

Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed 2nd January 2026



Equal Opportunities - Policy Statement

Summit Explorers Ltd. (Furthermore referred to as "we") is firmly committed to the principle that all members of staff and prospective members of staff are entitled to equality of opportunity regardless of their sex, race, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status or age.

We require all members of staff, regardless of the post they hold, to abide by and adhere to this policy.

Procedure

Scope of Policy

Summit Explorers Ltd. (referred to as "the Company") will not discriminate or tolerate discrimination on grounds of sex, race, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status or age or other grounds of discrimination not prohibited by legislation as covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Equal opportunities should be implicit and explicit in all school policies and procedures.

This policy applies to:

- advertisements of posts at the Company
- recruitment and appointment to posts at the Company
- terms and conditions of employment
- training
- promotion
- every other aspect of employment.

Staff involved in recruitment in particular should request training if they have any doubt about the application of this policy.



Employment of Persons with Disabilities

Summit Explorers Ltd. is committed to the employment of persons with disabilities whenever possible and will treat such members of staff in aspects of their recruitment and employment in the same way as other members of staff. Every reasonable assistance will be given to adapt the working environment to meet their needs.

The Working Environment

Summit Explorers Ltd. aim is to provide a safe and pleasant environment free from abuse, harassment and unfair discrimination on grounds of:

- sex
- race or ethnic origin
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation (LGBT)
- age.

We recognise that discrimination, direct or indirect, affects everyone and that everyone has a responsibility to challenge discrimination when it occurs.

Complaints

Any member of staff or client, may use the appropriate company procedure to complain about discriminatory treatment. Summit Explorers Ltd. aims to ensure that staff feel able to complain about discriminatory conduct.

No individual will be penalised or victimised for making such a complaint unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.

Use of Disciplinary Procedure

Any member of staff who harasses a colleague or client, on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, disability or religious affiliation or any other discriminatory reason, will be subject to the Company's disciplinary procedure. In very serious cases this behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and could result in summary dismissal.

Recruitment

Summit Explorers Ltd. recognises that our staff are our most important asset in the provision of outdoor activities for its clients and young people and that its success depends on the contribution from them. Summit Explorers Ltd. will adopt and maintain the best possible practices for the recruitment and selection of staff.

We are committed to maintain professional standards in its recruitment and selection procedures to ensure they are efficient, effective, fair and consistent with the company's equal opportunities policy. All candidates for posts will be selected according to skills, qualifications and abilities for the post in question.

- **Advertisements.** Advertisements for vacant posts at Summit Explorers Ltd. will be based on the job description and person specification.
- **Job Descriptions.** Job descriptions will be worded to ensure that no potential candidate is discriminated against. The job description will list duties and responsibilities in order of importance.
- **The Person Specification.** The person specification will not contain language that uses male or female characteristics or is culturally biased. All requirements in the person specification will be capable of justification. The person specification will be used to draw up the short-list for interview and as a basis for selection to the post.
- **Selecting for Interview.** Only applicants who meet the criteria for the post will be invited to interview. All applicants with a disability who meet these criteria will be invited to interview. Interviews will be arranged so that the place and time is convenient to any applicant with a disability and the applicant will be asked about any access requirements.
- **Conducting Interviews.** Interviews will be conducted in a professional manner. Interviewers will be familiar with the job description and person specification for the post.
 The content and structure of the interview will be applied consistently to all interviewees. The same questions will be asked in each interview, although interviewers may need to ask supplementary questions which may vary depending on the answers. Questions will be asked to assess the interviewee's suitability to carry out the duties of the post and should relate to the application form, the job description and the person specification. The interviewers will not ask discriminatory questions or questions about a person's personal circumstances which are not related to the post.
- **Monitoring.** This policy will be monitored on a regular basis. Where there are any issues about the way the policy is working these issues will be looked at closely and reviewed in consultation with stakeholders.



Young People (under the age of 21) OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

CLIENT EQUALITY

Summit Explorers Ltd. recognises that diversity is a reality of our community that brings significant educational benefits to all young people, enabling the creation of learning experiences enriched by different life experiences, varied perspectives, flexibility and creativity.

We recognise that the richness and diversity of culture and experience that we now enjoy is our heritage. It is the company's policy to accept and celebrate diversity; any form of intolerance is counterproductive and unacceptable. Summit Explorers Ltd. is therefore committed to building an environment where:

- all young people are treated with dignity and respect
- diversity is valued
- stereotypes are questioned
- bias, bigotry, prejudice and racism are wholeheartedly rejected.

