



# Have your say

## Pupil Place Planning Consultation Report



Consultation: 17 May – 28 June 2022

Report: 29 July 2022

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# 1.0 Executive Summary

The Pupil Place Planning Strategy 2021-2026 was approved in March 2021 by the Children, Young People and Education Committee. This Strategy set out the vision and principles “to ensure that Wirral’s children attend local schools that provide high quality education, are efficient, viable and provide the best possible educational standards to meet their needs”. It also presented a planned framework for the review of school places in both primary and secondary mainstream schools over the next five years.

Phase 1 of the review began in March 2021 looking at small planning areas in and around Birkenhead, specifically: Beechwood; Central Birkenhead; North Birkenhead; South Birkenhead; Noctorum; Prenton. A detailed review has since taken place, which included information gathering and stakeholder discussion.

Findings and recommendations of the initial review were taken back to committee where an agreement was made to undertake a formal consultation on the amalgamation of St Peter’s Catholic Primary School and St Paul’s Catholic Primary School, as well as the amalgamation of Manor Primary School and Hillside Primary School. The proposals for consultation were:

- Amalgamation of St Peter’s Catholic Primary School and St Paul’s Catholic Primary School - This would involve closure of both schools and opening of a new combined school on one site. Pupils from both schools would be guaranteed a place at the single school.
- Amalgamation of Manor Primary School and Hillside Primary School – This would involve closure of both schools and opening of a new combined school on one site. Pupils from both schools would be guaranteed a place at the single school.

The consultation sought the views of parents/carers and other stakeholders on these options for change. These findings will be considered at the September 2022 meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

## 1.1 Key Findings

- 421 people in total completed the questionnaire.
- 59.8% said that they are Parents or Guardians (Question 1).
- 36.8% of respondents were linked to Manor Primary School, 25.9% to St. Paul's Catholic Primary School, 20.6% to Hillside Primary School and 9.9% to St. Peter's Catholic Primary School (Question 2).
- 76.7% strongly disagreed with the proposal to amalgamate St Peter's Catholic Primary School and St Paul's Catholic Primary School. In total, 84.7% disagreed with this proposal and 2.2% agreed (Question 3).
- 70.5% strongly disagreed with the proposal to open a combined school on the site of St Peter's. In total, 78.5% disagreed with this proposal and 7.2% agreed (Question 4).
- 84.3% strongly disagreed with the proposal to amalgamate Hillside Primary and Manor Primary schools. In total, 89.2% disagreed with this proposal and 4.4% agreed (Question 5).
- 58.8% would prefer the combined school to be on the Manor site, and 41.2% would prefer it to be on the Hillside site (Question 6). There were 36 additional comments in Question 7 which said they would not pick a site in Question 6 because they disagreed with the proposal.
- When asked for any additional comments, the top themes were: (Question 7)
  - Against the proposal (14.2%)
  - Concerns about estate rivalries (8.4%)
  - Distance too far (8.2%)
  - Disruption not fair on children (7.8%)
  - Impact local communities (6.4%)

## 2.0 Methodology

Through the Pupil Place Planning consultation people were asked to tell us their views of the proposal to amalgamate Manor Primary School and Hillside Primary School, and to amalgamate St Peter's Catholic Primary School and St Paul's Catholic Primary School.

The consultation was carried out between 17 May – 28 June 2022. The approach used was an online public consultation through the 'Have your say' consultation portal at [www.haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk) with a page dedicated to the Pupil Place Planning Consultation. Documents provided on the site included a Pupil Place Planning Findings Report, and a map of the current and proposed catchment areas.

One online questionnaire was provided for residents to engage with. Respondents were also able to request paper copies or Easy Read versions of the survey, or submit additional comments via a dedicated email address, which was published on the 'Have your say' website alongside the online tool.

Following the consultation, the feedback will be considered at a meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Committee in September 2022.

### 2.1 Questionnaire

The consultation questionnaire was developed on the Pupil Place Planning proposals and enabled stakeholders to record their feedback. To enable further understanding, and in-depth analysis, respondents were invited to provide free-text comments to expand on their ideas or concerns.

Following closure of the consultation, the responses to each of the direct questions were collated and the responses included in this report. For the free-text comment questions, a text coding approach was used based on the reoccurring themes. This data was then collated and summarised in the report.

### 2.2 Analysis of Respondents

Respondents to the online tools were provided with the option to provide demographic information about themselves. It must be noted that this is an option and that not all respondents included this information. This data allows the demographic results to be included in this report to enable analysis of the scope of responses and representation from different demographic groups.

## 2.3 Interpretation of Results

In terms of the results, it is important to note that:

- The public consultation is not representative of the overall population but provides information on the opinion of those residents who engaged.
- For specific tools where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to rounding, or the question is multi-coded. All free-text questions and ideas that offered respondents the option to provide written feedback could have covered multiple themes. Therefore, with free-text responses being categorised using a coding system, some comments will be multi-coded and therefore add up to more than 100 percent.

## 2.4 Communication

To raise awareness about the consultation amongst as many residents and stakeholders as possible, a consultation communication campaign was carried out which invited target audiences to take part in the consultation.

A variety of communications channels and platforms were utilised. This included:

- Public meetings
- Drop-in sessions with affected schools (Manor Primary School and St Paul's Catholic Primary School)
- Availability of Easy read questionnaires
- Creation of a dedicated Schools Consultation email inbox

In addition to the above, the service itself administered the issuing and recording of paper copies and responses, as well as direct engagement with schools.

