



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



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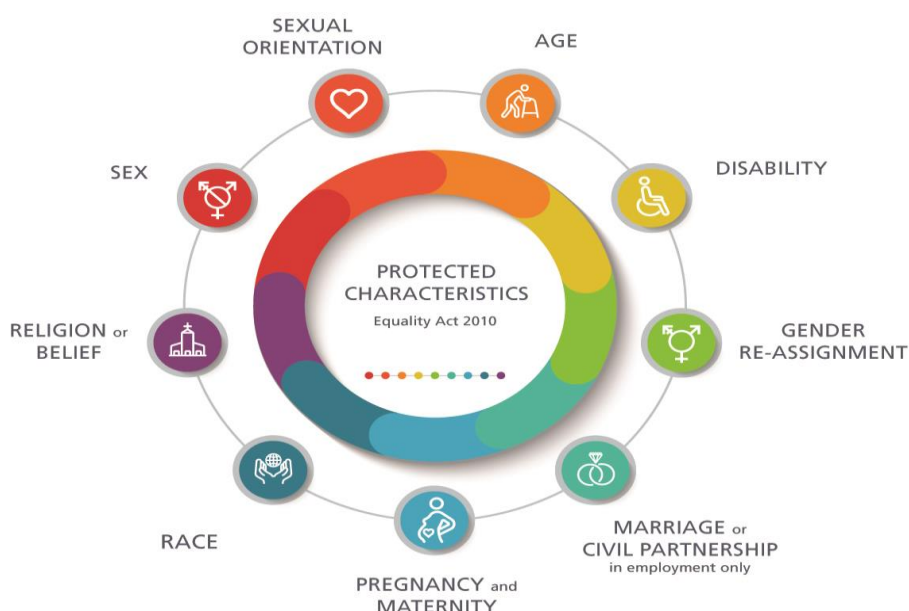
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Introduction/Context

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 all strands of diversity, how to eliminate discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations, we are empowering our workforce and preparing our children and young people to become good global citizens, appreciating and celebrating the diverse society in which we live.

Additionally, this important agenda will ensure we have a workforce which reflects the differences of our learners which in turn will help to shape a responsive and tailored service. We appreciate that talents reside in people of all backgrounds and a diverse workforce can harness this.

This is The Marches Academy Trust's first Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Annual Report (2022 – 2023)



This report will reflect the equality programme of work during this reporting period and how, as a Trust, we have considered and evidenced our Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) responsibilities.

Addressing inequalities will be a key focus for the Trust and our schools. The Trust has adopted, adapted and implemented the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) principles, working with a consultant to make our EDIB Strategy bespoke to Marches Academy Trust. In 2023-2024 we will continue to advance EDIB through a range of initiatives, activities and collaborations.

Primary Legislation

Equality Act 2010 and its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

1. The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and sets out functions to have due regard to and:
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

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, which includes school trips.

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 Education Inspection Framework 2023](#)

Inspectors will assess the extent to which the school complies with the relevant legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, including, where relevant, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Human Rights Act 1998. Schools must "promote an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation". Inspectors report non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 whenever encountered.

Equality objective 1

Through our inspections and insights, we will raise standards in education, helping to advance equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics, as well as those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

Equality objective 2

Through our inspections and regulatory activity, Ofsted will be a force for improvement for children in care and care leavers. This will particularly benefit some groups with protected characteristics who are disproportionately represented in the care population.

Equality objective 3

We will use our independent voice to share our insights, which will inform practitioners, policymakers and decision-makers. This will improve the education and social care systems, often impacting most on those with protected characteristics.

Marches Academy Trust Equality 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 three PSED 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
Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report
Workforce Diversity Profile Report
Annual School EDIB Audit
Cultural Competency Framework Grading and Review

Developing EDIB Objectives

A Cultural Competency Framework (CCF) model was identified for the development of this EDIB strategy and EDIB objectives. This model was shared and positively received by our schools. The framework has been designed to fit with the primary and secondary education architecture as it fully develops and encourages alliances, builds relationships, multi-speciality networks, strong leadership and governance, evidence-based decision making and advances EDIB through the curriculum, policies and day to day functions.

The Cultural Competency Framework comprises of 6 themes which were assessed:

Theme 1: EDIB Leadership, Compliance and Organisational Development.

Theme 2: Governance Process

Theme 3: Curriculum Design and Delivery

Theme 4: Inclusive and Diverse Workforce

Theme 5: EDIB HR/OD Related Policies, Procedures, and Functions.

Theme 6: Community/Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

Each theme was supported and assessed via a set of specific outcomes. Monitoring performance against these themes will be reviewed annually.

Each school undertook the Cultural Competency Framework assessment to establish a baseline, identify areas of good, embedded practice and to identify areas for development; which can be carried out independently or as a collaboration with other schools and the Trust.