Procedure

General

The person responsible for implementing this policy is the Director.

In accordance with its legal responsibility, Summit Explorers Ltd. will ensure that there is no discrimination against any Client for any reason.

It will not segregate or differentiate between individuals on the grounds of:

- sex
- sexual orientation (LGBT)
- race
- religious belief
- disability

Everyone at the Company will take responsibility for challenging stereotypes and all forms of discrimination.

the Company will promote equality of opportunity and will investigate all complaints of discrimination.



Sex Discrimination

All applicants for admission to the Company, and all Clients of the Company, will be treated the same way, irrespective of sex. In particular, the Company will ensure that:

- no attempt is made to balance the number of boys and girls admitted to the Company
- any tests used to screen Clients are identical for boys and girls
- all children have equal access to the curriculum
- careers advice, interviews and literature are not sex-discriminatory.

All Clients, regardless of their sex, will have equal access to:

- all subjects in the curriculum
- work experience placements
- all forms of community and social service
- all recreational, sport and social facilities
- all out-of-school activities.

Sexual-Orientation Discrimination

The Company will not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone because of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation.

The Company will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone because of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation.

The Company will promote equality of opportunity for all students regardless of their sexual orientation. This is included in its equal opportunities and behaviour policies and the curriculum.

The Company is committed to providing a safe environment for all Clients and will apply the Company's anti-bullying policy to deal with all instances of homophobic bullying or abuse. Homophobia is a dislike or fear of someone who is, or is perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Reaction can vary in intensity from passive resentment to active victimisation.

The Company will follow the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, which makes clear that teachers should deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support where necessary.



Racial Discrimination

The Company will promote equal opportunity and good race relations, and will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of:

- race
- colour
- nationality or citizenship
- ethnic or national origin.

The Company will not tolerate any form of racial discrimination, racial harassment or inciting of racial hatred. Incidents of this nature may be offences under criminal law and will be treated as such.

Disability Discrimination

The Equalities Act 2010 ("the Act") already imposes a duty on companies to make reasonable adjustments to 'policies, criteria and practices' to address potential issues of discrimination. With effect from 1 September 2012 the Act introduces a new aspect to the reasonable adjustments duty:

"where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, [a duty] to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid ". the Company will not tolerate any form of discrimination against disabled Clients. This includes the use of any derogatory term to indicate the disabled person's supposed mental capacity.

The duty only arises if a Client is disabled within the meaning of the Act. If the Client is not disabled, there is no legal duty to consider reasonable adjustments, although many companies may wish to do so anyway. Simply because a Client needs SEN support does not mean they are disabled but there will be overlap. The first step for a school to consider then is, "Is the Client disabled?"

No assumptions will be made about the general abilities of people who are disabled. the Company will bear in mind that a child with special educational needs (SEN) is not necessarily disabled and that a disabled child does not necessarily have SEN.

A failure to make reasonable adjustments amounts to disability discrimination.



Religious Discrimination

The Company recognises, respects and values the various traditions, customs and rules of different religious groups and will not discriminate against any Client on the grounds of his or her religion or belief.

The Company understands that for religious reasons certain Clients might wish to behave in ways that are contrary to accepted school rules. Every effort will always be made to meet the sincere wishes of these Clients.

The Company undertakes to tailor collective worship and religious teaching to reflect the particular racial and religious mix in the Company.

Religious and Belief Observance

Many religions and beliefs are represented in our multi-cultural society and the Company recognises that employees and Clients may wish to observe the requirements of their chosen religion or belief system while at work. The Company aims to ensure a fair and consistent approach in the management of such requests so that no young person or employee is discriminated against on the basis of his or her religion, belief, or absence of religion or belief.

This policy applies in the workplace and at all events that are work related.

PROCEDURE

General Considerations

While the Company aims to be sensitive to the needs of its community and the whole community also has a responsibility to ensure that the Director is aware, in good time, of their individual needs to meet the requirements of their belief or religion. This will ensure that there is ample opportunity for those needs to be considered and for the appropriate actions to be taken (where practicable).

Although the Company will take reasonable steps to try to accommodate requests, employees must understand that they have a responsibility to be reasonable when asking for time off or for other work adjustments to facilitate their religious observance so that the Company and colleagues are not unduly inconvenienced.



Time Off for Religious Festivals or worship

Time off for religious festivals should be taken as a part of the normal annual holiday entitlement or, with management's agreement, as unpaid leave. Clients are generally expected to ensure that their parents request any time off by writing to the Director.

