



12 Feb 2021

Dear Parents and Students,

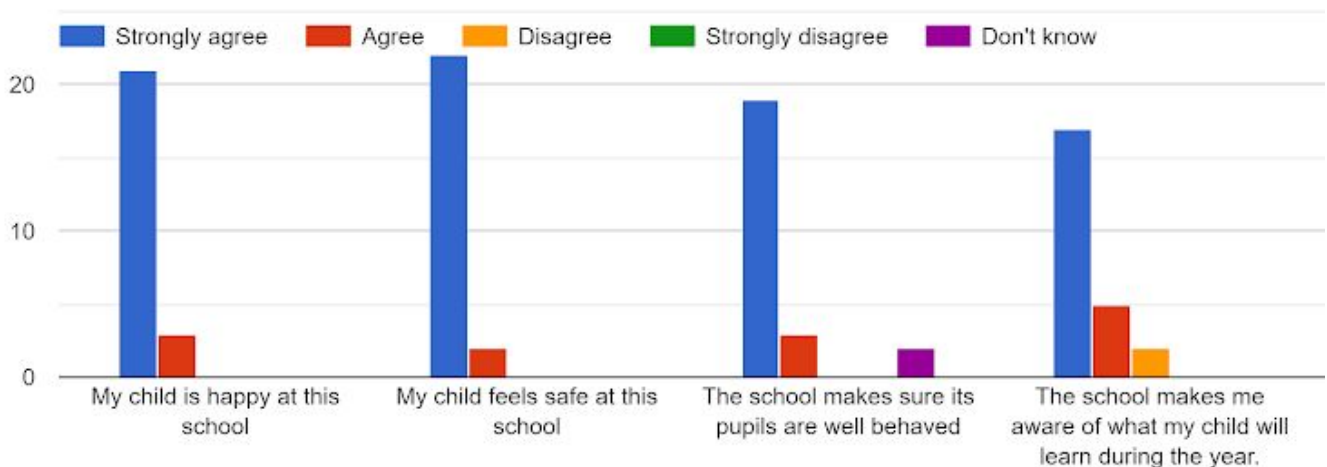
This month our newsletter takes a different form. I am sharing with you the results of the parent and student feedback survey that many people were kind enough to complete recently. I have added in some comments about how we have interpreted the feedback and how we plan to adjust our approach in response.

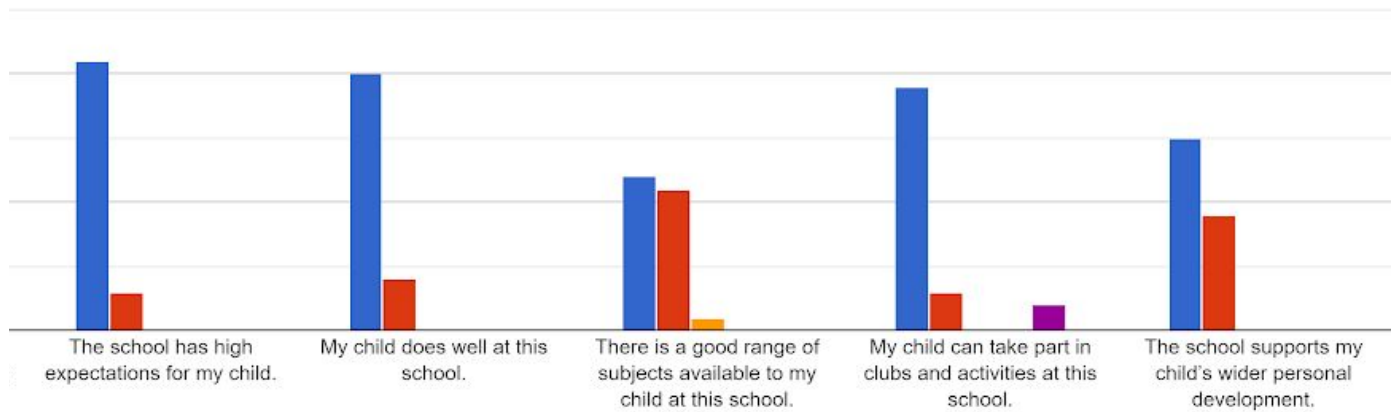
I went through this feedback with students this morning and also discussed with them what sort of activities we'd like them to be doing over half term - which I explain in [this video](#).