# 3.0 Results

## 3.1 The Questionnaire

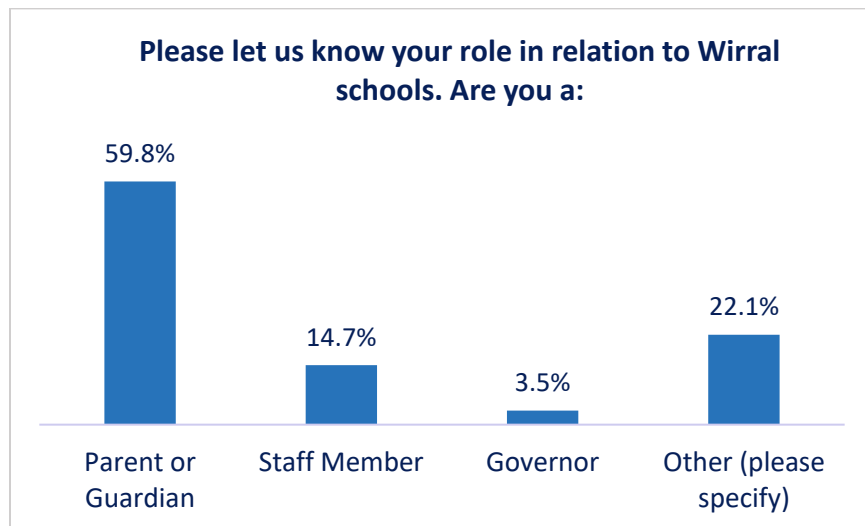
The questionnaire was responded to by 421 people, 265 through the online portal and 156 using paper copies. No questions were mandatory so respondents could choose which questions to respond to.

Note: 11 paper copies were received from people who had already completed the online questionnaire. Their answers were removed from the figures for Q1-6 and the demographics, but their overall comments in Q7 were kept.



**Q1: Please let us know your role in relation to Wirral schools.**

Of the 430 respondents, 257 (59.8%) said that they were a Parent or Guardian, 63 (14.7%) said they were a staff member, 15 (3.5%) said they were a Governor, and 95 (22.1%) said Other. The most prevalent replies in the Other Category were members of the community (33, 7.6%), relatives (29, 6.7%), ex-pupils (8, 1.8%) and linked to school through their work (7, 1.6%). N.B. The number of respondents is greater than the total responding to the survey because some people had more than one connection to a school.



*Figure 1: Chart showing the role of respondents.*

Please let us know your role in relation to Wirral schools. Are you a:	Online	Paper	Total	%
Parent or Guardian	151	106	257	59.8%
Staff Member	56	7	63	14.7%
Governor	15		15	3.5%
Other (please specify)	58	37	95	22.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Table 1: Showing the role of respondents.*



**Q2: Which school (if any) is your connection to?**

413 people responded to this question. 85 people (20.6%) said they were linked to Hillside Primary School, 152 people (36.8%) said they were linked to Manor Primary School, 107 people (25.9%) said they were linked to St. Paul’s and 41 people (9.9%) said they were linked to St Peter’s. 18 people (4.2%) said they had no connection to any of the schools listed, and 10 people (2.4%) said ‘Other’.

The replies in the Other Category were that people had links to more than one school (5, 1.2%) that people had links to other local schools (4, 1.0%), or that they were a Catholic Staff Member (1, 0.2%).

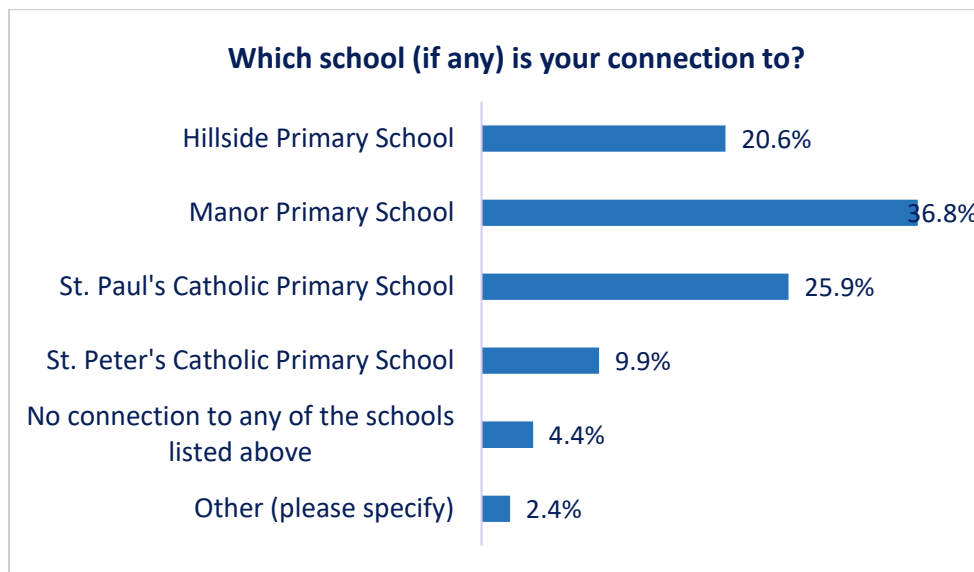


Figure 2: Chart showing to which school respondents have a connection.

Which school (if any) is your connection to?	Online	Paper	Total	%
Hillside Primary School	83	2	85	20.6%
Manor Primary School	73	79	152	36.8%
St. Paul's Catholic Primary School	46	61	107	25.9%
St. Peter's Catholic Primary School	38	3	41	9.9%
No connection to any of the schools listed above	18	0	18	4.4%
Other (please specify)	6	4	10	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2: Showing to which school respondents have a connection.