The assessments:

- Provided equality data and opportunities, sufficient for Marches Academy Trust to develop its EDIB Strategy and for each school to develop individual objectives which would support school development planning.
- Identified gaps which provided a range of short term and medium term EDIB actions which would support the embedding process and a further movement towards equality diversity and inclusion.

The results from the Cultural Competency Framework assessment supported the development of and underpinned the EDIB Objectives.

The EDIB strategy went out for consultation in November 2022. It was shared with Trustees, Local Governing Bodies, Headteachers and a newly formed EDIB committee. The committee includes a representative from:

- Headteachers
- EDIB Ambassadors
- Trustees
- Local School Governors
- Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff
- Parents and other stakeholders
- Union representative

The following table shows the results of the “Cultural Competency Framework Grading and Review” finalised in September 2022 to benchmark our position before initiating the EDIB Strategy 2022 – 2023.

Cultural Competency Assessment Grade Ratings across Schools September 2022

Themes	Constant Grade Ratings across the Trust and schools	Ratings Averaged
Leadership, Compliance and Organisational Development	Developing	Developing
Inclusive and Diverse Workforce	Beginning	Beginning
EDIB Related Policies, Procedures, and Functions.	Developing	Developing
Themes	Variation across the Trust and Schools	Ratings Averaged
Governance Process	Beginning - Developing	Beginning
Curriculum Design and Delivery	Beginning - Embedding	Developing
Community Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships	Beginning - Developing	Developing

As the EDIB strategy has only operated for a year, new benchmarking figures are being established on the impact so far from reporting tools such as feedback reports from children and young people, parents, staff, governors and trustees. These will be available Autumn term 2023.

Workforce Diversity Profile and Reporting

We are committed to building a diverse team that is representative of our local communities, 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.

We acknowledge we are at the beginning phase in collating our workforce diversity profile. This will be a key focus for the HR team in 2023 – 2024. In collating the data, we will benchmark against the **Shropshire Demographic Profile** and use this as a baseline to measure the diversity of our staff across the full range of pay grades and in future workforce planning.

Shropshire Demographic Profile 2021 Census (Fully released 2023)

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 classed 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%,

Implementing a Fair and Transparent Recruitment Process

[Link to ASCL guidance paper](#)

One of the first steps to changing the make-up of schools and colleges is to review recruitment processes to determine whether they are truly inclusive. For all school and college roles, implementing a consistent and fair process is vital to the ongoing success of the organisation. The focus in this guidance is two-fold: firstly, how to ensure as employers schools and colleges recruit the best candidates fairly and transparently; and secondly, how to ensure schools and colleges are employing best practice to enable candidates to experience a positive, fair, and transparent process.

In 2022 – 2023 a recruitment working party headed by the Executive Director of People and Development reviewed the advertisements for jobs to ensure they include an explicit EDIB statement. In 2023 – 2024 Marches Academy Trust will review each stage of the recruitment process objectively to ensure we are operating a truly inclusive, fair, and transparent process which in turn will enable candidates from all backgrounds to thrive.

Recruitment Process Data by Protected Characteristic

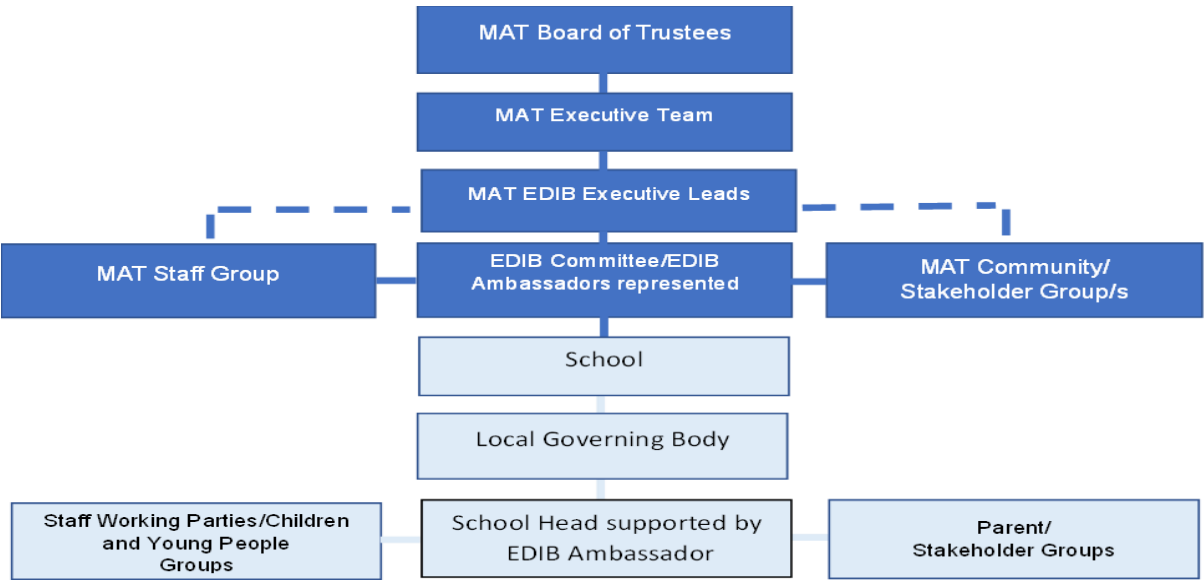
In 2023 – 2024 recruitment data will be analysed by protected characteristics. The information will provide a breakdown of applicants by protected characteristics and how they fared in the recruitment process.

