

EDIB

Equality, Diversity
Inclusion &
Belonging



Annual Report
2023 - 24

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Introduction

As part of our duties under The Equality Act (2010), Marches Academy Trust is required to produce and publish an annual report outlining the progress that we have made against our objectives which are set out in our EDIB Strategy 2022-25.

This report sets out a summary of the work undertaken in 2023 - 2024 against our objectives and outcomes, an update on work to meet each objective and finally, our workforce equality data which is also a publishing requirement under The Equality Act (2010).

Investing in embedding EDIB as a golden thread across the work of the trust

Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging is essential for both our workforce and our children and young people. Our vision of Achievement through Caring means we want to make sure all our staff and learners can thrive and reach their full potential. By raising awareness of the many aspects of diversity, how to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity

and foster good relations, we are empowering our workforce and preparing our children and young people to become good global citizens.

The Trust values each person equally. We are committed to building a diverse team and embedding a welcoming, inclusive culture that encourages diversity and authenticity. We believe this will encourage creative ways of thinking – ensuring we collaborate more effectively and achieve better outcomes.

The current Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Strategy is the benchmark for our ongoing work and priorities and runs until July 2025



This report will reflect the work of our EDIB Ambassadors, our schools and our Trust, under the lead of The Executive Director of People and Development, during this reporting period. It will evidence how, as a Trust, we have considered our Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) responsibilities.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require The Marches Academy Trust to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the PSED, at least once a year.
- Produce Equality Objectives at least every four years.

Equality and diversity legislation such as the Equality Act 2010 needs to be followed closely within education.

All people have the right to education without facing discrimination. Following the available guidelines will allow for educational diversity to become the 'norm' expected throughout all educational settings.

The Equality Act stipulates that schools must not discriminate in their admission policies or in the way they afford pupils access to a benefit, facility or service.

Advancing equal opportunities means:

- Removing or reduce the disadvantage people with protected characteristics face.
- Taking steps to meet the specific needs of people with protected characteristics.
- Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate fully in all activities, especially when they are underrepresented.

The Public Sector Equality Duties state we must have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited within The Equality Act 2010
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who don't
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

Other Considerations:**The Children's and Families Act 2014**

Reinforces wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. The act will reform the systems for adoption, looked-after children, family justice and special educational needs. It will introduce changes to support the welfare of children. 13 Mar 2014

Ofsted - Inspecting teaching of the protected characteristics in schools

Updated 31 August 2023

Inspectors will gather evidence on how schools promote equality and pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics. They will use this evidence as part of evaluating and coming to judgements in:

the personal development of pupils

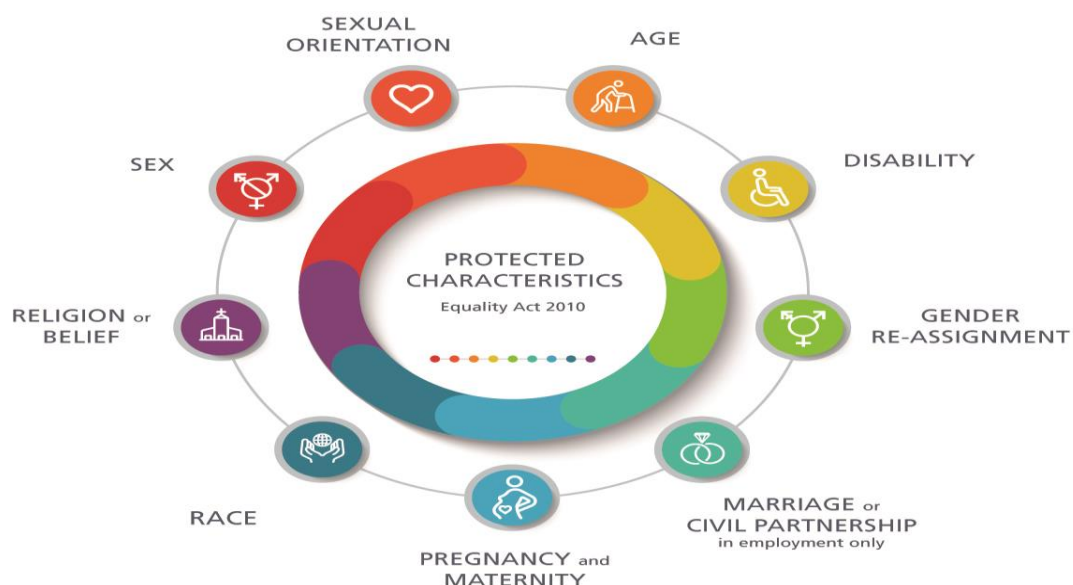
the effectiveness of leadership and management

**The Nine Protected Characteristics**

The nine protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, race, sex, and sexual orientation.