**Q3: The local authority and the Diocese of Shrewsbury are consulting on the amalgamation of St Peter’s Catholic Primary School and St Paul’s Catholic Primary School. This would involve closure of both schools and opening of a new combined school on one site. Do you:**

Of the 404 who responded to this question, ‘strongly disagree’ was the most common answer – selected by 310 (76.7%). In total, 84.7% disagreed with the statement and 2.2% agreed.

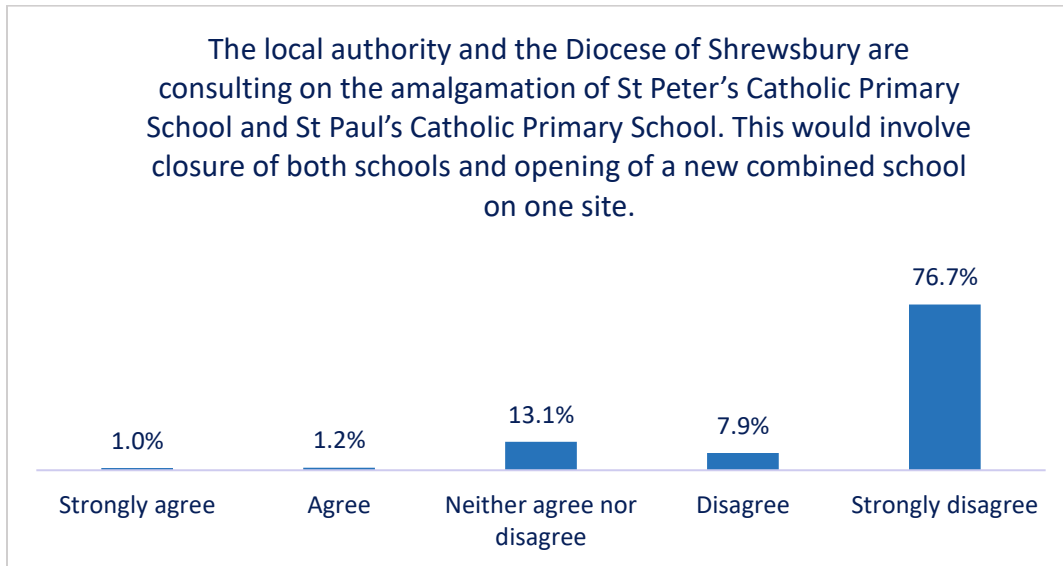


Figure 3: Chart showing whether respondents agree with the proposal to combine St. Peter’s and St Paul’s Catholic Primary Schools.

The local authority and the Diocese of Shrewsbury are consulting on the amalgamation of St Peter’s Catholic Primary School and St Paul’s Catholic Primary School. This would involve closure of both schools and opening of a new combined school on one site.	Online	Paper	Total	%
Strongly agree	4	0	4	1.0%
Agree	3	2	5	1.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	46	7	53	13.1%
Disagree	22	10	32	7.9%
Strongly disagree	184	126	310	76.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 3: Table showing whether respondents agree with the proposal to combine St. Peter’s and St Paul’s Catholic Primary Schools.

**Q4: In relation to the amalgamation of St Peter’s Catholic Primary School and St Paul’s Catholic Primary School, the Diocese have suggested the opening of a combined school on the site of St Peter’s. Do you:**

Of the 404 who responded to this question, ‘strongly disagree’ was the most common answer – selected by 285 (70.5%). In total, 78.5% disagreed with the statement and 7.2% agreed.

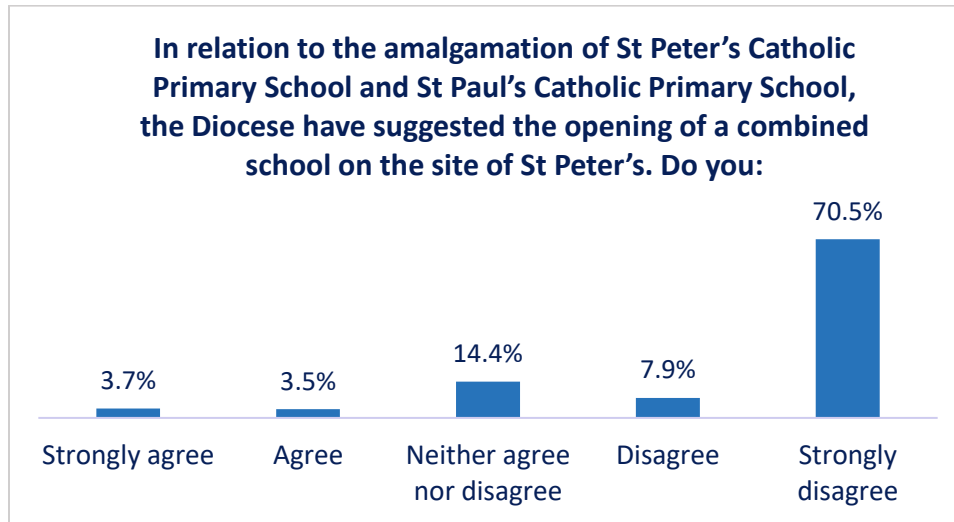


Figure 4: Chart showing whether respondents agree to locate the new combined school on the site of St. Peter’s.

In relation to the amalgamation of St Peter’s Catholic Primary School and St Paul’s Catholic Primary School, the Diocese have suggested the opening of a combined school on the site of St Peter’s. Do you:	Online	Paper	Total	%
Strongly agree	15	0	15	3.7%
Agree	13	1	14	3.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	49	9	58	14.4%
Disagree	19	13	32	7.9%
Strongly disagree	161	124	285	70.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 4: Table showing whether respondents agree to locate the new combined school on the site of St. Peter’s.

