

EDI Newsletter

December 2023



Welcome to our first EDI newsletter! Since the launch of the Trust EDI strategy in the summer, we have been working hard to implement actions that work towards our Trust being an equality, diversity and inclusion leader. We are passionate that everyone at Liberty, staff and pupils, feel like they belong. Here are some key updates for you, as well as a look at some of the wonderful work being done in our schools which we are very proud of.

What have we done so far?

The Halo Code

All Liberty schools have signed up to The Halo Code which is really positive step towards ending hair discrimination.

Race-based hair discrimination is illegal in the UK. However, 58% of black students experience name-calling or uncomfortable questions about their hair at school. 46% of parents say that school policies penalise afro hair. [World Afro Day and De Montfort University (2016), The Good Hair Study by the Perception Institute and the Hair Equality Report].

We celebrate Afro-textured hair and respect that it is such a large part of staff and pupils identities.



We have amended our EDI policy to include wording to confirm that we welcome Afro-textured hair in all styles.

EDI Partnership Board

We have established an EDI Partnership Board comprised of myself (Harriet Mughal) as Trust EDI Ambassador, Lisa Thompson as Trust Menopause Ambassador and two EDI champions from each of our schools - Laura Pirkel and Jamie Moyad from TVS, Dan Bunker and Diana Edgar from VGS and Stacy Booth and Kat Sercombe from CLS.

We will meet every term to review the strategy and the champions will hold myself and the Executive team to account on progress of actions.

The meetings are also a forum to share all the fantastic work and good news stories from schools to share through this newsletter. Amazing work is being done which we need to shout about and be proud of! If you have any inspiring content, please do share with your school EDI champion.



EDI Staff Intranet Pages

Did you know that you can access teaching resources on the EDI pages of our intranet?

As well as information and interesting reading about anti-racism, LGBTQ+, disability, gender equality and menopause, there is also information about The Black Curriculum, black history month resources and log in details to access the Hackney Diverse Curriculum. You can read an NEU article on how to support trans and gender questioning students and join the NEU network of LGBTQ+ teachers and leaders.

We have also recently uploaded a Community Against Prejudice Towards Autistic People downloadable guide on how to talk about autistic ways of being.

These pages will be updated regularly and any suggestions or contributions are most welcome! Please do contact me at

harriet.mughal@libertytrust.org.uk



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What are we doing next?

Disability Confident Leader

Liberty Trust is already a Disability Confident Employer. This means that we challenge attitudes towards disability, we increase understanding of disability, we are removing barriers to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions and we are ensuring that disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

However, we want to do more!

This academic year we are working towards achieving Disability Confident Leader status. This will involve numerous actions and activities including external validation of our evidence. This will be a really important step in our journey as a Trust of special schools.

You can find out more on the Gov.UK website.



EDI Staff and Pupil Surveys and Data Analysis

The EDI Partnership Board are reviewing how we collect and analyse meaningful EDI data. In sharing EDI data, we can build information to report on Gender and Ethnicity pay gaps and ensure we are on the right path towards equality.

By surveying staff and pupils, we can get an essential insight into how people are feeling about EDI within the Trust and any areas of improvement.



Staff Training and Awards to Achieve

Principals have agreed to include one hour of EDI training as part of INSET days. Survey results and data analysis will identify any key trends or themes and we will look to provide any training required.

As well as Disability Confident Leader and the Leading Parent Partnership Award, the EDI Partnership Board will identify which other awards we may want to work towards.

Develop recruitment guidelines that actively encourage a diverse applicant pool and unbiased selection process

We will be working with our Head of HR on a number of initiatives, including:-

- ensuring that up to date guidance is available for recruiting managers on how to deal with requests for reasonable adjustments
- ensuring all interviews include a Trust values based question
- updating our statement regarding positive action on job adverts
- ensuring all job descriptions include EDI responsibilities

As you can see, we will be really busy working towards our EDI goals and delivering the strategy for you and all our students!



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Schools EDI Updates Academy Trust
Church Lawton

Church Lawton raised £45.50 for #helloyellow World Mental Health Day on the 10th of October!



Our school decided to show support to young people's mental health needs by wearing yellow for world mental health day.