Parental Feedback

Based on 24 responses to our [google form](#) between 29/1/21 and 9/2/21

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement about ULMaS?

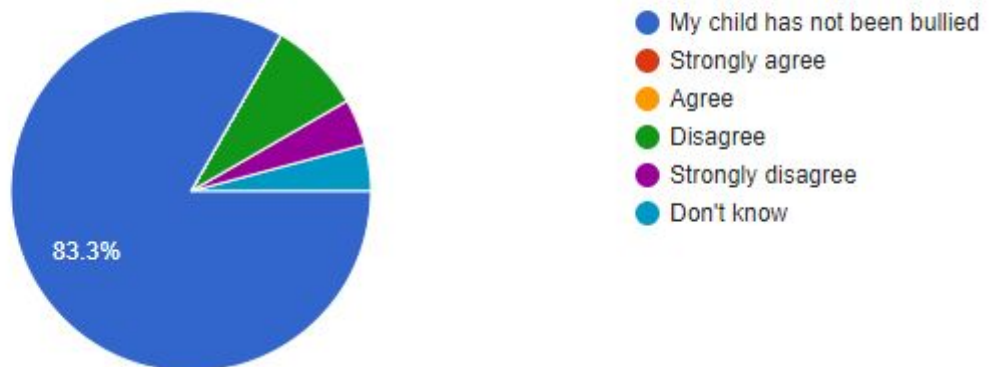




We're greatly for the very positive responses to these questions and note that there may be some room for us to improve the communication about what we teach students and how we go about it. We hope to improve this through the weekly vlogs that we publish on our [YouTube channel](#) and we encourage parents and students to subscribe to that channel. We also now plan to run an information evening for parents next September in order to enable everyone to hear more about our curriculum, ask questions and meet our students and staff.

My child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively.

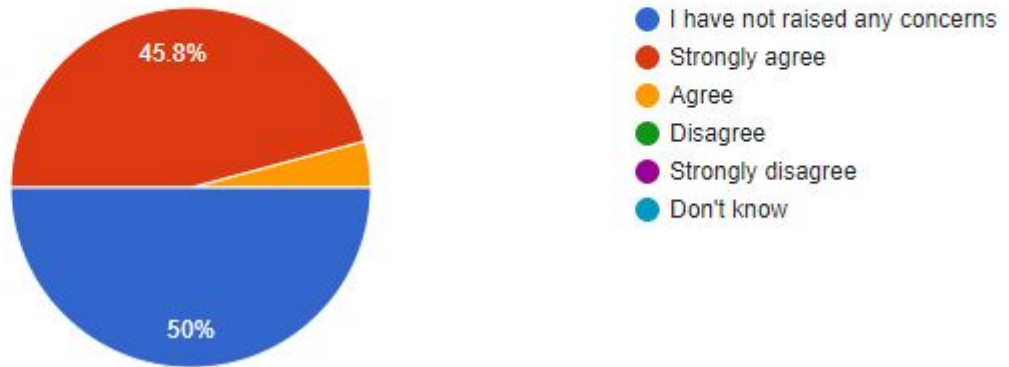
24 responses



We were a little surprised that the answers here were not 100% "My child has not been bullied", so I checked with students this morning and encouraged them to contact me or Dave (or any other member of staff) if they ever felt unhappy, socially excluded or bullied in any way at all. We're not aware of any bullying incidents since September but I hope that parents feel they can approach me or any of my colleagues if they ever worry that their child might be unhappy in school. I think that the question is worded a little unclearly and that respondents meant that they disagreed with the idea that a child would ever be bullied at this school: I certainly hope that is how we all feel, but we do not wish to ever be complacent about this.

