

Diversity at Work Policy

Aims

To promote equality and diversity in the workplace and ensure fairness in the manner in which decisions are carried out in order to maintain a good working relationship with all potential and existing staff irrespective of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, part-time or fixed-term status, and age so as to avoid unlawful discriminatory practices.

Diversity refers to the multitude of people, experiences and lifestyles at the Nursery and means ensuring that ALL employees are treated, and treat each other, with respect and recognise the value that a diverse workforce can bring. The nursery recognises that it makes good business sense to accept the differences between individuals and to value the benefits that such diversity brings.

To achieve this aim, the Nursery will commit to the following:

- Provide training and guidance to all employees and managers to ensure the Nursery's commitment to Diversity at Work is known and understood.
- Immediately investigate any discrimination claims.
- Regularly monitor and review all Policies and Procedures to ensure equality of opportunity, responsiveness, sensitivity and accessibility.
- Regularly review the existing and potential workforce against ethnic groups, gender and disability, ensuring action is taken where under representation is found.
- Regular consultation and communication on diversity issues in the workforce will happen during the management review process.
- Actively support the community to enable real involvement and social responsibility.
- Value all our staff, provide them with the skills and training to do their job well and the opportunities to progress within the Nursery.
- Monitor the Diversity at Work Policy at every stage including all elements of recruitment and selection, promotion and transfer, training and development, redeployment and redundancy, dismissal, terms and conditions of employment, work-life balance and sexual harassment policies, grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Nursery employees, regardless of level, and to contractors and sub-contractors.

Policy Statement

The nursery values the contribution to be made by a diverse workforce and undertakes to treat all individuals fairly and with respect. We recognise that everyone is entitled to dignity at work and seek to establish a fully diverse culture, in employment practices, service delivery and policy formulation.

The nursery recognises that staff are core to achieving its commercial objectives and that all existing and prospective staff and customers should be treated fairly in all matters regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, part-time or fixed-term status, and age.

The Company is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and ensuring an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation and victimisation.

The nursery commitment is to existing and prospective staff in terms of recruitment & selection, training and development, transfers and career moves, terms and conditions of employment, pay and benefits, grievance / disciplinary procedures, dismissal and selection for redundancy.

The nursery will not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or violence in the workplace at any level whether deliberate or unconscious, direct¹ or indirect². All complaints will be fully investigated in accordance with the Nursery Dignity at Work Complaint Procedure as detailed below^{**}.

This policy is made available to all staff, including contractors, through a number of varied Nursery communication channels including the intranet - Pulse, HR Induction, HR New Business Induction, Diversity Workshops and through all other applicable Company Policies.

This commitment is extended to customers and members of the public and is widely communicated through external company literature, the nursery premises, on customer sites, job vacancy advertising, the sales and bidding processes.

Dignity @ Work Complaint Procedure^{}**

Any individual who has a complaint, which has not been resolved informally, should detail the complaint in writing to the manager who they feel they can approach within 5 working days of when the alleged incident occurred.

The manager will inform the Director of Operations that the complaint has been raised and pass the individual's written complaint to the Director of Operations.

The Director of Operations will appoint an appropriate Investigation Team to investigate the complaint raised.

In instances where the presence of any person accused of harassment, bullying or violence,

may hinder the comprehensive investigation, the accused may be suspended on full pay whilst the complaint is investigated.

The Director of Operations and their line manager will meet with the accused to inform them of the complaint and suspend the accused on full pay, if appropriate.

If appropriate, the complainant may also be allowed by the Director of Operations to not attend the place of work where the alleged incident occurred until the process is complete.

The Investigation Team will meet with the complainant, any witnesses and the accused and will prepare a confidential report for the Director of Operations. At the investigation meetings the complainant and the accused will each have the right to have a Nursery work colleague present for support.

Where the investigation report recommends that formal disciplinary action is required, the accused will remain suspended on full pay and will then be subject to the All Seasons Childcare Nursery LLP Disciplinary Procedure.

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant and the accused and will be one of the following:

- Complaint validated
- Complaint not validated

Where the complaint is validated, the Investigation Team will recommend one of two outcomes:

- Informal resolution
- Formal disciplinary action

The Nursery policy is to ensure complaints are dealt with impartially and fairly and individuals participating in any investigation under the procedure will not be subject to victimisation or intimidation.

If any individual should feel that they have been victimised or intimidated, as a result of participating in the investigation, they must contact the Investigation Team or the Director of Operations immediately.

Responsibilities

The Board

The Executive Board fully endorses this policy statement and holds ultimate responsibility for achieving the following:

1. Be committed to achieving equality of opportunity.

2. Be responsible and accountable for the development of diversity and fairness within directorates.
3. Lead by example.
4. Review progress as part of the normal planning cycle and report back to staff.

Managers

All Managers are responsible for managing the Diversity at Work Policy and strategy, and all other related policies, within their service area on a day-to-day basis. These responsibilities include:

1. Ensure all employees are aware of their responsibilities.
2. Ensure that no discrimination takes place within their area.
3. Promote good working behaviours within the team.
4. Deal appropriately with any breaches.
5. The nursery recognises that direct and indirect discrimination can occur. Managers must consider their actions and ensure that there is no scope for discriminatory practice.

Employees

All employees of the Nursery, at every level, have an individual responsibility for ensuring equal opportunities. To achieve this, employees must understand the policy and be clear about its implications.

Employees must adhere to this Policy and are responsible for ensuring they do not:

1. Discriminate in any matter of employment or service delivery.
2. Induce or attempt to induce any other employees to discriminate.
3. Harass, abuse, intimidate or victimise other employees or members of the public.

Ultimately, contributing to the equality of opportunity for all and respecting the right to work in an environment free from prejudice and unfair discrimination is the responsibility of each member of staff.

The Operations Director is ultimately responsible for the implementation and review of our Diversity at Work policy and for ensuring all staff are trained and made aware of their responsibilities under the Diversity at Work policy.

The Operations Director is responsible for reviewing all related policies, monitoring employment practices, supporting managers and giving relevant advice and guidance with regard to Diversity at Work.

Monitoring

Recruitment and other employment decisions are regularly monitored to ensure that direct or indirect discrimination is not occurring.

Where under-representation can be demonstrated, a full review of all monitoring processes will be undertaken and advice from relevant organisations taken where appropriate.

Review

This policy is owned by the Nursery Operations Director, who is responsible for its effective implementation and regular review. This policy will be reviewed annually and also when new legislation is implemented. Monthly statistics will be produced and reviewed by the Recruitment Manager and the Nursery Manager. The Group Operations Executive will then review these on a quarterly basis.

Definitions

Direct Discrimination1 refers to treating a person less favourably than another person on the grounds of their race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age. For example in recruitment and selection, a male candidate being chosen over a female candidate (of equal skills, training and calibre) on the grounds that a male would 'fit in' better at work.

Indirect Discrimination2 refers to the application by the employer of a provision, criterion or practice to everyone but which has a disproportionate impact on one group because of that group's sex, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief of age. For example an employer stating a dress code, which prevents the wearing of head-garments may rule out a male Sikh wearing a turban or a female Muslim wearing a headscarf from getting a job or obeying the company rules.

Related Legislation:

The Human Rights Act 2000

The Working Time Regulations 1998

The Part-Time Working Regulations 2000

The National Minimum Wage

The Working Families Tax Credit

The Disabled Persons Tax Credit

The Employment Rights Act 1996

Maternity & Parental Leave Regulations 1999

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

[The Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000]

[The Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002]