

KiddiVouchers

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Equality Statement

- a) KiddiVouchers is an equal opportunities employer, committed to ensuring that our organisation is free from any form of unlawful discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment because of age; disability; gender; gender identity (transgender); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; responsibilities for dependents; working patterns (such as the need, or desire, to work part-time hours); or other irrelevant considerations.
- b) No person should receive less favourable treatment because of any of the protected characteristics listed above. Furthermore, we will ensure that no person is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that we cannot show to be justifiable.
- c) Employees and others who undertake work on our behalf, are expected to act in accordance with our equal opportunities policy both in terms of their dealings with our customers and relationships with colleagues.
- d) We will not tolerate discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment, direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional, against any person on any grounds whatsoever including, but not limited to, those mentioned above.

2. Purpose

- a) KiddiVouchers is committed to promoting equality of opportunity; treating people fairly; eliminating discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment throughout our activities and management of the organisation; and fulfilling our legal obligations under the equality legislation.
- b) Prior to October 2010 there were several pieces of legislation which aimed to combat discrimination, victimisation or harassment and promote equal opportunities and diversity which underpin this policy. Many of these acts have now been replaced by the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination, victimisation and harassment are unlawful in the UK on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Breaches of the legislation may result in legal action being taken against the individual concerned and KiddiVouchers.
- c) In addition to any legal action that may be taken against individuals who discriminate, victimise, bully or harass, because of the importance KiddiVouchers attaches to providing equality of opportunity, breaches of this policy could result in disciplinary action being taken against the individuals concerned.

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3. Implementation

All our employees and others who undertake work on our behalf share responsibility for ensuring that our equal opportunities policy is promoted and implemented fairly, consistently and effectively.

4. Employment

- a) All employees have the right to work in an environment which promotes equal opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices. We aim to promote a working environment that provides for open communication and constructive, informal discussion (and resolution) of work-related concerns between staff and managers. We do not tolerate any form of unfair treatment or discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment by or against our employees. All employees will be treated fairly and consistently.
- b) We work to ensure that individuals and groups who are employees or potential employees are not disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justified.

5. Recruitment, promotion and training

- a) A comprehensive induction programme is provided for all new staff which includes an introduction to equal opportunities. Guidance and training is available to all employees to help them understand the policy's scope and purpose, and legislation relating to equal opportunities
- b) It is KiddiVouchers' policy to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, race, marital status, disability, age, part-time or fixed term contract status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- c) Advertisements for posts will give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post. All descriptions and specifications for posts will only include requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.
- d) Recruitment literature will not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to this particular group, in which case this will be clearly stated.
- e) All selection procedures will be thorough, will be conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will relate purely to job requirements and be asked of all candidates.

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- f) All employees will be provided with training and development opportunities with the aim of enabling them to progress within the organisation and to enjoy a varied and fulfilling working life. Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of sex, race, marital status, disability, age, part-time or fixed term contract status, sexual orientation, religion or belief. All employees are encouraged to discuss their training needs with their manager.
- g) Employees who are involved in the process of recruiting, promoting and training staff, will be routinely reminded of their responsibilities under this policy.

A) Physical Environment

- a) Our physical environment (e.g. buildings and facilities) is regularly maintained and every reasonable step is taken to ensure that our offices are accessible and welcoming to all.
- b) The needs of staff that use any electronic equipment during the course of their duties will be assessed through Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments undertaken by suitably trained KiddiVouchers staff. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made after the assessment has been undertaken. DSE assessments will be undertaken:
 - (i) when a new member of staff starts work for KiddiVouchers;
 - (ii) when a substantial change is made to a workstation; or
 - (iii) if there are health or welfare reasons.

B) Dealing with discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment

- a) We will not tolerate breaches of our equal opportunities policy by any of our employees, or other persons undertaking work on our behalf. Complaints of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment will be taken seriously, and dealt with promptly, fairly and thoroughly.
- b) Behaviour taking place at events outside of normal working hours where individuals can be identified as representing or associated with KiddiVouchers, e.g. training events, conferences, Christmas lunches, dinners etc., that could be interpreted as discriminatory may be subject to investigation and, potentially, disciplinary action if it is considered to have a link with work or impact on the workplace.
- c) Any employee concerned about discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment in the workplace is encouraged to bring the matter to the attention of their line manager in the first instance. If the issue cannot be raised with the line manager, it can be raised with a Director.
- d) KiddiVouchers aims to promote an open and supporting environment for all staff. Individuals are encouraged to make clear to their colleagues if conduct or comments are offensive to them and to challenge any inappropriate behaviour

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- e) Any individual who witnesses an act of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment against a fellow colleague or visitor should report this to their line manager other relevant manager or Director. We understand that it may be difficult for witnesses to discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment to speak out against such actions. We will ensure that anyone who comes forward as a witness, acting in good faith, will be supported by their line manager and KiddiVouchers without fear of reprisal. Witnesses may be required to give evidence to an investigating officer, where appropriate.
- f) Managers should be made aware of any problem developing at an early stage and take prompt corrective action to ensure that the situation is resolved in a conciliatory and effective manner. Managers should also be responsive to and manage the concerns of the person who is being complained about.

C) Employees

- a) Any complaints or allegations of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment made by or against our employees, will be treated seriously and investigated by reference to our Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- b) Where an allegation of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment made against a KiddiVouchers employee is found to be substantiated, the issue may be treated as a disciplinary matter in accordance with our Discipline Policy and Procedure.

D) Unfounded allegations

- a) Unfounded allegations of discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment can be distressing to the individual being complained about and as such are regarded as a serious matter. Should such an allegation be raised that is subsequently found to have been brought mischievously, inappropriately, as an attempt to misuse our procedures or to frustrate any other legitimate management process in KiddiVouchers, then appropriate action, including appropriate disciplinary action, may be taken under our Discipline Policy and Procedure.

E) Complaints

- a) Any employee who feels that this policy has not been applied correctly has the right to have their case considered in accordance with our grievance procedure.
- b) Complaints from non-employees and external organisations, groups or individuals will be dealt with under our Complaints Procedure
- c) All complaints will be investigated fully and treated in confidence.