

# **A+ Group: pilot summary report**

**January 2023 - June 2023**

**Zaki El-Salahi, Dark Matter education**

# Participation

## A+ Group

5 sessions held from February to June 2023 (all remote via ZOOM)

13 Participants (a majority of whom will have children at JGHS in 23/24)

Demographics - a broad range of people

- 7 Black people, 1 Asian person, 1 Mixed Heritage person, 4 White people
- Childrens' stages: S1 to S5
- Families who are long-term settled + Newly arrived to Scotland
- Mix of Ages & Sexes, predominantly Women
- National heritage: Sudanese was the most populous

# What people hope to get out of it:

February 2023

What do you hope to get from the A+ group?

Mentimeter

recognised

my heritage celebrated

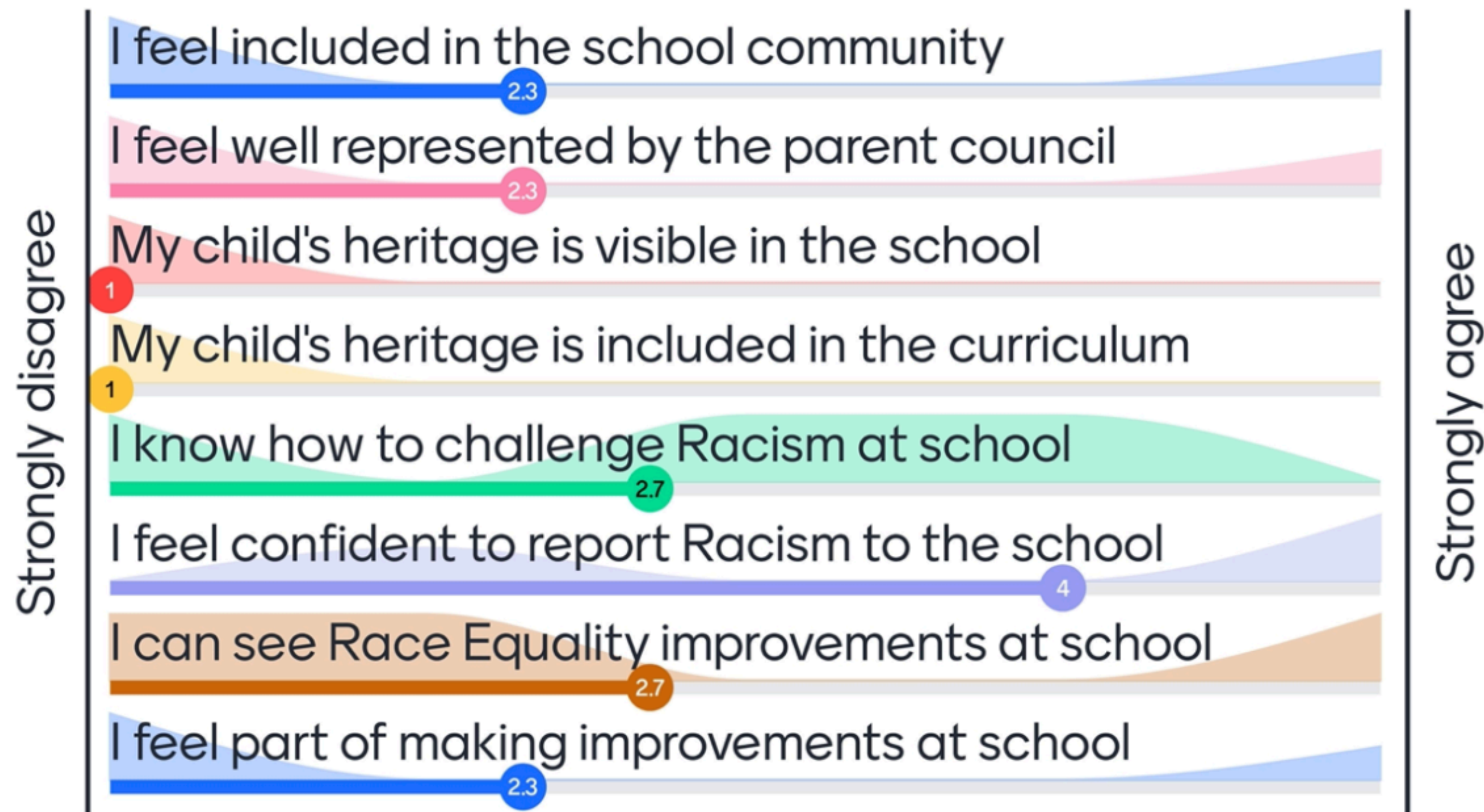
support

communication

# Survey 1 - February 2023 (Closed session)

## Agree/Disagree?

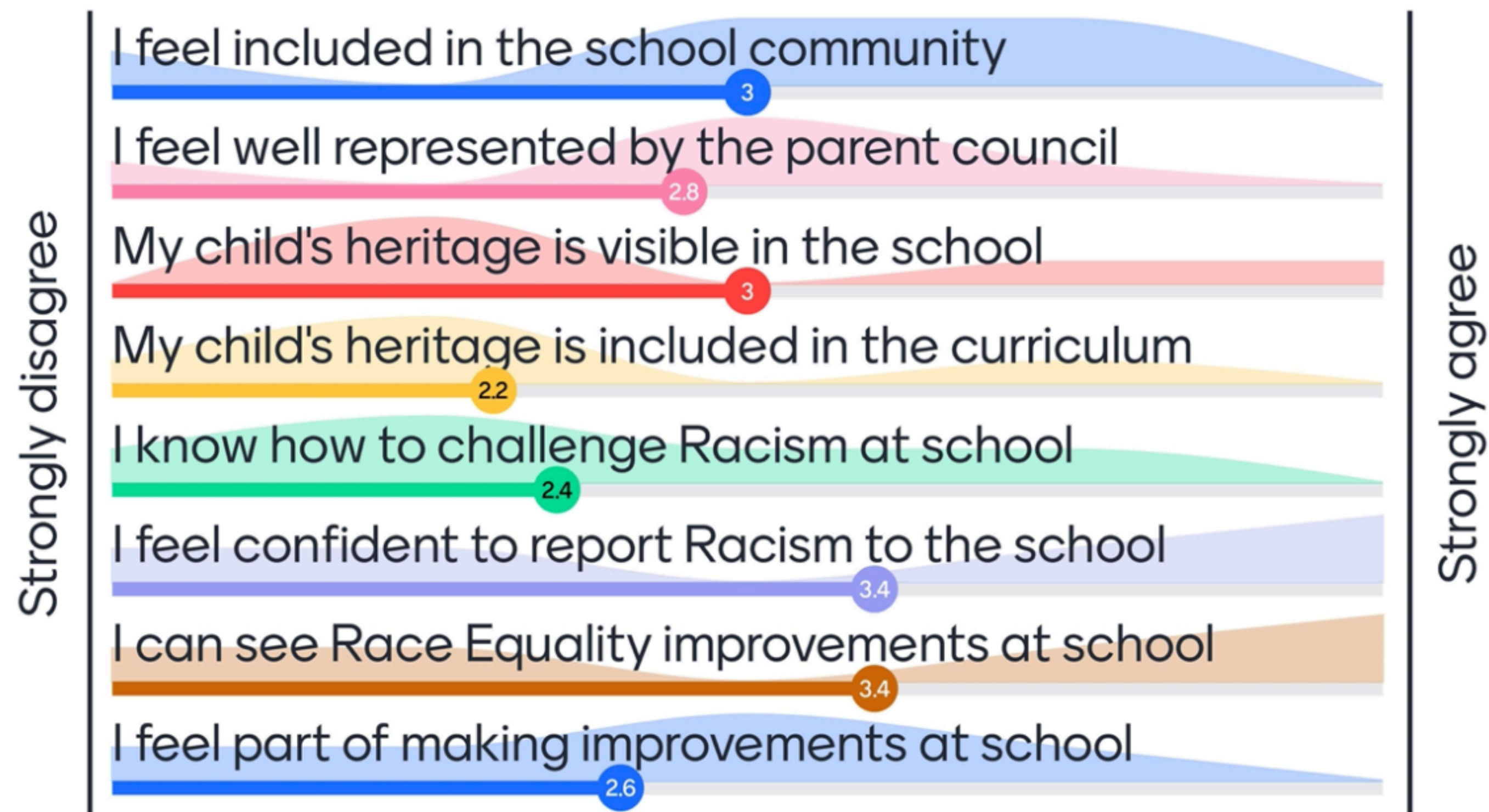
Mentimeter





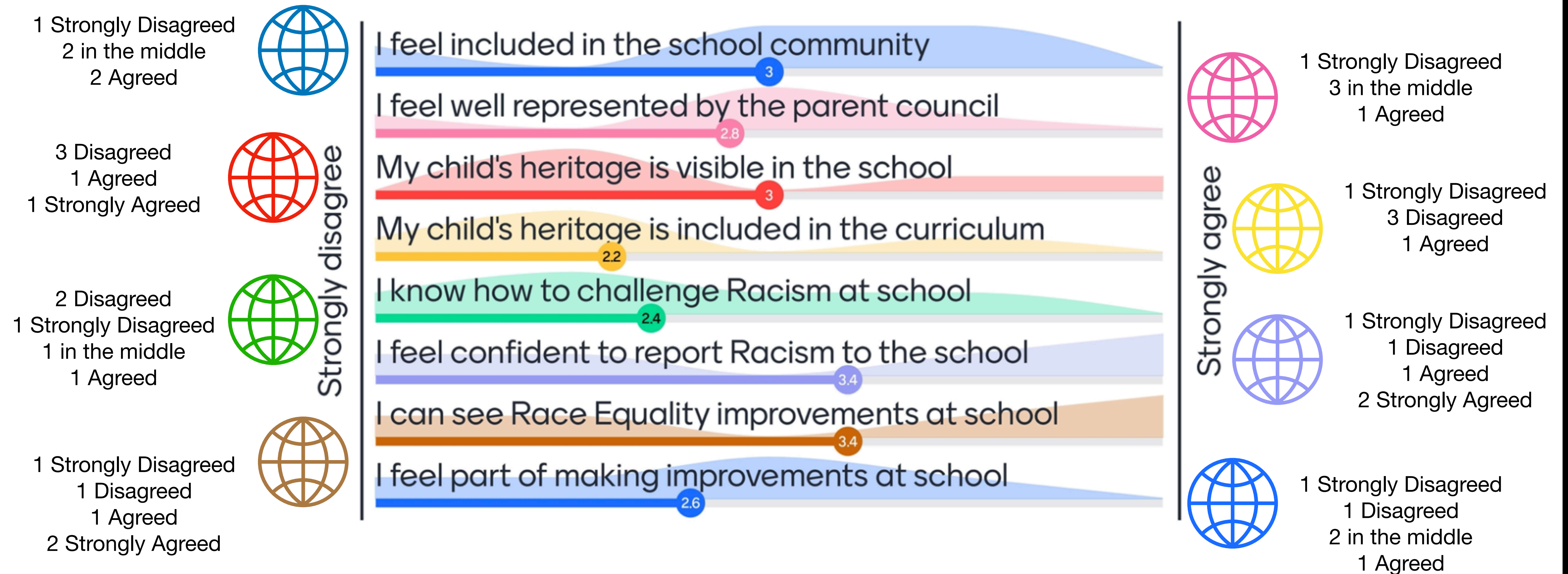
# Survey 2 - May 2023 (Open session)

## Agree/Disagree?



# Survey 2 - May 2023 (Breakdown)

## Agree/Disagree?





# School experiences discussed

Recognition of some positives & progress (Responsiveness to individual children, proactive ASN supports, new partnership with Pro-Black Youth worker, creative opportunities)

Sense of 'being invisible' and not valued (our Cultures, Languages, Nationalities, Values & Beliefs offer rich learning opportunities, Parents/Carers never approached to contribute to curriculum or school programme; missed opportunities within a Global school community)