In delivering the first phase of the EDIB Strategy it has provided us as a Trust with an opportunity to make change, transform systems, processes and engage in a fully inclusive way as we strive to listen, adapt and make changes where we can.

We acknowledge that whilst we have a strong foundation of work embedded since the inception of the strategy in 2022, we have a significant journey ahead to enable our objectives, culture and engagement work. The challenge is being met with enthusiasm, passion, commitment and resource to fully and effectively implement the changes we want to see.





“

We are developing a culture of inclusivity which will enable us to draw upon the widest possible range of views, experiences, and opinions.

”

Shropshire demographic profile 2021 Census (Fully released 2023)

The below information data sets are the results of the county of Shropshire from the ONS Census 2021. In the 2021 census the population of Shropshire was 323,600 and is made up of approximately 50.7% females and 49.3% males.

The average age of people in Shropshire is 48, compared to 40 in England.

5.9% of people living in Shropshire in 2021 were born outside of the UK, compared to 17.4% nationally.

97.4% of people living in Shropshire speak English. 94.1% were born within the UK, 5.9% were born outside of the UK.

The religious make up of Shropshire is 55.5% Christian, 37.0% No religion, 0.5% Muslim, 0.3% Buddhist, 0.2% Hindu, 0.2% Sikh, 0.1 Jewish, 0.5% other religion.

49.4% of people are married or in a registered civil partnership. 31.3% never married and never registered a civil partnership, 2.0% separated but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership. 9.9% are divorced or have had their civil partnership dissolved, 7.3% are widowed or surviving civil partnership.

90.6% within Shropshire identify as straight or heterosexual, 1.2% identify as gay or lesbian, 0.96% identify as bisexual, 0.12% identify as pansexual, 0.04% identify as asexual, 0.01% identify as queer, and 0.01% identify as another sexual orientation.

93.98% of people have a gender identity the same as their sex registered at birth, 0.11% of people have a gender identity different from their sex registered at birth but no identity given. 0.05% are registered as a trans woman and 0.06% are a trans man. 0.04% are non-binary.

Within Shropshire 18.5 are classified as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 and 81.5% not disabled under the Equality Act 2010.

56.0% of Shropshire were in employment in 2021, 2.4% unemployed and 41.6% classed as economically inactive. 50.8% of households were not classes as being in deprivation in 2021 compared to 34.0% being deprived in one dimension and 12.4% being deprived in two dimensions, 2.6% in three dimensions and 0.1% deprived in four dimensions.

The top occupations listed by people in Shropshire are : Professional 17.6%, Managers, directors and senior officials 13.9%, Skilled trades 13.8%, Associate professional and technical 12.2%, Caring, leisure and other service 10.0%, Caring personal service 10.0%.

Workforce Diversity Profile and reporting

***Overview data compiled from HR data available on iTrent.**
Pie charts represent feedback from Diversity Indicator Survey carried out September 2023.

In the academic year 2023 – 2024 there are 880 Trust staff and is made up of 73.64% Females and 26.36% Males.

Female	301
Male	103
I prefer not to say	8
Other gender identity	0



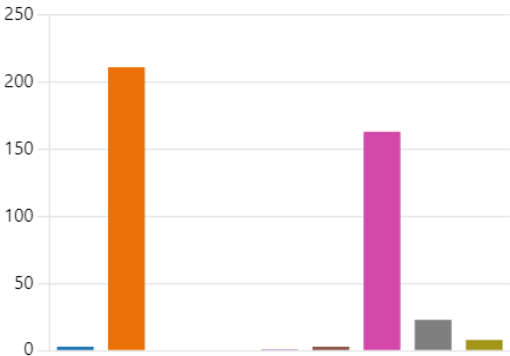
The age ranges across the Trust are Under 21 1.14%, 21-30 13.07%, 31-40 27.16%, 41-50 26.25%, 51-60 20.68%, Over 60 11.70% with the average age as 42.

18-40	184
41-60	205
61 or over	17
I prefer not to say	6



The religious makeup of the Trust

Buddhist	3
Christian (including Church of E...	211
Hindu	0
Jewish	0
Muslim	1
Sikh	3
No religion	163
I prefer not to say	23
Methodist	8



Other religion:

Pagan	3
Serbian orthodox	1
Agnostic	1

Sexual Orientation

Bisexual	9
Gay or Lesbian	7
Straight/Heterosexual	382
I prefer not to say	14



Within the Trust 2.50% of employees have a recorded disability

I have a disability and require a...	22
I have a disability but require no...	25
I do not have a disability	351
I prefer not to say	14



The ethnic makeup of the Trust is White British 34.55%, White English 4.43%, White Welsh 1.02%, White Irish 0.11%, White Scottish 0.45%, any other White background 0.18%, White Other 2.27%, Asian British 0.11%, Black Other 0.11%, Mixed Ethnic British 0.11%, Chinese 0.11%, Mixed Ethnic group Other 0.23%, prefer not to say 0.57%, unknown 1.61%, No answer 51.14%.

