

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



The shared vision for our trust is to “create schools that ‘stand out’ at the heart of their communities.” Our trust has four core beliefs; Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success that are integral to everything we do. The purpose is to enable everyone to be able to ‘Love Learning, Love Life.’

Our policies are underpinned by our vision, beliefs and purpose



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Policy Owner: Deputy Trust Leader			
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Signed: <i>Sarah Armitage</i>			
Name: Sarah Armitage		Role: Chair of Trustees	

Introduction

This policy applies to all schools across The Embark Federation, Trust Central Team and Trust Board. The purpose of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (herein referred to as EDI) Policy is to define The Embark Federation's commitment to EDI; to reaffirm our commitment to a common set of values and objectives, and to set out a consistent approach to communicating, implementing and monitoring EDI goals within the Trust.

The Trust and everyone within it are committed to promoting equality in both employment and education provision. We aim to ensure that students, parents, governors, employees, contractors, partners, clients and other stakeholders within the Embark community are treated fairly, and with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**Protected Characteristics**).

The Trust is committed to ensuring individuals are treated fairly and decisions are based on objective criteria. This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with the Trust, including recruitment and selection, pay and conditions, family friendly leave, flexible working and leave of absence, training and development, professional performance reviews, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment. This is not an exhaustive list, for more details see Embark employment policies [Embark Federation](#).

All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, leading by example and ensuring that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. All employees are expected to adhere to the principles and shared responsibilities set out in the Trust Code of Conduct and will undertake online training on equality, diversity and inclusion as part of their induction and on-going employment with the Trust. The Trust and everyone encourage the establishment of employee assistance and network groups.

This policy has been developed taking into account the guidance set out by ACAS on improving equality, diversity and inclusion. At Embark we are committed to being a disability confident employer.

Discrimination

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, students, governors, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in all Embark schools and both in the workplace and outside the workplace; when dealing with colleagues, students, customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts identified as an Embark employee and on work-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
- **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally, have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Antiharassment and Bullying Policy.
- **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

□ **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

The Trust recognises that it is also unlawful to discriminate by association or perception, e.g. treating a student unfairly based on the Protected Characteristics of their parents or other family members. Please also see the Embark Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Equality Statement

The Embark Federation will ensure that equal opportunities and the principles of fairness underpin all aspects of policy, procedure, education provision, consultation and decision-making.

We will provide high-quality education services, making sure services are accessible without barrier or discrimination. We will improve what we do by continuing to consult with employees, students, parents and governors, their communities and partners about equalities issues. We will promote our EDI policy in our contact with parents, employees, governors and external organisations.

Our employees, trustees, members and governors will recognise the importance of diversity and demonstrate a proactive approach in their day-to-day work. They will ensure that everyone is treated fairly, recognising special needs and understanding differences. Behaviour will reach our high standards of conduct (staff and students) and the learning environment we provide will be safe and accessible for all children, young people and adults who study or work within the Trust. Where necessary we will implement reasonable adjustments, or additional support, to ensure equality of access to an education and suitable working environment.

The Trust will adhere to statutory Government legislation and give consideration to other relevant guidance, which aim to make sure that everyone is treated with equity. We will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against members of the Trust community.

Inclusion

The Trust has collaboratively developed a collective commitment to Inclusion, something that we aspire to for every child and employee across Embark. Our aim is that this collective commitment is brought to life in everything we do



Employment

The Trust is committed to ensuring that employees have equal access to jobs, training, and professional development opportunities. All employment policies refer to the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010. The Trust recognises that the Act extends beyond the protected characteristics of an individual employee and that employers have broader responsibilities to employees and situations that maybe covered by the Act.

All recruitment will be within the provisions of the Equalities Act, and applications will be monitored to report on recruitment activity, in line with the act. Age is a protected characteristic in relation to employment, but does not apply to students studying in Trust schools.

Employees who are in breach of this policy will be dealt with under the Embark disciplinary policy.

Student/Pupil Provision

The Trust and its member schools will ensure that students are provided with appropriate support to recognise their individual needs. This includes protection under the Act extending the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled students.

Contractors and Service Providers

The Trust will ensure that all service providers that are contracted to provide services to students, employees or visitors will comply with Equalities legislation. Where services are deemed not to meet Trust standards, in relation to equal opportunities and fairness, contracts may be terminated.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board are responsible for:

- Ensuring all Trust and school practices follow the EDI policy and meet statutory responsibilities with respect to equality.
- Will monitor and set inclusion targets that represent the communities in which we serve.

The Trust SLT are responsible for:

- Providing consistent and visible leadership on EDI
- Engaging and collaborating on identifying and progressing priority areas
- Embarking on programs of work that will bring the collective commitment to inclusion to life.

Headteachers are responsible for:

- Providing consistent and high-profile leadership on EDI
- Putting the Embark EDI policy and any local equality statements and objectives into practice at the school level alongside their accessibility plans
- Ensuring all employees know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out
- Following relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- Making the collective commitment to inclusion visible through every day actions

Employees are responsible for:

- Promoting EDI, and avoiding unfair discrimination

- Actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination, related to protected characteristics perpetrated by students, colleagues or visitors
- Keeping up to date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training as appropriate.
- Making the collective commitment to inclusion visible through every day actions

Students/Pupils are responsible for:

- Respecting others in their language and actions
- Obeying all of the school's EDI policies.
- Making the collective commitment to inclusion visible through every day actions

Complaints

The Trust will regard any complaints of unlawful (or potentially unlawful) discrimination as a potentially very serious matter. Any complaint will be investigated in accordance with the Trust grievance, anti-bullying or harassment or complaints policy, whichever is appropriate.

Breaches of this policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Policy. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or through our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against employees who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy.

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General Data Protection Regulation

All data within this policy will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set out in the General Data Protection Regulation.