**Q5: The local authority are consulting on the amalgamation of Hillside Primary and Manor Primary schools. This would involve closure of both schools and opening of a combined school on one site. Do you:**

Of the 407 who responded to this question, 'strongly disagree' was the most common answer – selected by 343 (84.3%). In total, 89.2% disagreed with the statement and 4.4% agreed.

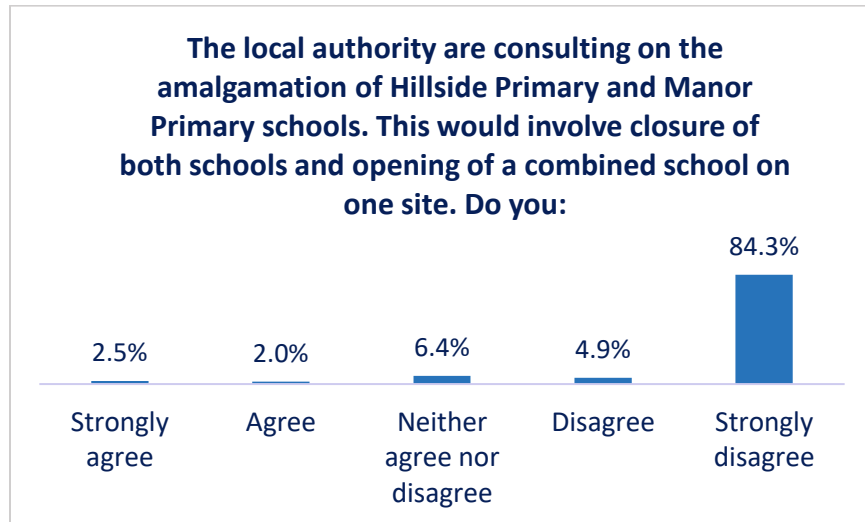


Figure 5: Chart showing whether respondents agree with the proposal to combine Hillside and Manor Primary Schools.

The local authority are consulting on the amalgamation of Hillside Primary and Manor Primary schools. This would involve closure of both schools and opening of a combined school on one site. Do you:	Online	Paper	Total	%
Strongly agree	9	1	10	2.5%
Agree	8	0	8	2.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	4	26	6.4%
Disagree	10	10	20	4.9%
Strongly disagree	212	131	343	84.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 5: Table showing whether respondents agree with the proposal to combine Hillside and Manor Primary Schools.

**Q6: In relation to the amalgamation of Hillside Primary and Manor Primary schools: if this were to go ahead which site would you prefer?**

143 (58.8%) of respondents said the Manor site, and 100 (41.2%) of respondents said the Hillside site.

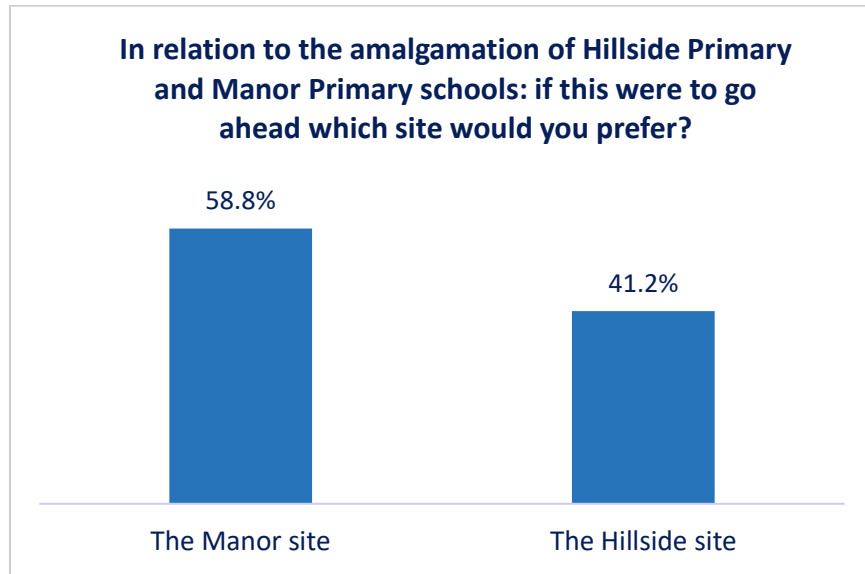


Figure 6: Chart showing which site respondents would prefer the new combined school to be on.