English, Welsh, Scottish, Norther...	387
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1
Irish	2
Roma	0



White and Asian	3
White and Black African	0
White and Black Caribbean	1



Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	1

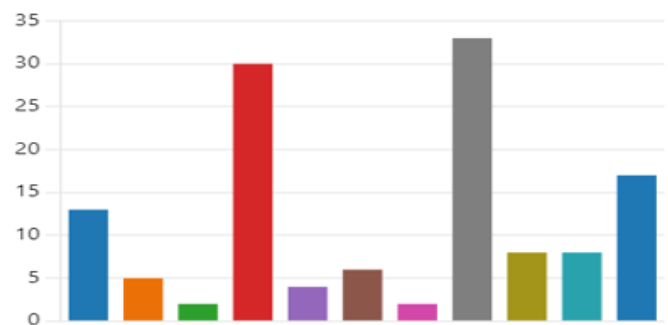


African background (detail below)	1
Caribbean	0



Learning impairments or neurodiversity conditions:

ADHD	13
Autism	5
Dyscalculia	2
Dyslexia	30
Dyspraxia	4
Hearing	6
Learning difficulties	2
Mental health	33
OCD	8
Vision	8
Other	17



GOVERNING BOARD DIVERSITY INDICATOR SURVEY September 2023

Female	29
Male	21
I prefer not to say	2



Age Last Birthday

18-40	9
41-60	23
61 or over	19
I prefer not to say	1



Disability

I have a disability and require a...	3
I have a disability but require no...	5
I do not have a disability	43
I prefer not to say	1



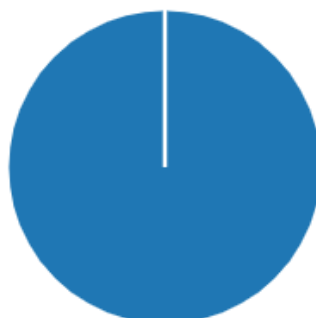
Sexual Orientation

Bisexual	3
Gay or Lesbian	1
Straight/Heterosexual	45
I prefer not to say	3



Ethnic Group

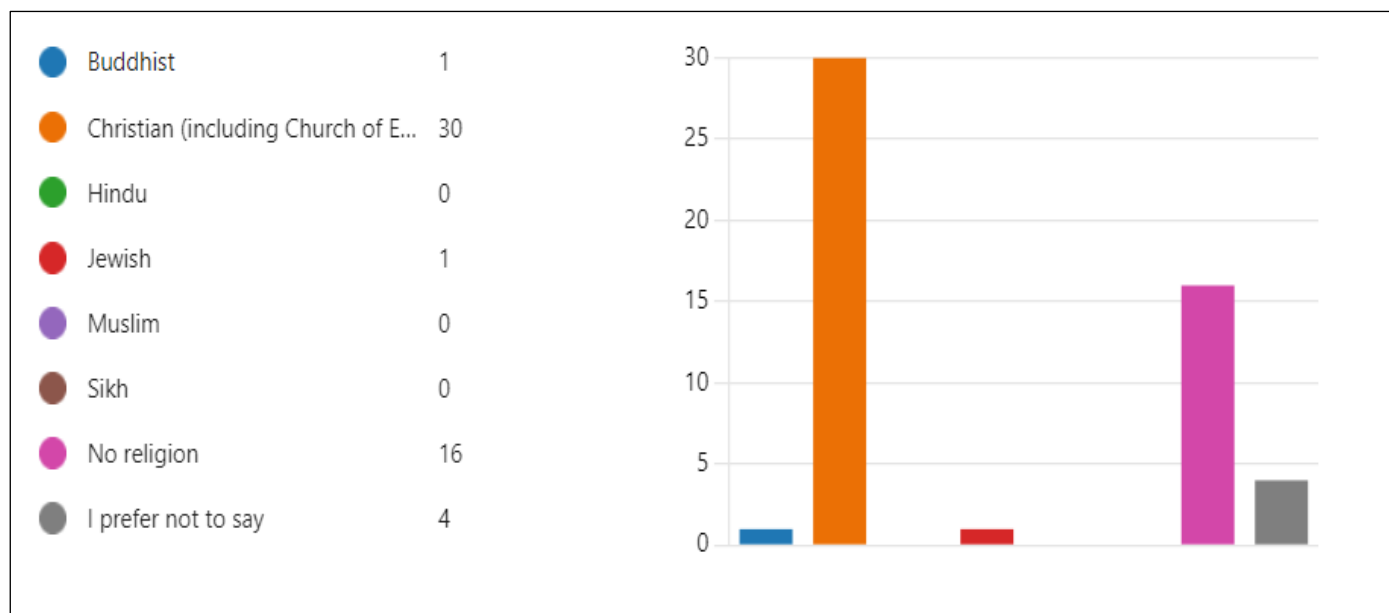
English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern...	50
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0
Irish	0
Roma	0



