

*Building the
Evidence Base
Year 2
Strand 1
Student Data
Final Report*



Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction	3
Structure of this report	3
Key findings	4
Broadly satisfactory	4
Specific issues	4
Primary.....	6
Challenge and inspiration	6
Autonomy and Influence	10
Lifestyles and health	14
Motivational influences	16
Secondary.....	24
Challenge and inspiration	24
Flexibility and choice.....	34
Autonomy and influence.....	39
Lifestyles and health	49
Motivational influences	51
Comparison of 2008 and 2009 data.....	62
Primary schools.....	62
Secondary schools.....	63
Comparison of primary v secondary data - 2009.....	64
The sample and demographic data	66
The primary sample	66
The secondary sample	68
Methodology.....	70



Executive summary

Introduction

1. This is the report of the findings of the learners' survey conducted by CUREE on behalf of QCDA during 2009. A total of 2380 learners from 83 schools completed an online survey. There were broadly similar numbers of respondents from primary (44%) and secondary (56%) phases. Forty-nine children and young people, all secondary, participated in five focus groups.
2. These data capture the perceptions of a large and reasonably representative group of learners at a point in time (summer 2009). They tell us something about how they felt about some aspects of their school experience, and we have tried throughout to report the results in terms of what learners' thought, felt or said. They do not, of course, present a complete picture of how the curriculum was enacted. This survey was designed to maintain a high level of continuity with a similar survey conducted in 2008. The sample sizes in both cases were similar; there were fewer responses in 2009 but across a larger number of schools. In general the shape of the responses was similar between years. Where there are differences worthy of note, we have flagged these in the relevant sections.
3. We have produced descriptive data (counts, ratios, frequencies) for all the questions in the survey and these are reported in full in the associated spreadsheet. We have subjected a selection of these data to further statistical comparisons. We have tested a selection of questions for significance in relation to the gender and ethnicity of the respondents and to their self-reported expected National Curriculum test scores. We also looked to see if there was any significant correlation between respondents' answers and the achievement profile of their schools. For reasons set out in full in the methodology section we did not test every question against each of these respondent characteristics.

Structure of this report

4. There are a lot of data contained in this report so we have tried to 'layer' them in ways which cater for a range of interests. The whole report is in three separate documents. This section contains this executive summary plus an analysis and commentary on what seem to the reports' writers to be the more significant findings (tested via feedback from QCDA staff on a preliminary report). A separate section (**Section 2 – Technical Appendix**) contains a) the full text of the two questionnaires and b) a separate and specific analysis of the focus group responses. Thirdly, the full summary data set is contained in **Section 3 – Data Set**, two Excel workbooks, one each for primary and secondary, with several spreadsheets. Fourthly, and finally, subject preferences as A3 documents are repeated, but at A3 size for easier reading, for secondary school learners in **Section 4 -Subject Preferences**.
5. The analysis and commentary which follows this summary contain sub-sections on:
 - the findings of the primary survey
 - the findings of the secondary survey
 - a comparison of the 2008 and 2009 data focusing on those questions which showed, or might have been expected to show some variation
 - a similar comparison of primary and secondary data – for the 2009 survey only



- a description of the sample and its demography, and
 - a description of the methodology.
6. These can be accessed (by selection in the on-line version of this report) via the table of contents above.

Key findings

Broadly satisfactory

7. The data from the 2009 survey reinforce the findings of the previous learner survey (2008) that a majority (but sometimes a bare majority) of learners in both primary and secondary phases have a positive view of their experiences of most aspects of the curriculum.
8. The views of learners are strongly consistent between the two years of the survey though there are some changes (for instance, in the relative views of boys and girls on some issues).
9. Primary learners remain generally more satisfied with their school experience than their secondary counterparts.
10. There was no great variation of view by gender or ethnicity. How well their *school* was doing had little influence on what learners thought about the curriculum. How well an *individual learner* was doing (as measured by self-reported predicted National Curriculum attainment level) did have some influence on learner opinion particularly in relation to secondary learners' attitudes to different subjects.
11. Unremarkably, older secondary learners wanted more influence over and choice about their curriculum experience than primary learners.

Specific issues

12. Within this broad message of overall satisfaction with their curriculum, there were some specific issues of interest to emerge.
13. Though most learners overall (both primary and secondary) felt that their lessons offered about the right level of challenge, a significant minority (around 25%) thought their lessons were too *easy*. This was roughly twice the proportion who thought they were too *hard*. This relationship was broadly the same as last year. Secondary girls were more likely than boys to say that lessons were too difficult, as were learners with lower National Curriculum levels.
14. Secondary learners reporting lower than average predicted National Curriculum test scores were significantly less likely to say that they 'solved problems in group work'. Similarly, those learners were more likely to strongly disagree that they 'get to mark their own and other's work' (as were girls, in both 2008 and 2009).
15. There was a weak link between reported National Curriculum test scores and learners views on how good teachers were at helping them but no correlation with teachers encouraging them to use their imaginations.



16. Higher attaining secondary learners were more likely to take a neutral or weakly positive position on lessons being interesting and fun. Lower attaining learners were more polarised (strongly agreed or strongly disagreed).
17. As noted elsewhere, we found very little differentiation in the answers by ethnic group although this did occur in one particular case. White (British) learners were significantly more likely to say that they didn't have a say in how they were taught at school.
18. Learners were asked both about their experience of the curriculum and what they would like it to be. Most learners wanted more of the aspects of the curriculum they felt positive about. The biggest gaps (greater than 20%) between experience and aspiration for secondary learners were in:
 - the amount of practical activity
 - people coming into school from outside, and
 - use of audio-visual resources.
19. This was a change from last year in that a) teachers' use of the internet and b) the variety of activities in lessons no longer features in this list.
20. Secondary learners were asked about their subject preferences (these are illustrated in Figures 4 and 5). PE was identified as the easiest subject and the one mostly likely to involve practical activities, group work and contact with people from outside the school. English was seen as the subject with the most connections with other subjects, most learnt from books and most involving the use of the imagination.
21. Mathematics was the most frequently cited as the hardest subject and also to have the least practical activity, group work, outside visitors, use of ICT resources and teachers who encouraged imagination and creativity. But it was the second most likely to connect with the world outside school.
22. As last year, primary learners were quite conscious of physical health issues (diet, exercise, smoking etc) and believed that they had got information about these topics in school. Similar views were expressed by secondary learners about the same wellbeing issues, but also about alcohol and drugs.
23. Questions around stress elicited more complex responses. About half of primary learners said that stress was a subject their teachers addressed, with girls more likely to acknowledge this than boys. A similar proportion said they were learning about how to deal with stress and over 77% said their friends were dealing better with stress because of what they had learned. In secondary schools, the figures were similar.
24. As last year, secondary learners said that school was more stressful and demanding than their memories of primary school. A majority of primary school learners said that their parents, friends and the school all expected them to do well at school. Around 25% thought parents and carers put too much pressure on them but, interestingly, almost as many (19%) thought they were not pressured enough. The figures were broadly comparable in the secondary phase though views about parental pressure were a little more polarised (27% too much and 24% too little pressure respectively).



25. We were able to explore some of these issues a little more through free text answers in the survey and through focus groups. The focus group inputs are found under the relevant sections. Broadly, the responses from members of focus groups added detail and texture but otherwise reinforced the survey results. Again they were generally quite positive but some criticisms were voiced. For instance, the teaching of mathematics was singled out as being unchallenging and rarely featured collaborative working. Another group commented on the importance of a teacher's specialist knowledge and the problems arising when this was lacking (in this case with reference to language teaching).
26. The free text answers are reported at the end of each section on phase. Primary learners when asked what they would like the school to do more of said, in order of popularity, a) nothing b) more activities and c) make lessons more interesting. Secondary learners when asked 'what does my school do to make me learn?' said a) different teaching strategies b) life skills and advice and guidance and c) extra help in lessons.

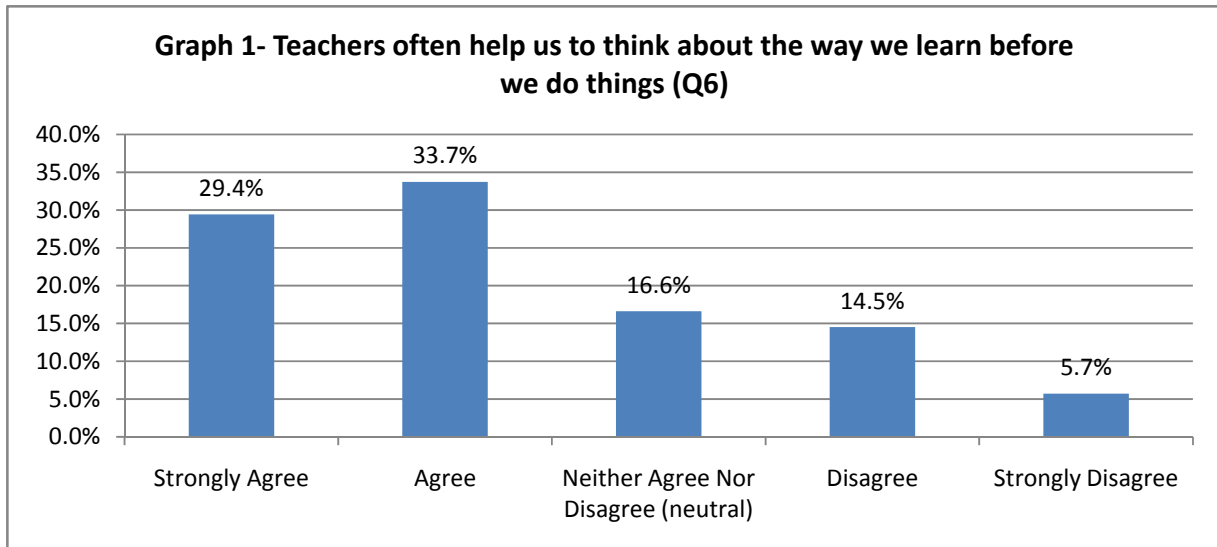
Primary

Challenge and inspiration

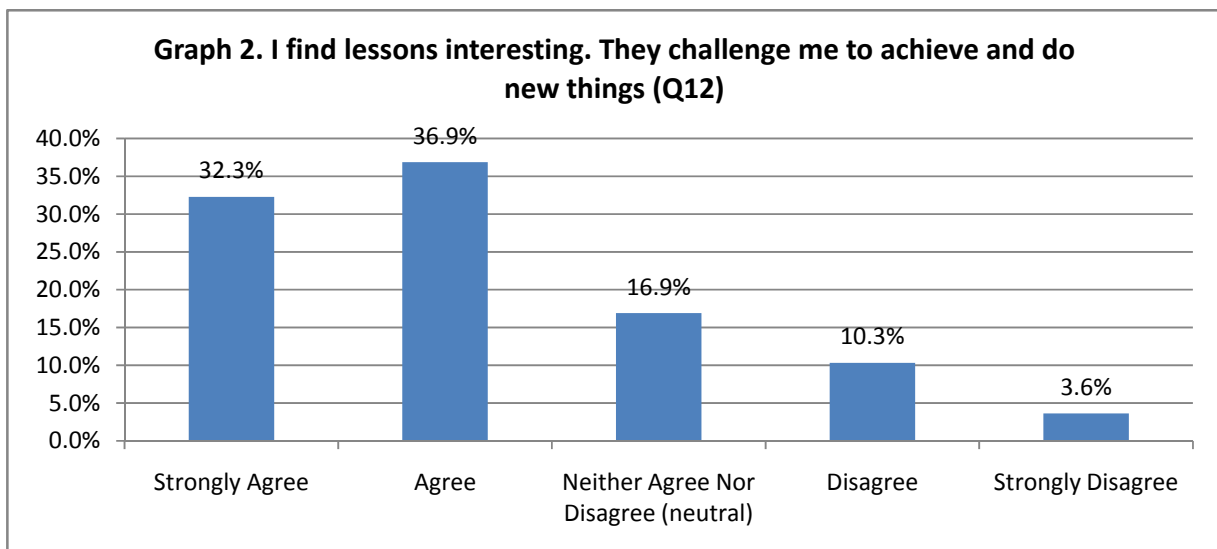
27. The data for the primary phase were all derived from the survey. On many issues, primary learners in our sample have relatively uncontroversial responses about the experience of the curriculum. A majority (over 80%) said that:
- they often use the internet at school, and
 - their teachers are good at helping them to understand what they need to know and what they need to be able to do next.
28. In terms what they would like their teachers to do more of in the future, a majority of learners (over 80%) would like them to:
- help them discover new ways to learn
 - use examples from videos or DVDs or television during lessons
 - make lessons fun and interesting
 - enable them to use the internet at school
 - be good at finding out what they know already before they try and teach them anything new, and
 - vary activities in lessons.
29. Over 70% said that their teachers take account of what they already know, help them to solve problems in group work and allow the learners to do a lot of different things in their lessons. Learners thought that they do a lot of practical activities and that they can often use what they have learnt at school in their life outside school. In the future, learners would like teachers to help them solve more problems in a group and they would like teachers to help them discover new ways to learn. Learners also felt they would like people from outside to come into their school to work with them and that they would like to use what they have learnt at school in their lives outside school.



30. Over 50% of survey respondents said they did group work with other learners in their class, find lessons interesting because they challenge them to achieve and do new things. They also feel that teachers often help them to think about the way they learn before they do things and that they often have people coming into to school to work with them.

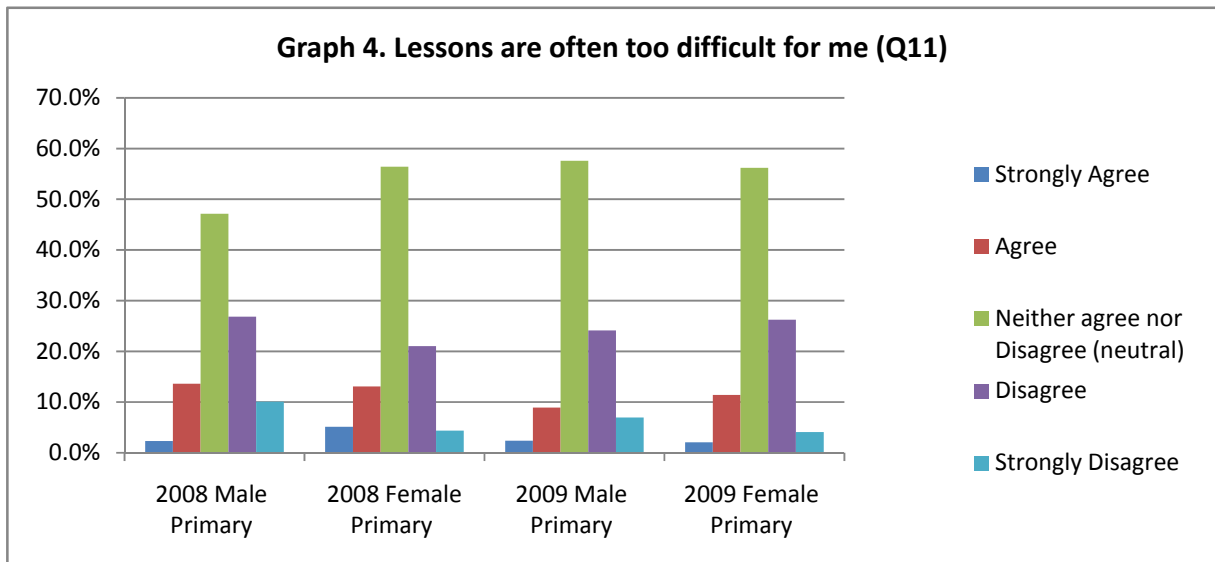
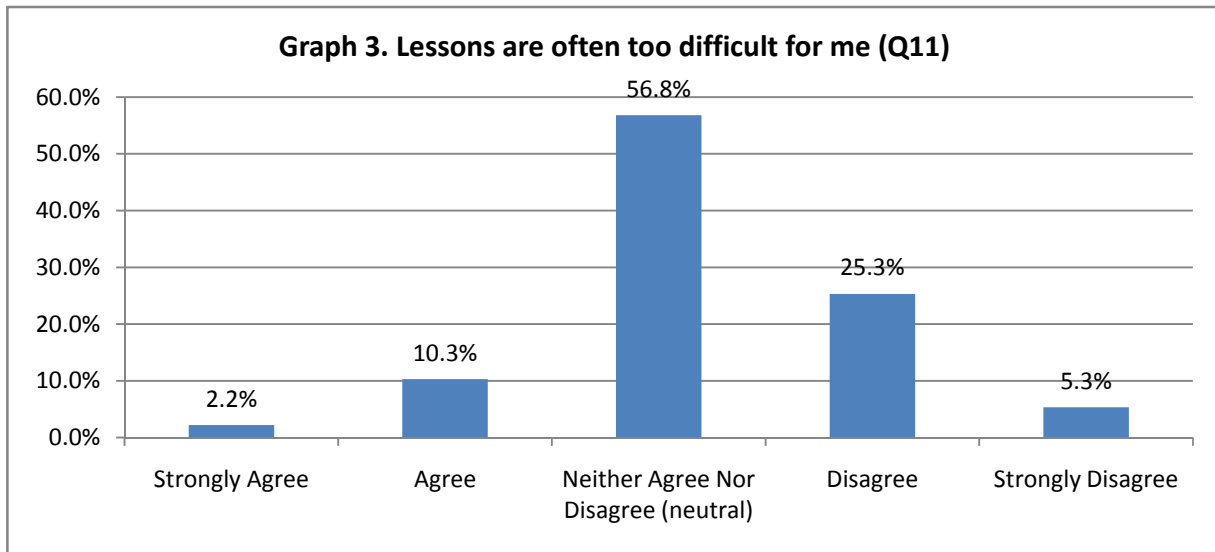


31. Question 12, 'I find lessons interesting. They challenge me to achieve and do new things' was tested for statistical significance for ethnicity. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was -1 (equivalent to agree). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups (P=0.098).



32. Question 11, 'lessons are often too difficult for me' was tested for statistical significance for ethnicity. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was 0 (equivalent to neutral). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups (P=0.172).





33. We tested question 27, *'in the future, I would like teachers to be good at finding out what I already know about before they try and teach me something new'* for gender differences. The average value for boys in 2008 was -1 (equivalent to agree) whereas for girls it was -2 (equivalent to strongly agree). Therefore girls were significantly more likely to say that *'in the future they would like teachers to be good at finding out what I already know before they try and teach me something new'* ($P=0.009$). In contrast, there was no difference in the responses of boys and girls in 2009. In 2009, the boys' responses were closer to those of girls; for instance, more or less the same number of boys and girls *'strongly agreed'* that they wanted teachers to be good at finding out what they already know before they tried to teach them something new.



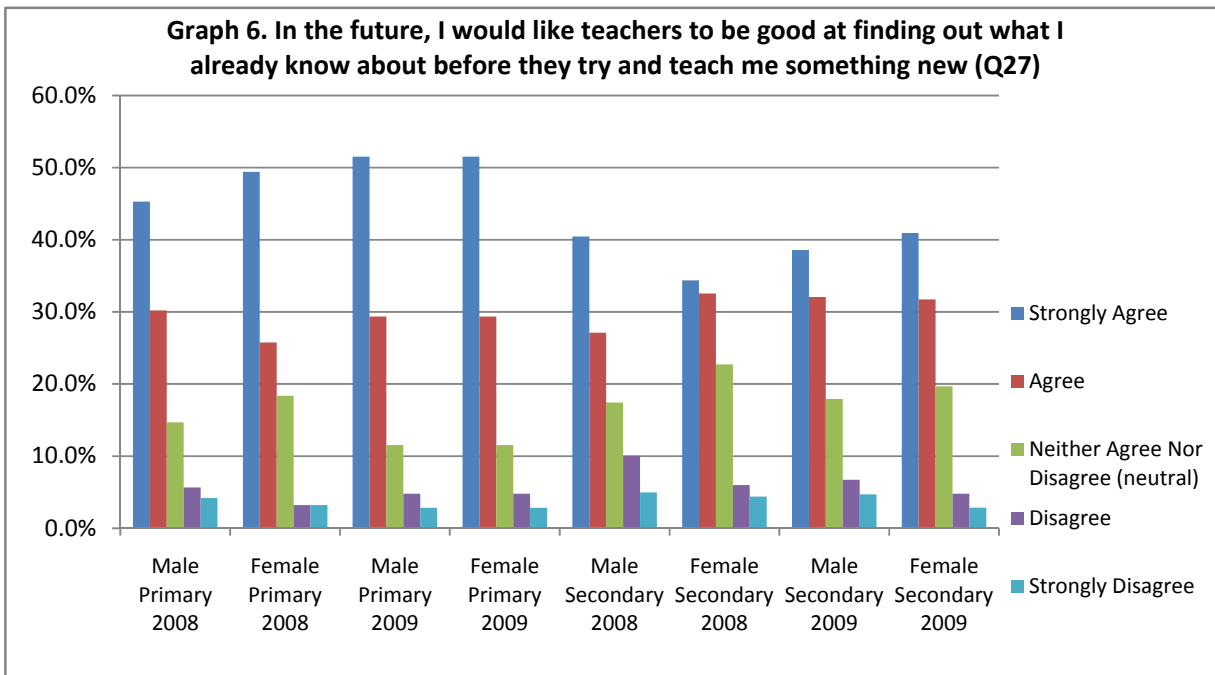
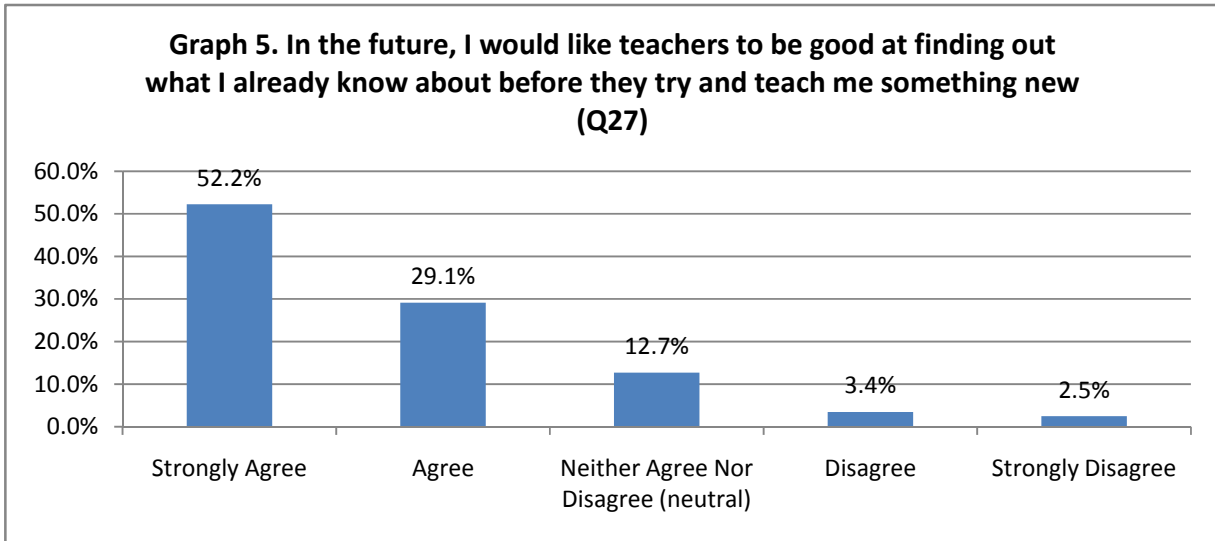


Table 1. Genders compared on Q27

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	477	460	-1	-2
Girls	472	535	-2	-2



Total	949	995
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Autonomy and Influence

34. Over 70% of learners sometimes marked their own and/or other learners' work at school. In 2008 the average value for boys was -1 (equivalent to agree) whereas for girls it was -2 (strongly agree). In 2009 the average value for boys and girls was -1 (agree). There was a highly significant difference between boys and girls in both 2008 and 2009. Girls were significantly more likely to say that they sometimes get to mark their own and/or other learners work at school.
35. Question 32, 'I sometimes get to mark their own and/or other learners' work at school' was tested for statistical significance for ethnicity. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was -1 (equivalent to agree). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups (P=0.939).

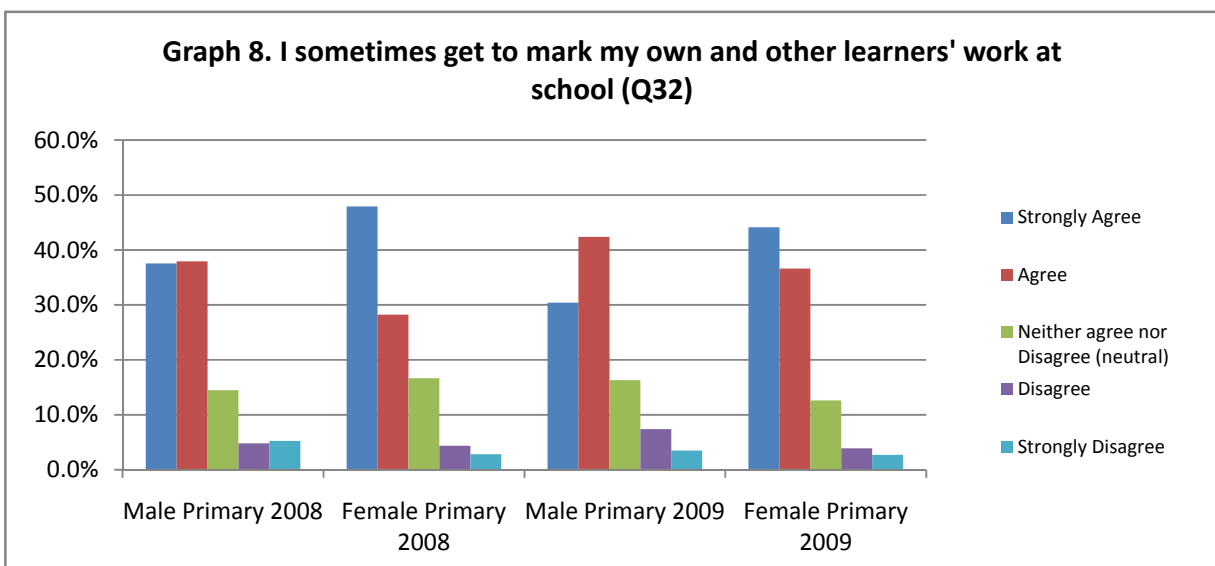
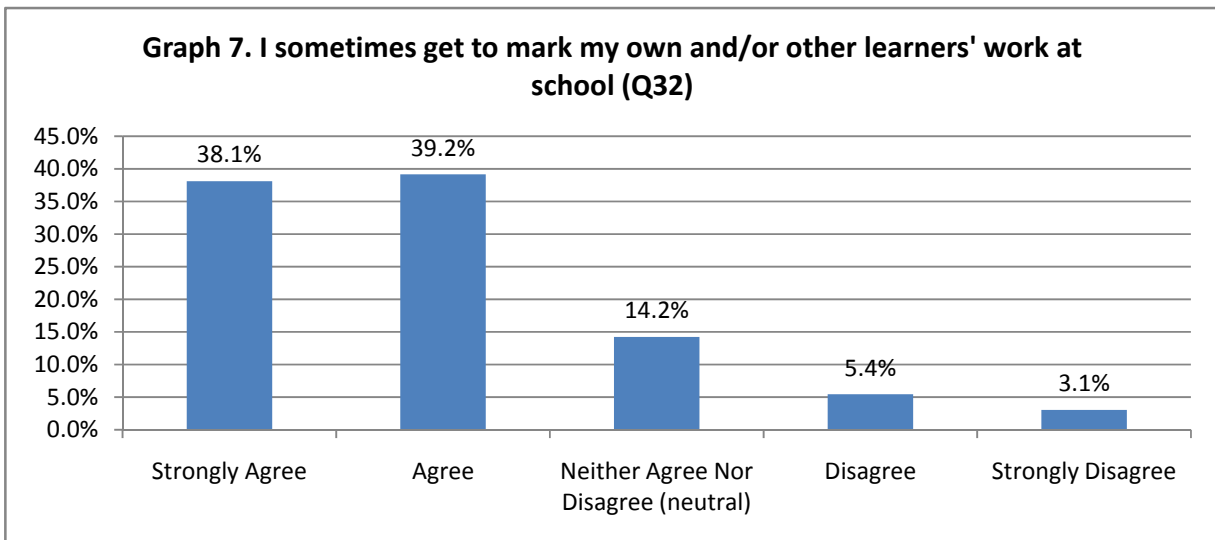
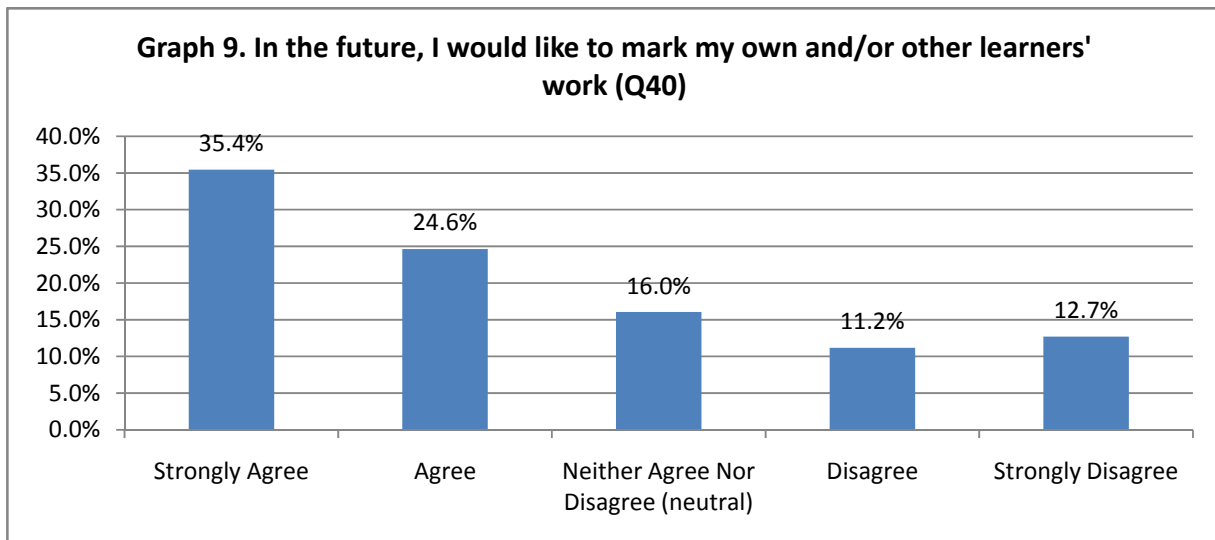


Table 2. Genders compared on Q32

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	477	460	-1	-1
Girls	472	535	-2	-1
Total	949	995		

36. Question 40, *'in the future, I would like to mark my own/ or other learners' work'* was tested for statistical significance for gender and produced interesting results. The average (median) value for boys and girls in 2008 and 2009 was -1 (equivalent to agree), but the range around the average value revealed a statistical difference between genders. This statistically significant difference occurred in both the 2008 and 2009 data. Girls were significantly more likely to say that in the future, they would like to mark their own and/ or other learners' work (P=0.007).



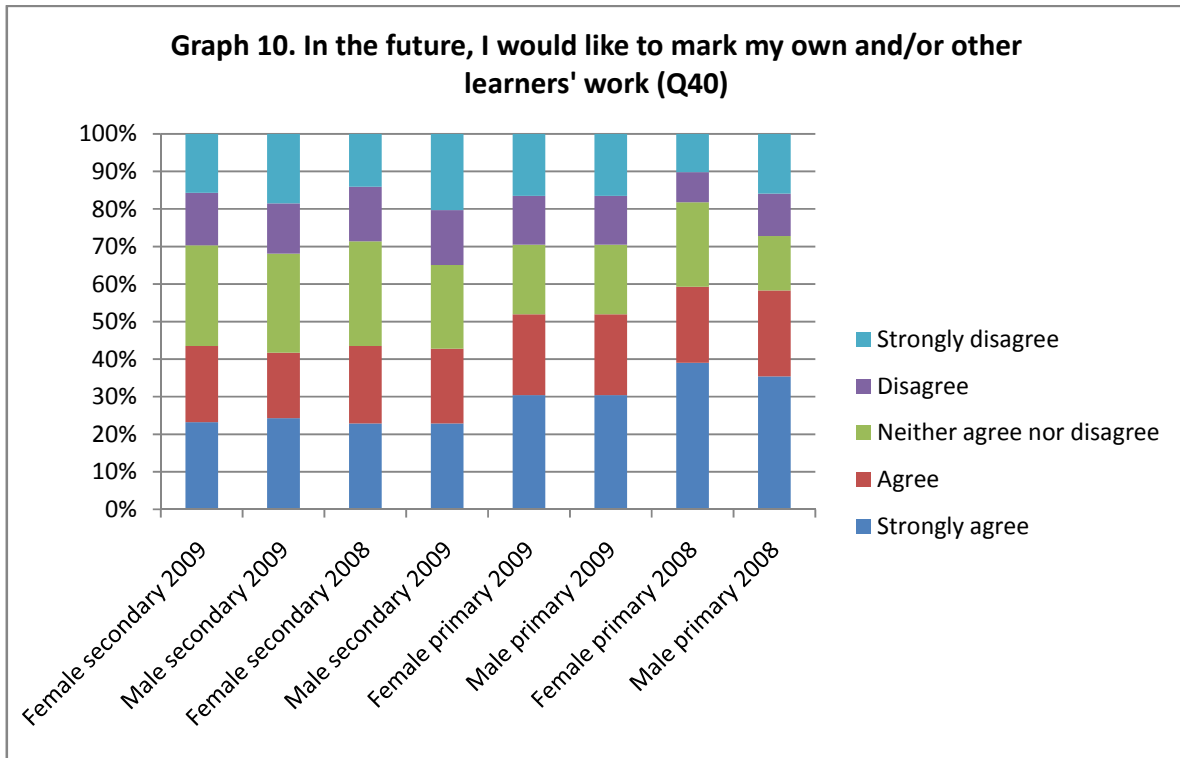


Table 3. Genders compared on Q40

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	477	460	-1	-1
Girls	472	535	-1	-1
Total	949	995		

37. 77% of learners reported that teachers often ask them what they are finding difficult. The average value for boys and girls in 2008 and 2009 was -2 (equivalent to strongly agree). In 2008, the range around the average was significantly different between genders. Girls were significantly more likely to say that in the future, they would like teachers to ask them about what they found difficult. In contrast, there was no significant difference between boys and girls in 2009. Both genders strongly agreed that they wanted teachers to ask them about what they are finding difficult.



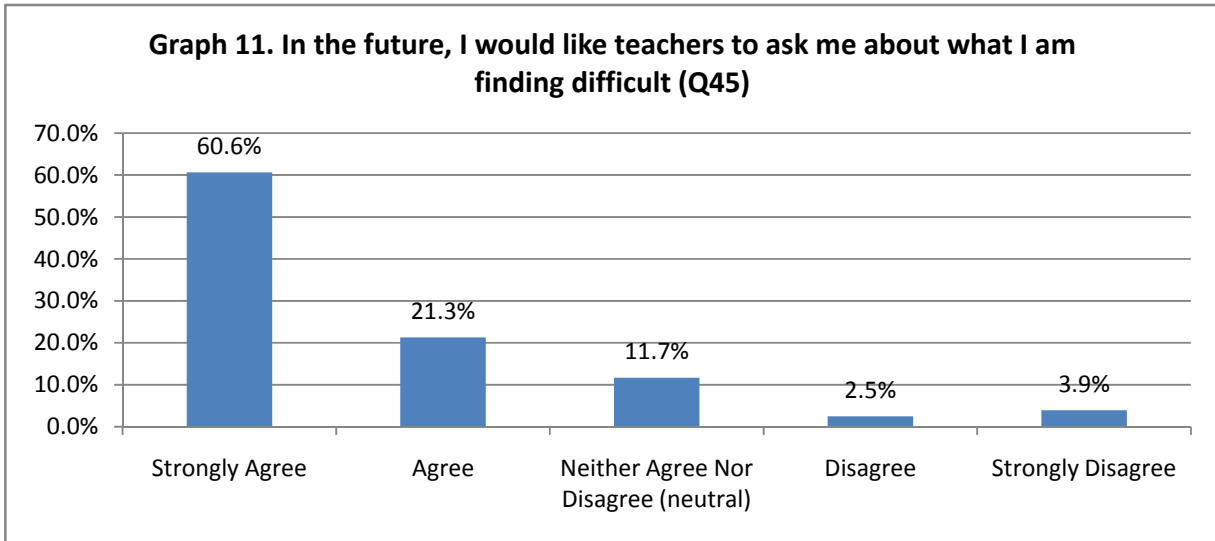
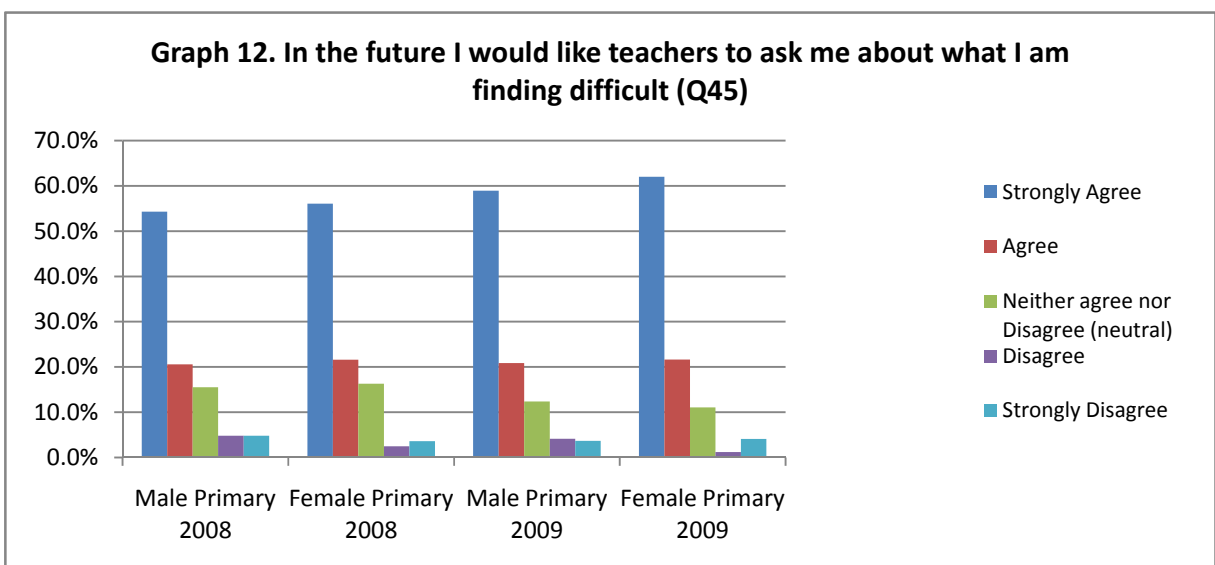
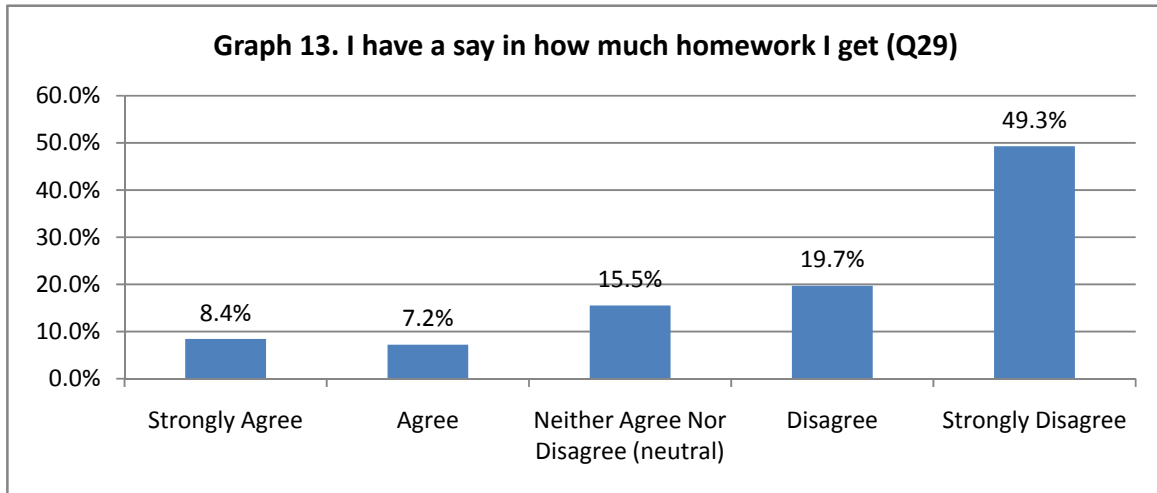


Table 4. Genders compared on Q45

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	477	460	-2	-2
Girls	472	535	-2	-2
Total	949	995		



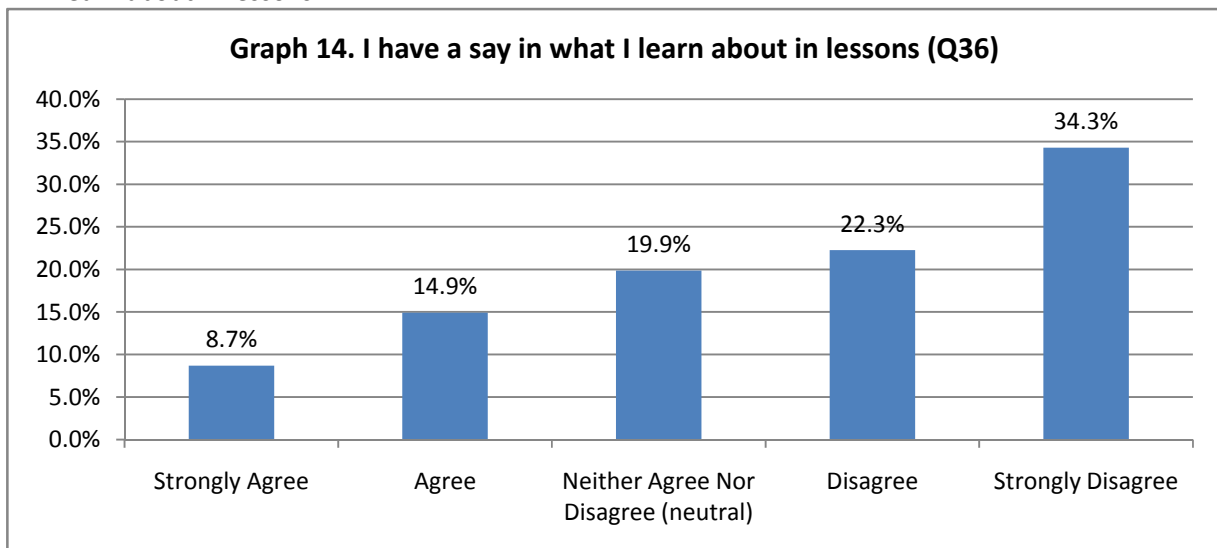
38. Over 80% of learners said that they have to be in school all the time during the school day. Nearly 70% thought that they did not have a say in how much homework they were given.



39. In the future, over 80% of learners said they would like:

- to be able to choose to do some of their learning online
- to choose who to work with in lessons, and
- teachers to ask them what they are finding difficult.

40. 72% of learners wanted to have a lot of choice in the subjects they wanted to do. Over 70% also thought that it was important for them to have a say in how they were taught and in what they learn about in lessons.