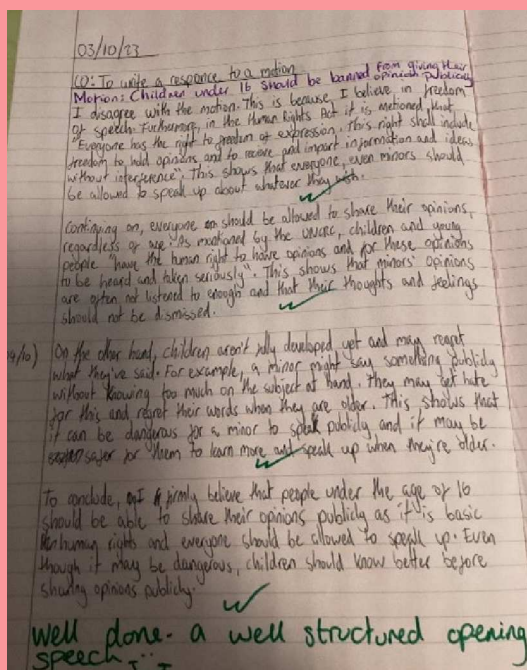


We can all struggle with how we feel. It sometimes it can be tough and be difficult to cope. For many young people when this happens, they don't get the help they need, when they need it. #helloyellow is to raise awareness and show young people that they matter, we are with them and that they deserve the support they need, when they need it [Young Minds 2023]

In Secondary, students have been learning about **Taking a Stand** and how people have publicly taken a stand.

They have been annotating speeches by David Attenborough, Emma Watson, Greta Thunberg and Malala Yousafzai.

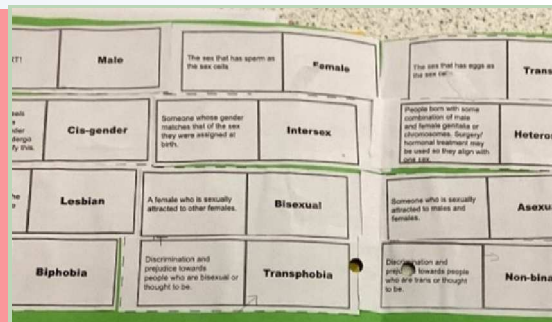
They have also learnt how to have a formal debate and written their own opening speeches.



On World Refugee Day, Church Lawton took part in the virtual **Great Big Assembly!** The intention was to help children across the UK further understand what life is like for millions of refugee children around the world.

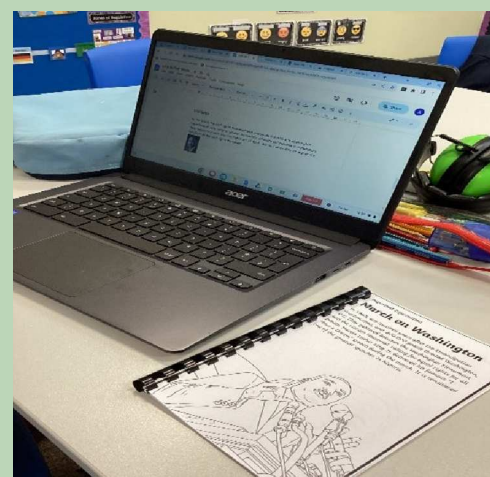
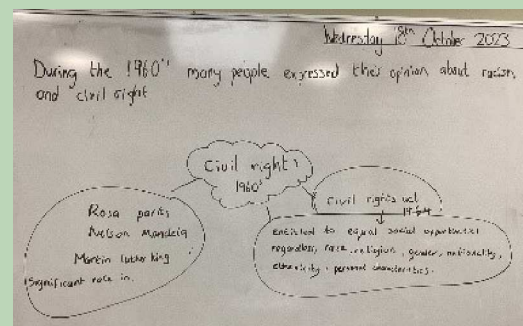


Liberty

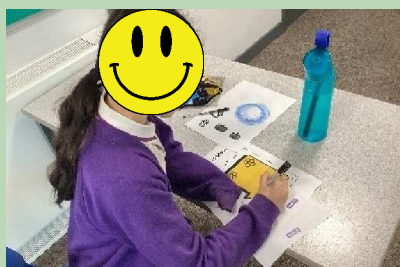


In QOL, students have been learning about **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**. They have all had good discussions about what this means.

In primary we have been using the text Journey to Jo'burg. This text has allowed us to develop an understanding of **black history**.