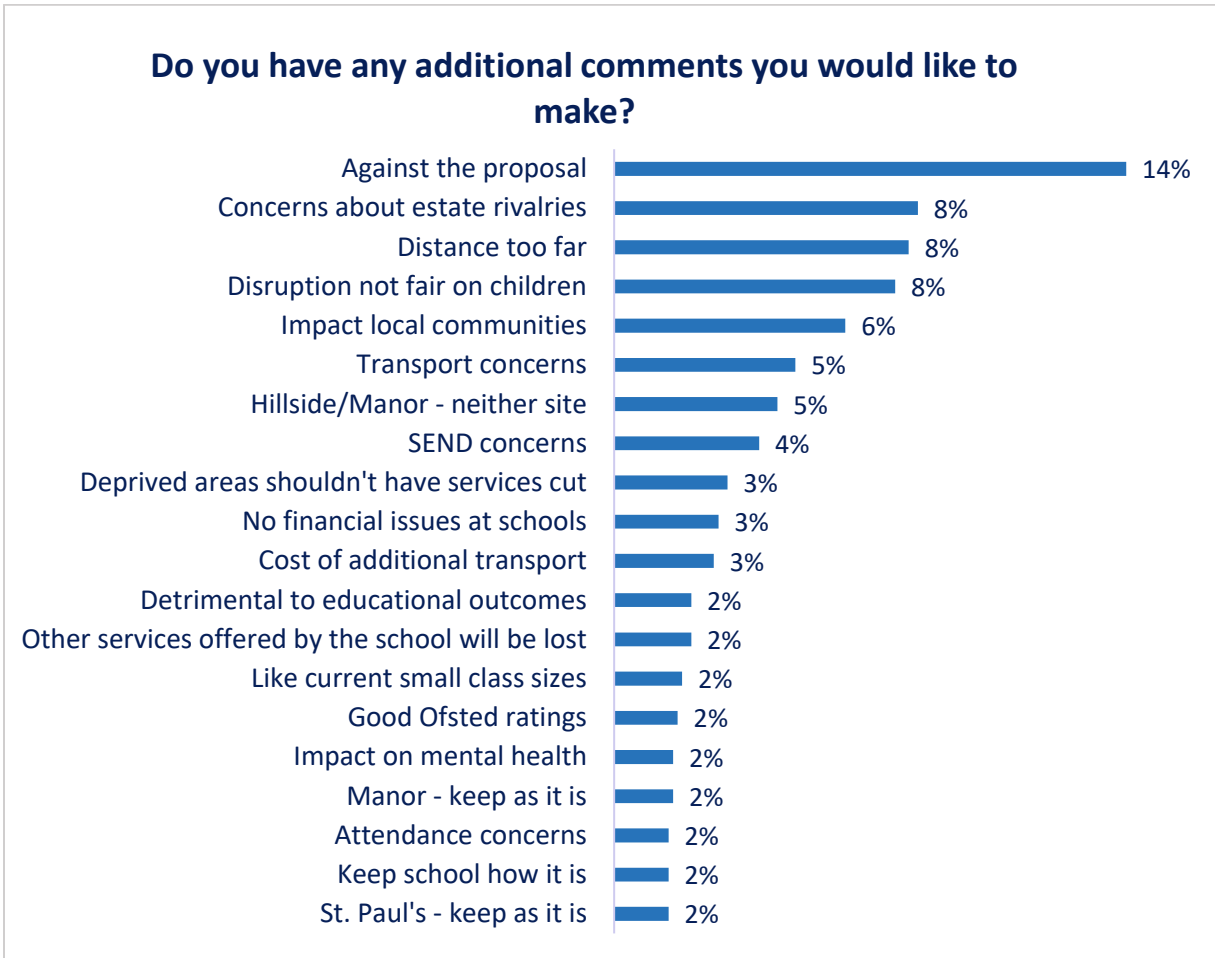
In relation to the amalgamation of Hillside Primary and Manor Primary schools: if this were to go ahead which site would you prefer?	Online	Paper	Total	%
The Manor site	81	62	143	58.8%
The Hillside site	97	3	100	41.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 6: Table showing which site respondents would prefer the new combined school to be on.

In Q7, there were 36 additional comments which said they would not pick a site in this question because they disagreed with the proposal.

**Q7: Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?**

Responses to this question were tagged and categorised by theme. The top themes are highlighted below.



*Figure 7: Chart showing the top 20 themes in the additional comments.*

Tag	Count of Contribution	%
Against the proposal	113	14.2%
Concerns about estate rivalries	67	8.4%
Distance too far	65	8.2%
Disruption not fair on children	62	7.8%
Impact local communities	51	6.4%
Transport concerns	40	5.0%
Hillside/Manor - neither site	36	4.5%
SEND concerns	32	4.0%
Deprived areas shouldn't have services cut	25	3.1%
No financial issues at schools	23	2.9%
Cost of additional transport	22	2.8%
Detrimental to educational outcomes	17	2.1%
Other services offered by the school will be lost	17	2.1%
Like current small class sizes	15	1.9%
Good Ofsted ratings	14	1.8%
Impact on mental health	13	1.6%
Manor - keep as it is	13	1.6%
Attendance concerns	12	1.5%
Keep school how it is	12	1.5%
St. Paul's - keep as it is	12	1.5%

*Table 7: Table showing the top 20 themes in the additional comments.*

### **Against the proposal (14.2%)**

Many comments stated that they disagreed with the proposals.

### **Concerns about estate rivalries (8.4%)**

Respondents are concerned about friction between the communities on the two estates.

People mentioned that there are great tensions between the communities, with violence such as stabbings, fighting, gang violence, drugs, and a recent shooting.

People are concerned about the safety of children on the school run, with some saying they would not send their child to a school on the other estate.

### **Distance too far (8.2%)**

Many respondents said that the distance that pupils would have to travel is too far. Many are concerned about having to walk a long distance on the school run, sometimes multiple times a day. There are also concerns about children getting wet and cold in poor weather.

There are also concerns about transport, as there isn't adequate public transport, and people are also concerned about the cost and environmental effects of additional transport.

**Disruption not fair on children (7.8%)**

Many people feel that children have had a lot of disruption to their education with the Covid-19 lockdowns and feel that it is unfair to the children to have more disruption. Some questioned where the children will go to school while the building work is taking place.

**Impact local communities (6.4%)**

Respondents said that the schools were at the heart of the community, and that there are not many other facilities on the estates, and that losing the schools would be detrimental to the community.



## 3.2 Direct Representations

Many direct representations were received via the dedicated email address supplied for the consultation process.

Type	Hillside Primary	Manor Primary	St Paul's Catholic Primary	St Peter's Catholic Primary
Parent/relative representations		18	9	
Joint governor & parent representations		2	1	1
Staff representations				
Pupil representations			69 <sup>1</sup>	
Other representations		1	3	
<b>Total number of representations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1</b>

*Table 8: showing the number of representations for each school*

### Public meetings

There were two public meetings held at Manor Primary School.

Meeting	Attendees	Households
March 2022	30	27
June 2022	39	38

*Table 9: Table showing the attendees at public meetings at Manor Primary School*

There was one public meeting held at St Paul's Primary School.

