

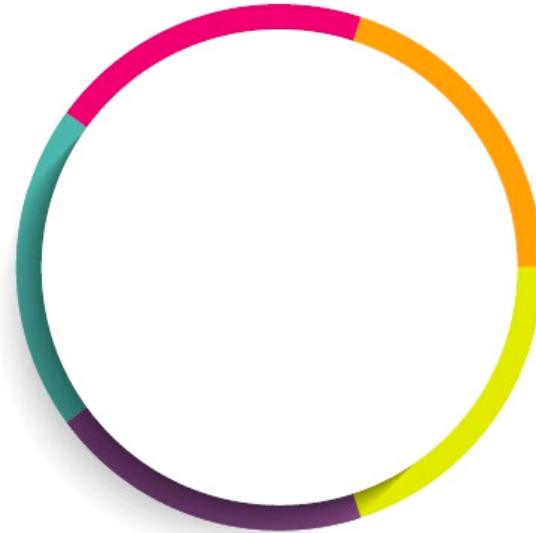


Marches Academy Trust

**ANNUAL
REVIEW
2020/21**

Vision & Values

Our vision:
Achievement
through caring



Excellence

Excellence: striving
always for mastery
and personal success

Integrity

Integrity: consistently
acting with honesty,
compassion and
respect

Empathy

Empathy: embracing
and supporting the
uniqueness of every
individual

Creativity

Creativity: inspiring
and challenging
through invention,
experimentation
and exploration

Equality

Equality: ensuring
fair opportunity
for all

Strategic Priorities

ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH CARING

Empower everyone in our Trust and our communities to live and breathe Achievement Through Caring and reach their full potential

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PEOPLE FIRST STRATEGY	LEARNING FOR LIFE	CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY	SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
A culture of talent spotting that develops leadership capacity at all levels and engages all our workforce.	'Anytime, anywhere learning'	Share the strength of the Trust to ensure Achievement Through Caring for all	Secure financial foundations on which to build the future school
A National/International lead in leadership programmes and conferences with a 'Research School' approach to Professional Learning.	Building a community of lifelong learners	High quality governance embedded	Safe and secure schools that meet the needs of schools and their curriculum
Developing a culture of an inclusive and diverse workforce - enabling us to draw upon the widest possible range of views, experiences and opinions.	Dynamic and flexible workforce	MAT plays a central role in the communities it serves	Environmental impact of schools reduced with clean energy and energy efficient equipment installed across the estate
	Research led education	Collaboration locally, nationally and internationally	An Exemplary wellbeing programme. The mental wellbeing of our school staff remains high on the agenda.

Strategic Priorities Continued

BY 2025

<p>PEOPLE FIRST STRATEGY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » A talent pathway that “grows our own” engaged workforce, which supports succession planning. » Staff will have a clear sense of purpose, a strong sense of belonging and an appreciation of everyone’s unique contribution to the Trust. All staff will be able to identify the standards of excellence that pertain to their role, the professional development they have had and the next steps they will be undertaking. » To be a National/International lead in leadership programmes with MAT, National & International Learning Conferences. » Trust professional learning programme underpinned by research-based study.
<p>LEARNING FOR LIFE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » To ensure all learning is accessible ‘Anytime, anywhere’, creating opportunities beyond the classroom » To build a trust wide inclusive education curriculum vision that reflects ‘The 0-19 Journey’ » Build a dynamic and flexible multi-skilled workforce with an ethic of excellence understanding the MMAT way. » We will ensure that all staff have opportunity to research and develop in their understanding of teaching and learning, so that there is an expert understanding of pedagogy, skill, knowledge to secure learning at every level with contributions at local and national level. » Create a process for the identification, quality assurance and training of enablers of excellence in learning and teaching
<p>CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We will have realised a growth plan, underpinned by the infrastructure and capacity required to ensure existing academies continue to flourish and those joining are able to benefit from the opportunities the Trust provides. » We will have robust processes and procedures, so the Trust remains sustainable. » We will be recognised throughout the world for our creative intersectional curriculum and innovative practice.
<p>SUSTAINABLE FUTURE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We will have school estate which is fit for the needs of the curriculum, providing a safe and secure learning environment which also minimises the environmental impact through energy efficiency and clean energy sources. » Finances will be secure and income streams diversified to provide greater security against funding fluctuations. » Shared services will deliver value for money solutions, schools will recognise the value provided. » The Marches Academy Trust is a centre of excellence in the investment of emotional health, wellbeing and equal opportunities of our staff.

