

# Flexible Working Policy

We believe that flexible working may increase staff motivation, promote work-life balance, and improve performance and productivity.

From 30 June 2014, all employees who have a minimum of 26 weeks continuous service have the right to request flexible working and to have their request considered seriously by their employer.

## Requests for flexible working

A request for flexible working could include any of the following:

- a change to the number of hours that the employee works
- a change to the pattern of hours worked
- a request to job share or
- a request to perform some work from home.

## Applying for flexible working

All requests under this policy must be made in writing. Any request made under this policy must include:

- the date of the application
- the changes that the employee is seeking to their terms and conditions
- the date on which the employee would like the change in terms and conditions to come into effect
- what effect the employee thinks the requested change would have on the organisation
- how in the employee's opinion any such effect might be dealt with
- a statement that this is a statutory request
- whether or not a previous application for flexible working has been made
- if a previous request has been made, when the application was made.

Employees are not obliged in law to provide a reason for the request, but they may do so if they wish to.

## Meeting to discuss a flexible working request

Once the management receive the request, it will be dealt with as soon as possible, meeting the timescales laid out below. The manager will arrange a meeting to discuss the request. The aim of the meeting is to find out more about the proposed working arrangements and how they could be of benefit to both the employee and organisation.

## **Outcome of a flexible working request**

After the meeting:

- The management will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements carefully, weighing up the potential benefits to the employee and to the organisation against any adverse impact of implementing the changes
- The employee will be informed in writing of the decision as soon as is reasonably practicable after the meeting, but no later than the deadline set out below.

The request may be granted in full or in part: for example, we may propose a modified version of the request, the request may be granted on a temporary basis, or the employee may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period. The employee will be given the right to appeal the decision if the request is not upheld or is upheld in part.

## **Reasons for turning down a flexible working request**

We will give reasons for the rejection of any request. Those reasons must be for one or more prescribed business reasons, which are:

- The burden of additional costs
- An inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- An inability to recruit additional staff
- A detrimental impact on quality
- A detrimental effect on ability to meet the demands of the nursery business
- Insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work
- A planned structural change to the business.

## **Flexible working requests that are granted**

If the request is upheld, the employee and manager will discuss how and when the changes will take effect. Any changes to terms and conditions will be put in writing and sent to the employee as an amendment to their written terms and conditions of employment as soon as is reasonably practicable.

## **Timescales**

- All requests will be dealt with within a period of three months from first receipt to notification of the decision on appeal
- The manager will hold the meeting within 28 days of receiving the request and notify the employee of the decision within 14 days of the meeting
- If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the request, they are allowed to lodge an appeal within 14 days of the notification, with the appeal to be heard within 14 days
- The employee will be informed of the outcome of any appeal within 14 days of the appeal meeting

- These time limits may be extended where both the parties are in agreement. For example, the employee may agree to extend the time limit to give chance for a trial period on the flexible working arrangements.

### **Problems with a flexible working request**

If the employee is dissatisfied or unclear at any stage throughout the process, they should contact the manager. If they are dissatisfied with the way in which their request has been handled, they should raise a grievance.

If the employee fails to attend a meeting, including an appeal meeting, and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, their application will be deemed to have been withdrawn.