Other ethnic group:

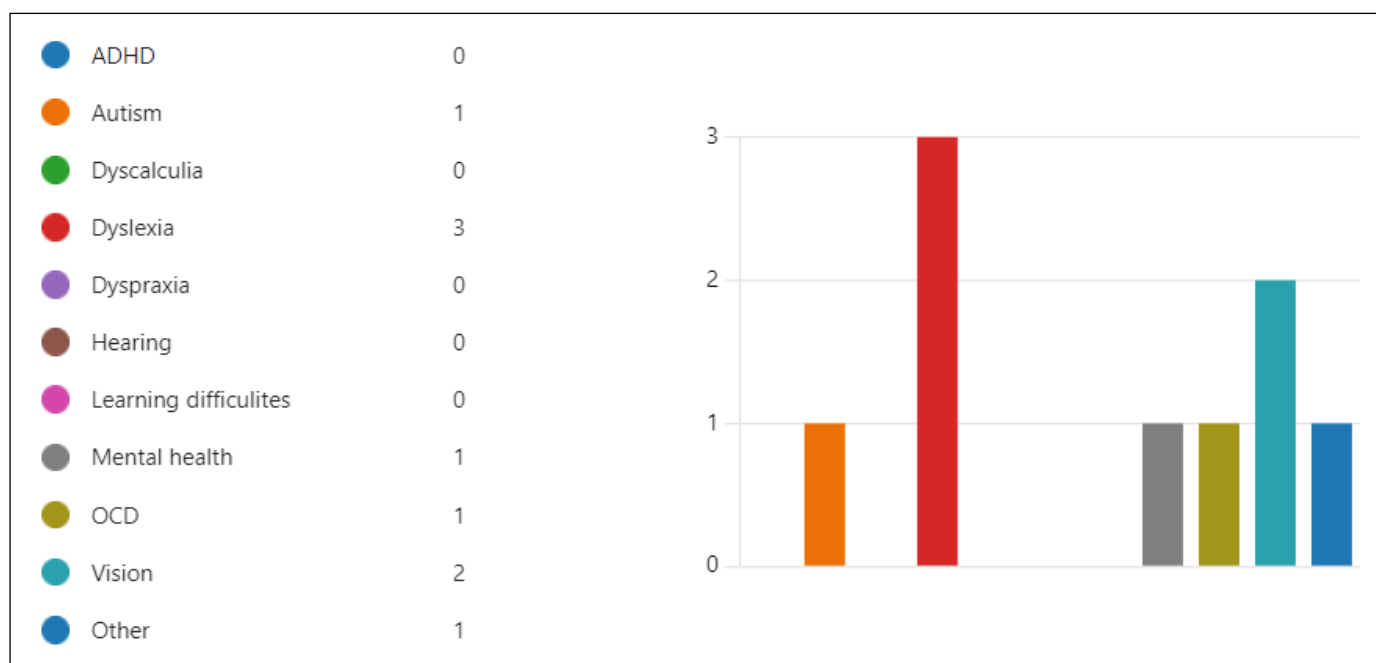
1 x Mixed European, Irish, Russian, Eastern European, refugee heritage

Religion



Other religion: 1 x Pagan

Learning impairments or neurodiversity conditions



Marches Academy Trust EDIB Objectives 2022–25

Reporting on the EDIB Objectives

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

Marches Academy Trust is required to publish information annually to evidence compliance with the Equality Acts Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This annual report provides summary information on progress against our equality objectives along with other activity, good practice or associated mechanisms used to demonstrate compliance with the PSED three aims and other statutory requirements. Information on our EDIB strategy will be published throughout the year, internally and on MMAT and individual school's website.

Marches Academy Trust are embracing its EDIB responsibilities along with providing assurances that our schools are progressing and are supported in meeting these responsibilities.

This will be achieved through referencing:

EDIB Strategy and Objectives

Cultural Competency Framework Grading and Review

Annual Report

Workforce Diversity Profile

The Trust's Executive Director for People and Development supports schools to set EDIB priorities and objectives in consultation with key stakeholders to support the Trust's vision of being an inclusive organisation.