When I have raised concerns with the concerns with the school they have been dealt with properly

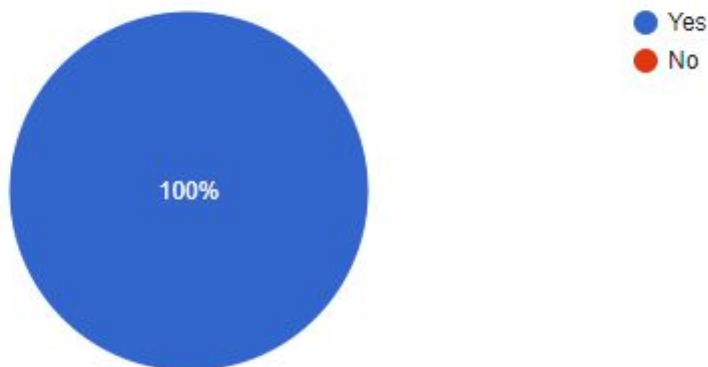
24 responses



We're grateful for this positive feedback. As I've said in previous newsletters: do contact me if you ever need to. If it should ever be the case that we do not handle things well then you will find our complaints policy [here](#), and I would encourage you to use it.

I would recommend this school to another parent

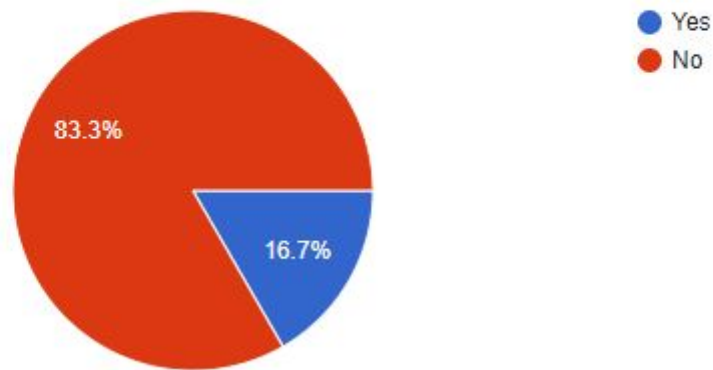
24 responses



This is wonderful for us to read: thank you.

Does your child have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)?

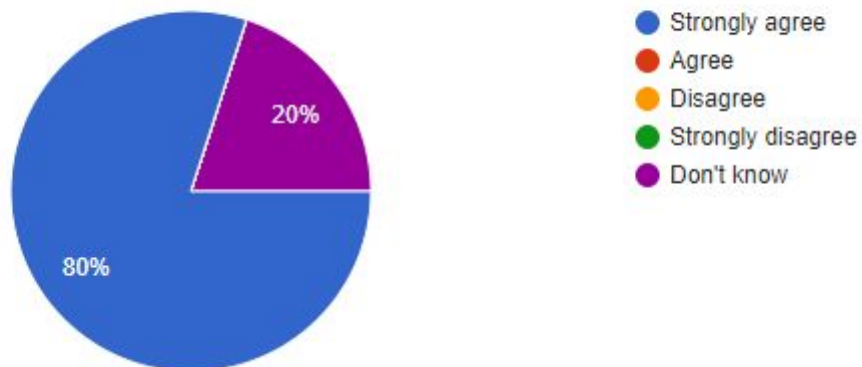
24 responses



I made a slight error with the form here and those answering “no” should have been directed to the next section - apologies! I fixed this a few days ago.

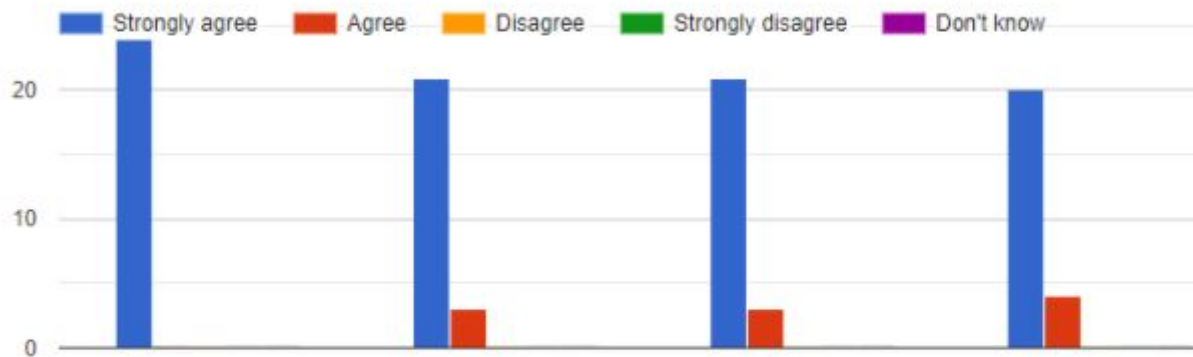
My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed.

