

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

The Marches Academy Trust 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 strategy which will result in a 3-to-4-year strategic plan.

Through identifying talent across our schools and enabling working parties, we continue to drive change. We have an established working party of EDIB Ambassadors with a representative from each school and one for shared services. Our Ambassadors attended a Train the Trainer residential June 2022 and have also received Facilitator and Coaching training to support them in their role.

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.

We have completed a Cultural Competency Framework Assessment (CCFA) with each of our schools **The CCFA Assessment:**

- Provided 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 in November 2022. This will be reflected in the final strategy document.
- Identified gaps and therefore provided a range of short term and medium term equality actions in our schools which will support the embedding process and a movement towards an inclusive trust of schools.

This assessment was 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 have:

- Produced Assessment Reports for each school.
- Assessed the schools' present level of cultural competency and set bench marking.
- Updated Trustees/Local Governing Bodies on progress to date
- Used the school report, the assessment level and feedback to develop a draft 3-year Equality Strategy/Policy (to be reviewed annually).
- Supported our schools in setting up to four Marches Academy Trust Equality objectives on their school development plans for 2022 – 2023.

November – December 2022

- Consult on a draft equality strategy/policy with Marches Academy Trust staff and key stakeholders.
- Amend strategy to reflect feedback and launch.
- Collect workforce data on updated Equality monitoring form
- Begin our EDIB Training and Development Plan.

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

*The Marches Academy Trust will include all 9 characteristics in relation to children and young people.

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

We also include at Risk/Vulnerable groups which could include Carers, Asylum Seekers or Gypsy / Travellers

***According to DfE advice - The Equality Act 2010 and Schools**

Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities May 2014

Protected characteristics 1.9

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their: • sex • race • disability • religion or belief • sexual orientation • gender reassignment • pregnancy or maternity

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

1. Age
2. Marriage and Civil Partnerships

The information we publish and analyse will be clearly linked to the three aims (General Duties) of the Public Sector Equality Duty. General Duties are the things that our 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'.*
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