

KiddiVouchers

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Introduction

KiddiVouchers recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all, without discrimination.

This policy sets out KiddiVouchers' position on equal opportunity in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, selection, training and promotion. It also provides guidance to employees and encourages them to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender, colour, race, ethnic origin, nationality, marital status, disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, part-time and fixed term contract status, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. In particular, employees are required to extend courtesy and fair treatment to all clients, parents, childcare providers, suppliers, competitors and other members of the public.

In addition to keeping up-to-date with and applying all relevant legislation, KiddiVouchers is committed to the positive promotion of equal opportunities in all aspects of employment.

KiddiVouchers recognises that the policy of providing equal opportunities maximises the effective use of individuals, which is in the interests of both KiddiVouchers' and its employees. The directors recognise the great benefits in having a diverse workforce, with employment based solely on ability.

2. Responsibilities

The responsibility for determining, communicating, implementing and revising this policy lies with the directors. The directors have a responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and its implications.

All employees should be aware of their individual responsibility to comply with this policy.

3. Definition of discrimination

Discrimination can be direct or indirect, both forms of which must be avoided. Under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, the Employment (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and the Employment (Age) Regulations 2006:

- i) Direct discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another on grounds relating to sex, race, marital status, age, sexual orientation or religion or belief.
- ii) Indirect discrimination occurs where a requirement is imposed which cannot be complied with by a smaller proportion of persons of a particular sex, race, marital status, disability, age, part-time or fixed term contract status, sexual orientation or religion or belief, than persons in another group and which is not objectively justifiable in the given situation.

KiddiVouchers

4. Recruitment, promotion and training

KiddiVouchers will appoint, train, develop and promote employees purely on the basis of merit and ability.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Employees who are involved in the process of recruiting, promoting and training staff, will be routinely reminded of their responsibilities under this policy.

5. Disability discrimination

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995:

- i) Direct disability discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another on grounds relating to disability;
- ii) Indirect disability discrimination occurs when for a reason which relates to the disabled person's disability, an individual:
 - a) treats them less favourably than they treat, or would treat, others to whom that reason does not or would not apply, and
 - b) the employer cannot show that the treatment in question is justified.

KiddiVouchers

KiddiVouchers will:

- i) Make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled (for example by providing training, special equipment or reduced working hours).
- ii) Include disabled employees in training and development programmes.
- iii) Give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job. In particular, wherever possible KiddiVouchers will make reasonable adjustments to hallways, passages and doors in order to provide and improve means of access for disabled employees and workers.

KiddiVouchers is registered with the Two Ticks scheme run by JobCentre Plus.

6. Part-time employees

KiddiVouchers will allow all employees to request part-time work or flexible working hours. Requests will be accepted whenever they are logistically and economically viable. KiddiVouchers aims to work with each employee to create a schedule which fits in with their family commitments.

KiddiVouchers recognises that it is an essential part of this policy that part-time employees are treated on the same terms as full-time employees (albeit on a pro rata basis) in matters such as rates of pay, holiday entitlement, maternity leave, parental leave and domestic incident leave.

KiddiVouchers also recognises that part-time employees must be treated the same as full-time employees in relation to training and redundancy situations.

7. Grievances

Discriminatory conduct, harassment and victimisation shall be regarded as gross misconduct and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employees who engage in such activity. If there is any doubt about appropriate treatment under KiddiVouchers' Equal Opportunities Policy, employees should consult the directors.

Records will be kept of any complaints which arise in the area of equal opportunities and complaints will be dealt with promptly by senior management.

8. Protecting employees against unlawful discrimination by a member of the public

KiddiVouchers requires any employees who suffer from discrimination or harassment by a customer or member of the public during the course of their employment to report the incident to a director within one week.

KiddiVouchers

KiddiVouchers will endeavour to take all appropriate and reasonable steps to protect employees from such discrimination.

Any reported incidents will be investigated thoroughly and promptly and the affected employee(s) will be kept informed of progress. Where the discrimination involves a customer or supplier of KiddiVouchers, a complaint will be made to the customer or supplier at a suitable level of seniority. Further action, such as severing contractual agreements with the customer or supplier, will be considered.

KiddiVouchers will provide additional training and/or counselling for affected employees, as appropriate.

9. Positive promotion of equality of opportunity

KiddiVouchers works towards embedding race, disability and gender equality into every aspect of day-to-day work, in line with the positive equality duties referred to in the Race Relations Act 1976 and amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Equality Act 2006.

This means being able to demonstrate that this equal opportunities policy is translated into practice by:

- i) Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment,
- ii) Promoting equality of opportunity between persons of different groups, and
- iii) Promoting good relations between people of different groups.

KiddiVouchers embraces the diversity of parents, clients and childcare providers who use our services. Our company literature reflects this diversity and we are committed to making our services accessible to all.