5 responses



All parents of students with SEND were strongly in agreement with the statement (the “don't knows” were a result of my error setting up the form) We're very glad to hear this and will continue to do our best to be as inclusive as possible of students with SEND and enable them to meet the same high level of performance as every other student.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



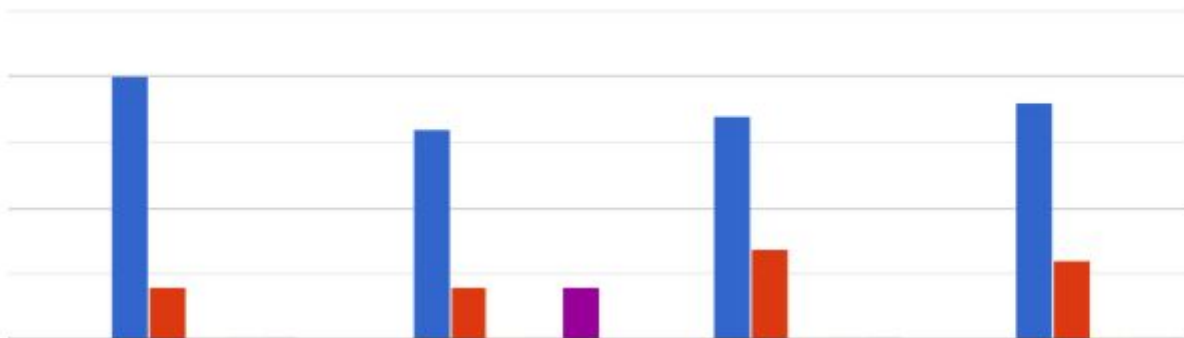
The school's curriculum encourages the students to think deeply and understand properly.

Students at this school get valuable opportunities that they would probably not get elsewhere.

The teachers at this school are academic experts.

Students at this school are given excellent preparation for STEM degree courses.

The first part of the feedback form was based on the Ofsted ParentView questionnaire. This section is made up of our own questions which are designed to measure whether we are reaching our specialist aims as a maths school. We're delighted with this very positive response: thank you.

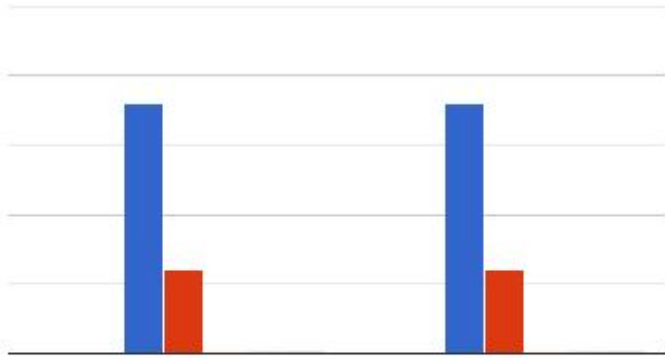


Students at this school are given an excellent preparation for STEM careers.

This school is unusual in the extent to which students support each others learning.

My child's motivation for STEM has grown since they became involved with the school's work

The school delivers an education which goes far beyond the A-Level courses it delivers.



I feel confident my child will be in a strong position to apply for competitive STEM degree courses.

The school provides excellent pastoral care to maximise the wellbeing of students.

How would you rate the school's provision of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?

24 responses



We're very glad that parents are happy with our efforts here. We'd like to acknowledge that, compared to almost every other school in the country, we have some unique advantages that make it much easier for us to deliver online education. We feel a great deal of respect for our colleagues in other schools who are managing to deliver an excellent remote education to their students without the many advantages that we have.

Is there anything else that you would like us to know? This form is anonymous, so if you would like a response to your comments then please email damian.haigh@liverpoolmathsschool.org rather than recording them here.

3 responses

Very satisfied with the school and everything they do. Been excellent for our boys.

Support, assistance, ambition and opportunity are all given in abundance at ULMas. Thank you for everything.

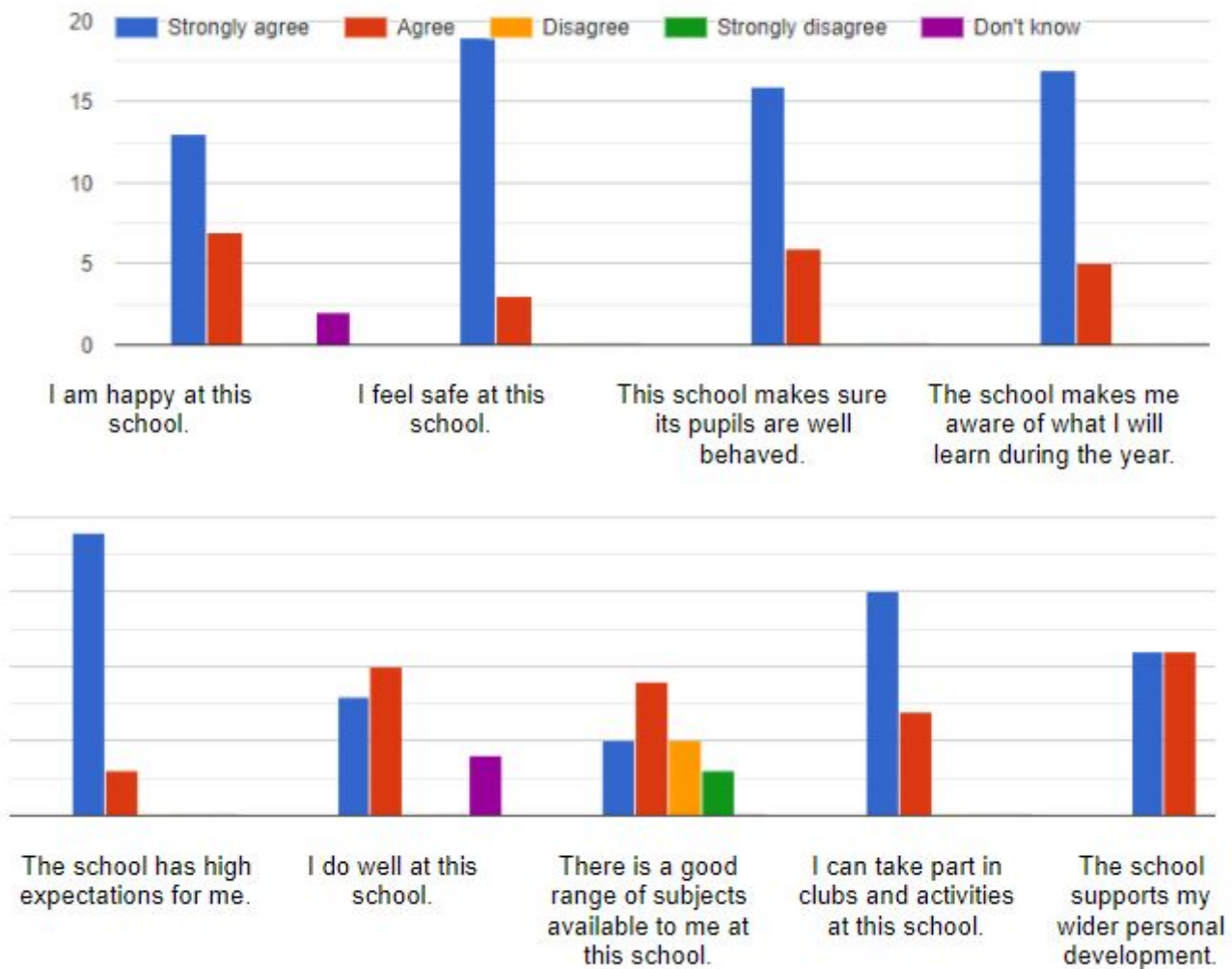
We are very impressed with how the college has maintained high standards of teaching throughout Covid 19 ensured challenging and dynamic teaching continues. My worry is that with pupils working remotely it is easy to overwhelm them with information and expectations, resulting in them losing some confidence in themselves and feeling pressured. I know they have regular pastoral time to discuss issues but some might feel they are failing if they admit they are finding the pace too much, possibly enough is covered throughout the 6/7 hours in a taught day and don't require homework, leaving them some relaxation time at night.