Structural Racism, Sexism (What's not taught/not noticed, Colonial perspective/Anglocentrism is blatant within curriculum/homework from key subjects, lack of Black or Asian teaching staff, persistent degrading experiences of girl-children/females in key subject)

Sudan War (lack of support for children & families directly affected, in stark contrast to Ukraine War response in teaching & school engagement; children's fundraising efforts not known or celebrated)

General sense of exclusion from day-to-day school life, despite identifiable barriers (Zoom platform never used, despite being most familiar & accessible; creche facilities not offered at events & open evenings; these are routinely scheduled when people are caring for young children/working in night-time economy jobs)

# Children's Rights discussed

Right to an Identity - Name, Nationality, Religion (**Articles 8 + 14**)

Right to an Education about Respect, their Culture & Environment  
(**Articles 28 + 29**)

Right to freedom from Racial Discrimination (**Article 2 + CERD**)

Right to freedom from Discrimination against Girls/Women (**Article 2 + CEDAW**)

Right to their own Culture (**Article 30**)



# **Facilitator's feedback: Languages**

**At the start of the project key information was professionally translated into Arabic & Mandarin. These languages were prioritised based on evidence from school data.**

**Our budget was too small to do more translations, and we were unable to offer interpreting services during the pilot period.**

**4 Arabic speakers registered, from the African & Asian diaspora.**

**0 Chinese Mandarin speakers registered.**

**English was used as the lingua franca/common language for each of our sessions.**

**People who attended at least one group session also spoke Tiv (Nigeria) and Tigrinya (Eritrea).**

**In future, based on school data, key languages to be prioritised for translation & interpreting are Cantonese, Urdu and Ukrainian Russian.**

# **Facilitator's feedback: Engagement**

**Registrations and attendance was small, as anticipated for this pilot phase. Over the five sessions, the average number of attendees at any given session was 5 participants; including the facilitator. Fluctuations in attendance ranged from 0 to 9 participants; the June session was held on the final day of the summer term, and received 1 apology, 0 attendees.**

**Promotion through School and Parent Council channels seemed as successful as promotion through informal community connections. Parents/Carers informal feedback evidenced that word-of-mouth between neighbours/friends was as effective as emails sent from the School and Parent Council, in terms of leading to registration which followed through to attending at least one session.**

**Routine attendance was strongest amongst Black Parents/Carers. Routine informal feedback evidenced common sentiments that the A+ Group represented 'finally, something for us'.**

**Asian & White Parents/Carers who did register rarely attended. Individual informal feedback was that last-minute competing commitments came up for them.**

# Recommendations to the School: page 1

**JGHS should**

- 1. continue the A+ Group over the 2023-2024 academic year**
- 2. Convene a session of the emerging 'Race Equality & Anti-Racism working group' in August/September 2023, to identify actions based on evidence from pilot projects in 2022-2023**
- 3. Focus on inclusive, multilingual communications with Parents & Carers through a range of mediums and modes; including the A+ Group, the Pro-Black youth worker, using Zoom platform and audio/podcasting alongside the Friday email**
- 4. Disseminate and promote its 'Decolonised Curriculum' project amongst pupils & their families within 2023; *with a specific focus on Black and Asian families***
- 5. Utilise Black History Month 2023 and International Women's Day 2024 for broad Parent/Carer engagement activities (through Zoom & in-person), *with a specific focus on Black families***



# Recommendations to the School: page 2

**JGHS should also**

**6. Continue working closely with the Parent Council, with a focus on the outcomes & recommendations from the A+ Group pilot project**

**7. Support & sign-off a joint funding application with the Parent Council to appropriate donor bodies (e.g. Scottish Refugee Council, University of Edinburgh Community Grants) for the A+ Group to continue & expand in 2023-2024**

**8. Agree a Race Equality & Anti-Racism plan of action with the Parent Council committee at the start of the academic year, to build on the improvements the Parent Council chair has supported in 2022-2023**

**9. Prioritise within this action plan a visible response to the impacts of the ongoing Sudan War on current JGHS pupils & their families; in parallel with similar global-impact conflicts, such as the Ukraine War**

**Summary Report compiled in August 2023.**

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