Lifestyles and health

41. Learners in the primary phase seemed to be well-informed about health. Around 66% acknowledged that they had been told about healthy eating, while less than 3% said they had not. Nearly 50% said that this information had led to them eating more healthily (although nearly 55%



said they were doing it anyway). We realise that these two answers are difficult to align and therefore it is likely that some learners chose both the options c, 'I have started eating more healthily because of what I have learnt at school' and d, 'I already eat healthily'. Nearly 40% said some of their friends were eating more healthily. We included the 'what are your friends doing?' form of question partly to get an impression broader than just the individual but mostly to give the respondent a proxy whose behaviour they might be able to report more honestly than their own. The reporting of the behaviour of 'friends' might be a more reliable guide to actual behaviour change. The percentages reported in 2009 are very similar to those we reported in 2008.

Table 5. Healthy eating		
Do I eat healthily at school?	Disagree	Agree
I've never been told about healthy eating at school	97.7	2.3
I've been told about healthy eating at school	34.0	66.0
I have started eating more healthily because of what I have learnt at school	50.8	49.2
I already eat healthily	45.5	54.5
Some of my friends are eating more healthily because of what they have learnt at school	62.4	37.6

42. Nearly 90% of respondents said that they have had a lot of encouragement to take exercise at school and 42% reported that their friends had started doing exercise as a result of what they had learned at school. Again, this 'friends' report might be a more reliable guide of behaviour change than self report.

Table 6. Exercise		
What have I learnt about exercise?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don't encourage us to take exercise	94.2	5.8
In my school we have had a lot of encouragement to take exercise	11.4	88.6
Some of my friends have started to do more exercise outside of school because of what they have learnt about it at school	57.7	42.3

43. The figures on physical well-being are quite reassuring while those on psychological health are more mixed. 82% of learners said they had learned a lot about bullying, and only 5% said that teachers knew nothing about it. The data on stress are more polarised. 50% of respondents claimed they had learnt about stress and how to deal with it but 46% said that their teacher did not talk about stress at all.

Table 7. Stress		
What have I learnt about stress?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don't talk to us about stress	53.8	46.2
In my school we have learnt about stress and how to deal with it	50.0	50.0
Some of my friends have started to deal better with stress because of what they have learnt in school	77.5	22.5

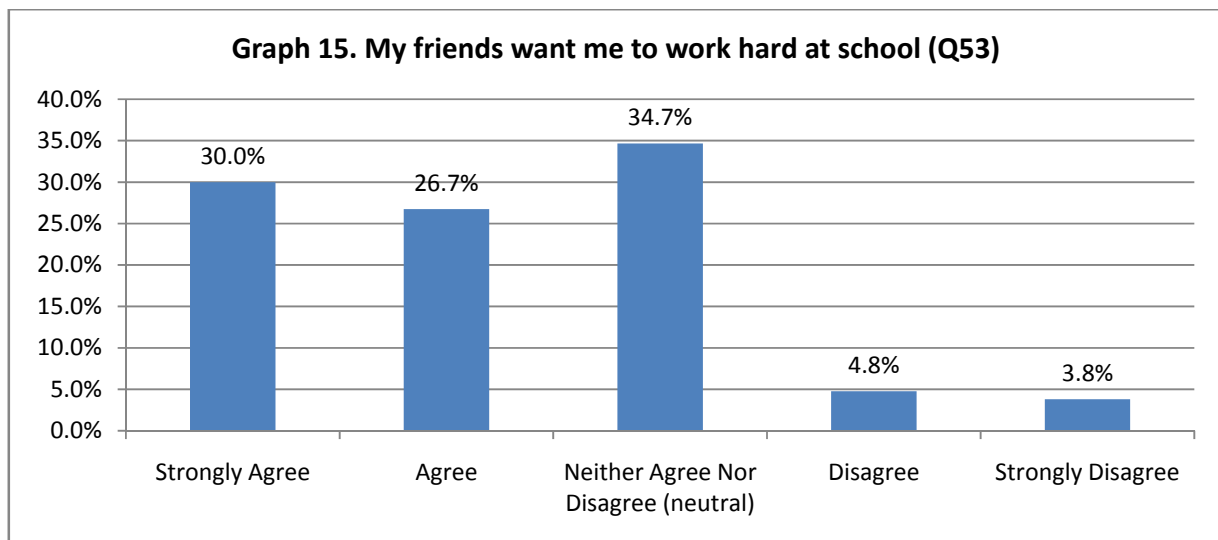


44. With regards to question 48 on stress, in 2008 there was a significant difference between the responses of boys and girls to the third sub-question ‘Some of my friends have started to deal better with stress because of what they have learnt about it at school’. Boys were more likely and girls were less likely to agree with this statement. This sub-question was not significant in 2009. However, in 2009, there was a significant difference in the number of boys and girls that answered ‘agree’ to the first sub question ‘Teachers don’t talk to us about stress’ (P=0.025). Boys were more likely and girls were less likely to say that teachers did not talk to them about stress. The question overall still showed significance, but it was the third sub-question ‘some of my friends have started to deal better with stress because of what they have learnt about it at school’ that showed the largest difference.
45. Question 49, ‘what have I learnt about bullying’ was tested for statistical significance for ethnicity. A Chi-square analysis was carried out, comparing the proportion of answers to each of the sub questions between the two ethnicity groups. There was no significant difference between the answers (P=0.770).

What have I learnt about bullying?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don’t know a thing about bullying	94.9	5.1
In my school we have learnt a lot about bullying	17.9	82.1
I know how to help other learners if they are being bullied	32.9	67.1

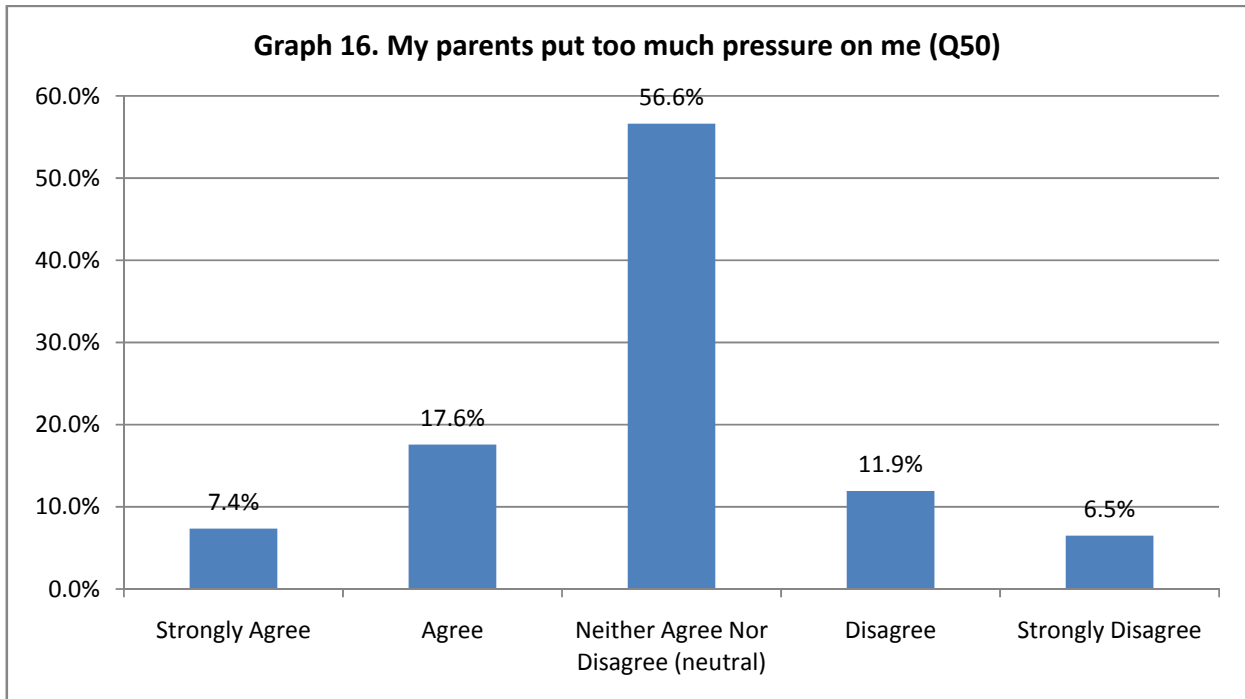
Motivational influences

46. The majority of learners in the primary phase experienced high expectations from their parents and carers and friends to do well at school. Over 60% thought that friends expected them to do well at school and nearly 60% wanted them to work hard at school.



47. This rose to 83% for learners who thought parents and carers expected them to do well at school. A quarter (25%) thought that parents and carers put too much pressure on them to do well, whilst nearly 19% thought that their parents and carers put too little pressure on them.





48. Question 51, 'my parents expect me to do well at school' was tested for statistical significance between primary and secondary responses in 2009. The average value for primary and secondary was -2 (equivalent to strongly agree). Although the averages were the same, there was a highly significant difference between primary and secondary, caused by variation around the average (P=0.0000). The mean values show the direction of the difference: primary = 1.4; secondary = 1.2. Primary learners therefore were significantly more likely to strongly agree that their parents expect them to do well at school.

Table 9. Genders compared on Q51

	Sample size	Average (median) score
Boys	1047	-2
Girls	1324	-2
Total	2371	

49. Question 50, 'my parents put too much pressure on me' was tested for statistical significance for ethnicity. A total of 1047 learners responded to this question with just over four fifths (887 learners) claimed to be of white ethnic origin and less than one fifth (160 learners) claimed to be of 'other ethnic origin'. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was 0 (equivalent to neutral). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups (P=0.520).



50. Question 52, *'my friends expect me to do well at school'* was tested for statistical significance between primary and secondary responses in 2009. The average value for primary was -1 (equivalent to agree). The average value for secondary was 0 (equivalent to neutral). There was a highly significant difference between primary and secondary opinions ($P=0.0000$). Primary learners were significantly more likely to agree that their friends expected them to do well at school in comparison with secondary learners, who had a neutral opinion.

	Sample size	Average (median) score
Boys	1047	-1
Girls	1324	0
Total	2371	

51. Question 54 *'what does my school do to make me learn'* was a free choice answer. These free text answers were then grouped into common themes, and the themes assigned a one-word or short-phrase descriptor. The larger and darker the word or phrase in the diagrams, the more often it was given as an answer by learners. Tables listing the themes and count data to support these illustrations are provided below. The diagrams do not include themes mentioned by less than ten learners.



Figure 1. What does my school do to make me learn? (Q54)



Table 11. Responses to Q54 (Primary)		
N=972		
How my school helps me to learn	Number of responses	Proportion of responses (%)
Subject knowledge	127	13.1
Fun/interesting lessons	124	12.8
Activities, visits and practicals	121	12.4
Explaining content	81	8.3
Variety of content	76	7.8
Introducing unfamiliar material	68	7.0
Challenge	64	6.6
Using resources	62	6.4
Life skills	49	5.0
Talk	48	4.9
Using IT	35	3.6
Pastoral advice (Bullying, health, SEAL)	35	3.6
Group work	31	3.2
Homework	26	2.7
Targets	24	2.5
Lots	22	2.3
Support to work	22	2.3
Support by teaching assistants	17	1.7
Extra-curricular clubs and activities	10	1.0
Repeating activities	6	0.6
Supporting independent learning	5	0.5
Nothing	5	0.5
Boring	3	0.3
Unsure	1	0.1

52. The three key themes i.e. where more than 10% of respondents offered a response were subject knowledge (13.1%), interesting lessons (12.8%) and activities, visits and practical lessons (12.4%).

53. Specific comments made about subject knowledge were:

‘My school encourages me to learn and work hard so I improve and reach my targets.’

‘My teachers ask me what I have learnt before they start to teach me stuff that I do not know. They also show us what to do and then let us do it. Then if we do it wrong then they keep showing us it till we learn it. Then if they realise that we can not learn it that way then they try teaching us a different way until we learn it. I like the idea of putting lots of lolly sticks with all of names on them in a box and then we pick them out randomly to choose our partners.’



‘To help me learn, my teachers regularly walk around classrooms to check how we are doing with our work, and if we don’t have much done, or look as if we are finding it difficult, they will sit down next to us and explain to us what we are supposed to be doing. If we have a problem, they will listen to us, and try to find a way of how they can solve it. I have learnt lots of techniques in English, Mathematics, Science, Music, Art and lots more subjects. My school has taught me how to behave, how to behave around others, and how to calm myself down when I am angry.’

54. Comments about interesting lessons:

‘They make lessons fun by sometimes taking lessons outside.’

‘My school helps us to learn by encouraging us to do our best and not to be afraid to have a go at anything. Also we go on trips, do workshops and at the same time have fun. Sometimes we have people that come that are out of the school to increase our knowledge by learning us new things that sometimes help us to achieve our dreams or help us in adulthood.’

‘A way my school helps me learn, is that we have themed weeks every once in a while. A few weeks ago we had a 'Medieval Week' this was very interesting as I have not yet learnt about the medieval times.’

55. Comments from learners about activities, visits and practicals:

‘Arrange school trips to different countries and 'sleepovers' at different places in the U.K. Also we have day trips to lots of places.’

‘My school does a lot of hands on experiments in science and if we don't fully understand the teachers will come over to my table and help me to understand.’

‘Teachers teach us in different activities like in revision we did a treasure hunt outside to answer questions. They try to make us learn by making the lessons more fun when we don’t even know that we are doing work when we are. We also have fun themes like we had book week where Justin Sonper [the author of Vampirates] came in and we dressed up as pirates so they have fun themes where people come in and talk to us about our learning.’

56. Other themes where more than 5% of learners and less than 9.9% learners answered were:

- explaining content in lessons (8.3%)
- variety of content in lessons (7.8%)
- introducing unfamiliar material (7.0%)
- challenging learners (6.6%)
- using resources (6.4%), and
- teach life skills (5.0%).

57. Question 55, ‘*What could my school do more of to help me learn?*’ was a free choice answer. These free text answers were then grouped into common themes and the themes assigned a one-word or short-phrase descriptor. The larger and darker the word or phrase in the diagrams, the more often it was given as an answer by learners. Tables listing the themes and count data to support these



illustrations are provided below. This diagram does not include themes mentioned by less than ten learners.



Figure 2. What could my school do more of? (Q55)

Table 12. Responses to Q55 (Primary)		
N=913		
What could my school do more	Number of responses	Proportion of responses (%)
Nothing	165	18.1
More activities and interactivity	115	12.6
More fun or interesting	81	8.9
More explanation of lesson content	69	7.6
More IT	50	5.5
More collaborative or group work	48	5.3
More use of resources	48	5.3
More independent learning and empowering learner	47	5.1
More support when pupils struggle	44	4.8
More teaching of subject knowledge	42	4.6
More variety in content and style of lessons	39	4.3
More encouragement	28	3.1
More one-on-one help	26	2.8
Make work harder	26	2.8
More talk	24	2.6



Don't know	22	2.4
More pastoral or life skills	20	2.2
Better teachers	18	2
Better classroom management	14	1.5
More PE	14	1.5
More time for tasks	12	1.3
More extra-curricular clubs	11	1.2
More homework	11	1.2
Make work easier	9	1.0
More teaching assistants	9	1.0
More unfamiliar content	9	1.0
Less homework	5	0.5
Change lessons	4	0.4
Make classes smaller	3	0.3
Reduce lesson time	2	0.2
Lots	2	0.2
More targets	1	0.1

58. There were many responses but the key themes (over 8.5% of the answers) were 'nothing' (18.1%), 'more activities' (12.6%) and 'to make lessons more interesting' (8.9%). Selections of the quotes were:

59. Comments on the theme that 'nothing more could be done' included:

'I feel they are doing all they can to help me learn and I don't think they could do any more. I really like the way they (my teachers) are teaching me.'

'I think that my school doesn't really need to do anything else to help me learn more apart from doing everything they already do.'

'Nothing really because they do help me to try and understand my work'.

60. Comments on the theme that 'lessons need more activities' included:

'Let us have a say in how and what we are learning. I would like to do more practicals as I think I learn more when I have an object in front of me to help me learn.'

'I think we should do more research on the internet and do more activities on the computer. Our school should have some posters around to help encourage us to learn more. And we could have more interactive resources to do on our own.'

'They could do more experiments in science because it is always writing and reading but doing experiments helps us learn more and its more fun. In literacy we could at least have see a DVD or CDs to encourage us more with our writing.'



61. Comments on the theme that 'lessons should be more interesting' included:

'Quizzes would be fun.'

'What they can do to help me learn more is do more activities which are fun, more children would want to learn because it looks fun and they want to participate.'

'Teachers could allow us to bring fun things in from home to help with our projects.'

62. Other themes where more than 5% of learners and less than 8.5% learners answered were:

- more explanation of lesson content (7.6%)
- more ICT (5.5%)
- more group work (5.3%)
- more use of resources (5.3%), and
- more independent learning (5.1%).

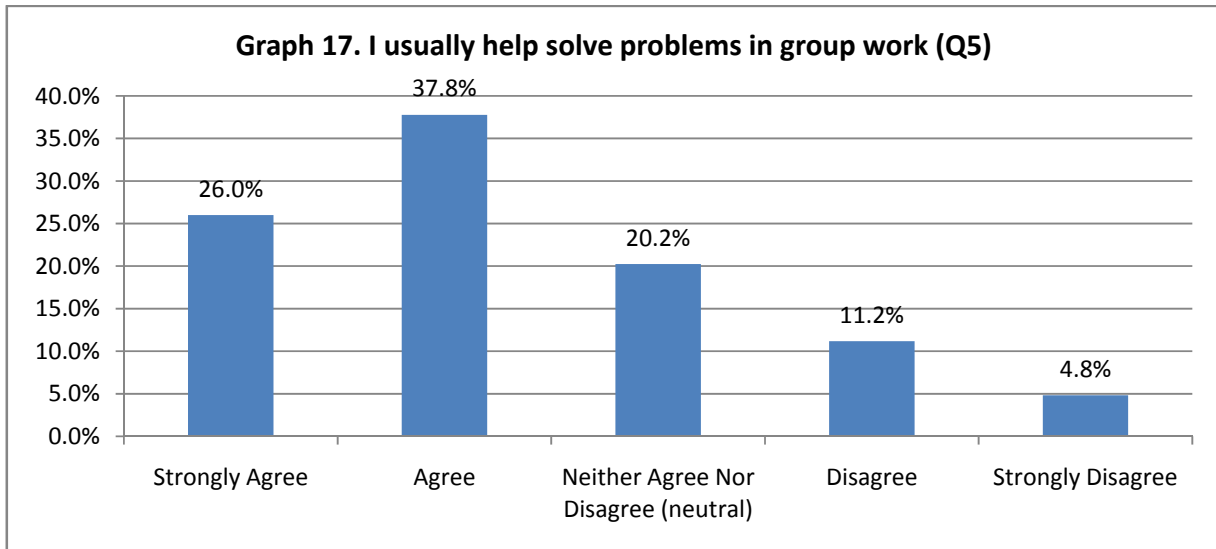


Secondary

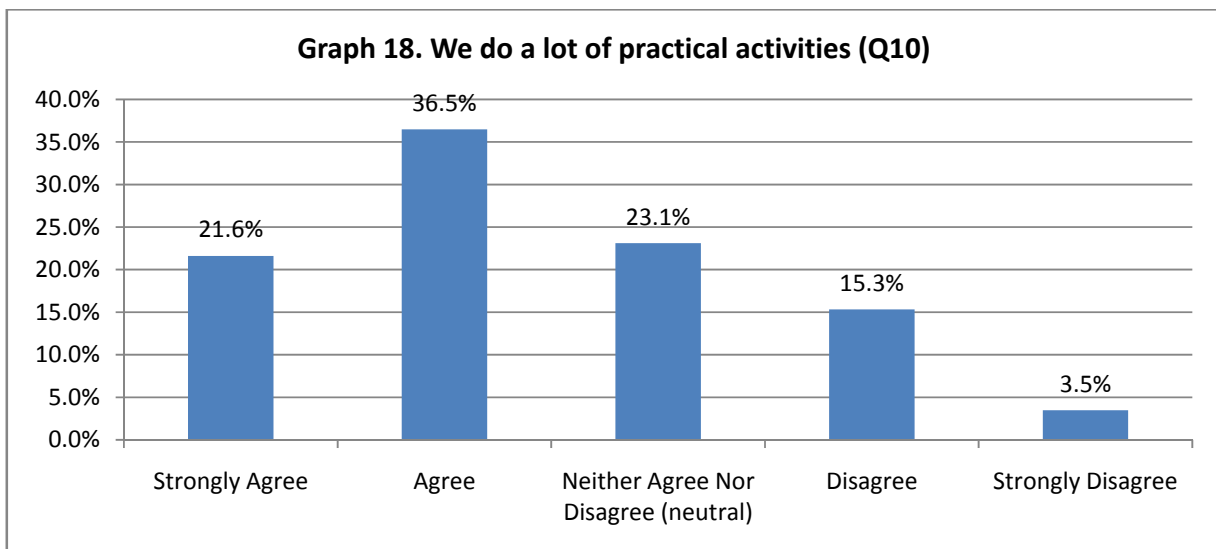
Challenge and inspiration

63. Secondary learners were generally neutral or positive about their experience of the curriculum whilst in most categories, they felt less challenged and inspired than the primary cohort. Over 60% of secondary respondents to the survey felt a lot or somewhat that:
- they often use the internet at school
 - teachers are good at helping them to understand what I need to know and what I need to be able to do next
 - they were usually able to solve problems in group work
 - they do a mix of different activities in lessons (although a substantial minority – 22.4% thought otherwise), and
 - teachers encourage them to use their imaginations and to be creative in their work.
64. Question 4, *'teachers are good at helping me to understand what I need to know and what I need to be able to do'* was tested for statistical significance using learners' reported individual National Curriculum tests attainment. Most learners chose the 'agree' option. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for those choosing the option 'strongly disagree' was 9. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for all other survey opinions was 10. The range around the averages showed a highly significant difference. (P=0.001). Learners who 'agreed' that teachers were good at helping them to understand what they need to know also had significantly higher National Curriculum tests scores than those that 'strongly agreed' with the statement.
65. Question 5, *'I usually help solve problems in group work'* was tested for statistical significance using learners' reported individual National Curriculum tests attainment scores. Most learners chose the 'agree' option. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for those choosing the option 'strongly disagree' was 8. The average mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for all other survey opinions was 10. The range around the averages were highly significantly different (P=0.003). Learners who strongly disagreed that they usually helped solve problems in group work had reported significantly lower National Curriculum tests scores than those with a 'neutral', 'agree' or 'strongly agree' opinion.
66. Question 5 was also tested for statistical differences in ethnicity. A total of 1324 learners responded to this question with just under four fifths (1030 learners) claimed to be of white ethnic origin and slightly more than one fifth (294 learners) claimed to be of 'other ethnic origin'. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was -1 (equivalent of agree). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups (P=0.071).





