

Change@CCHS Autumn Update

INTRODUCTION, MRS LEDWIDGE, DEPUTY HEADTEACHER AND CHANGE@CCHS PROJECT LEADER

During one of our staff training days in September, I spoke of how Change@CCHS started as a means of contributing to anti-racism work, and that over the course of the year, the objective of the platform had evolved. Change@CCHS is really about inclusivity in all its forms, and we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all, irrespective of race, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or socio-economic background. We want all those connected to the school to feel proud of their identity and be able to participate fully in school life as a valued member of our community. That means inclusivity with regards to the protected characteristics, not as single social categorisations, but as overlapping and interdependent systems of advantage and disadvantage.

Inclusivity is a celebration of human diversity, and one specific aspect that we have been researching further is that of Neurodiversity.



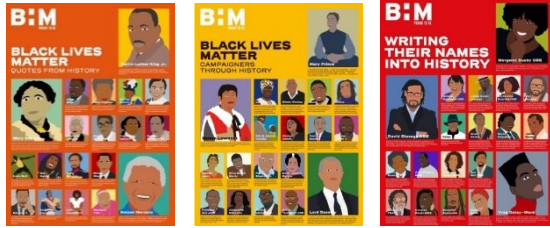
Neurodiversity is the diversity of ways in which humans think, learn, and relate to others. It is estimated to affect around 20% of the population. It is about realising that the differences in brain function exhibited by people diagnosed with dyslexia, ADHD or autism, is a normal and natural aspect of human variation to be expected and accepted.

We are happy to accept that different plants need different environments to thrive yet are often too quick to assume all young people will benefit from the same environment and inputs. Recognising that there are different but equally valid ways of doing things and promoting acceptance of individuality and difference are key to increasing self-esteem, confidence, and achievement in individuals.

In this Autumn update, Mr Harvey, Subject Leader for Art, and School Development Leader, writes about his research project on diversity and his plans to implement suggestions made at a recent webinar he attended on supporting neurodiversity in education, with Dr Chiara Harlin & Dr Elliot Spaeth.

Also, within this update, Mrs Cross provides details of staff training that took place during one of our staff INSET days on LGBTQ+ and the use of language.

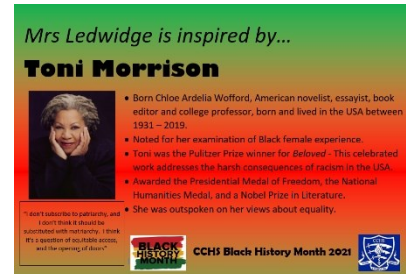




October marks Black History Month, the annual celebration of the history, achievements, and contributions of black people in the UK. This year the uplifting theme of *Proud to Be* was observed by students in Years 10, 12, and 13. Miss Harrison provides details of this truly inspirational assembly

delivered to our school community.

In an initiative promoted by Mrs Dawson, our Subject Leader of History, teachers across the school have been sharing examples of Black men and women who inspire them. Look out for posters like this one around the School campus.



DIVERSITY

MR HARVEY, SUBJECT LEADER FOR ART AND SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT LEADER

During the first staff twilight, Mr Harvey launched his school development research project on Inclusivity (which includes LGBTQ+) to teaching staff. Attendees were invited to complete a survey on their current understanding of Inclusivity. Information from this survey was collated and analysed and gave a real insight into the areas where we can make the biggest impact. Information has been shared with the School Development Leaders and will be cascaded to all staff next half term.

The next step for this project is to work with our students on the areas they would like to develop; this will help to inform the direction of the research project. An 'Art is for Everyone' display has been erected in V23 and V24 to celebrate inclusivity. This reflects of our commitment to Inclusion in our school.



As part of Mr Harvey's research, he attended a webinar on supporting neurodiversity in education, with Dr Chiara Harlin & Dr Elliot Spaeth. The webinar focused on learning, and the fact that not all people think the same way; examples were shared from different educational settings on Inclusivity and creating change.

FILMSOC

SIMRAN JOHAL, ON BEHALF OF THE YEAR 13 CHANGE & DIVERSITY PREFECTS

FilmSoc has been running on alternate Friday lunchtimes in V22 from 12:45-13:30. So far, we have had interesting discussions ranging from Neurodiversity, exhibited by The Joker, to Diversity in Disney Princess films. It has been a really rewarding experience hearing the opinions of all year groups, due to the style in which we run FilmSoc. We use a self-reporting method, where statements are given to members of FilmSoc and they can choose from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree.' We have found this to be useful in immediately driving discussion. At the end of FilmSoc, we have used questionnaires to evaluate student experience. We use this feedback when planning follow-up sessions.



The issues that have cropped up in our discussions always take us further than expected, which goes to prove how film is a great stimulus for discussing diversity. We try to incorporate film theory such as world-building, character arcs, and narrative styles to give us technical awareness of directors' choices in their storytelling. It's been productive to

use these theories as focal points to form arguments about Change and Diversity, and we hope to continue doing this.