Meeting	Attendees	Households
June 2022	9	9

*Table 10: Table showing the attendees at public meetings at St Paul's Catholic Primary School*

### Petition

A petition was signed at Manor Primary School, objecting to the proposed merger with Manor Primary School. 238 individuals signed the petition, which included 210 households. 2 names were not included because they did not include an address/postcode, and 2 were illegible.

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<sup>1</sup> The representations from pupils were drawings and writing about why they like the school.

# 4.0 Demographics and Site Traffic

## 4.1 Demographics

Registration was required to engage in the online Pupil Place Planning Consultation. The registration form included questions regarding demographics including gender, age group, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, however not all questions in the registration form were compulsory and respondents could choose to select 'prefer not to say' or skip the question. The demographics results are summarised below. The same questions were included on the paper-copy questionnaires.

Most of the respondents (74.4%) classed themselves as local residents.



Figure 8: Who are you registering as?

The gender of respondents was 75.5% female, 23.5% male, with 1.0% preferring not to say.

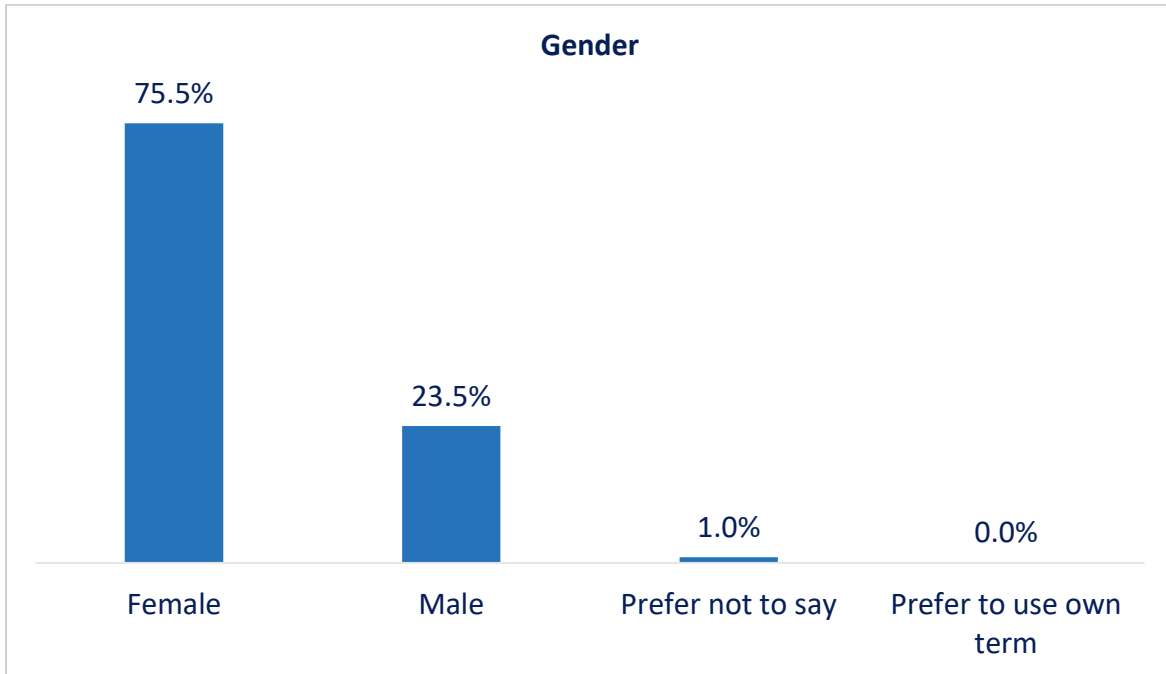


Figure 9: Gender of respondents

The age group profile is illustrated with the most common age groups were 35-44 years (36.4%), followed by 35-44 years (31.6%). Over 75s only made up 0.9% of respondents.

