.

- The ability to be more adaptive with the curriculum, including teaching life skills and teaching to meet individual needs including for gifted children.

- Reducing pressure on students.

- Behaviour in class was a controversial topic with several parents highlighting poor behaviour of other pupils affecting their child's learning. Other parents cited strict rules around behaviour as affecting their child's attendance and ability to reach their potential.

- Parents also highlighted the learning environment, including the physical environment and classrooms that support children with special educational needs and neurodiversity.

- Resources and bigger budgets were other areas mentioned by some parents, including extra staff in classrooms or settings to support the diversity of need.

Feedback received from parents, carers and practitioners

Both surveys included two questions allowing parents and carers and practitioners to provide feedback on inclusive education and early years.

Parents were asked to:

- share an example of how their child's school/nursery/college/setting has acted to make sure all children feel included or support them to reach their potential.
- share one suggestion of something that could be done to ensure all children feel welcomed, respected, and supported to reach their potential in nursery and education.

Practitioners were asked to:

- provide one example of good inclusive practice they have witnessed in their school/nursery/college/setting
- Provide one example of something that could be done to improve inclusion and early years.

Their responses have contributed significantly to the next stages of our work.

Read a sample of responses from parents an carers in Appendix 1 and practitioners in Appendix 2.

Next Steps

Using the survey findings, CYPES is creating a Vision and Charter for Inclusion in Education and Early Years. A charter is a set of principles that will enable inclusive education across the Island.

This is so that everyone who works with children and young people understands:

- how to best support all children and young people
- how to ensure all children and young people feel involved
- why inclusion is vital for the wellbeing of all children and young people
- how including all children and young people contributes to the educational, social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of the island

CYPES is conducting workshops with children and young people, parents and carers, education, early years, and childcare providers and third sector organisations to co-design the Charter.

Our aim is for our definition and principles of Inclusive Education and Early Years to reflect Jersey's whole community.

The National Association for Special Educational Needs (nasen) which conducted the *Independent Review of Inclusive Education and Early Years* on behalf of the Government of Jersey. suggests a process called "a continuum of inclusion", which is moving forward by stages from segregated provision to partial inclusion, systemic inclusion and finally to whole inclusion.

The nasen review makes 50 Recommendations that can help Jersey to move along this continuum of inclusion.

Appendix 1 - Free text responses from parents

Please share an example of how your child's school/nursery/college/setting has acted to make sure all children feel included or support them to reach their potential.

Praise

"A good teacher will know your child within half a term and will know how they learn and will recognise when they are struggling. Head teachers can promote taking an interest in each child. My daughters' primary school has done this generally very well."

"My child's school has uses a range of languages to welcome children and families and provides support for children struggling to engage in class."

"In my child's school, children with disabilities/neurodivergence are included and adjustments made where necessary."

"The following help tremendously: adapting buildings to enable all children to be included and able to attend and participate appropriately; adapting the curriculum to suit their level; adapting the environment to suit their needs and helping them finding their interests outside the curriculum."

"Providing additional and one to one support after school. Allowing for extended time to complete tasks."

"Encouraging girls to play football and netball alongside the boys. Also doing plays and performances which are inclusive of all."

"Treating families equally and addressing race, cultural, religious and LGBTQ+ issues fairly and respectfully. My children's school is also great at dealing with and supporting mental health issues."

"Asking me to join an assembly about different families, as we are a two-mum family."

"A child in class with ASD diagnosis was encouraged to share content of extra support sessions and additional TA support was provided."

"Celebrating different cultures and different world days. During the school play at Christmas there were songs in 5 different languages and every country was represented."

"My school acted quickly when my daughter started experiencing symptoms of anxiety. They adapted some of her school routines to help her cope and have engaged in conversations with me and external organisations to assist my daughter."

Areas highlighted for improvement by parents

"I have no idea what the learning curriculum looks like, what topics are covered at what age and what the messaging is. It would be helpful if parents were better informed so we can understand what our children are being taught so that conversations at home can be much more joined up."

"I strongly feel that early years/primary school is not the right age or setting to be introducing conversations about gender."

"I believe my child's school want to be inclusive/supportive when it comes to neurodivergence, but they don't have the support staff to match the new level of inclusion which they promote. They proudly say they have a high number of children on the inclusion register but in the next breath say they have 1 Teaching Assistant. Those numbers can't work."

"There are so many emails, updates, newsletters that I don't read them all."

"On the last survey I wrote the SENco was very good. Apologies I should not have said SENco. I should have mentioned a particular teacher who is very good. It is the higher management and the culture of the school who need more training on records of needs."