As this will be the first time the recruitment process data is produced and published no clear messaging, analysis or comparisons can be drawn. It will be used as a baseline for identifying any future trends where potential disparities between certain protected groups may exist during the recruitment process, where any such disparities might be mitigated or rationalised.

The Marches Academy Trust Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy

We have updated our EDIB Policy to be more aligned to and reflective of our new strategy. The policy provides details of how, in carrying out our day-to-day functions and activities, The Marches Academy Trust will consider our due regard responsibilities to the Equality Act and its associated duties. The policy is currently in draft form and going out for consultation before approval by trustees.

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 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 will 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, 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 Headteachers 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 will be developed over time and 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 management teams.

Children and Young People (CYP) Group – Through established groups, for example – The “One Voice” Group and or other CYP groups we will ensure a platform for our CYP to be involved in the way the schools develop this EDIB Strategy.

Parent /Stakeholder Groups

Parents and other significant stakeholders e.g., Carers, Voluntary and Community and provider partners will continue to be developed across the MAT and the schools.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) Ambassadors

In June 2022 we appointed an EDIB Ambassador in each school and a representative from Shared Services. The Ambassador roles were taken up by staff across a range of experience.

Our Ambassadors have been extremely active in 2022 – 2023.

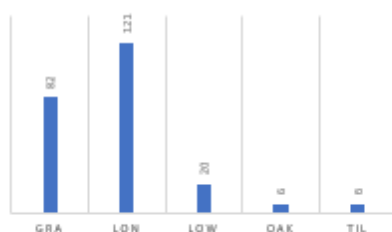
- In consultation with senior leaders, they ensured EDIB objectives formed part of the School Development Plan.
- The group has met half termly to review progress and move forward.
- They have regularly reported back in staff briefings, Local Governing Body meetings, through interim assessments and the Trust newsletter - sharing good practice and the impact of the EDIB strategy.
- Many have formed EDIB student voice groups and the Ambassador for Shrewsbury Academy has formed a parent group to provide a platform to support, express and voice a range of experiences.
- Ambassadors have led and facilitated the EDIB professional learning sessions scheduled across the year and delivered the EDIB workshop at the MMAT February conference.
- The year culminated in a 1-day conference in June 2023 which celebrated the work done in 2022 – 2023 and focused on objectives for 2023 – 2024 to develop the EDIB strategy.

Engagement and Feedback on Impact 2022 - 2023

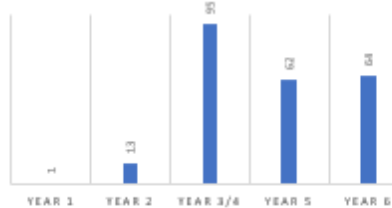
The CYP survey was delivered across all schools in July 2023. The results will benchmark current impact and enable us to measure progress in 2023 – 2024.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEY – PRIMARY
Feedback Report – July 2023

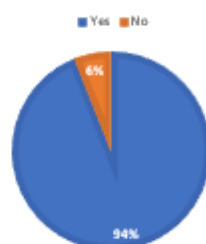
NUMBER OF SURVEY RETURNS



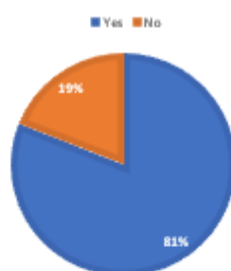
RETURNS FROM EACH YEAR GROUP



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE WORD "DIFFERENCE" MEANS WHEN WE TALK ABOUT PEOPLE?



DO YOU THINK OUR SCHOOL CELEBRATES DIFFERENCE?



DO CHILDREN USE UNKIND WORDS IN OUR SCHOOL?



DO YOU LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENCES IN YOUR LESSONS?

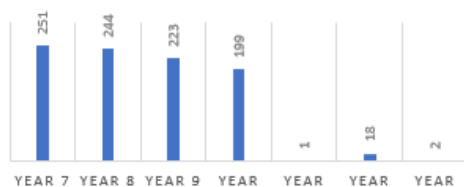


CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEY – SECONDARY
Feedback Report – July 2023

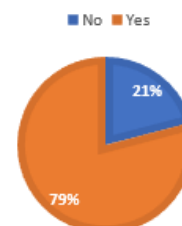
NUMBER OF SURVEY RETURNS



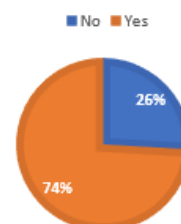
RETURNS FROM EACH YEAR GROUP



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE WORD "DIVERSITY" MEANS?

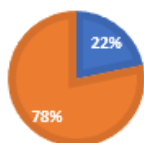


DO YOU THINK OUR SCHOOL CELEBRATES DIVERSITY?



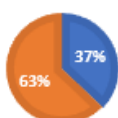
DO YOUNG PEOPLE USE DISCRIMINATORY WORDS IN OUR SCHOOL?

■ No ■ Yes



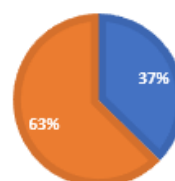
DO YOU THINK DISABILITY, GENDER REASSIGNMENT, RELIGION AND BELIEF, RACE, GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION ARE CONSIDERED IN YOUR LESSONS?

■ No ■ Yes



DO YOU THINK THE CURRICULUM AND THE CONTENT OF WHAT YOU LEARN IS REPRESENTATIVE OF DIVERSITY?

■ No ■ Yes



Surveys to staff, parents and governors will be sent in September 2023 to benchmark against feedback surveys in July 2024 to measure progress.

Ensuring a Sense of Belonging

We Thrive Survey 2022 - 2023

The Engagement survey was launched 13th June, running until 9th July 2022. 650 of our staff were surveyed with 351 completions (54%)

[Link to survey](#)

High scores in green across all schools in areas of School and pupils (company and customers) in personal performance, skills, attention. **78% of the Trust and schools felt there was a common bond and meaning which shows real progress towards a sense of belonging.**

EDIB related question:

“Marches Academy Trust and my school value and are developing a culture of an inclusive and diverse workforce – enabling us to draw upon the widest possible range of views, experiences and opinions.”

The average score across the 10 schools and the Trust is 67%. The KPI for evidence of impact is 70% or above.

As identified, we are in the beginning stage of developing an inclusive and diverse workforce and how HR capture this data. The survey July 2023 will be used as a benchmark against the We Thrive survey in February 2024

EDIB Training and Development

- All school teaching staff have completed the three compulsory EDIB training sessions set out on the MMAT Professional Learning Plan. This will continue into 2023 – 2024.
- Training for our EDIB Ambassadors has included conferences assessing their role, developing the skills needed and learning from good practice. Each Ambassador has also had a full day training in coaching and a second day in facilitator competencies to support them on leading change, working with others, and delivering professional learning sessions.
- Feedback from schools on the EDIB training that has been undertaken by staff on the professional learning sessions and conference workshops in 2022 – 2023 has been captured. Testimonials reveal a positive response and there are evidenced action plans for departments and school areas. In 2023 – 2024 schools will be tasked with capturing evidence to demonstrate the impact of EDIB professional learning.

“The professional development sessions provided by Trust have been well planned and well-tailored to Sir John Talbot's School's needs. The EDIB session in particular provoked deep thought and allowed 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**

“The EDIB sessions have made it clear that this isn't an extra thing to do, but an integral part of the ethos we want to have here at The Marches. Staff have been full of ideas about how they can make small, yet effective, changes and tweaks to their curriculum to have a positive impact. We also collectively thought about the school as a whole and how we could make practical changes to our practice.” **Marches**

- Training for Governors has been shared and can be accessed through the [NGA](#)
- A range of additional training and development opportunities in response to needs analysis will be made available to staff as we develop the strategy.

EDIB Training for 2023 – 2024

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. This builds on the workshop delivered at the MMAT conference in February.

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 positive interaction within the community and establishes a sense of belonging for all.

Communications and Involvement

From the onset, the introduction of the EDIB strategy has involved a consultative process. In our first year we have begun engaging with schools, staff, pupils, parents and governors to ensure the strategy is developed by all stakeholders.

As we move forward, we intend to communicate in a variety of ways:

- Surveys
- Social media
- Staff participation groups
- Public events
- Focus groups
- Reports on the impact
- A new information page hosted on websites “**Speak UP**” to share the various way staff can get support from EDIB Ambassadors, HR and Wellbeing hubs.

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.

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

The children and young people within our organisation will not only be informed of the importance on equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging but will actively support its implementation in their contribution to building a fair and just society.