



Gender Pay Gap Report 2025/2026



INTRODUCTION

At Embark Federation, we remain committed to creating an inclusive working environment where all colleagues can thrive, develop and progress, regardless of gender or background. Our collective commitment to inclusion continues to shape how we think about recruitment, development, progression and organisational culture across the Trust.

This year's report shows encouraging progress in a number of areas. Whilst our overall mean gender pay gap has increased slightly, our median gender pay gap has improved significantly, particularly across the middle pay quartiles. This is important because median pay provides a clearer reflection of typical earnings across the organisation and suggests that, for many colleagues, pay equity is improving.

The data also continues to show that the Trust's gender pay gap is largely structural rather than driven by unequal pay for equivalent roles. Across many staff groups, particularly within teaching roles, median pay gaps remain at or close to zero, reflecting the consistent application of national pay frameworks and equitable pay structures.

There are also positive signs within lower pay quartiles, where women's average pay is in some cases slightly higher than men's. In addition, the analysis demonstrates that many of the gaps that remain are concentrated within higher-paid roles and smaller staff groups, particularly within upper quartiles and parts of the central team structure.

However, we recognise there is still more to do. Women continue to make up the significant majority of our workforce, particularly within primary provision, and representation at higher salary levels remains uneven in some areas. Whilst this reflects wider structural patterns across education, it is important that we continue to challenge ourselves on progression, leadership pathways, recruitment practices and access to opportunity.

Over the last year, we have strengthened our understanding of the data and developed a more detailed picture of where gaps exist and why. This places us in a stronger position to take informed and intentional action. Closing the gender pay gap is long-term work and there are no quick solutions, but we remain committed to transparency, reflection and continuous improvement as part of our wider people and inclusion strategy.

Ultimately, our ambition is not simply compliance with reporting requirements, but to create an organisation where everyone can genuinely see a pathway to success and where opportunity, progression and reward are accessible to all



WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP

The gender pay gap measures the difference between the average hourly pay rate for men and the average hourly pay rate for women.

Although related, it is distinct from equal pay. The Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the Equality Act 2010 legislated that women and men must receive equal pay if performing equal work in the same employment. Equal pay includes all benefits, bonuses or performance-related salary increases.

The gender pay gap is a longstanding phenomenon and its causes are complex; this applies regardless of sector. Social pressures and norms also influence gender roles and often shape the types of interests, occupations, and career paths which men and women follow, and therefore their level of pay.

Pay gaps can be a good indicator of inequalities in access to work, progression, and rewards.



GENDER PAY SPECIFICS

The gender pay report does not calculate if women and men in the same or similar roles are on equal pay. The gender pay report highlights gender percentage across an organisation and if gender percentage varies between pay quartiles.

There are seven calculations in a gender pay report to measure full-pay relevant employees:

- Gender percentage of women and men employed
- Gender percentage of women and men employed per pay quartile
- Mean (average) gender pay gap
- Median gender pay gap
- Gender percentage of women and men who received bonus pay
- Mean (average) gender bonus pay gap
- Median gender bonus pay gap

(GOV.UK, 2020)

HOW WE CALCULATE GENDER PAY GAP

Gender pay gap (GPG) is calculated as the difference between average hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of men and women as a proportion of average hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of men. For example, a 10% GPG denotes that women earn 10% less, on average, than men. Conversely, a -10% GPG denotes that women earn 10% more, on average, than men.

Mean is the measure of the average which is derived by summing the values for a given sample, and then dividing the sum by the number of observations (i.e. headcount) in the sample. In earnings distributions, the mean can be disproportionately influenced by a relatively small number of high-paying jobs.

Median is the value below which 50% of jobs fall. It is the Office for National Statistics (ONS) preferred measure of average earnings as it is less affected by a relatively small number of very high earners and the skewed distribution of earnings. It therefore gives a more accurate indication of typical pay than the mean.

HOW GENDER PAY GAP DIFFERS FROM EQUAL PAY

Equal pay means that women and men in the same position performing equal work must receive equal pay, this is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010. Gender pay reports calculate the difference in average pay for women and men, regardless of the nature of their work, across an organisation, this measure is known as a gender pay gap.

HOW WE DEFINE MALE AND FEMALE

To calculate the data in this report, we have used the terms 'Male' and 'Female' to represent their legal gender.