67. Question 10, 'we do a lot of practical activities' was tested for statistical significances for ethnicity. A total of 1324 learners responded to this question with just under four fifths (1030 learners) claimed to be of white ethnic origin and slightly more than one fifth (294 learners) claimed to be of 'other ethnic origin'. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was -1 (equivalent of agree). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups ($P=0.634$).

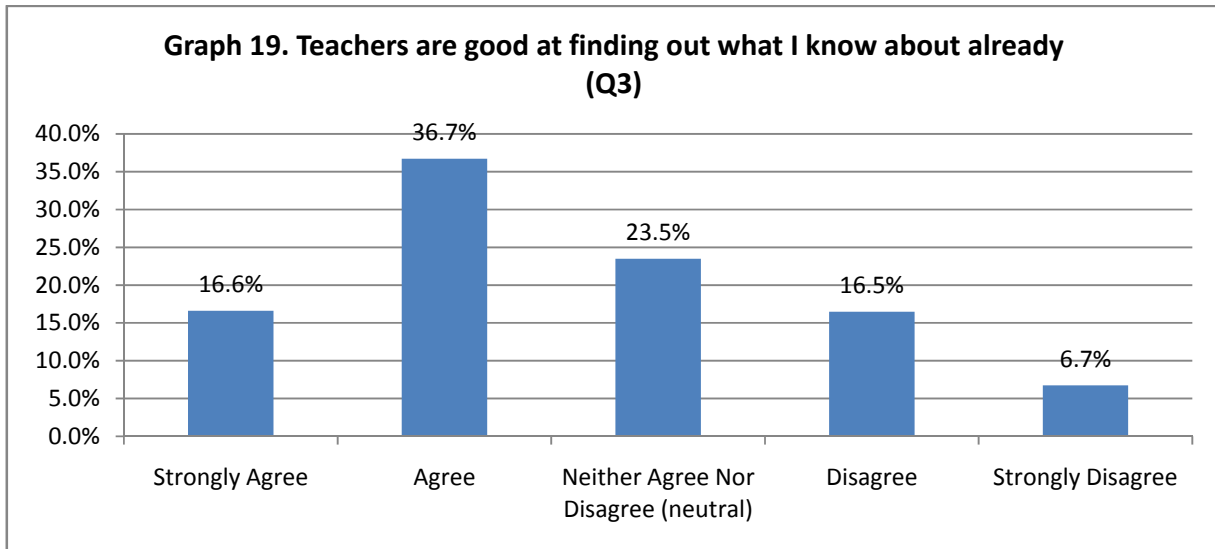


68. Question 16, 'teachers encourage us to use our imaginations and be creative in our work' was tested for statistical significance using learners' reported individual National Curriculum tests attainment scores. Most learners chose the 'agree' option. The average Mathematics and English score for those who strongly disagreed was 9 but for all other opinion groups it was 10. Learners who strongly disagreed tended too have lower National Curriculum tests attainment scores than those with a neutral or agree opinion, but this was not statistically significant.



69. In the focus groups, learners identified a wide range of subjects that involved a lot of problem solving activities. These were ICT, science, English, geography, RE, history, mathematics, and MFL. Two groups described how in citizenship they have focus or project days where they do lots of problem solving.
70. Learners had a wide view of what constituted problem solving. Learners described a range of problem solving activities:
- filling in the blanks in a worksheet in French
 - solving equations and using algebra in mathematics, and
 - working out formulas in science.
71. One learner described the problem solving they do in English:
- ‘In English, especially in poetry we problem solve by thinking about the author’s intentions, what were they? Who was the poem intended for?’
72. Four of the focus groups recognised that solving personal social problems in PSHE constituted problem solving activities.
- ‘In PSHE, we try to learn how to deal with situations, work with lots of different people and lots of real life situations.’
73. Just over 50% of respondents to the survey thought that:
- they often do group work
 - teachers are good at finding out what they already know about
 - teachers often make connections between different subjects
 - they do a lot of practical activities, and
 - they often use what they have learned in school in their lives out of school.
74. However, in this second group of responses, around 20% or more of the sample took the opposite position.
75. In question 3, ‘*Teachers are good at finding out what I already know about*’ was tested for statistical significance using learners’ reported individual National Curriculum tests attainment. Most learners chose the ‘agree’ option. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for all survey opinions was 10. The range around the averages showed a highly significant difference ($P=0.006$). Learners who ‘strongly agreed’ that teachers were good at finding out what they already knew about had significantly lower Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests scores than learners that had an ‘agree’, ‘neutral’ or ‘disagree’ opinion.





76. In question 6, *'Teachers often help us to think about the way we learn before we do things'* was tested for statistical significance using learners' individual National Curriculum tests attainment. Most learners chose the 'agree' option. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for all survey opinions was 10. The range around the averages showed a highly significant difference ($P=0.003$). Learners who 'agreed' that teachers often helped them to think about the way they learn before doing things reported significantly higher National Curriculum tests scores than those that 'strongly agreed' and 'strongly disagreed' .
77. In question 21, *'in the future, I would like teachers to make connections between different subjects'* was tested for statistical significance for individual National Curriculum tests attainment scores. Most learners chose the 'agree' option. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum attainment scores for all survey opinions was 10. There was no significant difference between the average and the range of survey opinion groups ($P=0.214$).
78. In the focus groups, learners were asked to discuss subjects in which practical work took place. Their answers revealed variable practice within individual subject areas. Several learners described doing practical activities in science, mathematics, PE, geography and music. English was not mentioned by any groups as a subject where they did practical activities.
79. Several groups identified science as being a practical-based subject:
- 'In science we are always doing practical things such as experiments, we like setting fire to chemicals and using Bunsen burners.'
- 'We are doing a practical activity almost every day in science.'
80. However, another learner described how practical work was not a frequent aspect of lessons.
81. Learners were unhappy if they felt they were doing too much written work. One learner mentioned that it would be good if they did more than just paper-based work in Spanish lessons. Learners had clear ideas about which subjects could incorporate more practical activities and how this could be done.



‘The teacher could do more in mathematics, like introduce more games or have us design a game.’

‘In Spanish the teacher could do things like bring in a Spanish DVD or we could use the computer.’

82. In the focus groups, learners viewed group work as a positive aspect to lessons. Examples of group work they gave were discussion-based activities and project work occurring across several subject areas. Learners in one school described the pair work they often did in Spanish, for example carrying out surveys.

83. One learner described his teacher’s rationale for structuring groups:

‘The PE teacher gets people he knows are at clubs, like cricket, and puts them in teams with others so they can act as a coach.’

84. However, it seemed that not all teachers were confident about allowing learners the space to collaborate, one learner described the inconsistent approach of one teacher:

‘The mathematics teacher gets angry a lot. When you try and talk about work she gets angry. She says to ask a partner before asking her if you get stuck, but when you try to do it you get into trouble.’

85. A learner from a different school mentioned lack of group work as having a negative impact:

‘We never do group work in mathematics its always independent, that’s why it’s so boring.’

86. Secondary learners were divided in their opinions about how well their teachers:

- made connections between lessons and their own experiences; and
- used of audio-visual resources.

In these areas, learner views were broadly spread across the spectrum.

87. Views about the level of challenge in school work were similarly diverse but just over half (54.5%) said they were neither too difficult nor too easy. This is similar to findings for the primary cohort where 54.3% found lessons neither too hard nor too easy. There was a more or less even split among learners on the question of whether they found lessons interesting - 39% said they were interesting and fun, 32% said they were dull and boring and 29% had no opinion.

88. Question 12 ‘*lessons are often too difficult for me*’ were statistically tested for gender differences. The average value for boys and girls in both years was zero (equivalent of neutral). There was a statistically significant difference between genders within the range around the average in both the 2008 and 2009 data. Girls were significantly more likely to say that lessons are often too difficult for them.

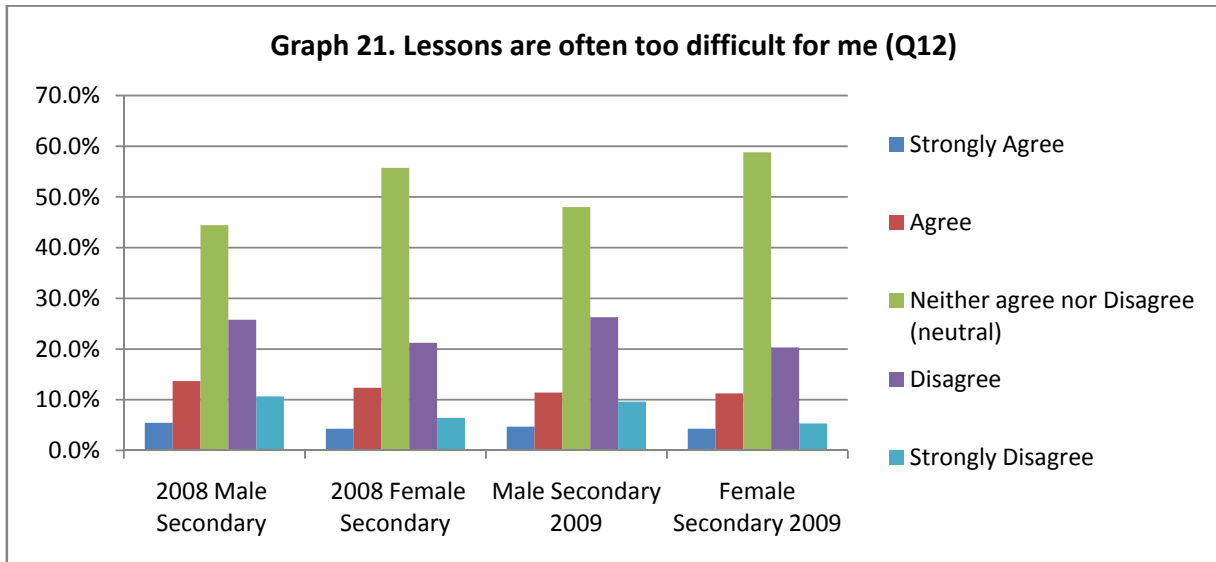
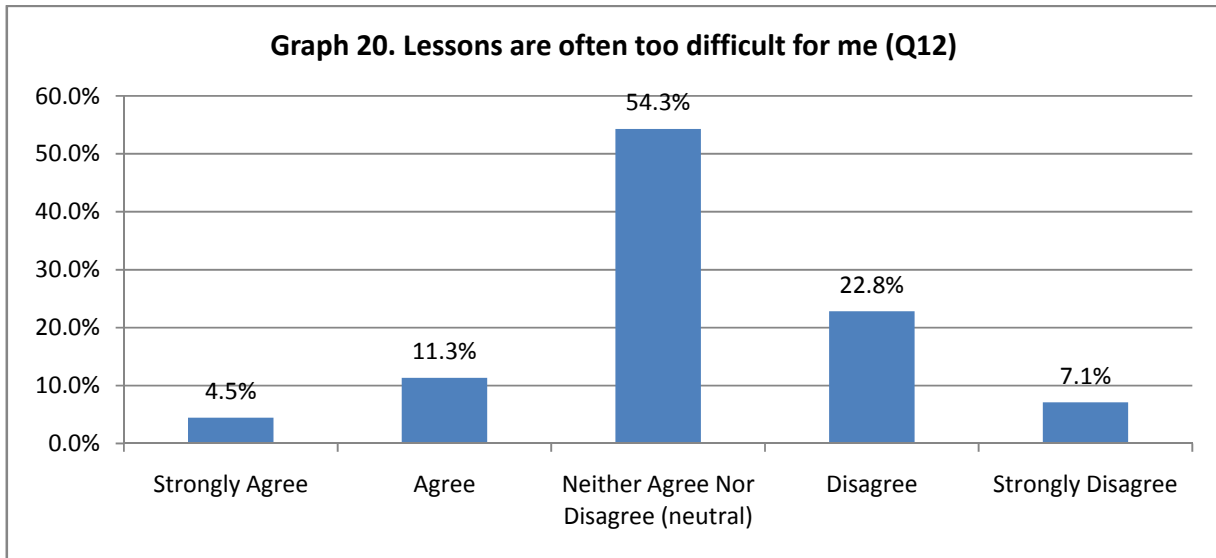


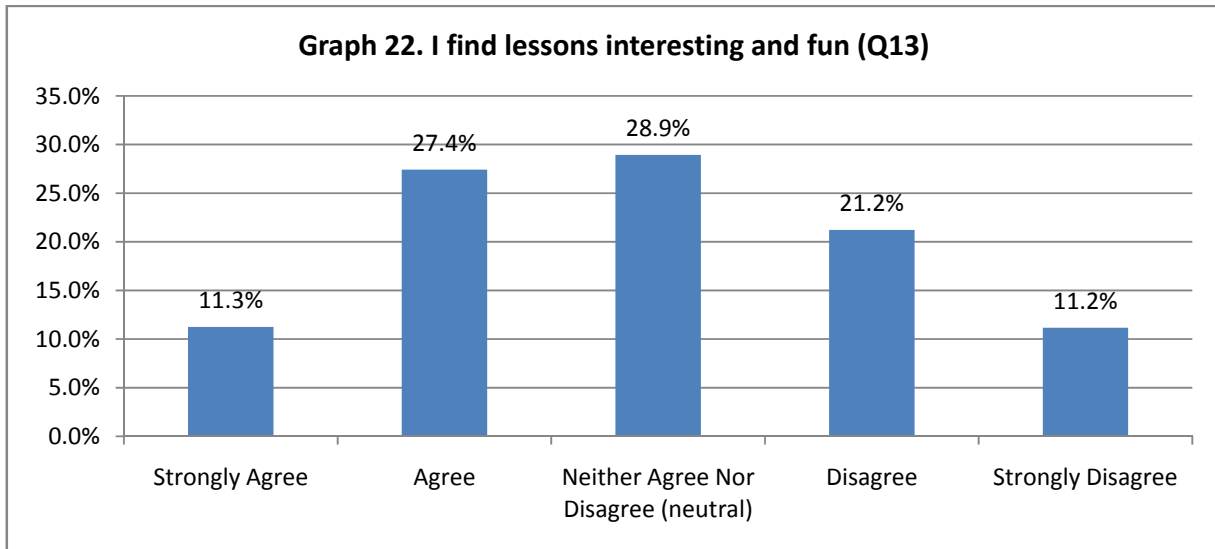
Table 13. Genders compared on Q12

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	826	552	0	0
Girls	803	667	0	0
Total	1,629	1,219		

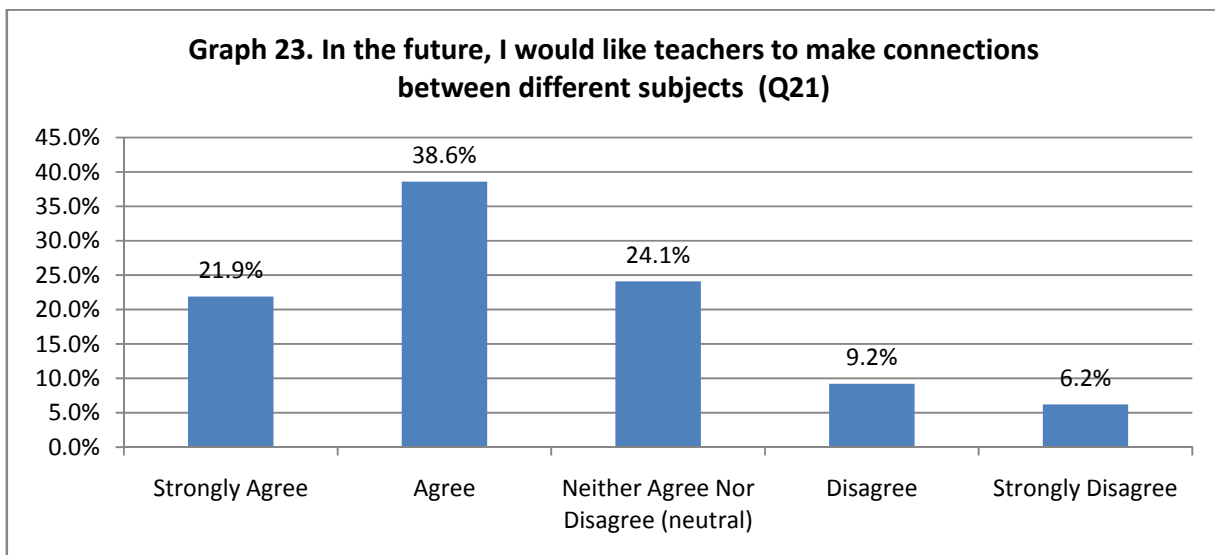


89. This question was also tested for statistical significance for individual learner National Curriculum tests scores. Most learners chose the 'neutral' option. The average Mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for learners with a 'strongly agree', 'agree' and 'neutral' was 10. The average National Curriculum tests score for learners with a 'disagree' opinion was 9 and for those learners with a 'strongly disagree' opinion was 8. There was a highly significant difference between survey opinion groups ($P=0.000$). Learners who 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' that lessons were often too difficult had significantly lower National Curriculum tests scores.
90. In the focus groups learners were asked to reflect on how they are challenged in class. Learners identified lessons that made them think hard and they could now do things that they couldn't do before. Learners were very aware and positive about learning new things. They identified a range of subjects where they had experienced challenge including ICT, MFL, design and technology, geography, mathematics and English.
91. They saw the benefits of learning new skills. One group described how a geography field trip would have been a waste of time if they had not learnt the measuring skills required. Another group described how learning to new challenges made them feel more confident:
- 'In mathematics, we thought we wouldn't be able to do equations but because we were taught well we were able to learn new things and then became more confident.'
92. The importance of the quality of the teaching was mentioned by several groups. One group, for instance, expressed concern about a language teacher's lack of specialist knowledge:
- 'It is good when teachers teach the correct subjects as the Chinese teacher also taught French when she wasn't very good at it.'
93. One group recognised that learners don't all learn at the same rate:
- 'In D&T and food technology there are things that are difficult to grasp such as weighing ingredients and measuring things but some can do it straight away and they help others to learn how to do it.'
94. Learners were very aware when they were not experiencing challenge. One year 7 respondent described how they had not been challenged at all in mathematics:
- 'we haven't moved forward from where we were last year.'
95. Question 13, 'I find lessons interesting and fun' was tested for statistical significances using ethnicity. The average value for White (British) versus all other ethnicity groups in both years was 0 (equivalent of neutral). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups ($P=0.093$).
96. Question 13 '*I find lessons interesting and fun*' was also tested for statistical significance for individual learner National Curriculum tests scores. Most learners chose the 'agree' option. The average mathematics and English score for those that 'strongly agree' was 9.5. For all other opinion groups it was 10. The range around the averages were highly significant ($P=0.007$). Significance lay between learners that 'agreed' versus 'strongly agreed' and also those with a 'neutral' opinion and those that 'strongly agreed' and 'strongly disagreed'. Learners with a 'neutral' or 'agree' opinion reported significantly higher National Curriculum tests scores than those who 'strongly agreed' or 'strongly disagreed'.





- 97. The secondary cohort was less positive about the school experience than primary learners, a phenomenon common in other surveys (Lord & Jones, 2006¹)
- 98. When asked what they would like the curriculum to be like in the future, most secondary learners wanted to have more of what they experienced as positive now. Over 80% wanted a lot of practical activities and use of audio-visual resources. Nearly three-quarters would like to use the internet more at school and they would like teachers to be better at finding out what they already know about an area before they try and teach them something new.
- 99. Nearly two-thirds of learners would like teachers to make connections with other subjects. Learners also wanted to do more group work and have a mix of different activities. In addition, learners would like to have people coming in from outside school to work with them.



¹ Lord, P. and Jones, M. (2006) Pupils' Experiences and Perspectives of the National Curriculum and Assessment: Final Report of the Research Review. Slough: NFER.



100. In question 19, 'In the future, I would like to get people from outside the school coming in to work with us' was tested statistically for gender significance. The average value for boys and girls in both years was -1 (equivalent to 'agree'). There was a statistically significant difference in both the 2008 and 2009 data between genders. Girls were significantly more likely to want visits from people outside school (2008: P= 0.004; 2009: P=0.017).