The Change and Diversity Prefects would love to hear some ideas, or really pressing issues that you feel can be discussed via film. Let us know your suggestions and help us make FilmSoc suited towards what is relevant for everyone.

LGBTQ+

MRS CROSS, ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER - TEACHING & LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As part of our September INSET training programme, staff were joined by Dr Elly Barnes MBE, from Educate and Celebrate, who spoke to us about LGBTQ+, language, legislation, and how to help support our school with inclusivity. Dr Barnes is a long serving teacher, and founder and CEO of Educate & Celebrate, an LGBTQ+ education charity that empowers and supports leadership teams, governors, teachers, students, and parents, to build a future of inclusion and social justice in their communities. Beginning in the UK in 2005, and spearheading the Department for Education HBT anti-bullying project, Elly went on to be voted No: 1 in The Independent on Sunday's Rainbow List 2011 for her commitment to LGBTQ+ in education, and DIVA Activist of the Year in 2018. The session was extremely well received and was a fantastic start to our continued commitment to Change@CCHS this academic year.



DIWALI

ARUSHI SHARMA, YEAR 10 STUDENT

Diwali, takes place on 4th November this year and is a celebration enjoyed by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains. Although the celebration holds different meaning for each faith, Diwali's celebrations and promise of a better tomorrow and are shared by all. The festival of lights is indeed the most awaited and celebrated festivals of India. This wonderful festival is the celebration of five days. On the first day (Dhanteras), people clean their houses and buy kitchen utensils or gold and silver as a sign of good fortune. On the second day (Choti Diwali), colourful decorations and clay lamps are furnished. Day three, the main day of Diwali brings families together for Lakshmi pooja, during which they praise the Goddess Lakshmi and host grand dinners. The same festivities continue on day 4 (Govardhan Puja), which signifies the day where Lord Krishna saved the people of Gokul from the wrath of Lord Indra by lifting the Govardhan mountain, and day 5 (Bhai Dooj) which is associated with the strong bond of love between a brother and a sister. Exchange of gifts also occur these last two days, and families and friends are welcomed into homes.

In my family, 2 weeks before the celebration of Diwali, we start cleaning our house to welcome the much-anticipated feeling of the wonderful festival and buy new items which we decorate the whole house with. On Dhanteras, we worship the god and goddess of wealth (Dhan) and we buy new clothes and silver coins. In the following days, we visit our cousins' place to exchange delectable, mouth-watering Indian sweets (my personal favourite being Kaju Katli- a fudge-like dessert made from cashews!) and place diyas (lamps of light) around the whole house to celebrate the triumph of good over evil. On the main day of Diwali, my sister and I love to make colourful rangolis in the morning (traditional Indian art made from coloured sand) which we decorate the floor with. In the evening, I wear a new beautiful traditional dress and get ready to worship Goddess Lakshmi with my family. After eating a wonderful grand dinner cooked by my wonderful mum, we get together in our back garden to enjoy some fireworks. Beautiful flashes of pink, gold, red, blue, of different shapes and sizes shoot up into the sky, ending the day by filling us up with joy as my sister and I stare in awe and film them. Here's a fun experience of mine to end--last Diwali, I tried to actually light a firework myself for the first time and indeed it was a bit scary at first, but it turned out to be the most beautiful one of the night which made me feel really special! Happy Diwali everyone!



AFRO-CARIBBEAN SOCIETY

AZARIA TAKYI – PRESIDENT OF AFRICAN-CARIBBEAN SOCIETY (ACS)

“The need for change bulldozed a road down the centre of my mind.”

Maya Angelou- Author, poet and civil rights activist

Change is not an immediate transformation. It is a painstaking, arduous process. However, the reason for change and its ultimate effect, surpasses any presumptuous doubt or former regret. And as Maya Angelou stated, the need for change should truly be the focus of everyone’s mind, as “change is the law of life” -John F. Kennedy

Change@CCHS was that first step in acknowledging and gaining control of what actions needed to be taken, to evoke this change.

By gaining inspiration and feeling emboldened by the new project established, I undertook the responsibility of creating the first African-Caribbean Society (ACS). Working hand in hand with the Change@CCHS project, the integral foundation of this society was to empower girls of African and Caribbean

descent within CCHS, whilst they were experiencing, arguably the most influential years of their secondary school lives.

By establishing a safe space for the younger students, celebrating parts of their individual identities that were concealed away, in their hopes of ‘fitting in’, African-Caribbean Society enacts a welcoming community, integrated within CCHS for all races and ethnicities. It is within these meetings, that sisterhoods are formed, confidence is cultivated, and all voices are heard. Furthermore, a focal aim of ACS was to encourage discussions around Black experiences and stereotypes, eradicating the sense of ‘tip-toeing’ around ‘uncomfortable conversation’s and embracing African-Caribbean culture all year round, not just limiting it to Black History Month.