"They did far from it, didn't embrace her needs, they created many pockets of exclusion through teaching methods and styles."

"This is not a school which has the children's best interests at heart. The SENco is very good however the management do not understand differences with children."

"My child has dyscalculia, and no one is interested in adapting her math level. She is just in the bottom set and that is it. We are feeling really frustrated."

Parents were asked to provide one suggestion of something that could be done to ensure all children feel welcomed, respected, and supported to reach their potential in nursery or education.

"Ensuring that all teachers attend SEN training. It is offered for free via the Inclusion Offer to schools. Ensuring that SENCos are adequately trained and actually listen to the parents/carers' concerns. Stop the fee-paying schools from discriminating against the 'non perfect' children who apply and are rejected / not offered admittance with the flimsiest of excuses."

"For teachers and TAs to have a clear checklist of what questions to ask the parents and ideally, they get some training. For teachers and teaching assistants to have an initial meeting with the parents at the beginning of the year, more than 10 minutes, to fully understand the language situation of the children."

"A lot is covered in RE with a bias to Christianity. More time should be spent discussing alternatives to religion as many are not religious but don't feel heard."

"Schools and teaching must take a relational approach rather than a task led approach."

"Focus on similarities rather than what makes them different."

"A sex and relationships curriculum which is broad, updated, meaningful, linked to other curriculum areas and consistently taught. It needs to be shared with parents. The government needs to be brave enough to give clarity to schools as to what and why they're teaching it. Evidence from the UK shows that if there is not an open and honest dialogue with parents, then that's when mistrust grows."

"Adapt teaching styles to certain pupils so that they can learn better. This may mean that they don't follow the usual curriculum."

"Encourage more use of additional languages and celebrating different cultures."

"Additional sessions on how to manage bullying and dealing with bullying behaviour."

"Break the social construction of genders. Not all girls wish to play with Barbies but neither do they wish to be boys. Not all boys wish to play football but neither do they wish to be girls. Stop categorising and allow them to just be."

"All educators to receive training in dyslexia and spotting the signs for early intervention. Have more individuals who can diagnose. Positive aspects of dyslexia should be discussed and celebrated. Reasonable adjustments should be made to accommodate each child's learning needs. This should not feel like a battle."

"Allow children to be children and not push grown up ideas on them, such as discussions around gender identity etc. They are too young to understand these kinds of subjects and should just be able to be kids."

"Better transition with parents from primary to secondary. My child's needs cannot be met as the school has never actually spoken to me about her. I have had to push for meetings so that I can go and address this."

Appendix 2 – Free text responses from practitioners

Provide one example of good inclusive practise you have witnessed in your school/nursery/college or setting.

"A KS2 group of children have been learning about neurodiversity and how the differences affect people and what they may have to do to live with them on a day-to-day basis."

"We have adapted courses for learners with needs such as autism, mental health, dyslexia, and those who are hard of hearing. We print resources on coloured paper, provide additional support for learners during activities and adapt them appropriately to suit their learning needs."

"We have adapted timetables to allow students to focus on personally important areas whilst removing extra pressures. This has been done alongside giving them support with organization and target setting."

"We never exclude any child from any outing/activity, regardless of their race, SEN, or behavioural needs. We ask parents of different ethnic groups to come in and speak to the children and tell them about their beliefs and cultures. We hold world cultures week celebrations."

"We use Clicker docs for dyslexic children, STEP approach for inclusive PE and staff members learn use of Proloquo in order to develop communication with children who need it."

"Our school has a good young interpreters' scheme to help include children of different nationalities."

"How some of the headteachers have really embraced the Rights Respecting Schools program and moved on with the work without waiting for central Government impetus, is a great example."

"We organise the pride event."

"We provide a quieter place to work within a noisy early year's classroom. Some children just cannot function or concentrate in the hubbub of an ongoing lesson."

"We send out newsletters and communication to parents in other languages."

Areas highlighted for improvement by practitioners

"The Jersey education system is selective and so not inclusive, both in ability to pay and academic standards. It is therefore very hard to identify practice that is consistent that benefits all children."

"CYPES needs to come up with a working definition of ''inclusion through equity' in a selective education system where many children are not given the same opportunities as others."

"Positive attitudes must not only be expressed but embedded in good inclusive practice from the management through to every member of staff within the wider team. These are not superficial, lip service efforts but conscious, inclusive practices, engaging in training staff, following through on recommendations from specialists, with opportunities to challenge, reflect, change, and adapt when necessary. Sadly, this is not commonplace."