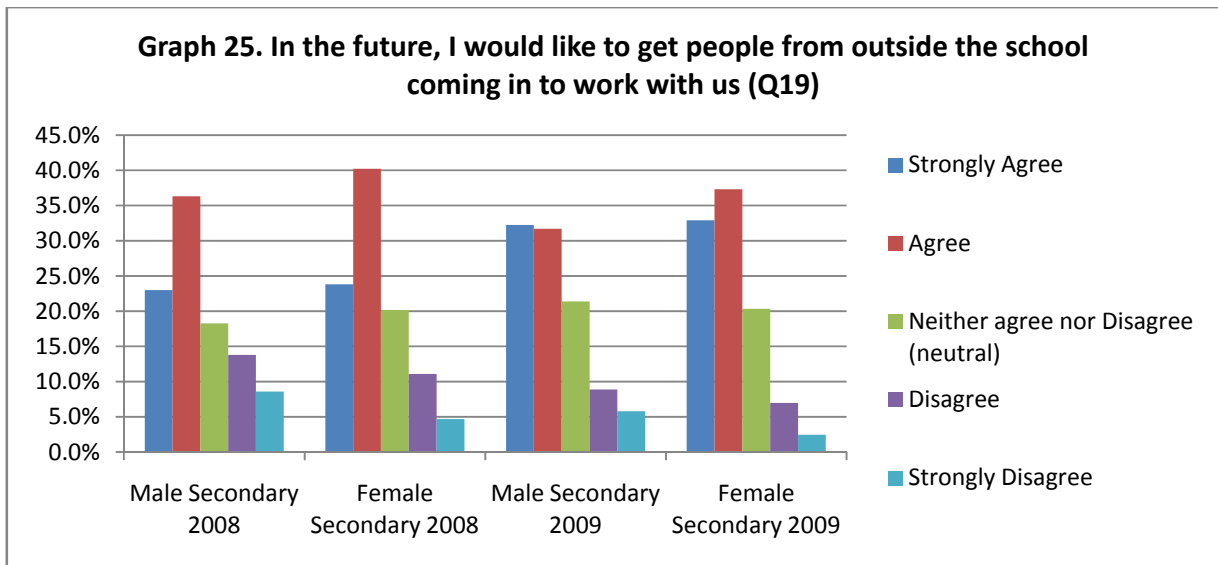
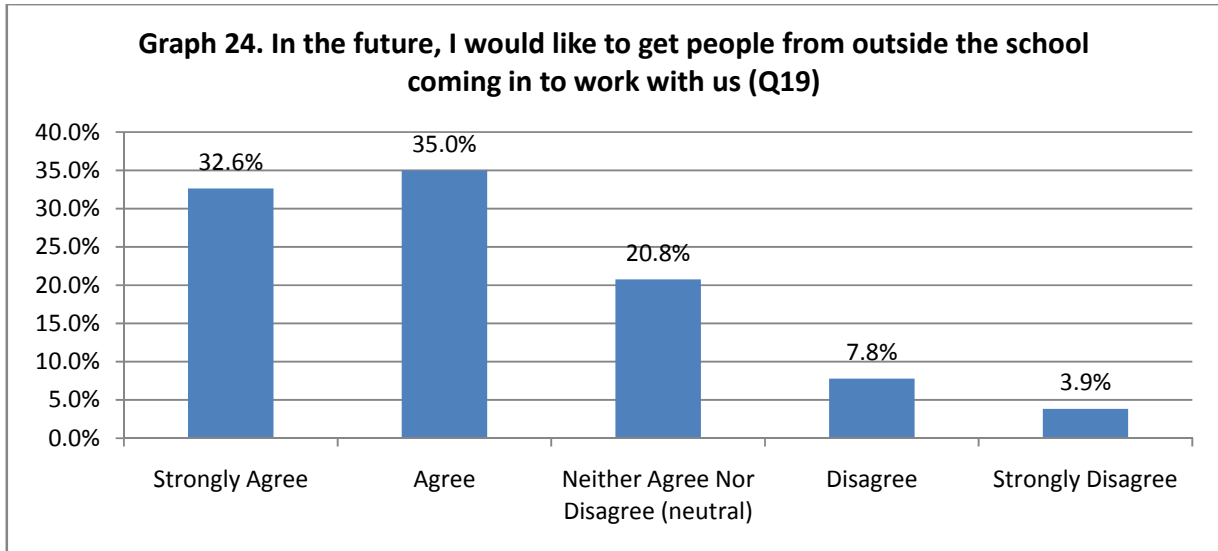


Table 14. Genders compared on Q19

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009



Boys	826	552	-1	-1
Girls	803	667	-1	-1
Total	1,629	1,219		

101. Despite nearly 30% of learners claiming that lessons were too easy, only 24% wanted lessons to be more difficult. 37% would like lessons to be easier.

102. The biggest gaps (greater than 20%) between learners' reported experiences of the curriculum and their hopes for the future were in relation to:

- the amount of practical activity
- people coming into school from the outside, and
- the use of audio-visual resources.

103. This differs slightly from the 2008 report, which might suggest that teachers of this year's cohort of respondents use the internet more in their lessons compared to those of last year and also use a broader mix of activities in their lessons.

104. One of the focus groups remarked on the importance of discipline and consistency:

'The teacher isn't very good at discipline, sometimes she is too mean and sometimes she is too lenient and therefore children take advantage and the other children get bored waiting and then they are distracted too All teachers need to be fair and consistent.'

105. Eight questions from this section were tested for statistical significance using school % for 5A*-C GCSE grades. The questions used were:

- Q3 - *'teachers are good at finding out what I already know about'*
- Q4 - *'teachers are good at helping me to understand what I need to know and what I need to be able to do'*
- Q5 - *'I usually help solve problems in group work'*
- Q6 - *'teachers often help us to think about the way we learn before we do things'*
- Q12 - *'Lessons are often too difficult for me'*
- Q13 - *'I find lessons interesting and fun'*
- Q16 - *'teachers encourage us to use our imaginations and be creative in our work', and*
- Q21 - *'in the future, I would like teachers to make connections between different subjects'.*

106. There was no significant correlation between school performance and survey results ($P > 0.05$). There are five possible answers per question (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) and most learners gave very similar answers. Therefore the averages between schools were similar. In surveys in the future, we will make methodological changes to strengthen this analysis.



Flexibility and choice

107. We asked secondary learners what they felt about individual subjects. The results of this section are set out visually below. Learners were asked to select the subjects that they thought were most and least like a particular characteristic (e.g. ‘we mostly learn from books’). The display shows the three highest ranking choices *most like* and the three *least like* the specified characteristic. PE was the second most frequent subject in which learners experienced:

- a lot of practical activities
- a lot of group work, and
- more people from the outside coming in to work with them.

PE was also most frequently regarded as the easiest subject.

108. English was the subject where learners were most likely to report that most learning occurred via books, and that English teachers made connections with other subjects. English teachers were good at finding out what students already know about an area in English before they start on a new area of learning. English and, art and design teachers were the most likely to encourage learners to use their imaginations.

109. Mathematics came out as the most frequent subject in which learners were least likely to:

- do practical activities
- do group work
- have people from the outside into school
- find easy
- be able to make connections with other subjects
- use audio-visual resources
- have teachers who explored existing knowledge when starting a new topic, and
- be encouraged to use their imaginations and be creative in their work.

According to learners, mathematics came out the second most frequent subject least likely to use the internet.

Mathematics was the subject that learners found hardest (20.9%). It was the second most frequent subject mentioned by learners as being useful outside of school and the third most frequent subject learners felt to be book based.

110. A point to note is the wide use of the term ‘other’. We are unsure as to whether ‘other’ does relate to other subject(s) or whether the survey respondents missed the subject that they wanted to enter in the drop down menu and therefore they wrote it in the ‘other’ box. We think that there may have been a systematic error of the respondent failing to spot the subject in the extensive list we provided. The respondents then wrote in the ‘other’ box although generally these answers did not appear to reveal many other subjects that we had failed to list.

111. The following diagram illustrates the subjects chosen by learners when answering which subjects were most and least like each phrase (listed on the left). The green bars denote subjects most like the phrase. The red bars denote subjects least like the phrase. The three most frequently chosen subjects are shown, both for subjects most like the phrase, and least like the phrase. In addition,



the percentage of the total learner population which selected that subject is shown next to each coloured bar.

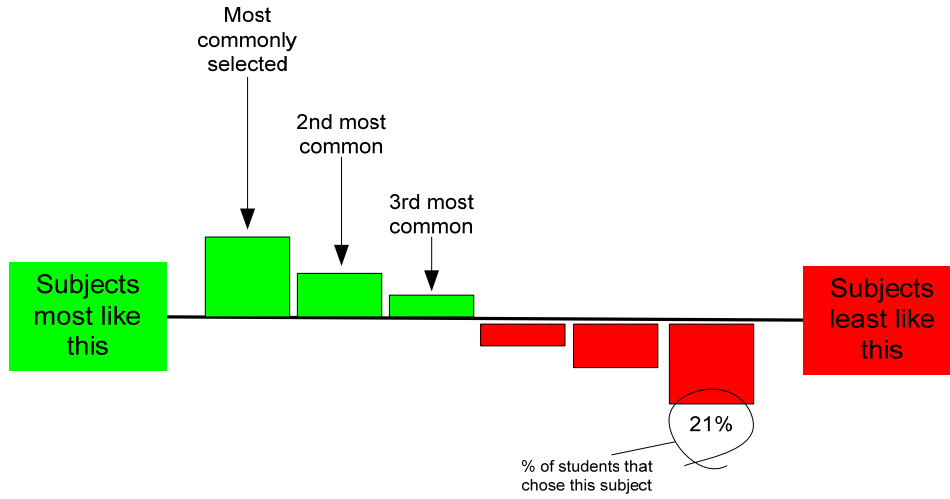


Figure 3. Subject preferences

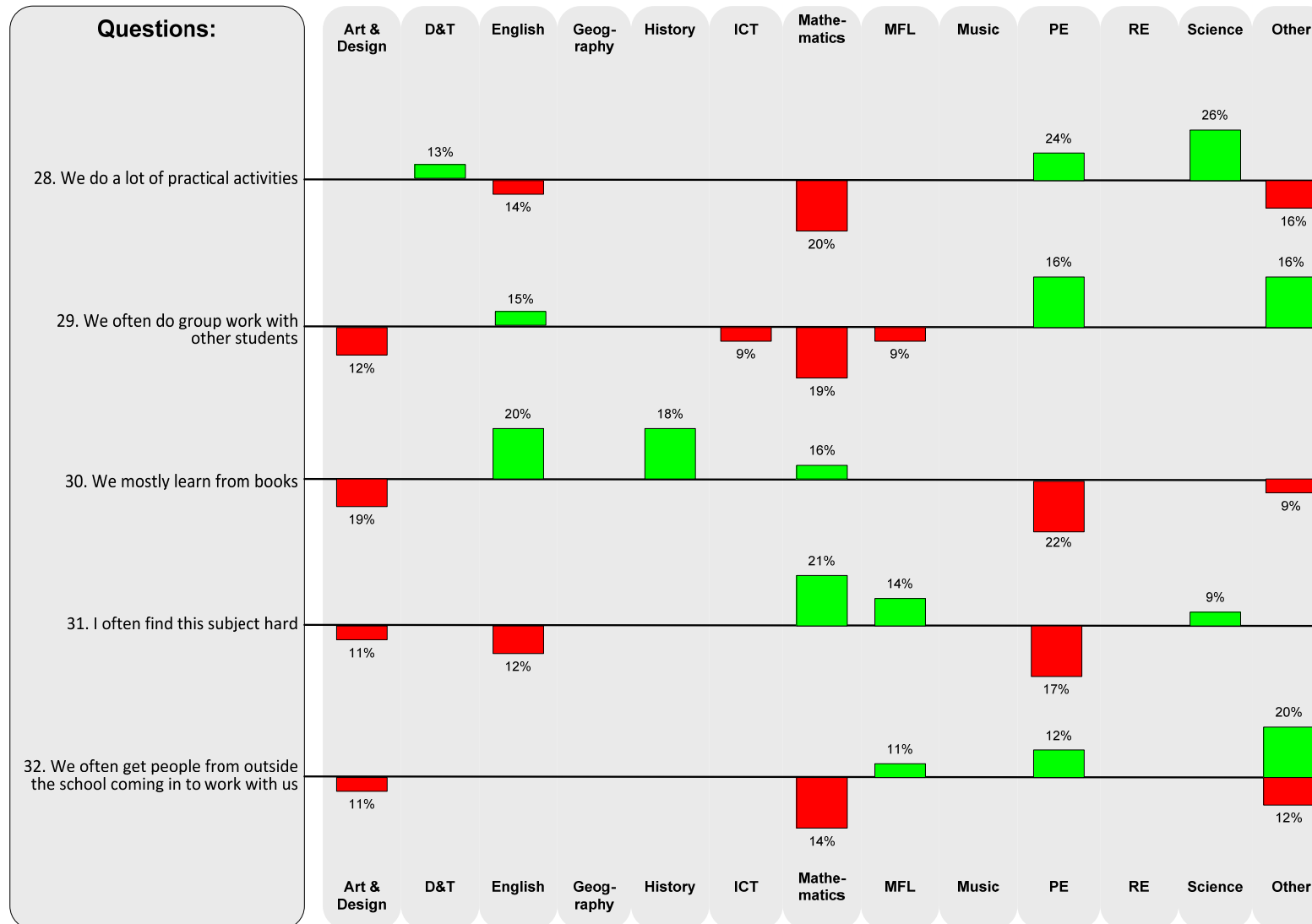


Figure 4. Subject preferences (Q28-Q32)



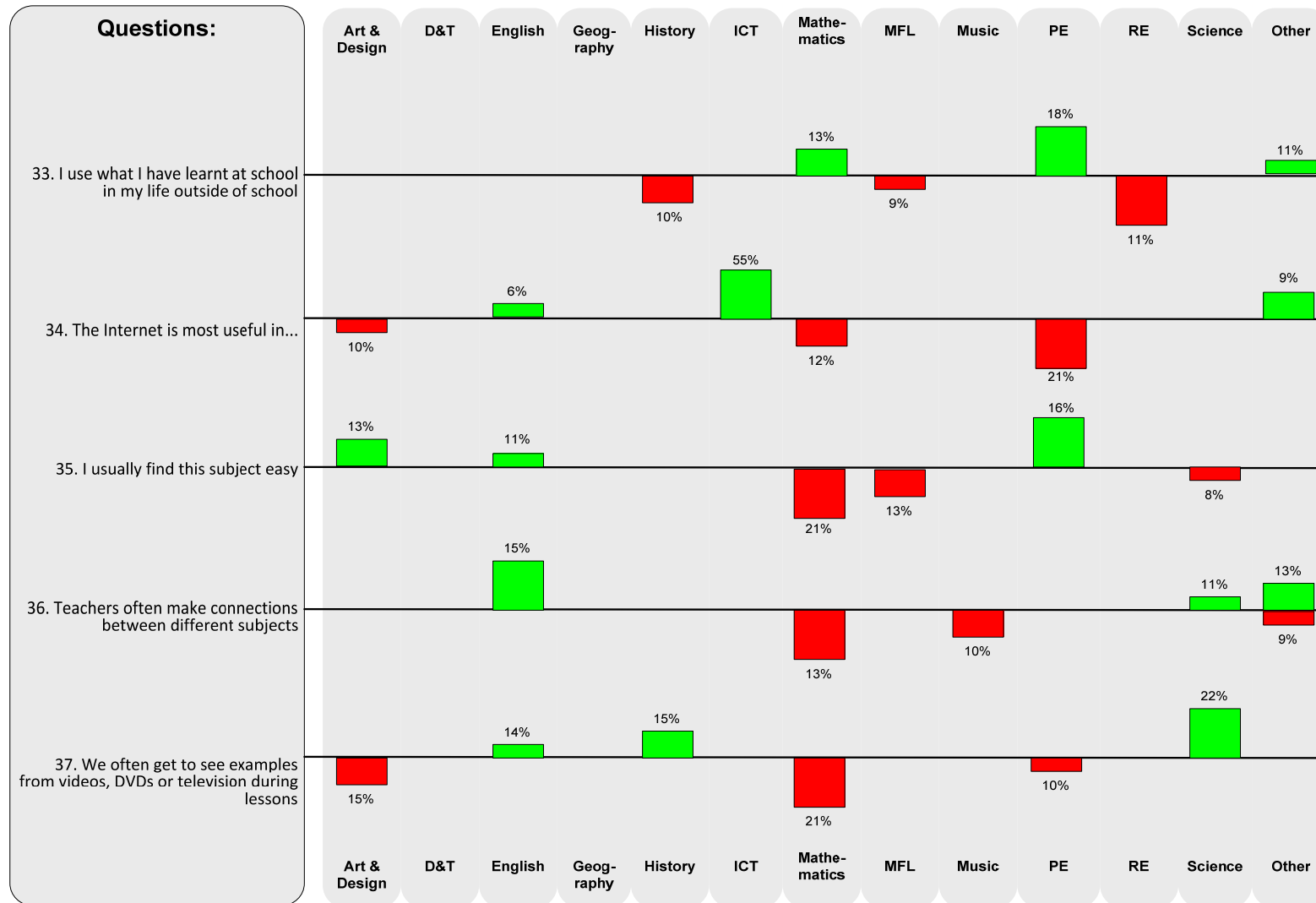


Figure 5. Subject preferences (Q33-Q37)



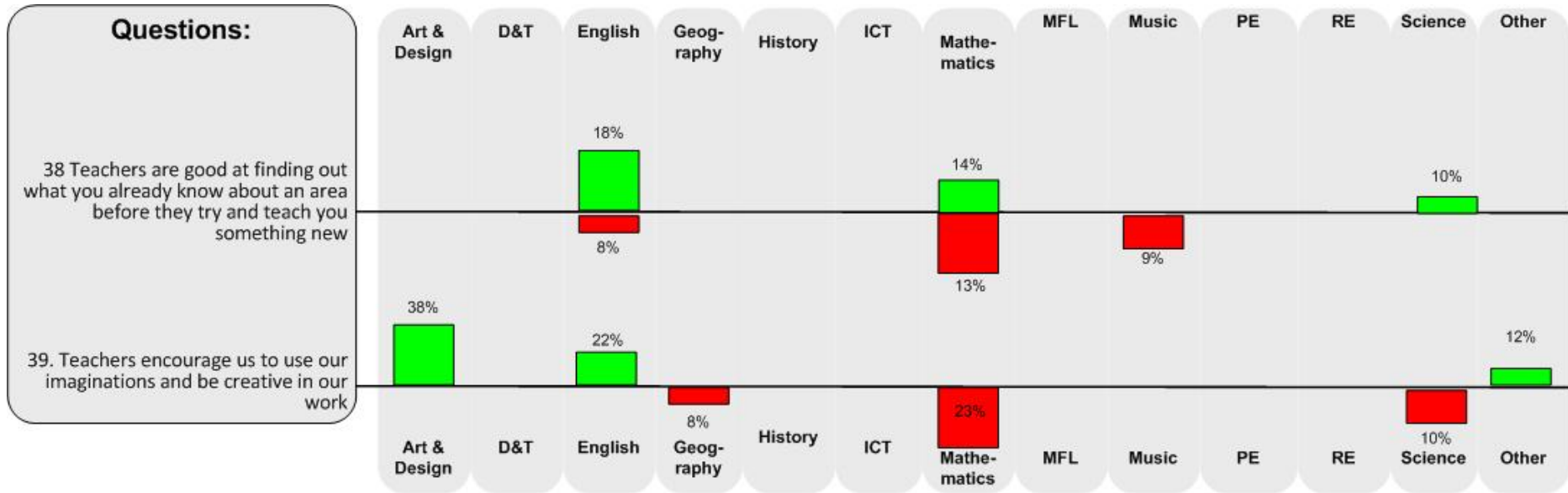


Figure 6. Subject preferences (Q38-Q39)



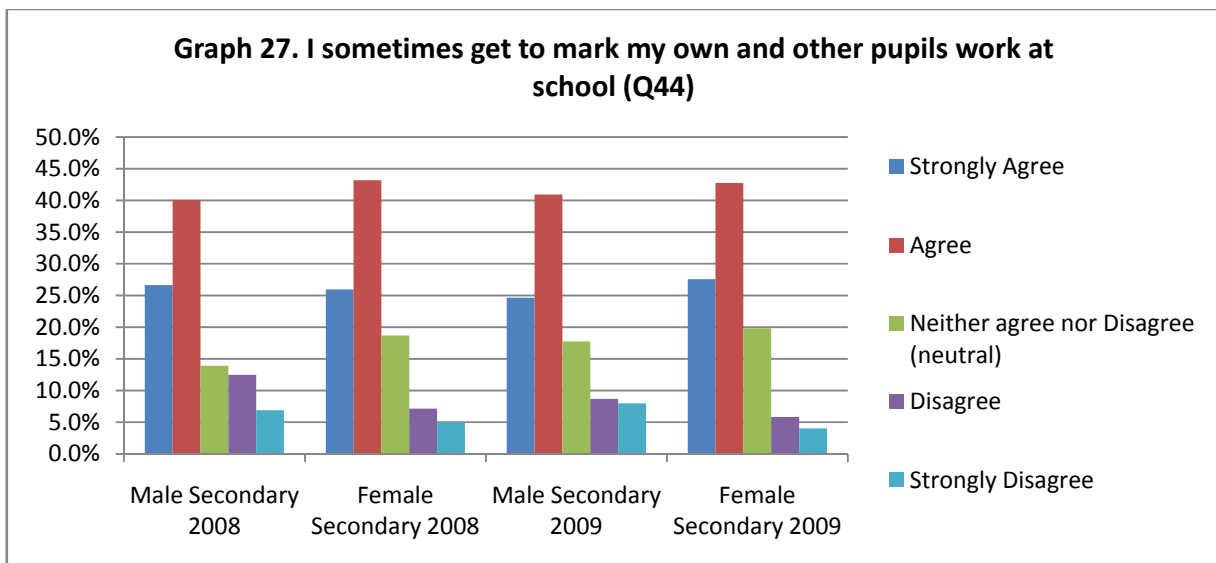
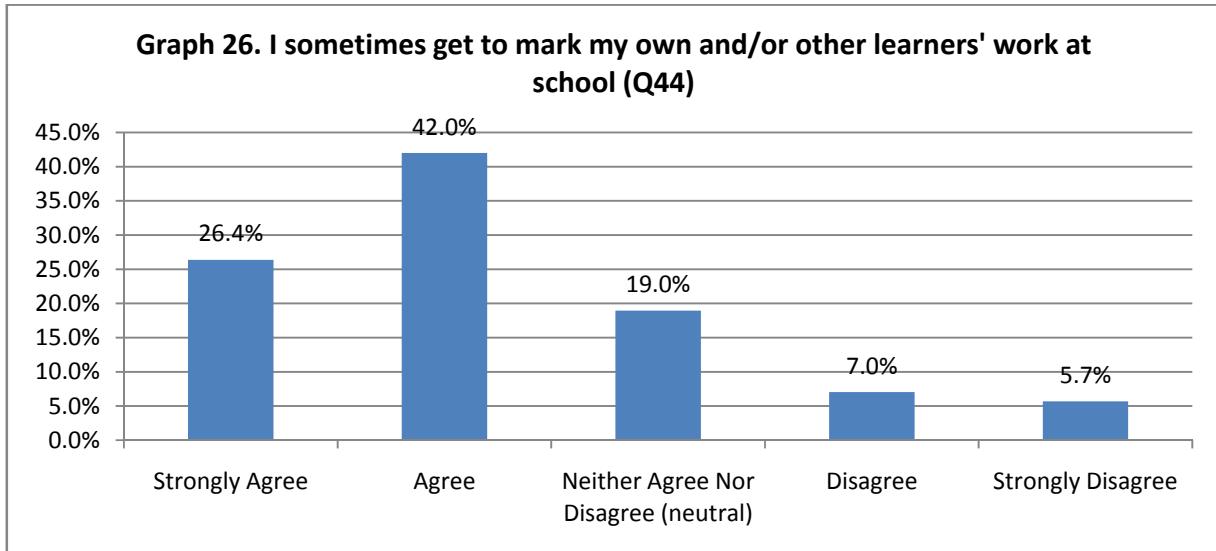
112. In the focus groups, learners viewed choice as a positive aspect to their lessons but gave limited examples of when they were given flexibility and choice. The most significant level of choice was described by a group of learners who have a lesson called 'enrichment' in which they discuss 'big questions' such as the nature of the universe.
113. Other examples of choice in lessons described by learners included being able to select which newspaper to write about in English, the topic for drawing in Art, and how to set out a booklet in PSHE. Freedom to choose who you work with was mentioned by one learner as important.
114. One group felt science could be improved by having more freedom to choose:
- 'Science would be more interesting if learners got to look up experiments themselves and ask the teacher if it's safe to carry them out.'
115. Learners in one focus group were unhappy about the lack of choice of which foreign language to learn:
- 'When you start in year 7 you are put in the x-side (Spanish) or the y-side (French), you don't have a choice which one.'
116. The same group described feeling very upset at being in the 'wrong' set and had strong views about how their school organised sets:
- 'In our school we have linked subjects, so if you moved down in one subject you have to move down in another. Me and x moved down in Spanish and had to move down in mathematics too. I'm comfortable in my Spanish class now, but was devastated to move down in mathematics.'
117. One group of year 7 learners said they felt they had more choice in primary school. Another group said they would like to have a wider range of subjects such as Japanese and Spanish in the schools.
118. When asked about which subjects they found of most practical use outside of school, learners in all the focus groups mentioned ICT as being used outside school. This was used for homework and general internet use. Two groups identified practical mathematics as being useful for example for checking change in shops. PE was mentioned as being useful particularly by the boys who played football. Two groups mentioned languages as being useful. One group discussed how citizenship was relevant for discussing issues arising outside of school, and music was described as useful if you played an instrument outside school.

Autonomy and influence

119. Questions about learner autonomy concerning teaching and learning showed strong differences depending on the issue examined. Two thirds of survey respondents said that they have the opportunity to mark their own or others' work and half (50%) reported that teachers ask them what they are finding difficult. Less than 15% said that they had a choice in how much homework they get.
120. Question 44 '*I sometimes get to mark my own and other learners work at school*' was statistically analysed for gender differences. The average value for boys and girls in both years was -1 (equivalent to 'agree'). There was a statistically significant difference in both the 2008 and 2009



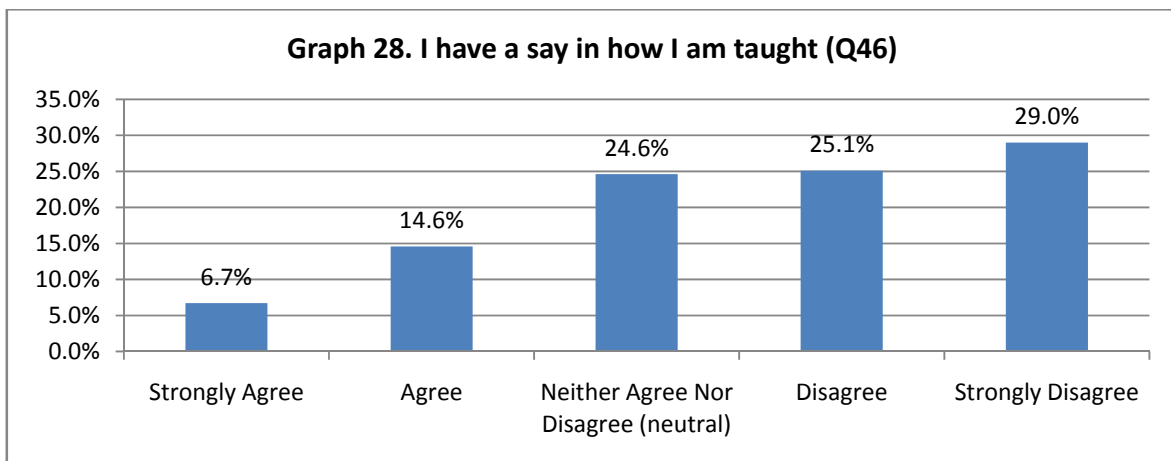
data. Girls were significantly more likely to say that they sometimes get to mark their own and/or other learners at school (2008:P=0.027; 2009:P=0.001).



	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	826	552	-1	-1
Girls	803	667	-1	-1
Total	1,629	1,219		

121. Question 44 was also tested for statistical differences for reported individual National Curriculum tests scores. Most learners chose the ‘agree’ option. The average mathematics and English National Curriculum test scores for learners choosing the ‘strongly disagree’ opinion was 9. The average mathematics and English National Curriculum tests score for all other survey opinions was 10. There was a significant difference between the average and range of survey opinion groups (P=0.022). Learners who ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement about marking their own and/or other learners’ work reported significantly lower National Curriculum tests scores than learners with a ‘neutral’ or ‘agree’ opinion.

122. Question 46 ‘I have a say in how I am taught’ was statistically analysed for ethnicity differences. The average value for White (British) learners was 1 (equivalent of disagree). The average value for ‘other ethnicity groups’ was 0 (equivalent of neutral). White British learners were significantly more likely to say that they don’t have a say in how they are taught at school (P=0.012).



123. Over three-quarters of the sample (78%) claimed that they had to be at school all the time during the day and just over half (54%) say they don’t have a say in how they are taught at school. 57% of learners said that teachers decide what they should learn about in lessons.



124. Responding to questions about what they would like in the future, learners generally – and not very surprisingly – expressed a preference for greater levels of choice and autonomy than they currently experience.

125. Over 70% of learners would like:

- to have a say in how they are taught
- to choose who they work with in lessons, and
- teachers to ask them about what they are finding difficult.

126. Question 54 '*In the future, I would like to choose who I work with in lessons*' was tested for gender statistical significance. The average value for boys and girls in both years was -2 (equivalent to strongly agree). There was a statistically significant difference in both the 2008 and 2009 data. Girls were significantly more likely to say that in the future, they would like to choose who to work with in lessons (2008: P= 0.003; 2009: P=0.021).

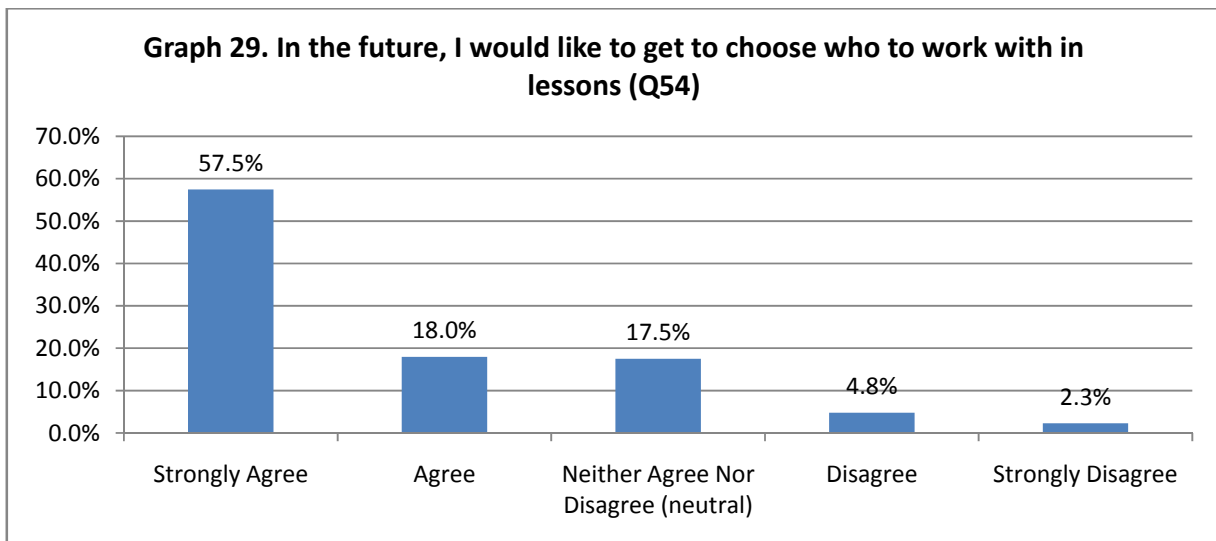




Table 16. Genders compared on Q54

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	826	552	-2	-2
Girls	803	667	-2	-2
Total	1,629	1,219		

127. Question 57 *'In the future I would like teachers to ask me about what I am finding difficult'* was also tested for gender statistical significance. The average value for boys and girls in 2008 was -1 (equivalent to 'agree') there was a difference in the average value for boys and girls in 2009, with boys averaging a score of -1 (equivalent to 'agree') and girls averaging a score of -2 (equivalent of 'strongly agree'). There was a statistical significant difference in both the 2008 and 2009 data. Girls were significantly more likely to say that in the future, they would like teachers to ask them about what they are finding difficult (2008: $P=0.013$; 2009: 0.000). The 2009 result was very highly significant ($P<0.001$).



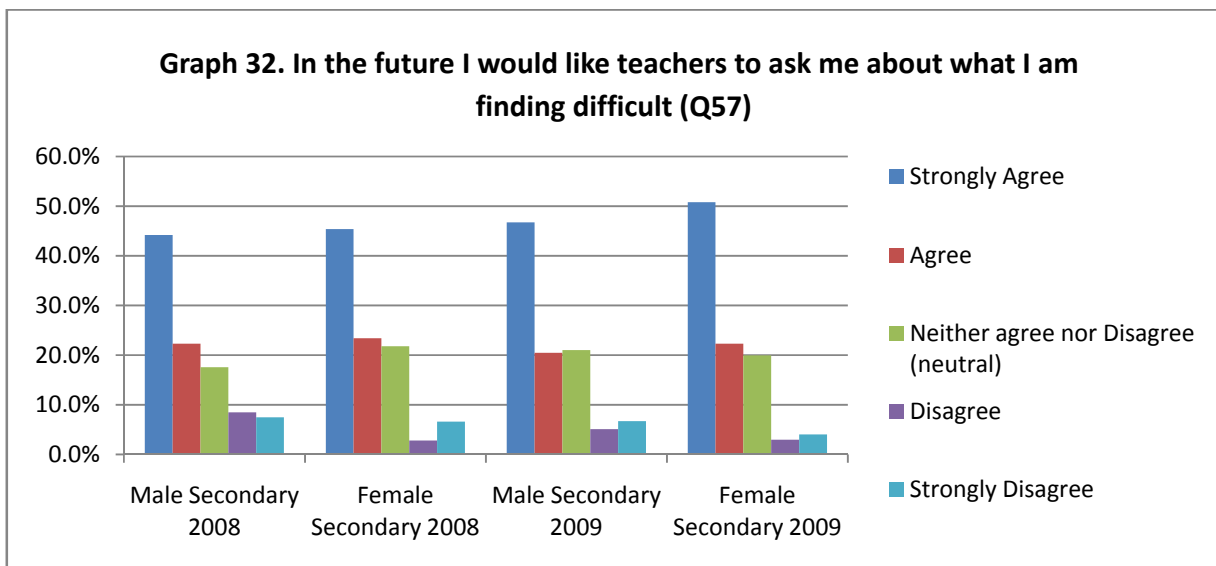
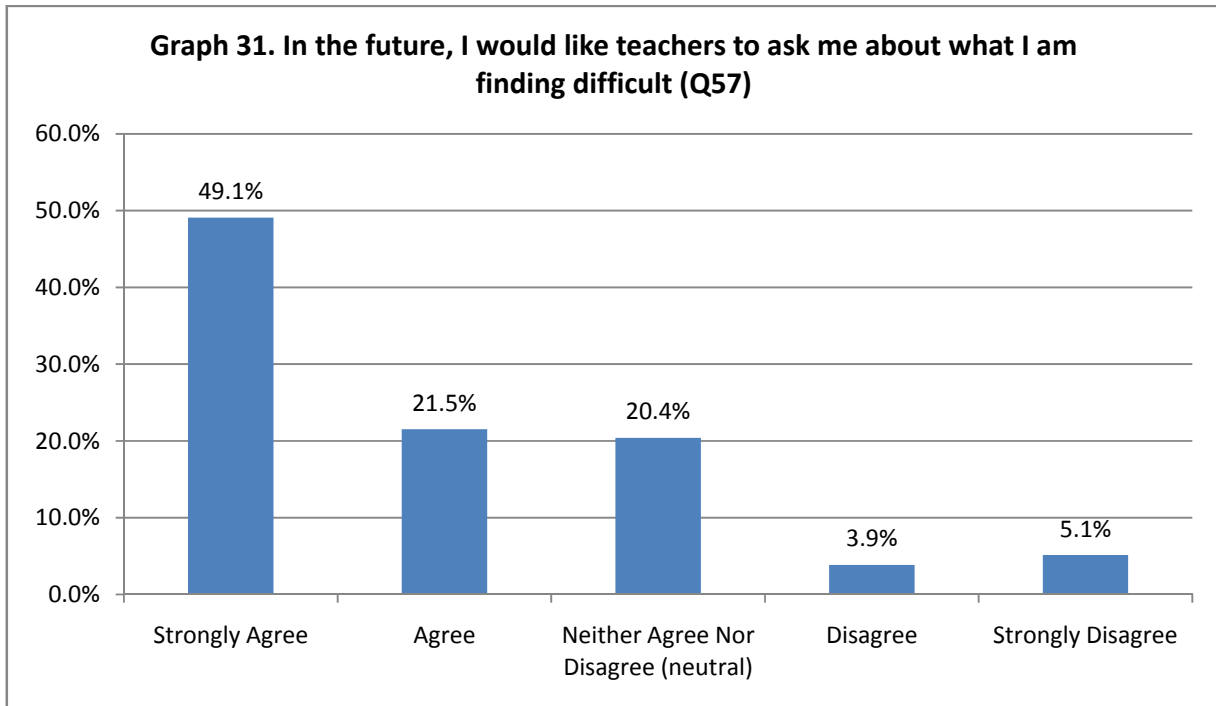


Table 17. Genders compared on Q57

	Sample size		Average (median) score	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Boys	826	552	-1	-1

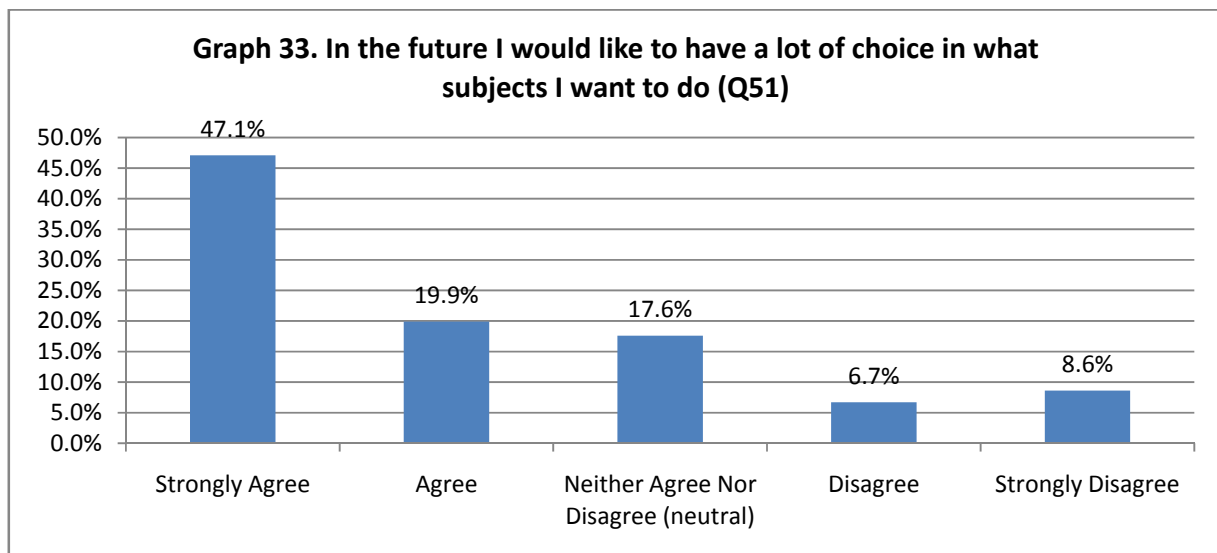


Girls	803	667	-1	-2
Total	1,629	1,219		

128. Nearly 70% of learners would like to:

- have a say in what they learn in lessons
- be able to choose to do some of their learning online
- have a lot of choice in which subjects they want to do, and
- have a say in how much homework they get.

129. Question 51 'In the future I would like to have a lot of choice of subjects in this school' was tested for differences according to gender in relation to reported individual National Curriculum test scores. Most learners chose the strongly agree option. There was no statistically significant difference between the average and range of survey opinion groups (P= 0.076).



130. Learners were least enthusiastic about the possibility of more self and peer marking with 43% being in favour of this while 31% were against. This could be because learners already experience this quite widely.

131. Nearly half of respondents (48%) suggested they would like to be able to choose to do some of their learning at home. Just over a quarter (26%) said that they would like to have to be in school all the time during the school day.

132. The table below illustrates that learners thought that mathematics was least likely to:

- allow them a say in how they are taught
- allow them a say in what topics they do in lessons
- have teachers ask them what they are finding difficult



- allow them to do some of their work online, and
- have a say in how they are tested

Mathematics was also the second least likely subject in which teachers provide learners with a lot of choice in what topics to cover in lessons, the option to do some of their learning at home, or a say in how much homework they get. Mathematics was also the most frequently cited subject in which teachers ask learners what they are finding difficult.

133. When asked in which subject learners could choose to do some of their learning online, ICT was the most frequently selected.

134. We repeat here the point made in paragraph 107 with regard to the wide use of the term 'other'. We are unsure as to whether 'other' does relate to another subject/s or whether the survey respondents missed the subject that they wanted to enter in the drop down menu and therefore they wrote it in the 'other' box. We think that there may have been a systematic error of the respondent failing to spot the subject in the extensive list we provided. The respondents then wrote in the 'other' box although generally these answers didn't appear to reveal many other subjects that we had failed to list.



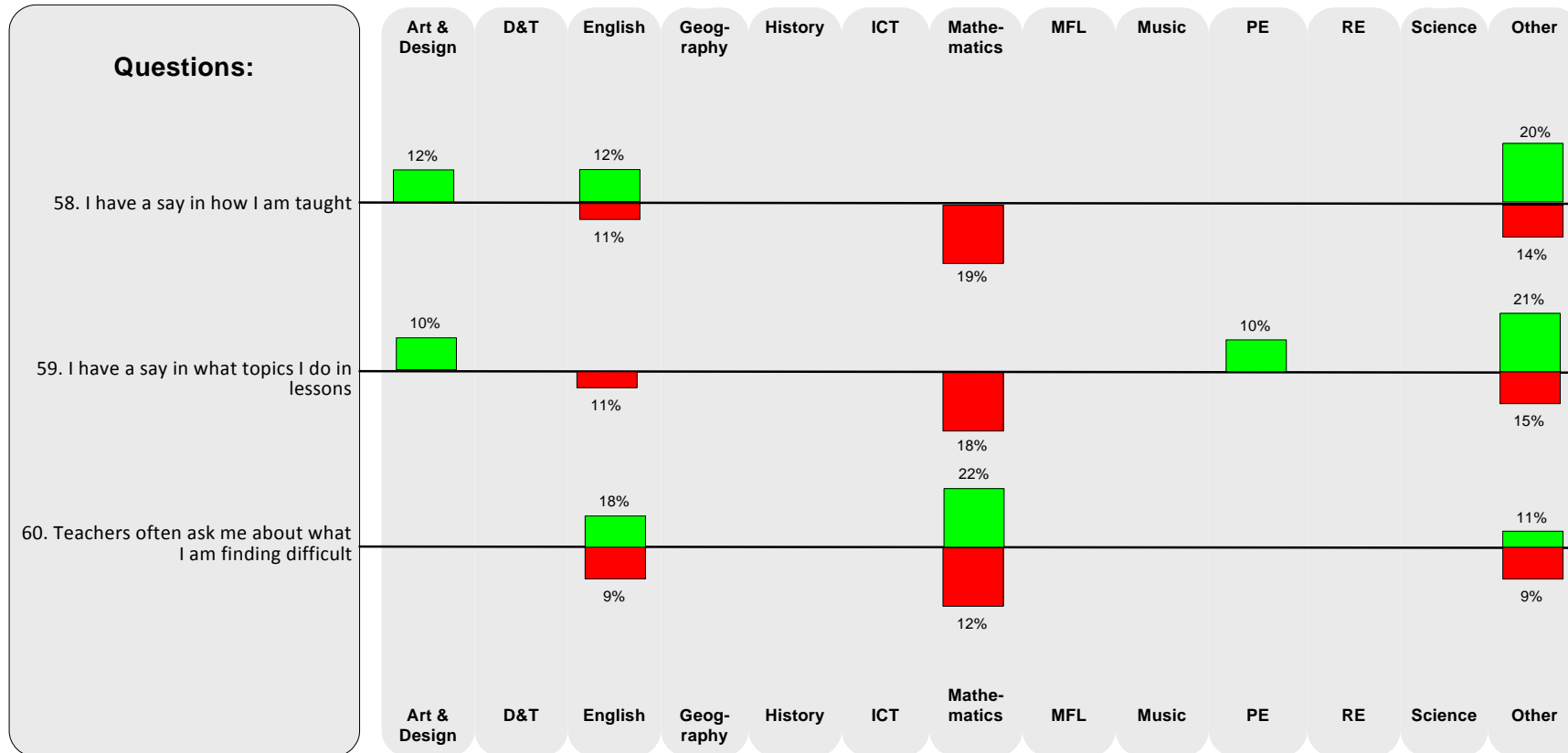


Figure 7. Subject preferences (Q58-Q60)



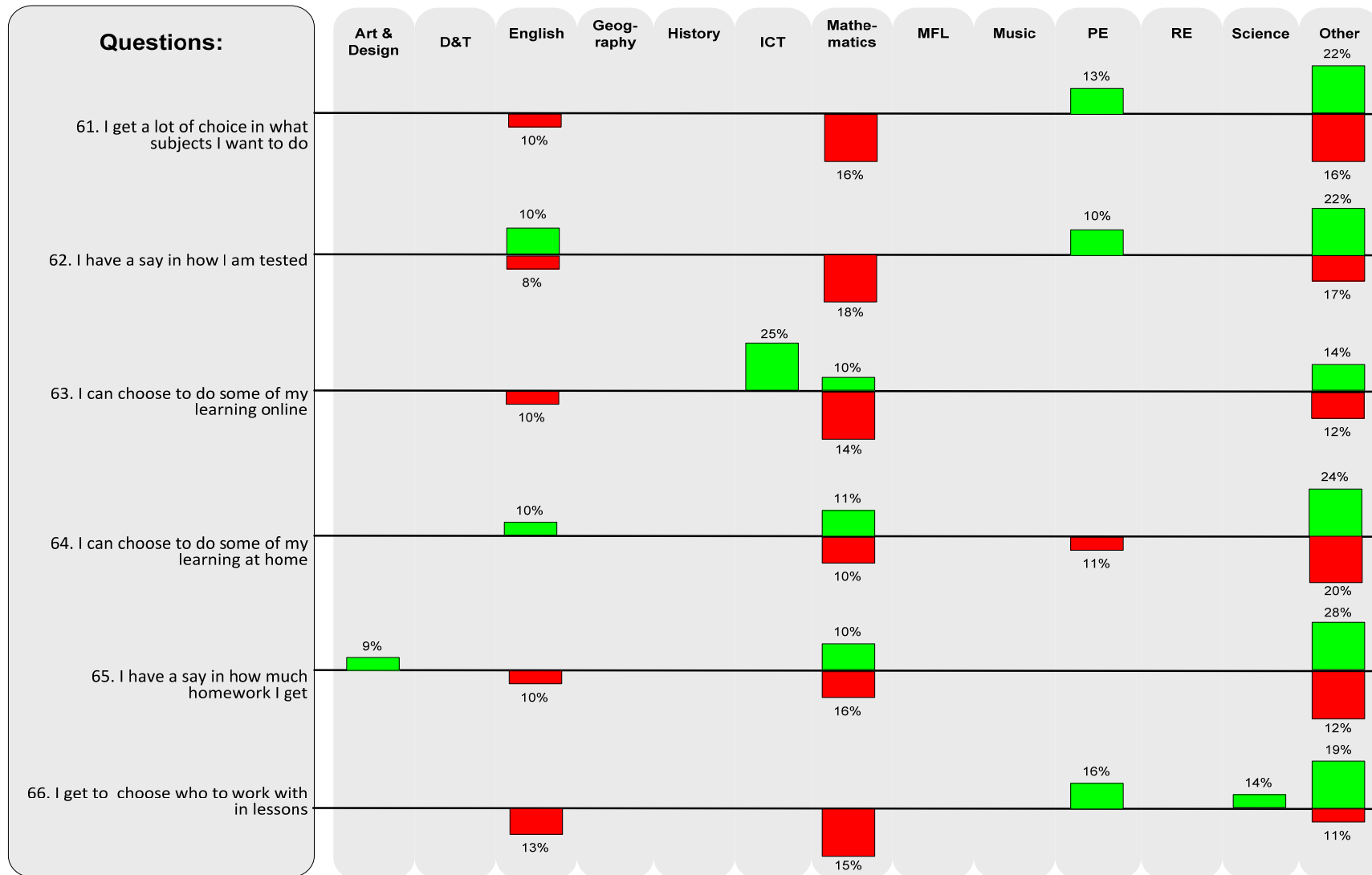


Figure 8. Subject preferences (Q61-Q66)



135. One question from this section was tested for statistical significance using school % for 5A*-C GCSE grades. The question used was:

- Q44- *'I sometimes get to mark my own and/or other learners work at school'*

136. There was no significant correlation between school performance and survey results ($P > 0.05$). There are five possible answers per question (strongly disagree- strongly agree) and most learners gave very similar answers. Therefore the averages between schools were incredibly similar. In surveys in the future, we will make methodological changes to strengthen this analysis.

Lifestyles and health

137. In the secondary sample, 67% of respondents reported being told about healthy eating with only 7% saying that they had not. Nearly 18% claimed that they had started eating more healthily because of what they had learned at school. In contrast, nearly 30% of learners claimed that they ate healthily anyway. 12% of learners claimed that some of their friends were eating more healthily because of what they have learnt at school. As with the primary cohort, this 'proxy' report about friends might be a more reliable indicator of behaviour than self report.

Do I eat healthily at school?	Disagree	Agree
I've never been told about healthy eating at school	92.9	7.1
I've been told about healthy eating at school	66.9	33.1
I have started eating more healthily because of what I have learnt at school	82.3	17.7
I already eat healthily	70.2	29.8
Some of my friends are eating more healthily because of what they have learnt at school	87.7	12.3

138. A learner in the focus group described the influence a food technology teacher had on her eating habits:

'School staff and teachers – they try and provide healthy things for us to eat at lunchtimes. Also the food technology teacher has taught us all about the vitamins and minerals that we need to be healthy so that is sometimes something that I think about.'

139. Other influences mentioned were friends and TV. However, both were described as having a contradictory influence.

'The TV especially television advertisements and food programmes that are on the cookery channels sometimes make me think about healthy eating as the recipes look really nice. Sometimes it is hard though as one minute they are advertising something healthy to eat or about weight loss or exercise and then next it's an advert on crisps/chocolate or something really unhealthy.'



‘You get peer pressure from friends to be fit and healthy on one hand but then they are quick enough to eat a bag of crisps or to get the bus instead of walking.’

140. A group of girls expressed concern about friends developing eating disorders:

‘We are friends as we spend a lot of time together in school and out. Sometimes we eat healthier without really thinking about it and sometimes it is nice to meet at McDonalds even though we know it isn’t healthy. On the subject of friends though, there is sometimes a worry that friends want to be too skinny and this can sometimes lead to anorexia and bulimia.’

141. Only one group mentioned that seeing overweight people had an influence on their thinking.

142. 43% of learners said that they have had a lot of information in their school about drugs with only 11% claiming their teachers don’t know anything about drugs. Just over two-fifths of learners said they were now less likely to take drugs because of what they have learnt at school, whilst 5% of learners said that some of their friends have stopped taking drugs because of what they have learnt at school.

Table 19. Drugs		
What has my school taught me about drugs?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don’t know anything about drugs	89.1	10.9
In my school we have had a lot of information about drugs.	56.3	43.7
I’m less likely to take drugs because of what I’ve learnt about them at school	59.5	40.5
Some of my friends have stopped taking drugs because of what they have learnt at school	95.0	5.0

143. Nearly half (49%) said that they have received a lot of information about alcohol in their school, with 13% claiming that their teachers didn’t know anything about alcohol. 32% said that they were less likely to drink because of what they have learnt at school and nearly 6% stated that some of their friends have stopped drinking alcohol because of what they have learnt at school.

Table 20. Alcohol		
What has my school taught me about alcohol?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don’t know anything about alcohol	86.6	13.4
In my school we have had a lot of information about alcohol	51.2	48.8
I’m less likely to drink alcohol because of what I’ve learnt about them at school	67.7	32.3
Some of my friends have stopped drinking alcohol because of what they have learnt at school	94.5	5.5



144. Nearly 64% of respondents reported that they received a lot of encouragement to take exercise in their school, although 11% claimed that teachers do not encourage them to take exercise. Just over a quarter of the learners said that some of their friends have started to do more exercise outside of school because of what they have learnt about it at school.

Table 21. Exercise		
What have I learnt about exercise?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don't encourage us to take exercise	89.5	10.5
In my school we have had a lot of encouragement to take exercise	36.1	63.9
Some of my friends have started to do more exercise outside of school because of what they have learnt about it at school	74.5	25.5

145. Learners in one focus group thought that teachers have an influence on exercise and several learners specifically mentioned PE teachers;

'The PE teacher has an effect on my attitude as he encourages me to be better at football.'

146. Nearly 38% of respondents said that they had learnt about stress and how to deal with it in their school. Just over 50% claimed that teachers don't talk to them about stress. Nearly 12% claimed that some of their friends are better able to deal with stress because of what they have learnt about it at school.

Table 22. Stress		
What have I learnt about stress?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don't talk to us about stress	49.6	50.4
In my school we have learnt about stress and how to deal with it	62.2	37.8
Some of my friends have started to deal better with stress because of what they have learnt about it at school	88.2	11.8

147. Just over half (53%) of the learners said that they had learnt a lot about bullying with 9% saying that their teachers don't know anything about bullying. Nearly 38% said they would know how to help other learners if they are being bullied.

Table 23. Bullying		
What have I learnt about bullying?	Disagree	Agree
Teachers don't know a thing about bullying	90.7	9.3
In my school we have learnt a lot about bullying	46.9	53.1
I know how to help other learners if they are being bullied	62.3	37.7

Motivational influences

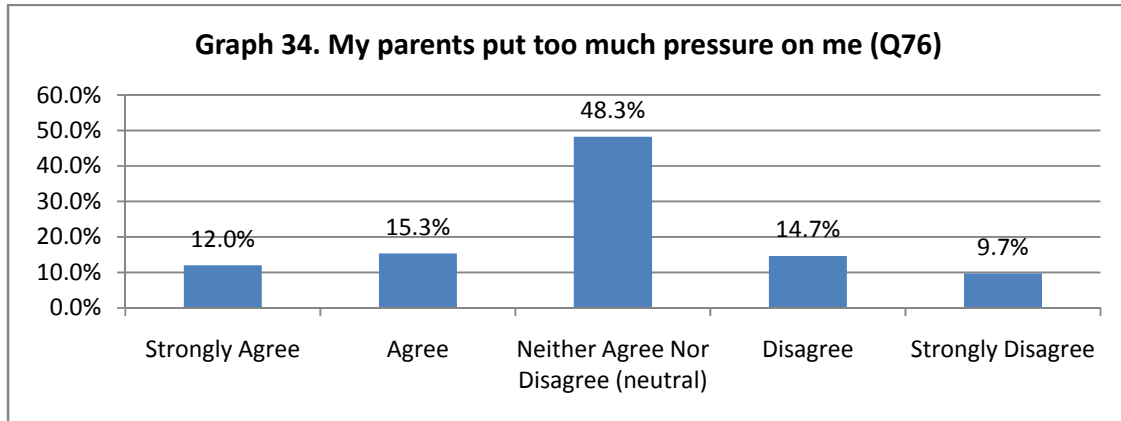
148. Learners experienced secondary school as more stressful and more demanding than primary school. Nearly 55% of secondary learners thought that teachers in secondary school expect more of them than their primary teachers in primary school. 42% of learners claimed that teachers put too much pressure on them, although nearly 18% thought that



teachers don't put enough pressure on them- just over two fifths (41%) expressed no strong views.

149. Over three-quarters (76%) claimed that parents and carers expected them to do well at school and 5% said that that parents and carers thought that they would not do well at school. When asked whether their parents and carers put too much pressure on them 27% said they applied too much pressure and 24% said they did not apply enough pressure. Nearly half (48%) had no strong view on whether their parents and carers apply too much pressure or not, which was similar to results from the 2008 survey.

150. Question 76 *'my parents and carers put too much pressure on me'* was statistically analysed for ethnicity differences. The average value for White (British) learners versus all 'other ethnicity groups' was 0 (equivalent of neutral). There was no significant difference between the responses of the two ethnicity groups (P=0.418).



151. Question 77, *'my parents expect me to do well at school'* was tested for statistical significance between primary and secondary responses in 2009. The average value for primary and secondary was -2 (equivalent to strongly agree). Although the averages were the same, there was a highly significant difference between primary and secondary, caused by differing variation around the average (P=0.0000). The mean values show the direction of the difference: primary = 1.4; secondary = 1.2, ie primary learners were more likely to experience parental expectations to do well at school.

Table 24. Genders compared on Q77

	Sample size	Average (median) score
Boys	1047	-2
Girls	1324	-2
Total	2371	



152. We probed this question further in the focus groups and asked learners to describe who was most likely to help them achieve their goals, learners were much more likely to identify family members and teachers. Parents and carers and teachers were described as providing similar roles:

‘Parents and carers, they motivate you and give you support.’

‘Parents and carers make sure you do your work.’

‘Teachers sort out problems and help you solve stuff.’

‘Teachers make you work.’

153. When asked about peer pressure, 49% claimed that their friends expected them to do well at school and 41% said that their friends wanted them to work hard at school – just over two-fifths (43%) expressed no strong view.

154. Question 78, ‘*my friends expect me to do well at school*’ was tested for statistical significance between primary and secondary responses in 2009. The average value for primary was -1 (equivalent to agree). The average value for secondary was 0 (equivalent to neutral). There was a highly significant difference between primary and secondary opinions ($P=0.0000$). Primary learners were more likely to agree that their friends expected them to do well at school in comparison with secondary learners.

Table 25. Genders compared on Q78

	Sample size	Average (median) score
Boys	1047	-1
Girls	1324	0
Total	2371	

155. In discussing who the people were who were likely to help them achieve their goals, learners in the focus groups identified a variety of significant others. Beyond family members and teachers, learners identified a range of celebrities, actors, sports people and musicians as being inspirational. One learner identified specific role models who were linked to her ambition to be an editor in a publishing house:

‘Authors such as Shakespeare, C S Lewis and J K Rowling inspire me to make me want to write books.’



156. Learners with sport ambitions mentioned coaches and also showed a degree of realism about their ambitions:

‘My football coach inspires me to become a footballer and if I can’t become a footballer then I will become either a coach or a referee so long as I get to be involved in the game.’

157. Some learners were very specific about what they wanted to do in the future, including becoming a palaeontologist or interior designer. However, these learners tended to find it difficult to identify who it might be who could help them move into these careers. They seemed to find the focus group discussion a useful opportunity to think about who they may go to for help in the future.

158. Question 80 ‘*what does my school do to make me learn*’ was a free text answer. These free text answers were then grouped into common themes and the themes assigned a one-word or short phrase descriptor. The larger and darker the word or phrase in the diagrams, the more often it was given as an answer by learners. Tables listing the themes and count data to support these illustrations are provided below. This diagram does not include themes that were mentioned by less than ten learners.

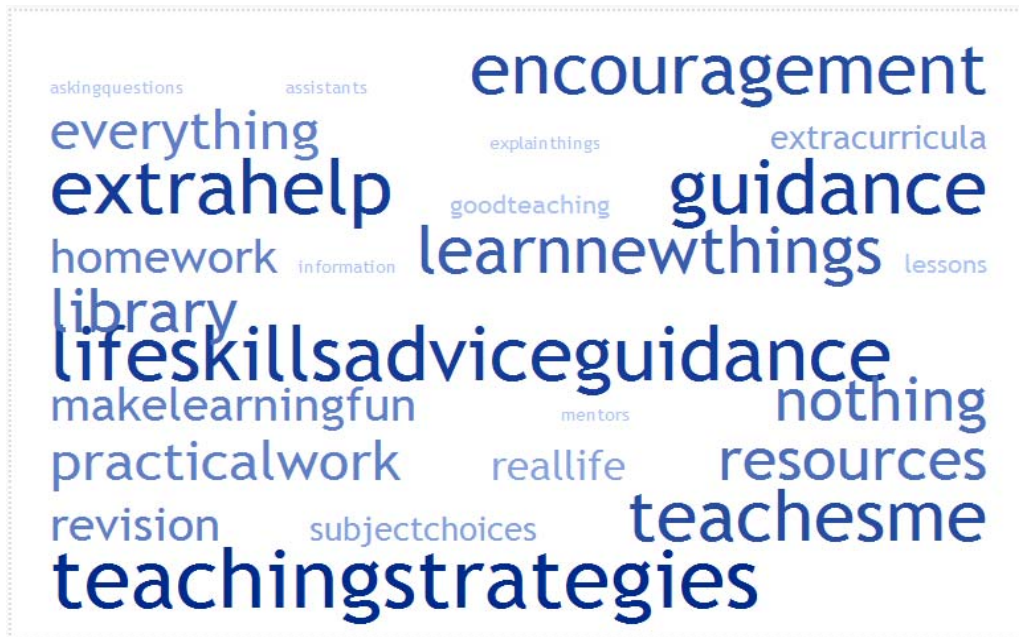


Figure 9. What does my school do to make me learn? (Q80)

Table 26. Responses to Q80 (Secondary)		
N=1075		
What could my school do to make me learn?	Number of responses	Proportion of responses (%)
Teaching strategies	129	12.0
Life skills, advice and guidance for the future	124	11.5
Extra help and classes	106	9.8



Teaches me	91	8.5
Encouragement	83	7.7
Help me learn new things	77	7.2
Library and resources	56	5.2
Nothing	51	4.7
Everything	41	3.8
Practical work	36	3.3
Revision	34	3.2
Homework	32	3.0
Make learning fun	31	2.9
Real life	23	2.1
Subject choices	21	2.0
Extra curricula activities and after school clubs	18	1.7
Lessons	16	1.5
Good teaching	14	1.3
Asking questions (when stuck)	12	1.1
Explain things	10	0.93
Teaching assistants and mentors	10	0.93
Information	10	0.93
Read and write	7	0.65
Don't know	6	0.56
Stuff	6	0.56
Mathematics and English	6	0.56
Lots of work	5	0.47
Erroneous	4	0.37
Fun activities	4	0.37
Friends	4	0.37
Right amount of work	3	0.28
Imagination & creativity	1	0.09
Discipline	1	0.09
Listens	1	0.09
Study Sessions	1	0.09
A lot	1	0.09

159. The three key themes i.e. where more than or near to 10% of respondents offered an answer were:

- different teaching strategies (129 respondents; 12% -)



- provision of life skills, advice / guidance for the future (124; 11.5%)
- extra help in lessons (106; 9.9%) said.

160. Comments for different teaching strategies included:

'I like it when teachers use different methods depending on what type of learning is best for us. I learn from reading books so I am taught how to pick the key information out of the book. Others are taught how to find information online'.

'My teachers make lessons fun and entertaining. Sometimes we do group work, sometimes we learn interactively, sometimes with power-points, sometimes quizzes'.

'Our French teacher makes it really easy to learn French by associating actions with words and making the lessons really cool'

161. Comments for life skills, advice and guidance for the future included:

'Advice, guidance and revision sessions where possible. Practice exam papers are readily available and teachers are always on hand to answer questions'.

'School helps me to learn skills I will use in the outside world'.

'School helps me to learn about jobs and money'.

162. Comments for extra help to learn included:

'My school gives out revision packs and runs after school revision lessons'.

'My teachers list websites to do with revision or studies. They also go through past exam papers'.

'School has different clubs after school, for example homework club and mathematics club'.

163. Other themes to emerge around this question from the responses of between over 5% and 10% were that teachers:

- teach me the way I like (8.5%)
- encourage me (7.7%)
- help me learn new things (7.2%); and
- have a well stocked library/ resources (5.2%).

164. Question 81 '*what could my school do to help me learn?*' was a free choice answer. Answers to this question were grouped into common themes, and the themes assigned a one-word or short phrase descriptor. The larger and darker the word or phrase in the diagrams, the more often it was given as an answer by learners. Tables listing the themes and count data to support these illustrations are provided below. This diagram does not include themes mentioned by less than ten learners.



More help with homework	1	0.1
More encouragement/support/pressure on learners	21	2.2
More group work	10	1.1
Less group work	1	0.1
Split classes into ability groups	2	0.2
More choice of subjects/learning matter	16	1.7
Ask what the learner is finding difficult	26	2.8
Find out what the learner already knows	5	0.5
Have some lessons outside	1	0.1
Learn about the outside world	27	2.9
Learn about life after school e.g. university/employment	8	0.9
More lessons	2	0.2
More time off	1	0.1
Shorter lessons	2	0.2
Longer lessons	2	0.2
Vary lesson length	2	0.2
Bring visitors into lessons	7	0.8
Choose own groups for group work	9	1.0
Mixed gender/ability groups	5	0.5
Use of presentation skills	2	0.2
“Teach/help me more”	48	5.2
Give feedback	6	0.7
Talk to learners more	5	0.5
Smaller class/group sizes	7	0.8
More revision time for exams	12	1.3
Less focus on exams	5	0.5
Focus on importance of revision	2	0.2
More tests	1	0.1
More notice for tests	1	0.1
Explain work more clearly	58	6.3
After school/lunchtime/break time classes/clubs	19	2.0
Set targets	3	0.3
Allow more time for tasks	12	1.3
More help for slower learners	4	0.4
More help for dyslexic learners	1	0.1
Work with friends	15	1.6
Work apart from friends	3	0.3



Economy and business	4	0.4
Bullying	4	0.4
Stress	2	0.2
Mathematics	9	1.0
Art	1	0.1
English	7	0.7
Music	2	0.2
Health/drugs/alcohol/smoking	5	0.5
More PE/sports	3	0.3
More help/helpers in lessons	15	1.6
More teachers	2	0.2
Different methods of teaching and learning	15	1.6
“Stop treating us like little children”	3	0.3
More supplies/resources/facilities	12	1.3
Have more of a say in teaching and learning	8	0.9
One on one teaching	14	1.5
Show examples	9	1.0
Prizes/rewards	2	0.2
More work	1	0.1
More difficult work	6	0.7
Easier work	2	0.2
Increased teacher subject knowledge	2	0.2
Teachers need to listen more	9	1.0
Teachers need to pay more attention	1	0.1
Better teachers	4	0.4
Teachers could answer more questions	2	0.2
Offer optional work on top of homework	3	0.3
More use of available resources	4	0.4
Make sure a topic is understood before moving on	3	0.3
Teach “more important things”	4	0.4
More project work	1	0.1
Respect learners’ opinions	3	0.3
Leave punishments until after the lesson	2	0.2
Extra work for more able learners	1	0.1
Leave learners to learn alone	5	0.5
Role play activities	1	0.1
Review what has been learned	4	0.4
Offer a range of learning activities	1	0.1



More challenging activities	1	0.1
Learning progression	1	0.1
Teach a greater range of subjects	4	0.4
Relate subjects more to the learner	2	0.2
More variety in lessons	1	0.1
Don't keep learners after school	1	0.1
Don't give too much information at once	1	0.1
More choice of homework	1	0.1
Go home at lunch	1	0.1
Go over the point more, until fully understood	1	0.1
Peer coaching	1	0.1
More independent learning	1	0.1
More flexibility	1	0.1
More reading	1	0.1
Less 'book learning'	1	0.1
More interaction	1	0.1
Break work into stages	1	0.1
"They could tell me how to apply plasters"	1	0.1

165. 111 learners (12.1%) thought that more practical/ interactive activities would help, 70 (7.6%) thought that making lessons more fun and interesting would help, 58 learners (6.3%) thought that explaining work more clearly would help and 48 (5.2%) said extra help in lessons . Comments about more practical activities included:

‘Do a little more practical work, so we can actually do what are learning about (if possible)’.

‘Do more practical things and more drama to help us understand our work’.

‘They could give us more interactive activities and give us more ideas to make our assessments better’.

166. Comments for more interesting lessons included:

‘They could make learning fun to help me remember what I have learnt’.

‘We deserve to have a bit of fun to encourage us to try our hardest to do good’.

‘Bring in more DVD's, let us go on the computers will make the lessons more fun. Bringing in visitors and doing more practical lessons, because then I learn more by doing and listening’.

167. Comments around the theme of explaining work included:



'Schools could help us more by explaining what I need to do in more detail'.

'Teachers should language that is easier to understand when explaining hard topics/work'.

'They could explain a bit more rather than getting frustrated with us if we don't understand. Like in R.E. if we don't get it they just get frustrated and say that we need to listen more, but we have been listening just don't understand!'

168. Comments about teaching and helping more included:

'They could help us on a one to one basis when we are stuck'.

'Teachers should find out what you find difficult and help you on that and help me to know in more detail what happens in exams and what you need to know'.

'They should get more helpers in lessons to help as my teacher can't be with lots of people at the same time, we have to wait and it gets boring'.

169. In all we identified 109 themes among learners' responses. Other themes emerging from responses of between 20 and 30 respondents were:

- less homework (24; 2.6%)
- more use of TV/DVD/videos (22; 2.4%)
- more use of ICT/internet (37; 4.0%)
- more field trips (29; 3.1%)
- more pressure/encouragement (21; 2.2%)
- ask what I know I will find difficult (26; 2.8%), and
- learn about the outside world (27; 2.9%).



Comparison of 2008 and 2009 data

170. This table brings together all questions for which an inter-year comparison was made. They were chosen because the result in 2008 or 2009 was interesting (i.e. either because it had policy significance, was outside the norm, or was at variance with the expected). Brief descriptions of the results are set out in the table.

Primary schools

Table 28. Comparison of Primary data		
Question	2008	2009
Question 11- Lessons are often too difficult for me	Average value for both ethnicity groups is neutral	Average value for both ethnicity groups is neutral No significant difference
Question 27- In the future, I would like teachers to be good at finding out what I already know about before they try and teach me something new	Average is 'agree' opinion for boys and 'strongly agree' for girls Significant difference Girls more likely to 'strongly agree'	Average is 'agree' opinion No significant difference Both sexes 'strongly agree'
Question 32- I sometimes get to mark my own and/or other learner's work at school	Average is 'agree' for boys and 'strongly agree' for girls Significant difference Girls more likely to say they get to mark work	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they get to mark work
Question 40- In the future, I would like to get to mark my own and/or other learner's work	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want to mark work	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want to mark work



Table 28. Comparison of Primary data

Question	2008	2009
Question 45- In the future, I would like teachers to ask me about what I am finding difficult	Average is 'strongly agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to 'strongly agree'	Average is 'strongly agree' opinion No significant difference Both sexes 'strongly agree'
Question 46- Healthy eating	Similar percentages recorded in 2008 and 2009	Similar percentages recorded in 2008 and 2009
Question 48- Dealing with stress	Significant difference Boys were more likely and girls were less likely to say that some of their friends have started to deal better with stress because of what they have learnt about it at school.	Significant difference Boys were more likely and girls were less likely to say that teachers didn't talk to them about stress.

Secondary schools

171. This table shows a summary of the questions that were chosen to be analysed by comparing the 2008 data and the 2009 data. These were mainly questions that were statistically significant in 2008 for the secondary school data set or, at first sight, appeared to indicate an interesting change. Therefore we wanted to retest them this year to see if they were still statistically significant or whether there was any change. Brief descriptions of the results are in the table.

Table 29. Comparison of Secondary data

Question	2008	2009
Question 12- Lessons are often too difficult for me	Average is a 'neutral' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say lessons are too difficult	Average is a 'neutral' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say lessons are too difficult
Question 13- I find lessons interesting and fun	Average for both ethnicity groups was 'neutral' No significant difference	Average for both ethnicity groups was 'neutral' No significant difference



Table 29. Comparison of Secondary data		
Question	2008	2009
Question 19- In the future, I would like to get people from outside the school coming in to work with us	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want people from outside to come in and work with them	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want people from outside to come in and work with them
Question 44- I sometimes get to mark my own and/or other learner's work at school	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they sometimes mark work	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they sometimes mark work
Question 54- In the future, I would like to get to choose who I work with in lessons	Average is 'strongly agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want to choose who they work with	Average is 'strongly agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want to choose who they work with
Question 57- In the future, I would like teachers to ask me about what I am finding difficult	Average is 'agree' opinion Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want teachers to ask about difficulties	Average is 'agree' for boys and 'strongly agree' for girls Significant difference Girls more likely to say they want teachers to ask about difficulties
Question 76- My parents put too much pressure on me	28% said parents applied too much pressure whilst 25% said no they didn't apply too much pressure	27% said parents applied too much pressure whilst 24% said no they didn't apply too much pressure
Question 77- My parents expect me to do well at school	73% claimed that parents and carers expected them to do well at school.	76% claimed that parents and carers expected them to do well at school.

Comparison of primary v secondary data - 2009



172. As with the previous section, this table brings together all questions for which an inter-phase comparison was made. They were chosen because the result in 2008 or 2009 was interesting (i.e. either because it had policy significance, was outside the norm, or was at variance with the expected). Brief descriptions of the results are set out in the table.

Question	Primary	Secondary
Question 51 (primary); 77 (secondary) - My parents expect me to do well at school	Average value is 'strongly agree' Primary learners were more likely to strongly agree	Average value is 'strongly agree' Variation around the average meaning that secondary school learners were slightly less likely to agree
Question 52 (primary); 78 (secondary)- My friends expect me to do well at school	Average value is 'agree' Primary learners were more likely to agree that their friends expected them to do well at school in comparison with secondary learners, who had a neutral opinion.	Average value is 'neutral' Primary learners were significantly more likely to agree that their friends expected them to do well at school in comparison with secondary learners, who had a neutral opinion.
Question 73- Teachers in primary school expected more of me than my teachers in secondary school		Secondary learners experienced secondary school as more stressful and more demanding than primary school. Secondary learners thought that teachers in secondary school expect more of them than teachers in primary school.



The sample and demographic data

173. As last year, our main target was secondary school learners and older primary school learners in years five and six. Our target was to get close to the number of responses we achieved in 2008, as this year we had a much shorter timescale to conduct the surveys. A total of 2380 (1333 secondary; 1047 primary) survey responses were received, compared to 2819 (1807 secondary; 1012 primary) in 2008. A total of 83 schools participated (43 primary; 40 secondary) compared with 66 schools (29 secondary; 37 primary) in 2008. Eight primary and eight secondary schools were included in both years' surveys.

174. Logistical and ethical considerations meant that we limited the focus groups to secondary learners only. We conducted five focus groups in total, one of which was with learners on the brink of expulsion.

The primary sample

175. We did not attempt to stratify the sample at the response stage, expecting to extract from the total a representative sub-set. In practice, when we tested the total primary sample for its match with the English School population, we found that it was very close in terms of gender. Our sample is similar to the national sample in terms of geographical location. However, we have a slightly larger number of schools (15.9%) that are town and fringe, which is less sparse than the national data-set (10.20%). We also have a slightly smaller number of schools in our sample that are 'urban >10K- less sparse' (63.64%) in comparison to the national dataset (68.92%).

176. The sample size in total for primary schools was 1047 with 887 learners reporting themselves as white ethnic origin and 160 learners reporting themselves as any other ethnic origin. It can be seen from the table below that these are relatively close to the national average, although we have slightly more learners reporting themselves as 'white' (84.7%) than the national average (79.2%). Therefore we had slightly less learners reporting 'any other ethnic origin' (15.3%) than the national average (20.8%).

177. In terms of deprivation, we have more schools with between 6% and 10% of free school meals (27.27%) than the national average (19.69%). We also have a larger number of schools with 51-55% of free school meals (4.55%) than the national average (1.40%).

178. We had a higher number of schools with 401-450 learners on roll (15.91%) compared with 6% nationally but we had a smaller group of schools with 101-150 number of learners on roll (4.55%) in comparison to the national data set (12.93%).

Table 31. Primary sample characteristics

Characteristic	Type	% nationally in primary schools	% in our primary sample
Rural/urban	Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling - less sparse	3.44%	2.27%
	Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling - sparse	0.55%	2.27%
	Town and Fringe - less sparse	10.20%	15.91%



Table 31. Primary sample characteristics

Characteristic	Type	% nationally in primary schools	% in our primary sample
	Town and Fringe - sparse	0.58%	0.00%
	Urban > 10k - less sparse	68.92%	63.64%
	Urban > 10k – sparse	0.15%	0.00%
	Village - less sparse	14.68%	15.91%
	Village – sparse	1.45%	0.00%
% of Free School Meals	0-5%	32.28%	29.55%
	6-10%	19.69%	27.27%
	11-15%	11.92%	11.36%
	16-20%	7.91%	6.82%
	21-25%	6.45%	11.36%
	26-30%	5.78%	2.27%
	31-35%	4.22%	4.55%
	36-40%	3.60%	2.27%
	41-45%	2.82%	0.00%
	46-50%	1.99%	0.00%
	51-55%	1.40%	4.55%
	56-60%	0.99%	0.00%
	61-65%	0.50%	0.00%
	66-70%	0.27%	0.00%
	71-75%	0.10%	0.00%
	76-80%	0.07%	0.00%
	81-85%	0.02%	0.00%
86-90%	0.00%	0.00%	
91-95%	0.00%	0.00%	
96-100%	0.00%	0.00%	
Gender	Boys	0.02%	0.00%
	Girls	0.02%	0.00%
	Mixed	99.96%	100.00%
Number of learners on roll (all ages)	0-50 (A)	3.98%	4.55%
	51-100 (B)	11.66%	11.36%
	101-150 (C)	12.93%	4.55%
	151-200 (D)	18.99%	13.64%
	201- 250 (E)	18.95%	18.18%
	251- 300 (F)	9.88%	9.09%
	301-350 (G)	7.01%	9.09%
	351-400 (H)	7.05%	6.82%
	401-450 (I)	6.00%	15.91%
	451-500 (J)	1.33%	4.55%



Table 31. Primary sample characteristics

Characteristic	Type	% nationally in primary schools	% in our primary sample
	501- 550 (K)	0.65%	2.27%
	551-600 (L)	0.63%	0.00%
	601-650 (M)	0.64%	0.00%
	651-700 (N)	0.15%	0.00%
	701- 750 (O)	0.04%	0.00%
	751- 800 (P)	0.02%	0.00%
	801- 850 (Q)	0.07%	0.00%
	851-900 (R)	0.01%	0.00%
Ethnic origin	White	79.2%	84.7%
	All other ethnic origins	20.8%	15.3%

The secondary sample

179. We did not attempt to stratify the sample at the response stage, expecting to extract from the total a representative sub-set. In practice, when we tested the total secondary sample for its match with the English School population, we found that it was very close in terms of gender and disadvantage.

180. The sample size in total for secondary schools is 1324 with 1030 learners reporting themselves as white ethnic origin and 294 learners reporting themselves as any other ethnicity origin. It can be seen from the table below that these are relatively close to the national average, although we have slightly less learners reporting themselves as ‘white’ (77.8%) than the national average (81.9%). Therefore we had slightly more learners reporting ‘any other ethnic origin’ (22.2%) than the national average (18.1%).

181. A discrepancy in the geographical location was that nationally 82% of schools are ‘urban > 10K- less sparse’, whereas in our sample we had more schools in this category (nearly 93%). In addition, nearly 18% of schools nationally have between 501- 750 learners on roll but we had a smaller number of schools with between 501- 750 learners (5%). However, we had a much bigger sample of schools with 1501-1750 learners on roll (nearly 13%) as the national average is nearly 2% of schools that have 1501-1750 learners on roll.

Table 32. Secondary sample characteristics

Characteristic	Type	% nationally in secondary schools	% in our secondary sample
Rural/urban	Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling - less sparse	1.68%	0.00%
	Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling - sparse	0.16%	0.00%
	Town and Fringe - less sparse	10.53%	7.50%
	Town and Fringe - sparse	1.49%	0.00%
	Urban > 10k - less sparse	82.43%	92.50%
	Urban > 10k - sparse	0.51%	0.00%



	Village - less sparse	2.85%	0.00%
	Village - sparse	0.35%	0.00%
% of Free School Meals	0-5%	27.43%	22.50%
	6-10%	27.43%	22.50%
	11-15%	14.84%	17.50%
	16-20%	9.42%	12.50%
	21-25%	6.95%	12.50%
	26-30%	4.50%	2.50%
	31-35%	2.73%	2.50%
	36-40%	2.63%	5.00%
	41-45%	1.36%	0.00%
	46-50%	0.67%	0.00%
	51-55%	0.86%	0.00%
	56-60%	0.44%	0.00%
	61-65%	0.22%	0.00%
	66-70%	0.16%	2.50%
	71-75%	0.16%	0.00%
	76-80%	0.00%	0.00%
	81-85%	0.00%	0.00%
	86-90%	0.00%	0.00%
	91-95%	0.00%	0.00%
	96-100%	0.00%	0.00%
Gender	Boys	5.36%	5.00%
	Girls	6.95%	10.00%
	Mixed	87.69%	85.00%
Number of learners on roll (all ages)	0-250 (A)	1.27%	2.50%
	251-500 (B)	8.15%	2.50%
	501-750 (C)	17.60%	5.00%
	751-1000 (D)	26.64%	30.00%
	1001-1250 (E)	22.42%	20.00%
	1251-1500 (F)	15.07%	17.50%
	1501-1750 (G)	1.87%	12.50%
	1751-2000 (H)	0.63%	5.00%
	2001-2250 (I)	0.13%	5.00%
	2250-2500 (J)	0.00%	0.00%
Ethnic Origin	White	81.9%	77.8%
	All other ethnic origins	18.1%	22.2%



Methodology

182. Each survey (primary and secondary) asked approximately 100 questions in four domains chosen to inform QCDA's priorities:

1. **challenge and inspiration:**
 - a. learners' current experience of their learning
 - b. what they would like in the future
2. **flexibility and choice:**
 - a. the characteristics of particular subject teaching
 - b. learner autonomy and influence over their learning
3. **learner lifestyles and health**
4. **motivational influences on learners.**

183. The primary survey had slightly fewer questions in the area of lifestyles and health. The survey was designed to:

- be quick and easy to complete (not more than 20 minutes)
- have questions which look for impressions, opinions and feelings
- have the fewest possible free text answers
- make extensive use of lists of possible answers (e.g. a list of subjects), and
- be delivered online.

184. A large proportion of the questions were posed with a 'slider scale', with learners choosing a value of either -2 (strongly agree), -1 (agree), 0 (neutral), 1 (disagree) or 2 (strongly disagree) to represent their opinion. This data was summarised using the median average, and the appropriate non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test for analysis.

185. To avoid systematic bias or the accidental imposition of a particular value position, some questions were 'reversed' e.g. with the 'good' or 'positive' answer being on the right of the range such as:



Figure 11. Slider scale

186. For some questions, learners chose either 'true' or 'false' to answer statements within a question. The counts of the total number of 'true' responses were then compared, e.g. between boys and girls, using a Chi-squared test.

187. For the difference between two sets (e.g. boys versus girls) to be statistically significant, the probability (P) value must be $P=0.05$ or less. This means 'there is a less than 1 in 20 chance that this result is due to chance alone.' A result of $P<0.01$ is significant, with $P<0.001$ highly significant.

188. Primary and secondary 2009 learner attainment scores were analysed against specific survey questions, using learners' individual mathematics and English National Curriculum



tests marks (where levels were provided by the learner). National Curriculum tests marks were translated into a numerical score. Grades 1a, b or c were given a score of '1'; 2a,b or c were given were given a score of '2'. English and mathematics scores were then added together to create an individual score, ranging from 2 to a maximum of 15. The average for all primary learners was 8.3 and for all secondary learners was 9.7. On the face of it, this is a small variance between phases and it might signify a problem in our data (i.e. students inaccurately reporting their predicted grades). Alternatively, they could accurately reflect the limited amount of progress learners make between primary and secondary phases (as examined in, for instance, What makes a successful transition from Primary to Secondary School?, DCSF-RB019 2008) as the survey respondents were predominantly years 5 and 6 in primary and year 7 secondary.

189. For analyses, where there were more than two predictor variables, pair-wise comparisons were carried out in Minitab (statistics package) in order to identify where significance lay between groups.
190. The same questions were analysed both for individual learner National Curriculum tests attainment, and % of 5A*-C grades including English and Mathematics in schools. For this reason the probability of getting a significant result was increased, and hence for these tests the P-Value was reduced to $P < 0.025$ before statistical significance was achieved.
191. For the ethnicity analysis, learners from two groups were compared: British white and ethnic groups not British white. Ethnicity analysis was either carried out using a Kruskal-Wallis test (for 'slider' questions) or a Chi-square test (for comparing between proportions agreeing with sub-question statements).
192. For the secondary school performance analyses, the effect of school performance was analysed for 32 schools by comparing the school's 2008 % of 5A*-C GCSE grades including mathematics and English against certain survey questions. Individual school performance ranged from 18% to 76%.
193. The following nine 'slider scale' questions were identified as relevant to analyse against school performance data:
- Q3 - *'teachers are good at finding out what I already know about'*
 - Q4 - *'teachers are good at helping me to understand what I need to know and what I need to be able to do'*
 - Q5 - *'I usually help solve problems in group work'*
 - Q6 - *'teachers often help us to think about the way we learn before we do things'*
 - Q12 - *'Lessons are often too difficult for me'*
 - Q13 - *'I find lessons interesting and fun'*
 - Q16 - *'teachers encourage us to use our imaginations and be creative in our work'*
 - Q21- *'in the future, I would like teachers to make connections between different subjects', and*
 - Q44 - *'I sometimes get to mark my own and/or other learners work at school'.*
194. In order to provide more variety between the five data points, answers to these nine questions were summed for each learner before being averaged across each school. The



ranked average survey scores per school were then compared with school performance data using the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient.

195. We have not tested all questions for statistical significance as there would be a higher possibility that we would find significance due to chance alone. We have therefore chosen aspects from last year that showed statistical significance to test this year.
196. The five focus groups were designed to provide deeper exploration of the issues addressed in and arising from the survey. Specifically, they canvassed learners' views on how teachers and schools could:
- increase the level of challenge and inspiration within learners' learning experiences;
 - increase the degree of flexibility and choice that learners encounter, and
 - enable learners to think and learn about ways of enhancing their physical, emotional and spiritual well being.
197. In addition we took the opportunity of the focus groups to explore in more depth what learners felt were the aspects of their school learning relevant to life outside school.
198. The focus groups were carried out around the country and included 32 year 7 children and 2 year 8 children. In addition 15 year 10 learners participated who were accessing an alternative curriculum because they were on the brink of expulsion.