EDIB Priorities for 2023/24

Provide timely and appropriate training and development to the workforce.

School Objectives:

Objective 1: Staff, children, families and community will recognise, respect and celebrate difference.

Objective 2: Our curriculum will develop and reflect the diverse society we live in.

Trust EDIB Objectives (2023 – 2025)

EDIB Objective 1 Inclusive and Diverse Workforce

The Trust has a culture of an inclusive and diverse workforce - enabling us to draw upon the widest possible range of views, experiences, and opinions.

The Trust and schools are clear about its workforce profile being representative of the communities it serves and there is equality of opportunity for all staff.

EDIB Objective 2 EDIB Related Policies and Procedures

The Trust has a range of EDIB related policies procedures and initiatives in place which are reviewed regularly and assessed to ensure fairness and equity.

EDIB Objective 3 Governance Process

The EDIB governance structure provides robust and inclusive governance.

The Trust has a structured and transparent process in place where the development of its EDIB agenda is shared with a range of stakeholders and their views are considered and can influence the EDIB priorities.

EDIB Objective 4 Leadership, Compliance and Organisational Development

Governing Bodies/Trustees and Senior Managers take responsibility for promoting EDIB.

The Trust produces and publishes information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act and its duties.

Cultural Competency Assessment



A Cultural Competency Framework (CCF) model has been used for the development of the EDIB strategy and school EDIB objectives.

Each theme is supported and assessed via a set of specific outcomes against Beginning, Developing, Embedding, Leading.

Baseline Assessment:

Cultural Competency Assessment Grade Ratings across Schools **September 2022**

Cultural Competency Framework Assessment Report Ratings/Findings

Themes	Constant grade across all Schools	Ratings averaged across all Schools
1. Leadership, Compliance and Organisational Development	Developing	Developing
4. Inclusive and Diverse Workforce	Beginning	Beginning
5. EDIB HR/OD Related Policies, Procedures, and Functions.	Developing	Developing
Themes	Variation across all Schools	
2. Governance Process	Beginning - Developing	Beginning
3. Curriculum Design and Delivery	Beginning - Embedding	Developing
6. Community Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships	Beginning - Developing	Developing

Cultural Competency Assessment Grade Ratings across Schools June 2024

Themes	Ratings across the schools	Ratings Averaged
1. Leadership, Compliance and Organisational Development	Developing – Embedding	Developing+
2. Governance Process	Beginning - Embedding	Developing
3. Curriculum Design and Delivery	Beginning - Embedding	Developing+
4. Inclusive and Diverse Workforce	Beginning - Developing	Developing
5. EDIB Related Policies, Procedures, and Functions.	Developing - Embedding	Developing
6. Community Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships	Beginning - Embedding	Developing

*There is now more variation across schools. This was to be expected as the strategy is rolled out.

All the “ratings averaged” have increased, with many more examples of Embedding – particularly in Leadership and Curriculum Design and Delivery.

[Update on Cultural Competency Framework June 2024](#)

Idsall are at the first stage of the strategy and will complete the Cultural Competency Assessment in September 2024.

Engagement and Feedback on impact 2023 – 2024

FEEDBACK FROM EDIB CYP SURVEYS JULY 2023 and JULY 2024

The CYP benchmark survey was delivered across all schools in July 2023. In July 2024 the CYP survey confirmed progress against each question asked of our CYP.

Comparing Data...

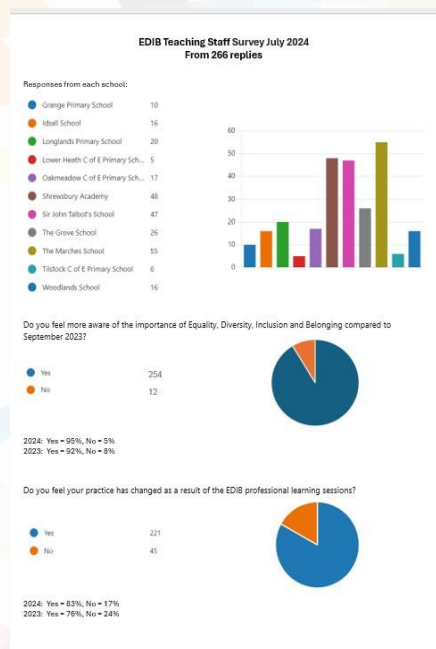
Secondary CYP Survey	2023	2024	
Do you know what the word “diversity” means?	79%	83%	+4%
Do you think our school celebrates diversity?	74%	76%	+2%
Do young people use discriminatory words in our school?	78%	76%	-2%
Do you think disability, gender reassignment, religion and belief, race, gender and sexual orientation are considered in your lessons?	63%	66%	+3%
Do you think the curriculum and the content of what you learn is representative of diversity?	63%	65%	+2%

Primary CYP Survey	2023	2024	
Do you know what the word “difference” means when we talk about people?	94%	98%	+4%
Do you think our school celebrates difference?	81%	92%	+11%
Do children use unkind words in our school?	83%	83%	
Do you learn about differences in your lessons?	93%	99%	+6%

FEEDBACK FROM EDIB – TEACHING STAFF SURVEYS November 2023 and July 2024

Understanding the importance of EDIB and the impact on work based practice has increased since benchmark in 2023 November 2023.