We're grateful for these comments and agree that it is easy for students to become overwhelmed at home without the support of peers and the sense of solidarity that comes from studying difficult topics alongside others. Our teaching time is 5 hours per day and we expect 2 hours homework each evening, so a 7 hour day in total. We know that after a day of working online and alone, returning to your desk to do 2 more hours of study is difficult, and it is quite right that students will sometimes make the sensible choice to spend social time with their families instead. However, we also recognise the importance of spending a significant amount of time working on tasks without direct support, and the need to maintain a homework habit even in the current difficult circumstances. Where students are struggling with this we are very keen to meet with them one to one to discuss those difficulties and find ways to address them and ensure that students are as happy and positive as they can reasonably be in the circumstances. Parents with a concern are welcome to give us a "tip-off" that we may need to intervene - we'd much rather know so that we can try to help.

Student Feedback

Students were also asked similar questions to parents. 22 responded.

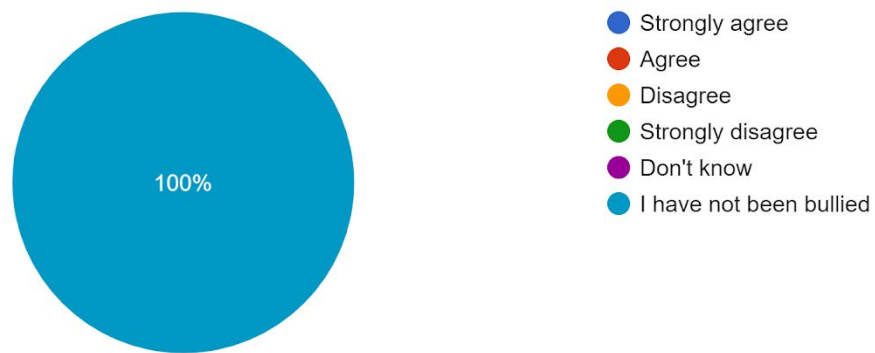
How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement about ULMaS?



Again, we're very grateful for these positive responses. We think that the question about a "good range of subjects" doesn't apply particularly well to a maths school. When I discussed it with students this morning I discovered there had been a variety of interpretations of the question - some had considered the range of clubs and PPEP/ AMP topics we cover and so responded very positively whereas others had considered that the school's curriculum would probably not meet the needs of their friends now studying at college, which is fair enough. Of course, we're always happy for suggestions about things we should add in to our curriculum and we're particularly interested to know whether people think we should offer Chemistry A-Level as an option instead of Computer Science or Physics at some point in the future.

I have been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively

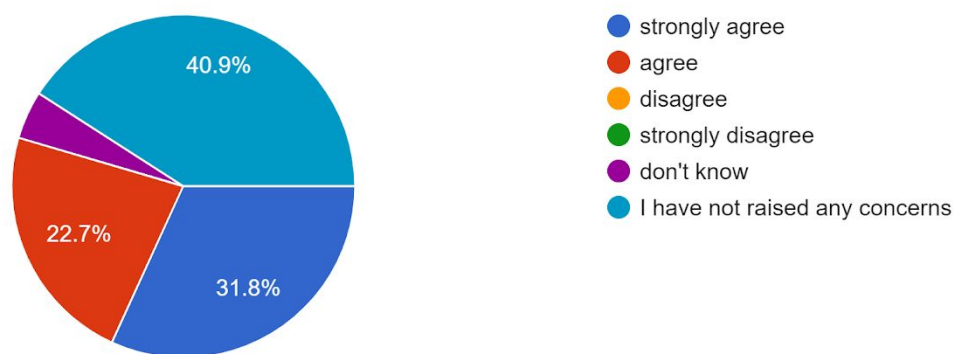
22 responses



This is good to know, and we hope it always remains the case. Maths schools, like all schools, should be very safe places where no one ever feels the need to hide away or conceal their enthusiasm for learning.

When I have raised concerns with the school they have been dealt with properly

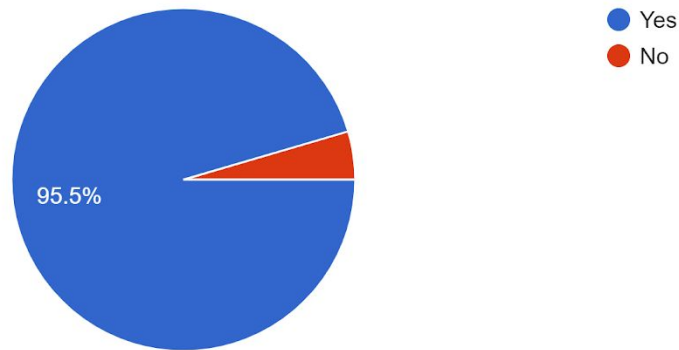
22 responses



We love it when students come to share their concerns and ideas with us and we are very happy to see this response.