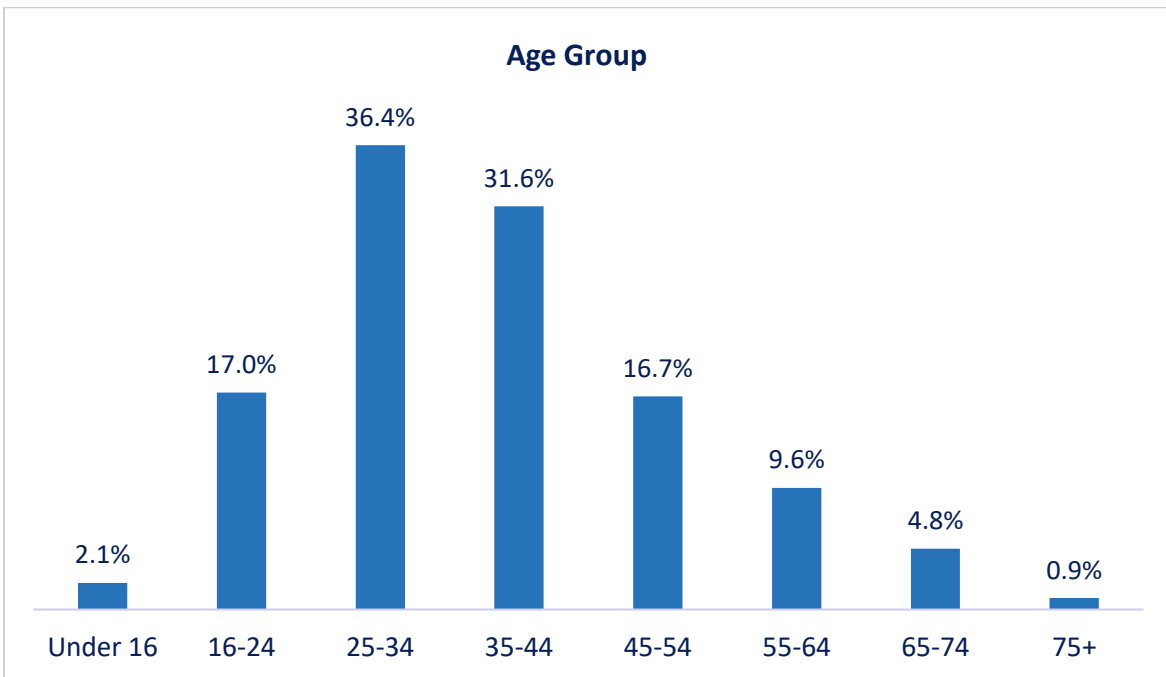


Figure 10: Age group of respondents

93.1% of respondents were white British. Only 4.3% of respondents were of a non-white ethnicity.

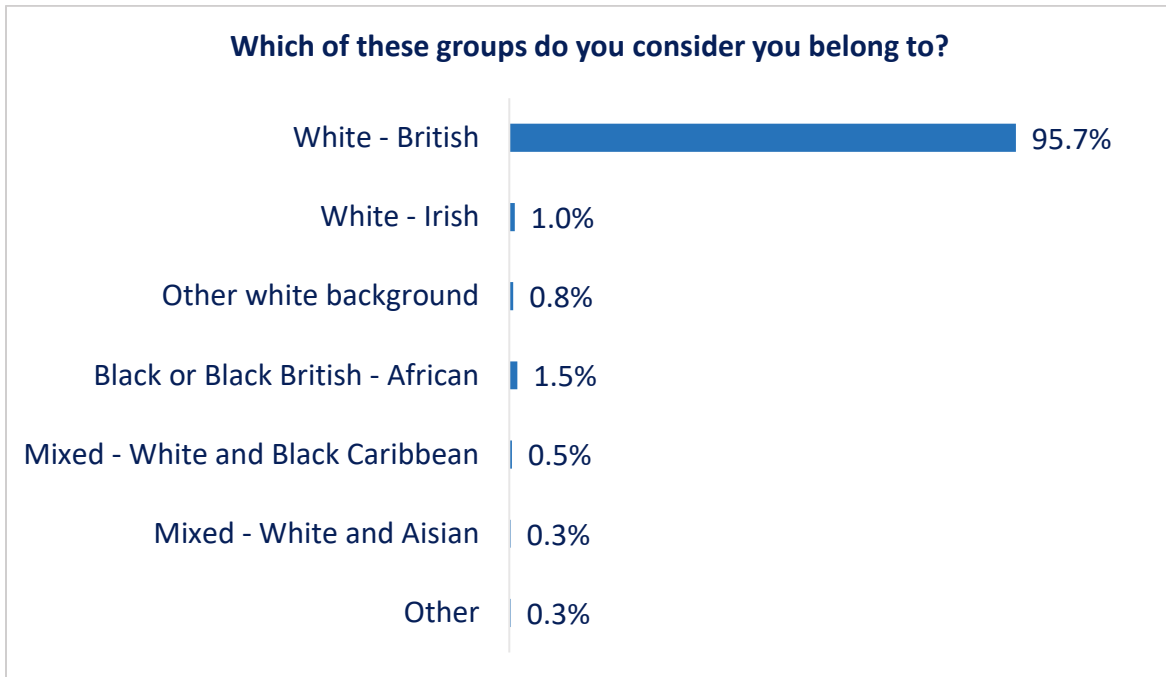


Figure 11: Ethnicity of respondents

87.9% of respondents were heterosexual, 1.3% were gay/ lesbian, 0.5% bisexual and 10.3% preferred not to say.