Requests for time off should be made in writing to the Director, ideally giving at least one week's notice. Where the date(s) required is (are) known in advance, employees/Clients should aim to provide as much notice as is reasonably practicable.

Priority will be given to requests on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Requests will be considered individually and where there is a high level of demand for time off requests will be treated fairly and equitably. In all cases, requests will be balanced with school's needs to ensure that the operation of the Company remains unaffected.

Any employees requiring a permanent change to their regular pattern of hours as a result of a religious observance requirement should discuss this with the director, who will assess if it is possible to alter the hours of work while continuing to meet the needs of the Company.

However, in attempting to meet an employee's/Client's request for time off to observe a particular practice or festival of a religion or belief, the Company will also ensure that it does not disadvantage those employees/Clients who do not hold any specific religion or belief.

Fasting, Prayers and Other Religious Obligations

Some religions require their followers to pray at specific times during the day. Should employees or Clients request access to an appropriate quiet place to undertake their religious observances, then providing that such a quiet place is available, and allowing its use for prayer does not cause problems for other employees, Clients or the Company, the Director will consider the request sympathetically.

Employees and Clients can request that their rest breaks coincide with their religious obligations to pray at certain times of the day. the Company will endeavour to accommodate such requests. However, the Director can refuse such a request if, for example, it conflicts with legitimate school needs which cannot be met in any other way.

Some religions or beliefs require extended periods of fasting, for example during Ramadan it is obligatory for Muslims to refrain from eating and drinking (even water) during the hours between dawn and sunset. Should employees or Clients feel that they need support during such a period, they should inform the Director who will then consider how best to provide the necessary support. However, all decisions will take into account the needs of the Company to ensure that unreasonable extra burdens are not placed on other employees, as this may cause conflict or give rise to claims of discrimination.

For example, they should, following consultation with their staff, consider:

- allowing flexibility in start and finish times to accommodate Muslim employees who wish to eat at sunset
- allowing staff to swap shifts or rotas if they wish
- allowing staff to use flexi-time to work shorter hours
- permitting employees who wish it to take a shorter lunch break in return for an earlier finishing time (but not less than 20 minutes as this is the minimum break required by the Working Time Regulations 1998 whenever the working day lasts six hours or more)
- adjusting the timing of breaks so that employees who are fasting can take a break at sunset (or just before dawn for night-shift employees) in order to eat
- refraining from arranging any important events, e.g. training courses or conferences, during Ramadan (as employees who are fasting will lack energy in the afternoons)
- refraining from organising afternoon meetings if they are likely to continue until sunset or beyond dusk
- avoiding working lunches as much as possible as Muslim employees will not be able to eat at that time of day.

Dietary Requirements

Some religions or beliefs have specific dietary requirements.

The Company will consider all requests from young people with religious dietary or alternative dietary needs and will make reasonable efforts to accommodate these requests where appropriate. The food that is provided by the Company for young people does not suit their personal dietary needs then the young person must inform the Company of any dietary requirements, and to co-operate in suggesting reasonable suitable alternatives. The kitchen caters for food allergies and will again need to be made aware in order to ensure the best service is provided.

Due to religious dietary needs if employees or Clients bring food into the workplace, they may need to store and heat food separately from other food. Should such an issue arise; the Headmaster will consult with all staff concerned to try to ensure a solution is found. This may be as simple as using plastic containers for the food in a shared fridge.

The Company will ensure that, at all work-related social gatherings where alcohol is available, non-alcoholic alternatives are available.

If food is provided by the Company for the employees or Clients as part of a workplace event, it is the responsibility of the employee to inform the line manager in good time of any dietary requirements, and to co-operate in suggesting reasonable suitable alternatives.

Personal Appearance and Dress

Should employees feel that the dress code in place in their workplace conflicts with the dress requirements of their religion, they should raise the issue with the line manager or in the Clients' case the Director. The Director and the employee/Client will together investigate possible adjustments in order to accommodate the dress requirements of the employee's religion or belief. However, such adjustments need to be made in a manner that is compatible with the requirements of the Company and that ensures the health and safety of employees.

Some religions require their followers to wear particular jewellery, headwear or other apparel. While the Director will consider each request sympathetically, the needs of the Company must also be considered and the requirements of health and safety legislation will need to take priority.

Harassment and Victimisation

Whilst all employees/Clients have the right to hold religious and other beliefs, it is not permitted for a employee to seek to impose his or her religious beliefs on other employees (or on customers, suppliers, etc), or to seek to persuade colleagues (or any other person) to convert to their religion.