I would recommend this school to another student.

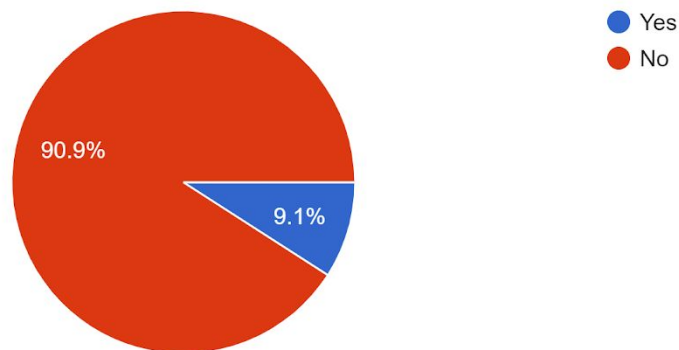
22 responses



I was just a little concerned about why 1 student would not recommend this school to another student so I asked students about it this morning and they suggested that it was perhaps because many of their friends would not want the particular curriculum we deliver. Another possibility is that we have a student who is not enjoying their experience, and I know that sometimes the challenge and high expectations can get a bit much, especially in the current circumstances, so we will continue to reflect on this and do everything we can to ensure that all our students are having the best possible experience with us.

Do you have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)?

22 responses



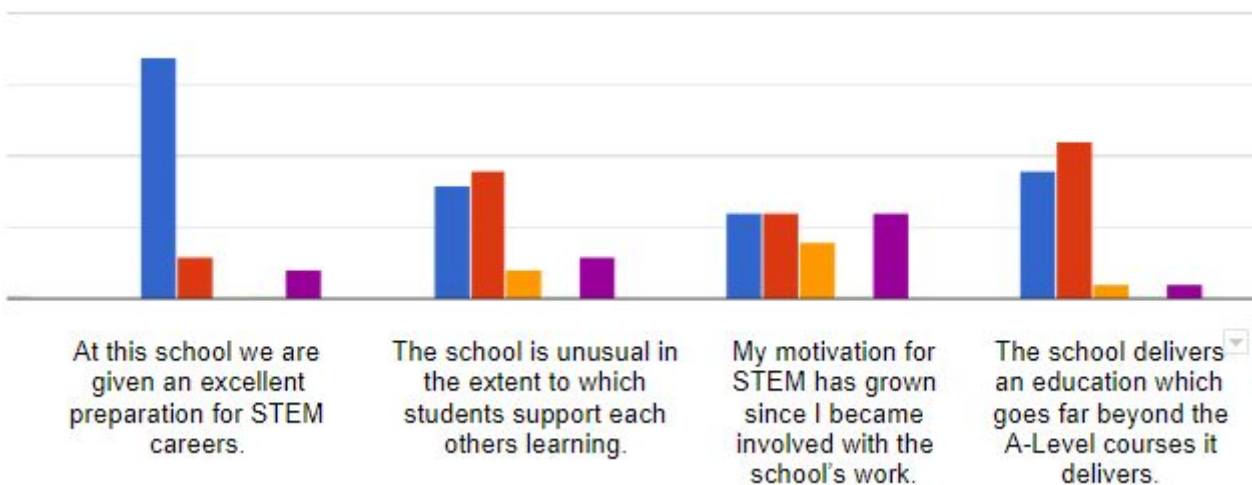
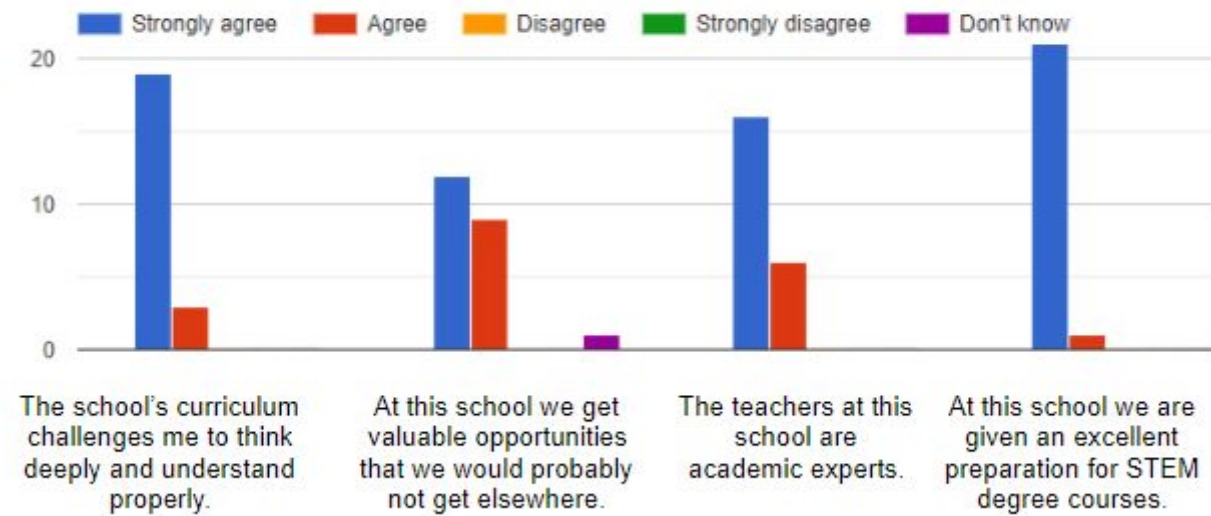
I have SEND, and the school gives me the support that I need to succeed.