"Our curriculum is very rigid after early years. Including children into the mainstream is not always the best outcome for some children. Where are the sensory rooms and quiet areas in mainstream schools? I currently use a tent, that I have bought, in a busy corridor for my pupils who require some down time. We are always trying to be inclusive but lack of resources and trying to keep up with the curriculum when you have three or more children in your class who require an alternative curriculum, makes it very difficult. Visiting schools would help the team get a better understanding of what we can all do to improve inclusion in every aspect."

"We need fully trained, teaching assistants with fair pay in every class. Schools need to stop hiring parents just for the sake of 'bodies' as not all 'bodies' are helpful."

"Improve the pay scale for Keyworkers and LSAs to attract more candidates into the profession and improve retention of highly skilled staff who just cannot afford to stay in the job."

"Provide better information about children joining nursery and reception as some have not been to their 2-year checks. They arrive at the services with significant needs that are completely unknown. At the very least, those not attending the 2-year check should be chased up and those children settling in the island between the check and the start of school should also go to a check. How can we say that we are putting children first if we don't know even their basic needs?"

"Schools need to be able to refer a child earlier. Why must a child wait for their school to have gathered a term and a half of evidence which usually results in the whole year of reception and even into year 1 before being referred. If a child is struggling in nursery/reception, then give the schools the tools to act. Key workers are vital and are needed as soon as a need is identified to give the child the support and be fully inclusive at school. Schools should be able to be more honest with parents rather than step around the issue. Where is early help and putting the child first?"

"Sometimes I feel that the needs and barriers are an afterthought. We should have a simple framework and workflow to help teachers consider needs and barriers at the very beginning of their planning, not as an afterthought which results in shoehorning children into unsuitable learning situations, and in some cases exclusion from learning."

"Let's have more practical school uniforms. Get rid of ties, make the clothing comfortable for sensory kids but make it inclusive for all children to wear comfortable clothes."

Provide one suggestion of something that could be done to improve inclusion and early years.

"A clear definition of inclusion."

"Better training, more staff, and more resources. Inclusion is great but without effective training and resources it can become a difficult to manage and then no one benefits."

"Easier access to support from trained professionals at an earlier stage, where the professional works with the child to model the practice and trains the school staff, rather than a list of ideas and advice given to the adults."

"Equal access to open spaces and adequate play areas. Town schools are choked with a lack of open space and poor play spaces. Large scale investment in schools that offer space would improve everything."

"A comprehensive anti-bullying policy covering HBT (Homophobic, Biphobic & Transphobic) bullying issues and hate speech. Also, to have LGBTQ+ peer support groups in schools."

"Celebrations of different cultures embedded into the curriculum rather than one off events."

"Change uniform policies. Adapt to different learning styles and actually check in with students and not assume they will ask if they're stuck."

"Co-production and engagement."

"I think that there needs to be better link up between health and education. Policies must be put in place to support children with extra or different needs. Resources must be given to teachers to adapt their teaching to suit the child as opposed to one size fits all. This means assistants to provide support who will continue into secondary. Private schools are very much focused on academia, and I think less open to neurodiversity as their targets may be affected. There needs to be consistent programs to educate across all schools and I think having a neuro diverse lead from education who works between health and education would be great."

"Mental health awareness sessions in school can lean towards becoming a bit depressing with lots of sessions around difficult topics like suicide and domestic violence. It would be good to move towards a more positive psychology approach."

Appendix 3- Case study report by Best Start Partnership considering inclusion in early years

'We all need help sometimes'

Inclusion in the Early Years

Introduction

As part of the Government's work on creating a Vision and Charter for Inclusion in Education and Early Years the Jersey Child Care Trust and the Childcare and Early Years Service have conducted a small research study to access the views of young children accessing Early Years provisions in Jersey. The study aims to access the voice of young children on what inclusion means to them and more broadly within an Early Years environment.

Methodology

The study consists of three case study settings, private and public. Data was collected from three sources at each setting: children, parents, and practitioners. The intention was to triangulate data to develop a more detailed and balanced picture of the complex issue under investigation.

The views of Parents and Practitioners

A short online survey (Appendix 1) was designed to access the views of parents and practitioners in each setting. The survey consisted of 7 open and closed questions around the perceived meaning of the term inclusion and how this is viewed within the context of the setting.

The views of children

Using the recently developed 'A toolkit for engaging with, and listening to, babies and young children' the study adopted various methods to access the views of young children (aged 2-4) within each setting. These included child conferencing, child led tours, puppets, and observations.

'Sally' (puppet) was introduced to each group. The facilitators told the groups she was a new puppet who was going to spend the morning with the group. The facilitators explained that Sally may need a little extra help as she hasn't learnt to walk yet. The facilitator explained that Sally had a few questions that she would like to ask. These included:

What do you think Sally will like about your nursery?

