



**EMBARK**  
F E D E R A T I O N

# Our Strategic Plan

2025-2030

Love Learning, Love Life.

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# Welcome from the Chair of Trustees and Trust Leader



Thank you for your interest in Embark and for taking the time to review our strategic plan for the next 5 years.

We have been delighted with our first 6 years as a trust and look forward to improving our schools further and creating schools that 'stand out' at the heart of their community.

Embark Federation was established in December 2018 with seven Primary Schools across Derbyshire. Our family has since grown to 23 schools now (19 Primary and 4 Secondary) and we serve 6 areas; Amber Valley, Erewash, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Dales, High Peak and South Derbyshire.

We are looking forward to building strong teams of schools in these areas and making a difference to the communities we serve. A number of our schools are in areas of high deprivation and as such we aim to provide children with an educational offer defined by aspiration, enrichment and opportunity.

This includes magical and memorable trust-led events and our Embark Award which enables learning through broad life experiences and enjoyable activities.

This document sets out our strategic direction for the next 5 years, our long-term ambitions and how we will achieve them.

We have high aspirations for our children and staff and want to 'stand out' for all the right reasons which means exceptional education and broad exciting curricula in a compassionate climate.

We want our staff to thrive both personally and professionally within the Trust, feeling valued, supported and developed so they choose to grow their careers with us.

We hope that you share our ambition for our children, staff and communities and would like to contribute to us achieving our shared vision.



Dave King  
Chair of Trustees



Matthew Crawford  
Trust Leader



# Shared Vision, Core Purpose and Strategic Ambitions

At Embark Federation our vision is to create 'stand out' schools at the heart of their communities. Our four core beliefs of Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success guide us on this quest and in all that we do.

Our core purpose is for all our stakeholders to be able to 'Love Learning and Love Life' in order for them to thrive.

Our vision, purpose and core beliefs act as a compass to set the direction for our Trust and to help us find a balance between the benefit of trust-wide systems and procedures and the autonomy and freedom for our schools to shape a curriculum for their own unique context.

We want our schools to enjoy the full benefits of being part of our Trust family and have the support and space to make the most of what makes them special.

Our four strategic ambitions; [Stand Out Schools](#), [Collective Commitment to Inclusion](#), [Environmental Sustainability](#), and [Organisational Excellence](#) which are described here, set out our ambitions for the trust and for our staff teams, young people, and their families.





# Strategic Ambitions

We want all our schools to stand out for our offer for young people, adults and their families.

We have divided this document into four Strategic Ambitions and how we as an organisation will achieve those to give us the assurances, we can meet the needs of all our stakeholders.



## Stand Out Schools

Enabling each school to serve their own unique community where every child deserves a great education.

## Collective Commitment to Inclusion

Enabling everyone to Love Learning and Love Life.

## Organisational Excellence

Enabling our schools to fully focus on children's education.

## Environmental Sustainability

Looking after our local area for future generations.





# Stand Out Schools

## Our Ambitions

### Educational Excellence and Ambition

We aim to deliver high-quality education with strong outcomes and a focus on wellbeing. Our curriculum inspires creativity, ambition, and a lifelong love of learning.

We promote positive behaviour and relationships, ensuring every pupil feels safe, valued, and that they belong.

### Stand Out Staff

We support staff wellbeing, reduce workload, and invest in high-quality development. We listen to our staff and help them grow and achieve their goals.

### Governance and Leadership

We will build strong, strategic governance to support growth and maintain high standards across all schools.

### Community Engagement and Social Impact

Our schools will drive improvement in disadvantaged communities, promote professional leadership, and share best practice across the sector.

## To Achieve This, We Will:

- Embed across our schools an inclusive culture rooted in our Embark vision and core beliefs. This culture is grounded in warm, caring, productive, collaborative and mutually respectful relationships and actively promotes a love of learning and a love of life.
- Ensure the curriculum exemplifies our Embark vision and core beliefs to meet the needs of our young people, provide opportunities, raise aspirations and broaden horizons.
- Develop trust-wide pedagogies and approaches to learning.
- Provide a clearly defined enrichment programme for all schools, underpinned by our Embark Award.
- Provide innovative Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), to enable young people to challenge perceptions, raise aspirations and reach their full potential.
- Forge strong partnerships with local secondary schools, colleges, universities and businesses to secure lifelong learning opportunities for children and adults.
- Ensure all schools effectively contribute to our regional team.
- Lead extensive inter-trust collaboration by sharing practices, developing opportunities and utilising our network for continuous improvement.
- Embed a staff wellbeing charter that promotes health, safety, and recognition based on staff feedback and clear communication with an underpinning of workload reduction.
- Provide excellent induction, training, and leadership development for all staff, governors, and trustees.
- Actively recruit new staff who will embrace and enhance this culture.
- Maintain cohesive and effective local governing teams to provide challenge and support, ensuring compliance and performance.