EMBARK DATA

OUR PAY STRUCTURES

We use nationally agreed pay scales for all staff. Those for teaching staff are aligned with the minimum and maximum of each pay scale within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, updated annually. The pay scales for support staff are in line with the rates set by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services that are endorsed or amended through the Derbyshire County Council partnership arrangements. Staff progress through the pay scales based on incremental progression eligibility, so earnings are determined irrespective of gender. The types of roles in schools, by phase, and across the central team are wide in variety and skill mix.

OUR RESULTS

In 2025/26 Embark employs a higher proportion of female staff 86% (84% in 24/25), and males therefore make up 14% (16% in 24/25) of our staff.

Across each quartile the representation of males and females is as follows with the 24/25 data in (brackets) to demonstrate movement:

TABLE 1: EMBARK EMPLOYEES BY GENDER

	Quartile 1 (lower)	Quartile 2 (lower middle)	Quartile 3 (upper middle)	Quartile 4 (upper)
Male (% males to all employees in each quartile)	8.4% (10%)	13.4% (13%)	10% (14%)	26.2% (28.5%)
Female (% females to all employees in each quartile)	91.6% (90%)	86.6% (87%)	90% (86%)	73.8% (71.5%)

EMBARK DATA

The following table sets out the gender pay gap across each quartile. The following observations can be drawn:

1. The overall mean gender pay gap has increased slightly from 21.8% to 22.9%. However, the overall median gender pay gap has improved significantly, reducing from 30.7% to 25.0%, indicating improvement in typical earnings across the workforce.
2. The most significant improvement is within Quartile 3, where both the mean and median gender pay gaps have reduced materially, including a 7.1 percentage point improvement in the median measure.
3. Quartiles 1 and 2 continue to show either very small gaps or a slight pay advantage in favour of female employees on the mean measure, indicating broadly equitable pay distribution within the lower pay quartiles.
4. Quartile 4 continues to show a positive mean pay gap in favour of male employees, although the median remains at 0.0%, suggesting that differences are driven by a smaller number of higher-paid roles rather than widespread differences across the quartile.
5. The data continues to demonstrate that the Trust's gender pay gap is primarily influenced by workforce composition and the distribution of employees across higher-paid roles, rather than unequal pay for equivalent work.

TABLE 2: PAY GAP DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

Pay gap % difference male to female –	Difference in the mean hourly pay (24/25)	Difference in the median hourly pay (24/25)
Quartile 1	-5.3% (-4.2%)	0% (1.5%)
Quartile 2	-2.9% (-2.8%)	-1.8% (-3.3)
Quartile 3	6.2% (8.4%)	7.7% (14.8%)
Quartile 4	8.5% (8.9%)	0% (0%)
Overall Pay gap % difference male to female	22.9% (21.8%)	25% (30.7%)

NO BONUS PAYMENTS WERE MADE IN EMBARK IN 2025/2026 THEREFORE NO GENDER BONUS GAPS EXIST.

OUR COMMITMENT

We recognise that we have a challenge in closing the gender pay gap and are committing to intentional action and decision making to do so. We also celebrate how far we have come in closing this and the impact in different quartiles. The following sets out our commitments, which have been updated to reflect where our data is suggesting to focus.



01.Strategy

- Delivering our key People Priorities that support the delivery of the collective commitment to inclusion

02.Being Data Led

- Using the GPG dashboard to make informed decisions

03.Policy and Process

- A commitment to putting the gender pay gap at the heart of our decision making on pay
- Embedding a trust wide induction and on-boarding process with a focus on long term retention

04.Staff engagement

- Further embedding our collective commitment with all staff and helping everyone understand our shared responsibility for equality
- Listening to staff and responding with support and development opportunities

05. Recruitment and Selection

- Embedding Inclusive recruitment principles with consistency of application across Embark to ensure fairness and equitable access to progression opportunities with full transparency
- Monitoring and Improving diversity at every level in Embark

06. Support Policies for our staff

- Ensuring visibility and ease of access to our policy and procedures to support people to stay in work e.g. Flexible working and Parental Leave policies
- Targeting interventions and monitoring uptake of coaching and support for all parents on parental leave or recently returned to work
- Updating and ensuring transparency of our flexible working process and decision making for all staff

07. Leadership Development

- Intentional leadership development with equality at the centre of what we do.

08. Reporting, review and scrutiny

- Producing in-year reporting to actively monitor and track progress

DECLARATION

We confirm that our data has been calculated according to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Date: XXXX



MORE ABOUT US

If you would like to find out more about Embark Federation, please get in touch:

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