Reflections

Since our last Annual Report, and despite the national and international pandemic, the Trust has continued to look to the future, to ensure our family of schools can develop to give the children and young people in our communities the best learning experiences. As we moved into autumn 2021 the new variant spread, COVID numbers nationally increased and things became increasing difficult for schools. Once again, our schools have remained teaching face to face, whilst some schools nationally have had a temporary return to virtual learning.

Key to the success of our Trust are the fantastic staff who work for us, and we have been looking at ways of giving our staff flexibility, so that we retain talent for the future. Looking ahead, the Executive team will be working with leadership teams to explore different ways that we can give our staff head space.

Our big idea is to create an education model that encourages all learners to achieve. Whilst we have ideas, our challenge now is finding practical ways to make these work for everyone from our children, young people, staff, and communities.

“ Ideas are easy. Execution is everything. ”

John Doerr

School of the Future

On page 2 and 3 are our strategic priorities for 2025. Each section of this report will demonstrate how we have moved towards these priorities over the past 12 months.



↓
2025



Attendance

- During the first half of autumn term attendance, although down on historic levels, held up well against national figures. Following the half term break, and as cases in North Shropshire soared to the highest levels since the start of the pandemic, securing good attendance became increasingly challenging. North Shrewsbury and Market Drayton appear to have been particular virus hotspots.
- The number of absences between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students is particularly stark, with disadvantaged students losing many more days of school than their peers. Improving disadvantaged attendance in all our schools will be a key challenge for spring and summer terms in all Trust schools.



- All secondary schools now have a full-time Attendance Officer in post. All are well embedded into their schools and have become key in monitoring and return to school dates for positive cases of COVID-19. Typically, they are managing daily absence lists that run into treble figures. Their work has been invaluable in ensuring good information flow between school and home, and they have typically been acting as de facto Coronavirus 'Helplines' for anxious families.
- Attendance is now a key part of the Trust Inclusion Framework, and continued development of the Arbor MIS will ensure that school leaders can access automated and live inclusions data for their schools.
- Education Welfare Officers have continued to support all our schools in challenging circumstances. Their support has been very welcome when challenging parents and carers whose children are repeatedly self-isolating or when families are reluctant to send their children to school.

Strategic Development

- The Trust has secured a significant sum from the Department for Education (DfE) for the Shrewsbury Academy build.
- Woodlands SEMH School successfully joined the Trust in April 2021.
- The Trust secured substantial funding from Shropshire LA to develop the Woodlands site.
- Headteachers across our family of schools are working with Safeguarding and SEND Quality Assurance Leads to develop a Trauma based ethos.
- Cavelle Priestley-Bird, has been appointed as the strategic lead for the Shropshire Telford Teaching School Hub (STEP).
- The CEO was on the Shropshire Local Authority interview panel to appoint the new Assistant Director for Education, demonstrating that the Trust is now a well respected voice in Shropshire.
- The Trust have moved away from Telford and Wrekin as the IT provider as our own infrastructure and IT team have been able to create a more innovative, responsive and robust provision across our Trust.
- The Trust is the first trust nationally to be awarded the partnership grant to work with the Aylestone Federation of schools in Hereford.
- A number of schools are working with us on the 'Try before you buy' scheme to see if they would benefit from joining the Trust.



Strategic Development Continued

- Since September 2020, The Marches Academy Trust have developed over 50 young adults via the Apprenticeship, Traineeship and Kickstart programme run by staff within the Trust. Working closely with The Department for Work & Pensions, Sports Structures, Association of Physical Education and Sports Leaders, we have seen 98% of these young adults achieve a full-time position within The Marches Academy Trust. Our development apprenticeships include:

- The Level 2 Community Activator Coach

This Apprenticeship is aimed at any organisation that coaches sport in the community. This carefully designed training and work programme combination teaches a range of skills.

- The Level 4 Sports Coach

The Level 4 Sports Coach apprenticeship is aimed at an advanced coach working in school sport, community sport or a high-performance sport environment.

- The Level 3 Community Sport and Health Officer

The Level 3 Community Sport and Health Officer Apprenticeship is aimed at any organisation that is looking to initiate behavioural change to a community through sport and physical activity.

- The Level 3 Business Administrator

The Level 3 Business Administrator Apprenticeship provides the opportunity to gain the skills and experience needed to work in any business administration role.



