

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

The Marches Academy Trust are intent on moving beyond just compliance with the Equality Act, the public sector Equality Duty and the Specific Duties. We have begun a robust programme to embed a culture of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB). Our schools are reviewing practice in a consultative-led assessment which will result in a 3-to-4-year strategic plan.

Our EDIB agenda will be supported by a comprehensive governance process which will incorporate wide stakeholder engagement.

Embedding an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Framework 2021 - 2023

Fully utilising the advantages of all aspects of EDIB means a major shift in just about any organisational culture. This is a long-term commitment to change. Organisational culture change takes years, not days.

Cultural Competency Framework Assessment (CCFA) Nov 2021 – July 2022

The Assessment will:

- Provide an abundance of equality data and opportunities; sufficient to develop the broad framework of the EDIB strategy. The strategy will be shared with Governors, staff, children and young people and wider stakeholders for their feedback. This will be reflected in the final strategy document.
 - Identify gaps and therefore provide a range of short term and medium term equality actions which will support the embedding process and a movement towards an inclusive trust of schools.
-

This assessment is based on 7 themes linked directly to EDIB:

1. Leadership and Organisational Development.
2. Governance Process.
3. Curriculum Design and Delivery
4. Inclusive and Diverse Workforce.
5. EDIB HR/OD Related Policies, Procedures, and Functions.
6. Community Engagement and Partnerships
7. Performance and Monitoring

Using the 'Cultural Competency Assessment' Framework we will:

- Produce Assessment Reports for each school.
- Assess the school/Marches Academy Trust's present level of cultural competency and set bench marking.
- Update Trustees/Local Governing Bodies
- Use the school report, the assessment level and feedback to develop a 3-year Equality Strategy/Policy (to be reviewed annually).
- Include up to four Marches Academy Trust Equality objectives.
- Consult on a draft equality strategy/policy with Marches Academy Trust staff and key stakeholders.

- Produce a consultation/engagement report with its findings.
- Amend strategy to reflect feedback and launch.
- Produce communications on the above and distribute accordingly.
- Launch the strategy to include a Training and Development Plan.

The Marches Academy Trust EDIB Strategic Plan will be ready for consultation September 2022.

Our interim Equality Duty Statement 2021 - 2022

This statement describes how, ahead of the full EDIB review, the Marches Academy Trust intends to fulfil its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty with regard to its pupils and its workforce.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires our Trust to publish information about qualities, specifically taking the following protected characteristics into account.

Protected Characteristics in relation to the workforce includes all 9 protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnerships
5. Pregnancy / Maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and Belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual Orientation

Protected Characteristics in relation to children and young people in a school setting excludes:

1. Age
2. Marriage and Civil Partnerships

At Risk Groups/Under Served Groups could include Carers, Asylum Seekers or Gypsy / Travellers

The information we publish and analyse must be clearly linked to the three aims (General Duties) of the Public Sector Equality Duty. General Duties are the things that schools aim to achieve.

GENERAL DUTIES

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

The two specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty are intended to help schools meet the general duty. They are to:

1. Set equality objectives
2. Publish information

Underpinning our equality objectives are our Marches Academy Trust's objectives for the People First agenda and Quality First Teaching which are to:

- *Develop a culture of an inclusive and diverse workforce - enabling us to draw upon the widest possible range of views, experiences, and opinions.*
 - *Build a trust wide inclusive education curriculum vision that reflects 'The 0-19 Journey'.*
-