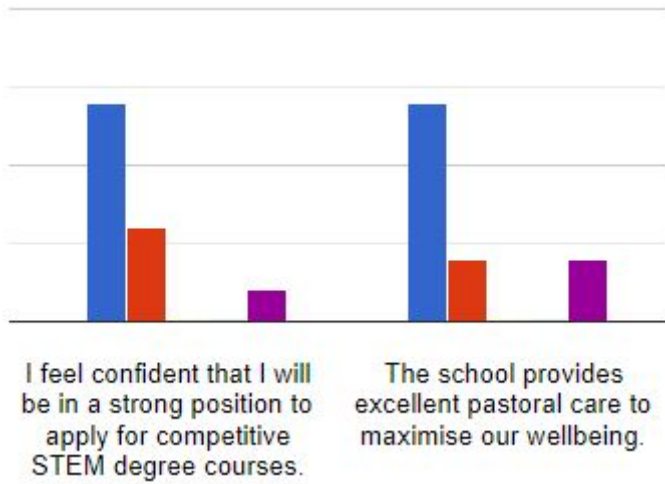
2 responses



We're very glad to hear this!

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?





We were a little concerned about the more mixed response to “My motivation for STEM has grown...” but we wonder if this is just that the response of some students was along the lines of “My motivation was high and it is still high ... so it hasn’t changed”. However, we’re also conscious that lots of the exciting plans we had to enthuse students with STEM have been stopped by COVID - we know that we still have much more to do to deliver on all the exciting dreams that we have. One day soon we will be travelling to CERN for real, and not just in our imagination.

How would you rate the school's provision of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?
22 responses



A more mixed response for this question from the students, when compared to parent responses. When I discussed this with students it seems that it's because for many teenagers the experience of learning on Zoom compared to being in school with your friends is, frankly, never going to be anything better than “satisfactory” no matter what the teacher does.

Is there anything else that you would like us to know? This form is anonymous, so if you would like a response to your comments then please email damian.haigh@liverpoolmathsschool.org rather than recording them here.

4 responses

I am absolutely loving the step lunchtime practice on a Monday and Friday, it is really useful and very fun

I have some friends in other colleges that are not getting anywhere near the support that our school is offering and it is causing them to fall behind, I am very thankful for how much support we are getting from the school especially including the tablets that we are being allowed to borrow to increase the effectiveness of our working time.

Online lessons have made me feel more challenged, worrying me about my grades.

All fine

We take particular note of that third comment. Many students feel anxious about their progress at the moment because it's hard learning difficult abstract material without friends around you to provide reassurance and helpful hints. We still feel very confident in our students and we know that, in the end, everything is going to be just fine. This puts me in mind of the film Shakespeare in Love: for schools, like theatres, [somehow everything is alright in the end](#).

I wish you all the best for half term,

Yours sincerely,
Damian Haigh