Strategic Development Continued

- Since January 2021 there have been a significant number of grants brought into the Trust. Details of these are:
 - £2,575 from Sport England for our Active Drayton Programme.
 - £78,900 from the Department for Work & Pensions for the Kickstart Programme.
 - £1,500 from the High Sheriff of Shropshire for Outdoor Learning at Longlands Primary School.
 - £8,900 from Shropshire Council for the Easter Holiday Provision.
 - £1,500 from Tesco Shrewsbury to help create their Community Allotment.
 - £900 from Belton Farm to help run the North Shropshire District Programme.
 - £750 from Aico Ltd. Sponsoring the Shropshire Outdoor Learning Conference.
 - £32,000 from Sport England to help improve the sporting facilities at Sir John Talbot's School, The Grove School, Shrewsbury Academy & The Marches School.
 - £19,450 from Shropshire Council to help run the Summer HAF Holiday Scheme within our primary schools.
 - £250 from the Shropshire Free Masons to support the running of the Social Farm at Longlands Primary School.
 - £4,400 from Aico Ltd to support the Social Farm provision at Longlands Primary School, Grange Primary School and Woodlands School.
 - £5,750 from the Actio Project to help our primary physical education team deliver SEND programmes.
 - £10,000 from the Wildlife Trust to help develop the courtyard at Longlands Primary School.
 - 10 Computers from the Connexus Group to help with home learning.





Trustee & Governance

- The Board of Trustees now has four Members Anna Burgess, Robert Forrester, David Griffiths and a CECET representative. Bob Pearson resigned in May.
- The Board of Trustees now has eight Trustees with Pam Edwards joining in February (appointed by the Diocese) and Angela Cattermole joining this September (appointed by Members). Alex Fry remained Chair of Trustees with Catherine Bennett as Vice Chair, and Keith Winter resigned in July.

- In June the Board completed a self-review of its performance. In summary the Trustees felt they had the right skills and background and exhibited strong relationships and trust amongst the Board. The appointment of new female Trustees means the Board is now more balanced and no longer male dominated. Trustees also felt that the Board does hold the appropriate number of meetings per year, receives adequate materials in advance and Trustees were satisfied with the content of these.
- External Governance Reviews are being organised for each school with an external school inspection consultant. The Grove and Tilstock have already undertaken this process and have benefitted from this valuable exercise.



Trustee & Governance Continued



- The Trust has been assisting in helping prepare its schools and Governors for impending Ofsted inspections by publishing a useful guide with key questions and answers. Some of these key questions have been dropped into a new annual LGB planner to help Governors raise challenge in certain areas. The Trust arranged an informative workshop with an external Ofsted expert on the new Ofsted framework and The Grove have undertaken a valuable internal mock Ofsted interview with senior leaders. The Clerk to Trust's Boards has worked closely with Clerks at The Grove and Tilstock to help them prepare and a checklist has also been provided to all Clerks to help them in their own preparations.

- The Trust is in the process of setting up Communities of Governance for Governors to receive support in their areas of responsibility and Trustee School Links to further boost Trustee knowledge of how our schools are performing and developing. It is hoped both new initiatives will enhance communication between the layers of Governance and strengthen Governance across the Trust.
- This year the Trust has focused on delivering quality training requested by our Governors. Browne Jacobson delivered a key workshop on exclusions best practice and legislation. We have also delivered useful Bitesize Governance workshops on understanding the curriculum, interpreting school data, finance and the Governor's role in monitoring the Single Central Record. There has been good engagement from Governors across our ten schools and positive feedback received in this regard. The Trust has also started collating a centralised training record.
- The Clerk to the Trust's Boards began conducting a Clerks skills audit to establish any knowledge gaps or issues that need addressing. There have been various changes in Clerking personnel, and she will be working closely with them to provide an in-depth induction.





People First Strategy

- We continue to invest in our staff to provide them with the necessary training and support to ensure the Trust's aims are met. We have embraced and celebrated continuous learning and believe we have created a culture where all learning is valued.
- All staff have been given the opportunity to make the most of their potential through fair and open access to training. We continue to utilise effective use of in-house resources and expertise to support training needs. We have successfully run a robust professional learning programme across the Trust in response to school development priorities. This combines essential modules with elective modules according to each school's needs analysis.

- Under our Talent Management Strategy, we have increased the opportunities on our Talent Pathway. We have a bespoke Early careers framework and a new NQT + 1 programme to support our early career teachers and support retention in the profession. We have continued to provide an environment in which everyone is encouraged and supported to develop leadership and management competencies. The new suite of National Professional Qualifications led by The Alliance of Leading Learning underpins this. Over 300 of our MAT staff have accessed the NPQs. We currently have 60 registrations onto the Shropshire cohort for February 2022.
- We continue to drive change and school improvement through enabling working parties with representatives from each school. The work of the agents and architects continues to have impact on schools' progress.



