



HIGHFIELD PARK – EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

Purpose

Our Company is made up of brilliant people. Each of us is unique, whether in terms of our background, personal characteristics, experience, skills or motivations. We value our people for the differences they bring to the table. Fostering an inclusive culture helps each of us to benefit from a wider range of different perspectives, experiences and skills. We believe that this creates a happier, more productive working environment for us all.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees:

- To take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy.
- To be committed to nurturing working environment based on dignity, trust, and respect.

Manager:

- To be committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust, and respect.
- To ensure that our recruitment, promotion and retention procedures treat people fairly.

Policy Elements

Scope

This policy applies to anyone working for us. This includes employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, interns and apprentices. The policy also relates to job applicants and is relevant to all stages of the employment relationship.

Our commitment to you

We believe that a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion not only benefits our Company but supports wellbeing and enables our people to work better because they can be themselves and feel that they belong.

We are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust, and respect, that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

We ensure that our recruitment, promotion and retention procedures do not treat people less favourably because of their:

- disability
- gender, gender identity or gender reassignment status
- marital status
- race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- age
- civil partnership status
- pregnancy or maternity
- paternity
- part-time status; or
- fixed-term status.

What we expect from you

We expect you, and every one of our people, to take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy. Our culture is made in the day-to-day working interactions between us so creating the right environment is a responsibility that we all share.

Cultivating this culture does not happen by accident but requires ongoing commitment and nurturing. We expect you to treat your colleagues and third parties (including customers, suppliers, contractors, agency staff and consultants) fairly and with dignity, trust and respect. Sometimes, this may mean allowing for different views and viewpoints and making space for others to contribute. By embedding such values and constructively challenging inappropriate comments or ways of working, you can help us achieve and maintain a truly inclusive workplace culture. Any dealings that you have with colleagues or third parties must be free from any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying (see relevant sections below). If any of our people is found to have committed, authorised or condoned an act of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying, we will take action against them, for those to whom it applies, this may include taking action under our Disciplinary procedure. You should be aware that you can be personally liable for discrimination and harassment.

Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination because of certain protected characteristics. These are:

- disability
- sex
- gender reassignment
- marital or civil partnership status
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- age
- pregnancy or maternity

Discrimination can be intentional or unintentional and may occur directly, indirectly, by association, or by perception.

There are also two specific types of discrimination that apply only to disability: “discrimination arising from disability” and “failing to make reasonable adjustments.”

Different types of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010:

- Direct discrimination: Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic compared with someone who does not have that characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination: Where a policy, procedure or way of working that applies to everyone puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage, compared with people who do not have that characteristic, unless there is a good reason to justify it.
- Associative discrimination: Treating someone less favourably because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by perception: Treating someone less favourably because you perceive them to have a protected characteristic even if they do not.
- Discrimination arising from disability: Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with that person's disability and where such treatment is not justified.
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments: Employers are legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that aspects of employment, or the employer's premises, do not put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage.

Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of:

- violating someone else's dignity; or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone else.

Sexual harassment is:

- conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; and
- less favourable treatment related to sex or gender reassignment that occurs because of a rejection of, or submission to, sexual conduct.

Victimisation

Victimisation is treating another person detrimentally either because that person has made a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or because they have supported someone else who has made such a complaint, for example by giving a witness statement that supports the allegations.

Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, we regard it as conduct that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting, or an abuse or misuse of power, and usually persistent, that has the effect of undermining, humiliating or injuring the recipient. Bullying can be physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. It is not necessarily face to face and can be done by email, phone calls, online or on social media. Bullying may occur at work or outside work. If the bullying relates to a person's protected characteristic, it may also constitute harassment and, therefore, will be unlawful.

Equality of Opportunity

Recruitment

We expect anyone making a decision about recruitment to not discriminate in any way during the process. Every decision-maker should challenge themselves, and other members of the recruitment selection panel, to make sure that any stereotypes, unconscious bias or prejudice do not play any part in recruitment decisions.

Career Development

Any decision made in relation to a person's promotion or career development must be free from discrimination.

Disability Inclusion

Recruiting people with a disability

The recruitment team should consider disability in advance of a recruitment campaign so that advertising, application forms and assessments, arrangements for interviews, job descriptions and employee specifications, and selection criteria are appropriate and as inclusive as possible.

We will ask applicants at the outset if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made to the recruitment process.

If you are involved in the interview process, you must not ask job applicants about their health or disability except with prior approval from the HR team. Such approval is given only in exceptional circumstances and where there are specific legal grounds for doing so.

Talking about disability

We understand that some people find it hard to discuss their disabilities and that disability can be invisible. Psychological safety, where people feel able to speak up about their experiences without fear of negative consequences, is paramount to ensuring disability inclusion.

However, this is only possible if we treat people with dignity, trust and respect and we expect everyone to uphold these values. We do not tolerate ableist language in our Company. Ableist language is language that is negative, inappropriate or offensive towards people with a disability and may take the form of jokes or "banter". If you adopt

such language, we will take action against you including (for those to whom it applies) under our Disciplinary procedure.

Reasonable adjustments

If you have a disability, you do not have to tell us. However, we would encourage you to let us know so that we can support you, for example by making reasonable adjustments to our premises or to aspects of your role, or to our working practices. If you are experiencing difficulties at work because of your disability, please contact the HR team to discuss potential reasonable adjustments that may alleviate or minimise such difficulties. We may need to discuss your needs with you and your medical adviser to help us get the right support in place.

Support

If you have a disability, or you care for someone with a disability, and need emotional support or help with practical issues, please contact HR and they will be able to help.

Training

All new starters must complete equality, diversity and inclusion training as part of their onboarding programme.