What do you think Sally may find difficult?

What should Sally do if she is worried about something?

How can we help Sally enjoy nursery this morning?

Is there anyone else in your nursery that needs a bit of extra help?

How do we help them?

During morning play, children were encouraged to show Sally around their rooms. Facilitators and children had conversations prompted by the following example questions:

Who are your friends and who is important to you?

What do you like to do with your friends?

Where do you like to play?

Is there anyone who can't join in?

Findings

Equality

Parents and practitioners spoke about the importance of 'equal opportunities' and 'Opportunities for all' regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, family background/circumstance, Special Educational Need. For parents inclusion meant an 'environment free of discrimination' where everyone had the 'right to be part of everything'. Parents spoke about the importance of 'everyone feeling welcome, safe, respected and celebrated'. One Practitioner stated that 'Everyone, regardless of biases is included and has the same privileges to education and support'.

Children also referred to the importance of equality with one child stating during a circle time activity that 'we all need help sometimes' and another saying, 'everybody needs help with something, like if I hurt my knee and crying – I need a cuddle'.

Recognising individual needs/learning styles

Whilst equality is a key theme in the discourse parents also spoke about the need to recognise difference to ensure equal opportunities are available to all children. It was recognised that settings should be recognising individual needs and 'catering for everyone'. 'One size does not fit all'. Ensuring equality of opportunity means adaptations need to be made to ensure everyone has the opportunity to learn and develop. As one parent stated Inclusion means 'Putting in effort to ensure that as

many children as possible can take part in as many activities as possible'. Another parent spoke about an inclusive setting being one where 'activities are adapted for individuals as required, everyone is made to feel equal and included and their (and their parents) voices are heard'.

Practitioners also referred to the diversity of need and the importance of meeting the needs of all children. 'An inclusive setting is one which has resources and staff to deliver care and learning to a diverse cohort of children'. Practitioners spoke about resource sometimes being a barrier to this with regards to staffing and access to professional support.

The children demonstrated a real understanding of responding to need. For example, in one setting the children took puppet Sally outside. They expressed concern that she hadn't brought in a hat. One child said 'She needs a hat on to keep her safe. I will get her a spare (hat) from the box' and another child responded 'and 'if she gets hot, we can bring her inside'.

In another example a girl asked if Sally would like to do some colouring. She took Sally to the craft table and helped her to sit in a chair. She helped Sally to make marks and then said 'oh no Sally hasn't got a tray yet. I will tell Emma (Nursery Practitioner) that she can put hers in my tray until home time.'

Although Sally the puppet couldn't respond the children generally asked before taking her somewhere or turned to the practitioner for assurance.

Empathy and understanding

Parents and practitioners talked about the importance of understanding and acceptance for inclusion. From observation and reflection, the children attending the three settings showed these qualities in abundance.

'George* should ask us if he finds something difficult.'

'Sally can play with us at nursery.'

'We can help her.'

'I will play with Sally and show her around.'

The children often referred to their peers to explain adaptations which had been made to ensure inclusion. For example:

'You can go in the sensory room if you like. Max goes when he is upset.
'

When asked what Sally might find difficult one child said, 'maybe riding on the trike' to which his peer responded 'Amber can do that'. Amber is a child that attends the setting with restricted mobility. In this comment the child's friend was suggesting that Sally could in fact ride the trike with some help as their peer with a disability is able to access all the activities in the nursery just like them. For children in that setting their experience has been that with support and adaptations to the environment all children can access the activities on offer.

94% of practitioners and parents stated that they felt their settings were either 'inclusive' or 'totally inclusive'. No practitioners or parents stated that they felt their setting was 'not at all inclusive' or 'not very inclusive'. The number of practitioners stating totally inclusivity was higher than parents (79% to 60%).

Parents spoke about the importance of communication between home and nursery to ensure inclusion. As one parent stated when asked what they felt they needed to contribute to inclusion in their setting 'make sure parents aware as soon as information available'. Importance was placed on consistent messaging and a shared understanding around difference. As one parent stated 'perhaps other parents could be made more aware of children with disabilities and treating them with respect. They can then discuss it at home with their children'. For parents the main barriers to inclusion focussed on communication and the sharing of information whereas for practitioners the focus was very much on resourcing and capacity.

In one setting Sally was replaced by George the bear

Project conducted by the Jersey Child Care Trust and Childcare and Early Years Service with special thanks to participating settings Busy Bees Day Nursery, La Providence, Grouville School and Happy Hatchlings Pre-school.