African-Caribbean Society will continue to provide that comfortable, safe space for all Black girls to have their voices acknowledged and heard; ensuring the decorum of respect is maintained and continuing the persistence of pushing for change.

and content.



DIVERSITY SOCIETY

MR HUGHES, TEACHER OF HISTORY AND CO-SUBJECT LEADER OF GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Diversity Society launched in September and is being led by three Year 12 students who originally started the plans for this during the January lockdown. The group is ever expanding and now has around 20-30 regular members who meet every Monday lunchtime. Topics discussed so far include racial bias in the music industry, representation of different cultures in the wider media, and feminism, and they have currently expanded into wider discussions regarding the themes raised in the BBC’s documentary series Black & British: A Forgotten History. The society is open to all students in Year 10 and above, promoting lively discussion and debate. Students are already busy planning themes for next half term.

DIVERSITY AND BROADENING THE CURRICULUM

MISS POCOCK, SUBJECT LEADER OF GEOGRAPHY AND SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT LEADER

Focusing on 'Diversity and Broadening the Curriculum', the aim of the Diversity research focus is ultimately to foster a sense of belonging at CCHS in all students, parents, and staff, and to ensure that everyone feels included, represented, and seen. This will include exploring different ways to equip CCHS staff, students, and parents, with the tools (including language, knowledge, and confidence) for being actively anti-racist; to create opportunities for our school community to come together to celebrate a diverse range of global cultures and festivals; and to build on existing approaches to further enable critical engagement with knowledge through curriculum audits and

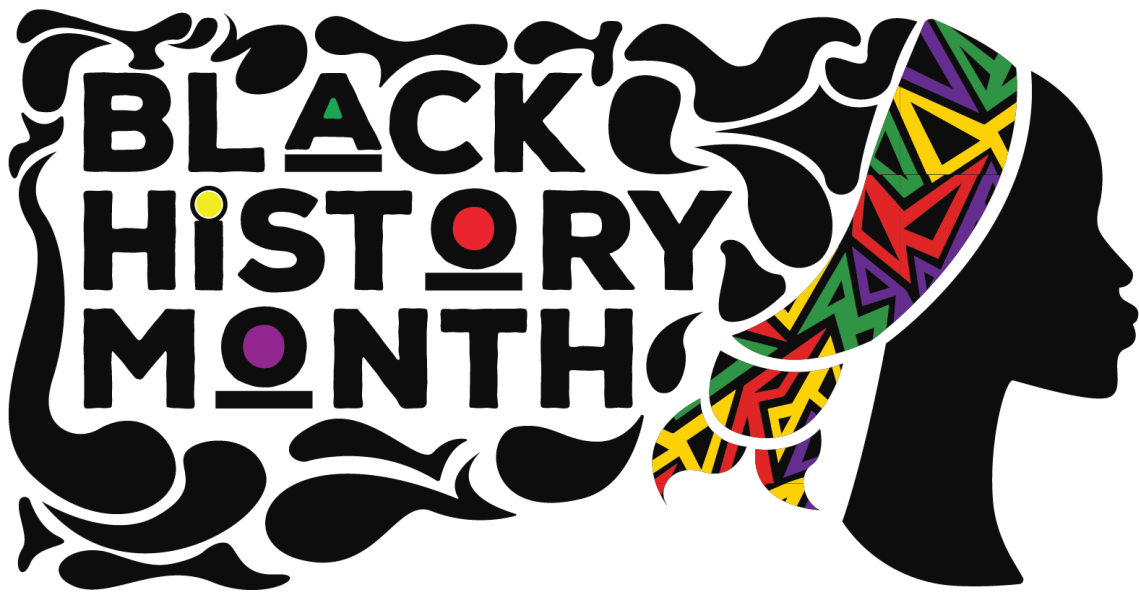


opportunities for exploring our subject disciplines from different perspectives. Following an initial survey of CCHS teaching staff, I will be attending the 2021 'Diversifying the Curriculum Conference' in November. From this I hope to gain more insight, from leading academics and figures in this field, into the many ways in which all subjects can embed more diverse perspectives within their teaching and learning. I will also begin working more closely with the Diversity Prefects next half term to identify, from their perspective, the areas of the CCHS curriculum that could benefit most immediately from more diverse perspectives.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH ASSEMBLY

MISS HARRISON, ASSISTANT HEADTECHER - PASTORAL

A group of Years 10, 12, and 13 students, who have been promoting Black History Month, presented an assembly on the theme of 'Proud to Be', the UK-wide theme for Black History Month 2021. Keren, Aliyyah, Abinaja, Grace, Eva, Damilola, Amie, and Louisa, shared their own views on why they are 'Proud to Be', capturing the voices of other students too through a recorded piece, which was a fantastic way to hear the voices of other students in our community. It was a true celebration and a reminder that this pride should not be confined to a month, but, as with learning about Black History more broadly, be ongoing all year round.



P R O U D T O B E