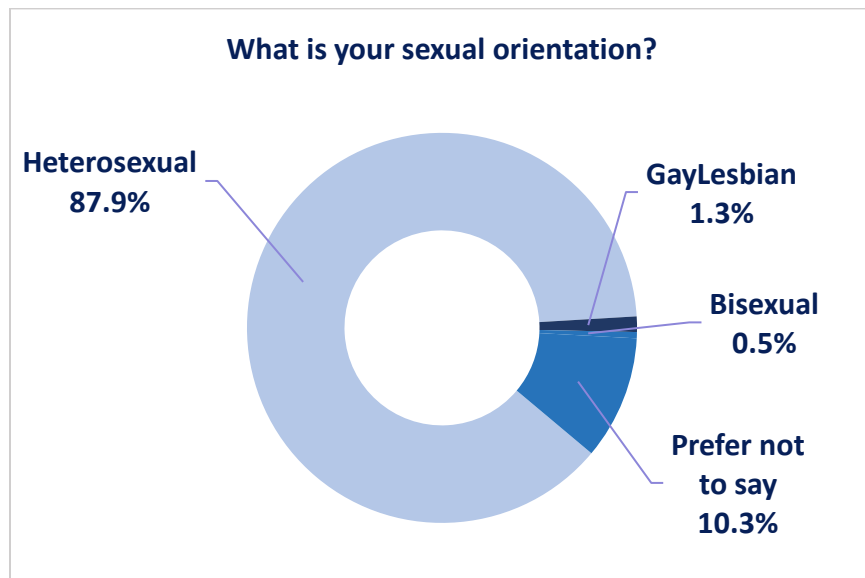
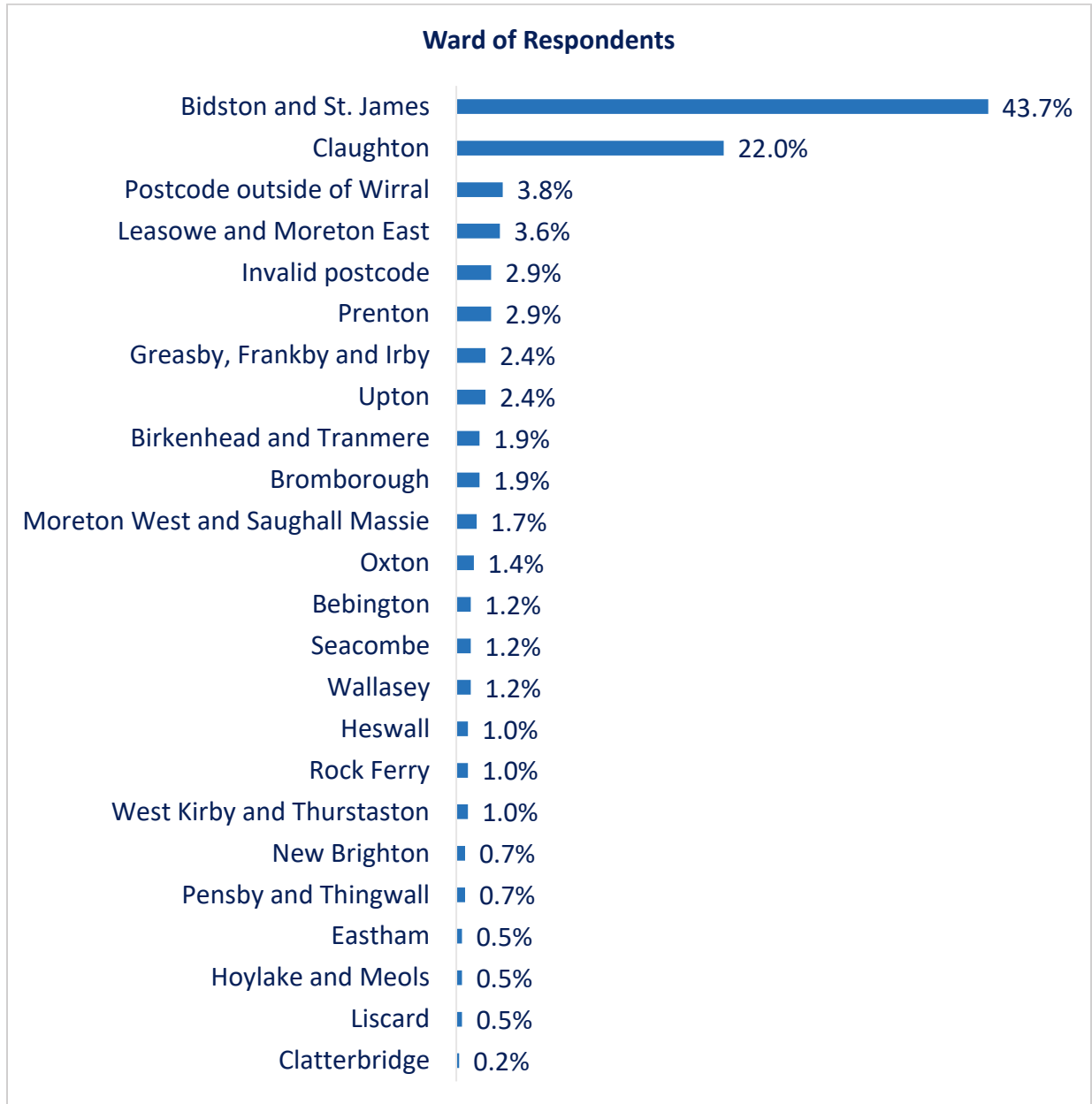


Figure 12: Sexual orientation of respondents

The most represented Wirral Wards were Bidston and St. James (183 people, 43.7%) and Claughton (92 people, 21.4%). There were 16 people (3.7%) who live outside of the Wirral.



## 4.2 Have your say - Site Traffic

Reviewing the site activity, visits, and how people visit the site can be useful to evaluate if people are aware of the site, as well as to ensure engagement activities are deployed effectively, and to a wide range of different people – enhancing public engagement in the future.

886 visited the Pupil Place Planning Consultation page of the Have Your Say site, of these 255 visited multiple project pages and 73 downloaded a document. 265 people in total completed the questionnaire.

These figures cannot be viewed as definitive as they are based on site tracking through ‘cookies’ and there are a number of factors that can impact on this. These include that cookies may be disabled or deleted, individuals may access the site multiple times through different devices or different browsers. However, the figures can be used to gauge how much interest has been generated in individual projects through the rate of engaged participants.

The route that people access the site is known as the traffic source. The ‘Have your say’ portal allows analysis to be carried out on traffic source, and if they lead to engagement in the site tools such as the questionnaire. This analysis allows a greater understanding of which communication and promotional tools to use to optimise engagement.

For this project a range of traffic sources have been reviewed and summarised in the table below. Most visits to the site were either direct visits where people typed the internet address into their web browser (616 visits) or links clicked from social media sites (373). Direct visits generated a rate of engagement of 30.8%, meaning 30.8% of these visits resulted in completion of the survey, and social media visits had an engagement rate of 13.1%.

TRAFFIC CHANNEL	AWARE VISITS	INFORMED VISITS (%)	ENGAGED VISITS (%)
DIRECT	616	338 (54.9%)	190 (30.8%)
SOCIAL	373	176 (47.2%)	49 (13.1%)
EMAIL	3	3 (100%)	1 (33.3%)
SEARCH ENGINE	52	31 (59.6%)	9 (17.3%)
.GOV SITES	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
REFERRALS	18	12 (66.7%)	7 (38.9%)

Table 11: Site traffic sources