Staff Survey July 2024



Importance of EDIB

2024: Yes = 95%, No = 5%

2023: Yes = 92%, No = 8%

Impact on work based practice

2024 Yes: 83%, No 17%

2023 Yes 76%, No 24%



School	Headteacher Feedback July 2024
Grove	Several workshops, all attended by staff. Increase in staff awareness. Posters have been distributed around site.
Idsal	We really like the EDIB focus, it creates a strong structure and clear guidance and direction. Easy to promote and get involved in.
Longlands	The EDIB strategy is helping to raise the profile of EDIB in school. It would be good to have support with engaging parents next.
Lower Heath	Good quality CPD and important reminders about the importance of EDIB. Easy to implement at Lower Heath as we all agree with it and respect is one of Christian values
Marches	Staff feedback – they are happy here because of the inclusive culture
Oak Meadow	There is greater awareness of the EDIB strategy across all stakeholders. Having an EDIB ambassador has meant that the strategy has been promoted and driven across school. Through working with leaders, the EDIB ambassador has been able to tailor priorities for our setting well.
Shrewsbury Academy	EDIB has been a positive cultural shift with SA contributing strongly to developing an inclusive environment and tackling things head on for the good of our learners and our staff teams.
Grange	Developing-not as impactful at Grange as the ambassador has been off and HT has covered so perhaps not as much work has taken place.
Sir John Talbot's	Supporting shifting the culture, and giving confidence with language
Tilstock	This has bought about lots of deep discussion and debate. This also provides staff with a deeper understanding of what EDIB means and how it is reflected in our own school's context. The professional development sessions provided by the trust are clear and insightful. Staff have been confident to lead on projects

The Strategy so Far

There has been a clear process in setting up and developing the three year strategy.

From the onset we were intent on ensuring this strategy was not “lip service”. This is a long-term commitment to change. Organisational culture changes take years, not days.

To date we have followed a clear timeline with measured outcomes.

The main actions are captured below:

- Set up Governance Structure to ensure buy in from the top
- Established an engaged and enthusiastic working party of EDIB Ambassadors
- Ensured a consultative process on launching the EDIB strategy
- EDIB Ambassador Initial Training
- Cultural Competency Assessment - Identifying areas for development
- Set up a Strategic Plan for 3 Years
- Regular ambassador meetings to drive progress and measure impact
- Trustee and Governor updates and training
- Conference days that invest in our ambassadors and leadership skills
- Empowering our ambassadors to have a voice
- Celebrating achievements through Governor’s meetings, Trust newsletter
- Data Collection and sharing measured impact



Our EDIB Ambassadors



Our Ambassadors promote and advocate for Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging in their schools and across the Trust; helping to create a culture of collaboration, innovation, and belonging. Their role is to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibility to support inclusion, and to help drive cultural and behavioural change

A key part of their role is to monitor and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of progress and identify areas for improvement.

Our EDIB Ambassadors have:

A passion for inclusivity

The ability to working effectively with their teams and lead on driving sustainable improvements.

Commitment to developing the effective practice of others.

The opportunity to:

Be part of a working party of dedicated and enthusiastic colleagues driving change.

Receive training in coaching and how to deliver training.

Develop and share experience; and learn from effective practice

Deepen leadership skills

Gain excellent experience to support career development

Supporting and Empowering our Ambassadors:

- We provide regular feedback, recognition, and appreciation for their efforts and achievements.
- Create a safe and supportive space for them to share their experiences, challenges, and learnings with each other.
- Give them autonomy, authority, and resources to implement their ideas and actions.
- Involve them in decision-making and planning processes, and solicit their input and feedback on diversity and inclusion issues and opportunities.
- Most importantly we show them how their work matters and makes a difference for their colleagues, stakeholders, and communities.
- Our Ambassadors have been empowered to regularly self-evaluate their school's performance against their school objectives and share with their governing bodies and staff.