We have developed a knowledge and understanding of Apartheid and the importance of the civil rights act. We have learnt about the significance of Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks and the impact that they had in history



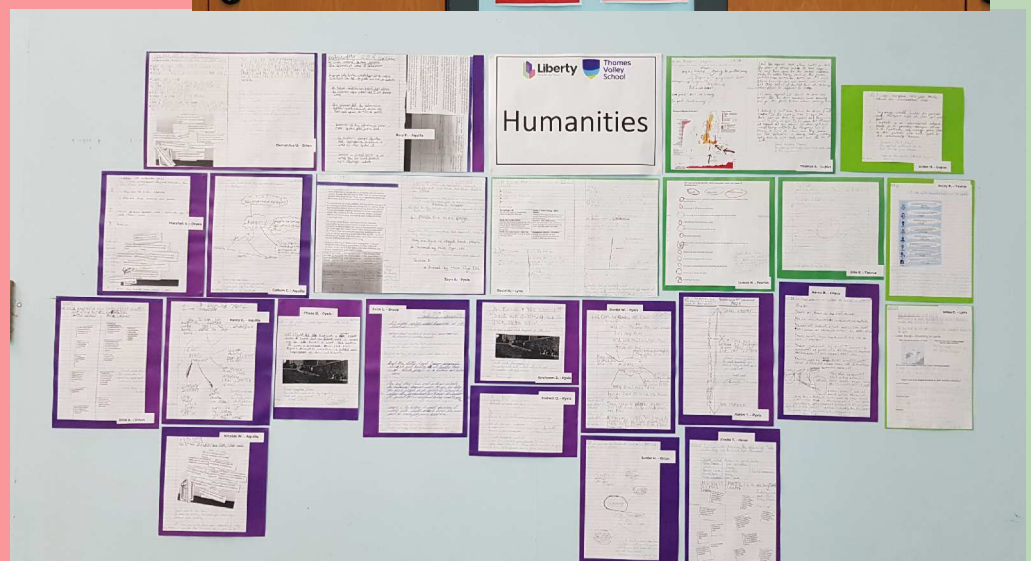
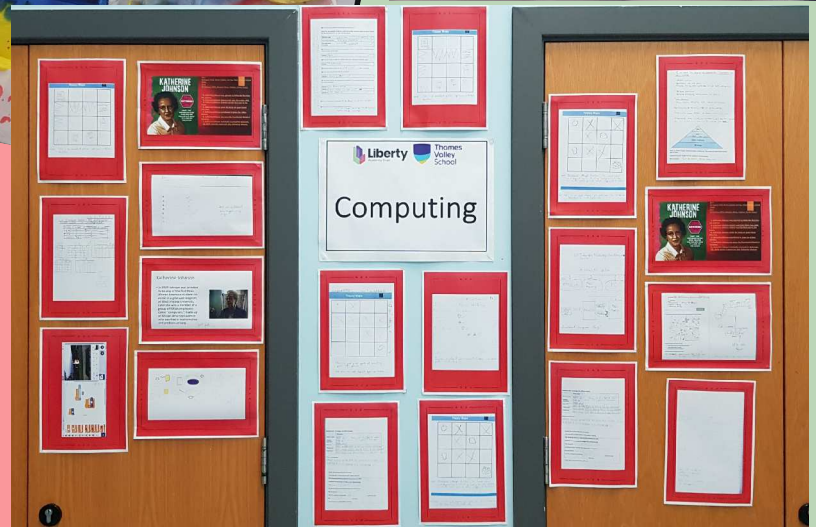
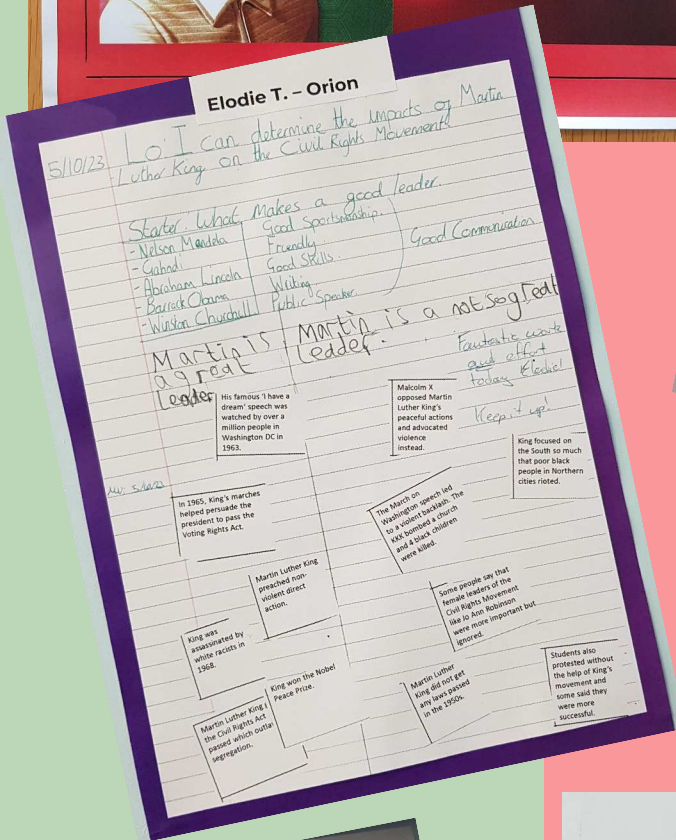
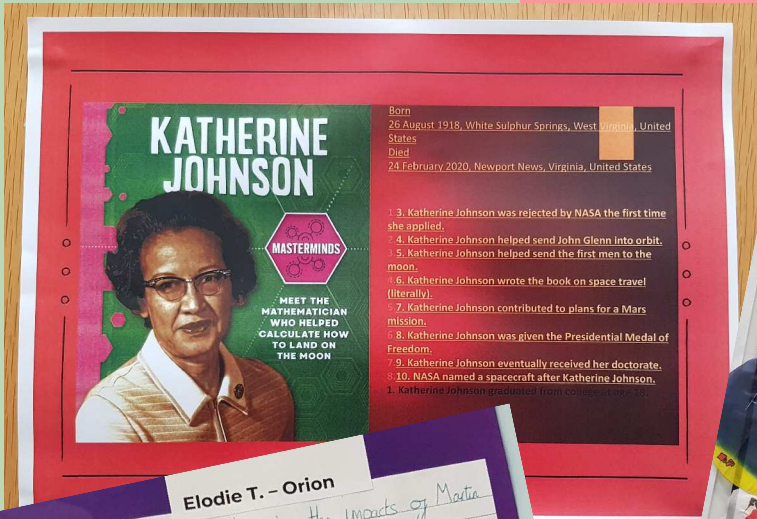
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Schools EDI Updates Thames Valley