# Collective Commitment to Inclusion



## Our Ambitions

### Lived Commitment

The collective commitment will be actively experienced by our young people, adults, and families.

### Equitable Achievement

Young people from vulnerable groups will achieve at high levels, performing at least on par with their peers nationally.

### Exceptional Educational Experience

Every young person will receive an outstanding educational experience that equips them with the necessary skills, wellbeing and confidence to thrive in life both academically and personally.

### Proactive Safeguarding

We will work collaboratively with families and safeguarding networks to advocate for and protect the wellbeing of all young people and adults.

## To Achieve This, We Will:

- Embed the collective commitment to inclusion in regular, meaningful conversations across Embark to understand how it will be brought to life to support individual and school performance and achievement.
- **Prioritise Inclusive Education:** Utilise our collective commitment framework to ensure each young person and their family are well understood, enabling us to identify challenges early and provide high-quality, inclusive education and a curriculum that is accessible to all.
- **Establish Learning Hubs:** Create “Love Learning” hubs that provide families with access to community-based support that provide all children with equal access to a variety of extracurricular activities, including opportunities such as the Embark Award.
- **Identify Champions:** Develop a network of stakeholders, ensuring all voices are heard, especially those of our young people, in order to inspire, shape and lead our collective commitment to an outstanding educational experience for all.
- **Build Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborate with external organisations to provide students with opportunities and also role models who reflect excellence and diversity.
- **Foster Professional Growth:** Offer clear career pathways through access to genuine professional development opportunities, allowing staff to learn collaboratively from the best in the sector and benefit from evidence-based frameworks.



# Organisational Excellence

We will make sure that the maximum resource is targeted to frontline education to give all young people the best opportunities to thrive.



## Our Ambitions

### Financial Sustainability

We aim to achieve financial sustainability by delivering efficiencies that increase direct spending on learning.

### Quality Learning Environments

We will create great school spaces that support effective learning and enhance the educational provision for young people and adults.

### Regional Engagement

We are committed to providing tailored regional services that meet the specific needs of local communities.

### Digital Transformation

We will embrace digital transformation to enhance our learning spaces and improve operational efficiency, utilising data to inform decision-making and support effective teaching and learning.

## To Achieve This, We Will:

- Secure long term financial sustainability with schools operating within budget and having sufficient reserves. Explore opportunities to utilise our buying power and to deliver high quality services at a more economic cost.
- Engage all schools with our regional teams' model to develop community facilities and services to improve our wellbeing offer for families.
- Explore all capital resources to enhance our estate so that all schools can meet the needs of their young people and the wider community with teaching and learning environments that are fit for purpose.
- Create a digital strategy across the Trust and review opportunities to increasingly integrate appropriate technology into the provision of learning for the future.
- Effectively manage risks and engage governance structures to ensure that we remain compliant with statutory and civic responsibilities in pursuit of the Trust's vision and goals.
- Utilise risk management to assess and address risks and threats throughout the Trust.



# Environmental Sustainability

We will transform our approach to become environmentally sustainable to champion, preserve and enhance our local areas.

## Our Ambitions

### Environmental Awareness

We aim to ensure that our young people and adults understand their personal responsibility toward the environment and incorporate this into the curriculum.

### Carbon Footprint Reduction

We are committed to reducing our carbon footprint by introducing greener solutions to energy usage.

### Waste Management and Recycling

We will focus on reducing, reusing, and recycling by identifying opportunities to minimise waste and enhance recycling efforts.

## To Achieve This, We Will:

- Develop an Embark Environmental Sustainability Strategy and support every school to develop a sustainability action plan, ensuring that this is at the heart of the school curriculum.
- Support schools to develop rich biodiverse environments and achieve nationally recognised eco-awards.
- Seek opportunities that enable children to connect with nature and introduce local community champions to support local projects.
- Improve our carbon footprint by reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and increasing our investment in solar power and LED lighting.
- Initiate discussions with providers to minimise packaging and reduce food waste. Establish a competition to reward schools that develop innovative ways to upcycle or recycle any leftover waste, fostering effective partnerships in the process.





# Summary

The above ambitions incorporate our vision, purpose and core beliefs in order to embed the culture of our Trust whilst maintaining autonomy and freedom for our schools to stand out at the heart of their communities, with young people, adults and families who...

**Love Learning, Love Life.**







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