EDIB Ambassador Training

Our Trust training equips our ambassadors with the skills required to deliver the EDIB strategic objectives. Training to date has explored and clarified the role of the ambassador, tackling any common barriers or challenges and discovering how to unlock the influence and impact that ambassadors can have in achieving an inclusive culture.

The training run by the Executive Lead for People and Development has supported ambassadors to:

- Set school EDIB objectives and map these against their SDP and the Trust's EDIB objectives
- Confidently influence and have impact
- Measure their success and share that knowledge with stakeholders
- Be an Influencer and develop EDIB
- Understand strategy and set direction
- Understand Resistance
- Utilise basic coaching skills
- Have facilitator training to run workshops in school and at our MAT Conference
- Understand models of change
- Develop in confidence to have a voice

EDIB Training and Development

All school teaching staff have completed the three compulsory EDIB training sessions set out on the MMAT Professional Learning Plan 2023 – 2024.

EDIB Training Sessions

1. **Words and language.** Shaping the dialogue with confidence in the classroom. This session digs deeper into the language of inclusion. It encourages participants to consider language choice, to build the confidence to challenge or champion vocabulary and to develop a discerning command of the language of inclusion.
2. **Implicit Bias.** How can we use our understanding of implicit bias to underpin shifts towards equitable classrooms? This session explores our innate human bias and how to combat this to level our approach to assessment, feedback and communication so that our classrooms are equitable, inclusive spaces.
3. **Community Engagement.** An inclusive environment is a place where the voices of everyone in a community can be encouraged, heard, valued and understood. This session will consider community engagement which encourages and establishes a sense of belonging for all.

“The EDIB professional development sessions provided by Trust have been well planned and provoked deep thought, allowing all staff to reflect on what inclusivity means in our setting. All sessions have given valuable, practical time for implementation where collaboration in subject teams has been key. Feedback from staff has been that EDIB sessions allowed them to see their curriculum through different eyes. The buzz after the session has meant that staff were still speaking about ideas they have days after.” **SJT**

Our focus is on developing training that is hard wired to the EDIB agenda's purpose, values and frameworks.

Our EDIB staff training focusses on behaviour change and has tips, techniques and practical take-aways to impact on work based practice.



EDIB Governance Structure

Marches Academy Trust provide governance for EDIB through the following arrangements:

Board of Trustees provide the leadership and have overall decision-making responsibilities for MAT.

The Executive Team receive regular updates from the Executive lead of People and Development and ensure the EDIB strategic plan is achieving its identified aims and objectives within scheduled timeframes.

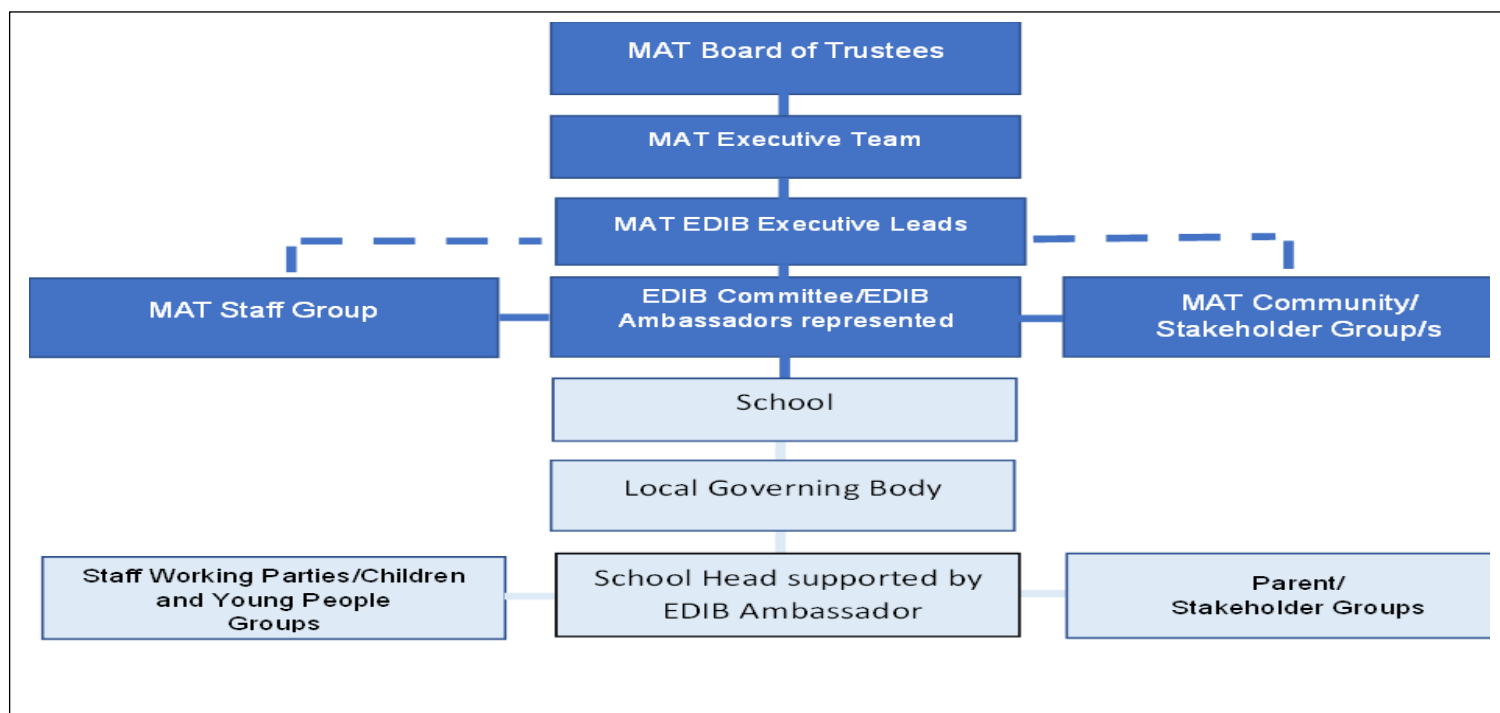
The EDIB committee represents the Trust, School Leaders and stakeholder groups who have recommendation and decision-making responsibilities. The committee brings together representatives from Head Teachers, EDIB Ambassadors, Trustees, Local School Governors, Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff, Children and Young People, Unions, Parents and other stakeholders