Raising Issues Related to this Policy

If employees/Clients are dissatisfied about any arrangements made (or denied) to accommodate a request under this policy, and they would like the matter to be investigated further, the matter should be raised using the Company's grievance procedure.

Employees/Clients should also use the grievance procedure if they feel that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised in any way.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body and Local Authority as required.

Policy planning and development

In the planning and development stage of policy-making, we will ensure we have consulted and taken into account stakeholder views.

All improvement plans will be designed with an element of impact assessment built in to monitor the success of each activity.

There will be a systematic review by the Bursar or any of the Senior Management Team of the impact of all policies and procedures on equality and diversity to address any areas of inequality as felt appropriate or identified by the Company at any time.

Our target-setting processes ensure appropriate, challenging targets are set in relation to identifiable groups as well as individual Clients / cohorts.



Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Each Client's progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked-after status.

In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the Company meets its duty to positively promote diversity. (e.g. lesson observations record evidence of differentiation and texts are reviewed to ensure appropriateness and inclusivity)

The data collected is used to inform further company planning, target-setting and decision-making.

- ☐ All policies can be made available in larger print or other accessible formats if required.

- ◀ ■ **Forms of Discrimination**

- ◀ ■ **Types:** Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

- ◀ ■ **Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person of a protected characteristic. For example, rejecting a Client of one race because it is considered they would not 'fit in' on the grounds of their race, would be discrimination.

- ◀ ■ **Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice, which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with gender, it would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of gender.

- ◀ ■ **Discrimination arising from disability:** Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be justified. For example, where a Client with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend a school trip because there are no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

- ▲ ■ **Equal access:** the Company will afford all Clients equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation (LGBT) religion, belief or social educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare.

- ▲ ■ ☐ **Positive action:** the Company may afford Clients of a particular racial group, or Clients with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the Clients in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

- ▲ ■ ☐ **Teaching and school materials:** Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the Company's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

- ▲■□ **Client interaction:** All Clients are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other Clients, irrespective of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, pregnancy or maternity, or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the Company, and Clients will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

- ▲■□ **Bullying:** the Company will not tolerate bullying or cyber-bullying for any reason. Specific types of bullying include bullying relating to race, religion, belief or culture, bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or disabilities, bullying related to appearance or health conditions, bullying related to sexual orientation (LGBT) bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances, sexist or sexual bullying. the Company's Anti-Bullying Policy contains more details about the Company's anti-bullying practices.

» **Disability and Special Educational Needs**

- »■ **Our approach:** We are an inclusive company which welcomes Clients with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled Clients and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the Company. We will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the Company's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our Disability Policy and Policy on Special Educational Needs are consistent with this policy. Copies of these policies are available on the Company website.

- »■ **Definitions:** Children have 'special educational needs' if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a 'substantial and longterm adverse effect' on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010). For further clarification please refer to the policies mentioned in paragraph 8.1.

- »■ **Reasonable adjustments:** the Company has an on-going duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled Clients and Clients with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such Clients are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other Clients. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life, for example, the curriculum, classroom organisation and timetabling, access to school facilities, clubs and visits, school sports and school policies.

- »■ **Informing the Company:** In accordance with the Company's terms and conditions, parents of Clients must notify the Director in writing if they are aware or suspect that the Client (or prospective Client) has a disability of if they (either parent), the Client (or prospective Client), or any close relations have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty. Parents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the Company with such information will enable the Company to support the Client as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a 'need-to-know' basis.

- »■ **Access:** the Company will monitor the physical features of its trips and expeditions to consider whether disabled users are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the Company will take steps to improve access for disabled users. The Company has an Accessibility Plan, which is kept under review and revised as necessary. The Plan is available on request from the Company.

☐■ **Responsibilities**

☐■☐ **Leadership, Management and Governance**

Summit Explorers Ltd.is committed to:

- being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of life and the wider community;
- encouraging, supporting and enabling all Clients and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
- working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination.

12.3 **The Director**

It is the Director's responsibility to:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying;
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the Company's equality and diversity policy;

- produce a report on progress for governors annually.

12.4 All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- be vigilant in all areas of the Company for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the Company's culture;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;
- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

☐ ◀ **Monitoring and review**

- ☐ ◀ **Monitoring:** To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admission and selection, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in the Company, the Company monitors applicants' gender, race, religion or belief confidentially as part of the Admissions procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy.