



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI) NETWORK: STAFF UPDATE

Welcome to your latest EDI Network update! We're committed to building a truly inclusive and equitable environment for everyone at Witham Prospect School. Here's a summary of the key discussions and actions from our recent EDI meetings on May 20th and June 18th, 2025:

1 Enhancing Cultural Inclusion & Menu Diversity

- **Understanding Cultural Needs:** We are actively seeking deeper understanding of diverse cultures represented by our young people, especially when parents are less forthcoming. We plan to research cultures like Albanian heritage to ensure full inclusion.
- **Inclusive Menus:** A new menu is being developed to offer greater variety and accommodate cultural and sensory preferences, including spicier food options. Parents are being consulted for recipes, with input already received from one young person's mum.
- **Integrating World Days:** We're incorporating various "world days" into daily menus (e.g., World Ice Cream Day) and planning at least one major inclusive event monthly across education and care. The Summer Solstice was a recent successful example.

2 Improving Accessibility (Physical & Digital)

- **Site Accessibility:** A detachable ramp has been ordered to improve wheelchair access. Parking improvements, including new yellow lines and a disabled bay, are now in place at both the school and training unit.
- **Communication & Information:** The damaged multi-language welcome board needs replacement. We are exploring cartoon/easy-read communication boards throughout the setting for both young people and staff, emphasizing communication and house rules in a child-friendly voice. Research continues on converting longer policies into accessible presentation-style formats with audio, and integrating text-to-speech for the new website.
- **Family Room Phone:** A new phone is planned for installation in the Family Room to improve accessibility and communication.

3 Staff Wellbeing & Support

- **Wellbeing Plans:** Research is ongoing to develop effective and inclusive staff wellbeing plans, considering the needs of staff with neurodiversity (e.g., movement breaks, flexible training).
- **Support Dogs:** Discussions are underway regarding suitable on-site locations for support dogs, acknowledging that staff may need specific accommodations.
- **Private Staff Space:** The need for a private space for staff care (e.g., for injured staff) was highlighted as an ongoing issue.

4 Improving Accessibility

- **Awareness & Education:** Microaggressions, defined as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages," are a frequent occurrence, often stemming from unconscious biases. Education and challenging perceptions are key to overcoming them.
- **Pronunciation & Preferences:** The issue of mispronounced names was discussed, emphasizing the importance of staff challenging mispronunciations and communicating their preferences.
- **Supervision Form Update:** Our staff supervision forms are being updated to include a section for preferred names, accessible via a QR code for changes.

Your Involvement Matters!

The EDI Network encourages all staff to contribute to creating a more inclusive and equitable environment at Witham Prospect School.