Local Governing Body – each school has a Local Governing Body who have oversight of decision-making responsibilities for the School's EDIB agenda.

School Heads and EDIB Ambassadors – play a crucial role and are the glue that binds the EDIB governance structure. They foster good relations and are key influencers between the diverse groups that make up the governance structure.

The Staff Working Parties are in development stage and in 2024 – 2025 will provide a platform for staff at all levels and from a range of areas and departments. These groups will be chaired by the School's EDIB Ambassador. The main function of the staff working parties will be to provide and represent the views of its workforce, provide equality of opportunity of all staff and to provide liaison between the workforce and leadership teams.

Children and Young People Group (CYP) – Through established groups such as “One Voice” and the many EDIB related CYP groups already set up in schools, in 2024 – 2025 we will ensure a platform for our Children and Young People to be involved in the way the schools develop this EDIB Strategy.



We aim to ensure colleagues at senior levels are visible in driving inclusion and challenging behaviours.



A Sample of feedback from the staff survey June 2024

I feel there is a safe space to voice our thoughts and worries. Our work on EDIB is thought provoking, and gives us the opportunity to see where we can adapt our curriculum to be more inclusive. Our EDIB ambassador is brilliant and so helpful.

Really informative and thought provoking. I am now respectfully curious about others backgrounds and perspectives and how this frames their learning.

Through the Trust work on EDIB I have made a concerted effort to engage students and try to be more equitable – without having bias judgements on their background based on their ability.

The Work on EDIB has enabled staff to reflect and have a professional dialogue with one another to provide an inclusive environment for the children and families.

It is vital that we focus on all the facets of EDIB and not do this as a token gesture

The EDIB work has concrete strategies to apply to teaching. It has supported me to self-assesses my own bias and to make more meaningful connections with the children and their families

I am more aware of different cultures and religions. Also I'm more aware of disabilities and how we can share these with the children and have class discussions openly about them.

Key Drivers for Change 2024 - 2025



To collaborate effectively and empower our staff and CYP to embrace our Equality, Diversity Inclusion and Belonging approach

- To build confidence & skills in our colleagues and future CYP working parties leading on EDIB work
- To ensure regular updates on work force EDI data (in line with current GDPR, privacy policy and Data Protection)
- To collate feedback on impact and a “You said, we listened, change happened” culture.
- To ensure all communications promote inclusion and belonging
- To ensure our diverse current and potential workforce are valued, respected, and celebrated.
- To develop and deliver a fully inclusive curriculum
- To share and embed the EDIB initiative with our communities

The majority of what we do as a Trust requires us to be collaborative to ensure we effectively deliver relevant and inclusive services to all stakeholders. We know that creativity, innovation and equality, diversity and inclusion go hand in hand when it comes to supporting our staff, CYP and communities in our drive to become a fully inclusive organisation.

The work we have completed and committed to since launching the EDIB Strategy needs to be supported at every level and be driven through proactive teams and passionate individuals. We have an EDIB Policy that establishes our purpose and processes for those who face discrimination, and we aim to consistently address inequality at given opportunities.



Marches Academy Trust 

CPB July 2024