- We have launched the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging strategy and have a clear plan in place to ensure we are a fully inclusive Trust.
- We ran a Headteacher 2-day conference focusing on the Executive Review and developing a coaching culture. This was very positively received by our Headteachers.
- We ran a very successful, scaled down National Conference for 45 delegates (due to Covid restrictions). The day was hosted by Sir Tim Brighouse, Professor Mick Waters and renowned international speaker Richard Gerver. Such events continue to secure us on the national map.
- We are hosting a MAT conference for 400+ of our MAT teaching staff at Telford International Centre in February 2022 to drive our journey towards the school of the future.
- Through our Teaching School work, we are working collaboratively as a Professional Learning Community to devise and deliver innovative, high-quality programmes for school improvement and the quality of teaching and leadership.

Learning For Life

- The Trust has worked to develop an effective inclusion framework to secure learning for all, with a clear commitment to ensuring our children and young people get the provision they need and deserve.
- There is a robust system of quality assurance that supports each of our schools in strategic leadership, quality first learning and ensuring there is a well sequenced, balanced and broad offer delivering a carefully considered curriculum and strong pedagogy.
- As a Trust we offer a strong structure in our quality assurance that facilitates professional development and secures excellence for all in our schools.



- Across our schools we are proud of the environments we are developing and our strong school to school relationships also ensure we can give expertise to the provision we provide.
- The schools have continued to develop provision according to need, following an unprecedented period in education.



- Remote learning has evolved to ensure that no young person misses out on their learning offer.
- Lessons learned from use of digital technology has meant that, when necessary, schools have been able to switch efficiently and quickly between remote, live and face to face learning for whole school, year groups or bubbles.
- The Action Research Project offered to our staff through their appraisal process also supports developing a highly knowledgeable team around learning, supported and developed through research.
- The continual professional learning offered to our schools also enables excellence to be pursued and is the constant forefront of what we do.

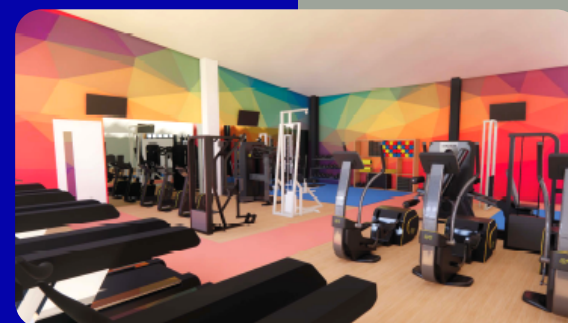


Connecting with our communities

- The Trust has strengthened Local Governing Bodies (LGB) and built upon the lines of communication so that our Governors from all schools in the Trust feel connected and more importantly an integral part of the journey of the Trust.
- Our Trust has connected with Health, Police and Social Services in Shropshire to ensure that our children and communities are getting the support they need to thrive.
- The Trust has a successful partnership with Shrewsbury School. We are sharing good practice in maths, careers, Sixth Form, ExpertEd and the development of talented sports people.
- All schools are looking at ways to connect with their communities from open days at Longlands where the community were invited in to spend time in the social farm to Marches School holding a kindness week, where they took cards with messages of gratitude to members of the Oswestry community.
- The Trust continues to build on its partnership with Shrewsbury Town in the Community. This benefits our children in the Trust and the wider community.
- We are fortunate that the Rotarians based in each of the areas that our schools are located in are proactively involved in supporting our schools through mock interviews, mentoring and fundraising to support special projects.
- Our schools continue to play a vital role in collecting and distributing food parcels to their communities.

Sustainable Future

- The Trust has maintained its healthy level of financial reserves and ensures its schools are operating within their budget and financial parameters to continue operating in a sustainable manner in the future. This has required some staffing restructures during the year.
- The Trust has invested capital funds across the Trust estate, improving facilities to ensure schools have the buildings and infrastructure required to meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum.
- The Trust has invested in the development of systems and structures within its Human Resources function to ensure that Trust systems and policies are applied consistently across the enlarged Trust.
- Schools across the Trust have received significant additional IT equipment from DfE during the pandemic which has increased the opportunities for development of digital skills and remote learning. Alongside this we are developing the Trust wide infrastructure to enable greater sharing, collaboration and remote learning opportunities.
- The Trust has developed its wellbeing offer to staff, forming wellbeing committees in schools and placing the wellbeing of staff high on the agenda to ensure staffing structures and workloads are sustainable.





Marches Academy Trust

#TOGETHERWEGROW

 01691 664400 |  trustadmin@mmat.co.uk

 marchesacademytrust.co.uk |  [@MarchesAcademyTrust](https://www.facebook.com/MarchesAcademyTrust)