We have done so much inspiring work throughout **Black History Month!** Here are some examples:-



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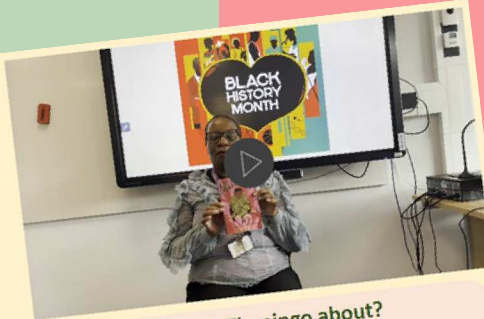
Schools EDI Updates Vanguard

The staff at Vanguard worked on an amazing **Reading Black Literature** project for **Black History Month**. You can see the full PowerPoint presentation on the EDI pages of the intranet which includes fantastic videos from staff discussing their favourite books by black authors. Please do take a look! Here are some examples:-

Ms Edgar: *The Black Flamingo*



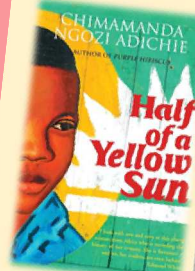
By Dean Atta



What is *The Black Flamingo* about?

The book follows Michael as he grows up and comes to terms with his identity. Being gay and mixed race, the more he is exposed to the world, the more he feels it wasn't made for him.

Ms Fordjour: *Half Of a Yellow Sun*



By Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



What is *Half of a Yellow Sun* about?

Half of a Yellow Sun takes place in Nigeria in the 1960s. The story of the Biafran War (Nigerian Civil War) through the perspective of the characters Olanna, Ugwu, and Richard.

Why is this book important to me?

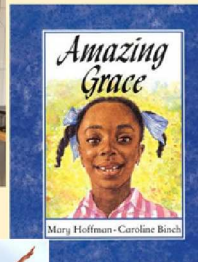
- I discovered new information on African history that I did not learn in school.
- It covered themes such as colonialism, war and violence, race and culture and love which made it very interesting to read.
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an inspirational writer and speaker.

Ms Lloyd: *Amazing Grace*

What is *Amazing Grace* about?

When her school decides to perform Peter Pan, Grace longs to play the lead, but her classmates point out

that Peter was a boy. Besides, he wasn't black. With the support of her family, Grace learns that she can be anything she wants to be, and the results are amazing!



By Mary Hoffman

Mr Johnson: *Hair Love*



What is *Hair Love* about?

"When Daddy steps in to style it for an extra special occasion, he has a lot to learn. But he LOVES his Zuri, and he'll do anything to make her — and her hair — happy." Tender and empowering, *Hair Love* is an ode to loving your natural hair — and a celebration of daddies and daughters everywhere.

By Matthew A. Cherry



Mr Henry: *Why Be Discouraged?*



"Black skin is not a badge of shame, but rather a glorious symbol of national greatness"

