

53. Equal Opportunities: Dignity at Work & Valuing Diversity Policy

Policy Statement: FUNdays Club is an equal opportunity employer and is fully committed to a policy of treating all of its employees and job applicants equally. FUNdays Club will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment and selection, promotion, transfer, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, other terms of employment, discipline, selection for redundancy and dismissal.

FUNdays Club will take all reasonable steps to employ, train and promote employees on the basis of their experience, abilities and qualifications without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. In this policy, these are known as the “**protected characteristics**”.

FUNdays Club will also take all reasonable steps to provide a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity and that is free from harassment and bullying based upon age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. In this policy, these are known as the “**anti-harassment protected characteristics**”. All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with this policy. FUNdays Club will not condone or tolerate any form of harassment, whether engaged in by employees or by outside third parties who do business with FUNdays Club, such as parents, carers, children, clients, customers, contractors and suppliers.

Employees have a duty to co-operate with FUNdays Club to make sure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination, harassment or bullying. Action will be taken under FUNdays Club disciplinary procedure against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation. Serious breaches of this equal opportunities and dignity at work statement will be treated as potential gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. Employees should also bear in mind that they can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination or harassment. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.

Employees should draw to the attention of their line manager if they suspect discriminatory acts or practices or suspected cases of harassment or bullying are taking place. Employees must not victimise or retaliate against an employee who has made allegations or complaints of discrimination or harassment or who has provided information about such discrimination or harassment. Such behaviour will be treated as potential gross misconduct in accordance with FUNdays Club disciplinary procedure. Employees should support colleagues who suffer such treatment and are making a complaint.

FUNdays Club will also take appropriate action against any third parties who are found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful harassment against its employees.

Direct discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs when, because of one of the protected characteristics referred to previously, a job applicant or an employee is treated less favourably than other job applicants or employees are treated or would be treated. The treatment will still amount to direct discrimination even if it is based on the protected characteristic of a third party with whom the job applicant or employee is associated and not on the job applicant’s or employee’s own protected characteristic. In addition, it can include cases where it is perceived that a job applicant or an employee has a particular protected characteristic when in fact they do not.

Discrimination after employment is also unlawful if it arises out of and is closely connected to the employment relationship, for example refusing to give a reference or providing an unfavourable reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

FUNdays Club will take all reasonable steps to eliminate direct discrimination in all aspects of employment.

Indirect discrimination: Indirect discrimination is treatment that may be equal in the sense that it applies to all job applicants or employees but which is discriminatory in its effect on, for example, one particular sex or racial group. Indirect discrimination occurs when there is applied to the job applicant or employee a provision, criterion or practice (**PCP**) which is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic of the job applicant’s or employee’s. A PCP is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic of the job applicant’s or employees if:

- It is applied, or would be applied, to persons with whom the job applicant or employee does not share the protected characteristic
- The PCP puts, or would put, persons with whom the job applicant or employee shares the protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with persons with whom the job applicant or employee does not share it
- It puts, or would put, the job applicant or employee at that disadvantage, and
- It cannot be shown by FUNdays Club to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

FUNdays Club will take all reasonable steps to eliminate indirect discrimination in all aspects of employment.

Victimisation: Victimisation occurs when an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion, because they have raised or supported a grievance or complaint of unlawful discrimination, or because they have issued employment tribunal proceedings for unlawful discrimination or they have given evidence in connection with unlawful discrimination proceedings brought by another employee. However, an employee is not protected if they give false evidence or information, or make a false allegation, and they do so in bad faith.

Post-employment victimisation is also unlawful, for example refusing to give a reference or providing an unfavourable reference because the former employee has done one of the protected acts set out above.

FUNdays Club will take all reasonable steps to eliminate victimisation in all aspects of employment.

Recruitment, advertising & selection: The recruitment process will be conducted in such a way as to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in terms of relevant experience, abilities and qualifications. FUNdays Club is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy statement at all stages of recruitment and selection.

Advertisements will aim to positively encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people. When advertising job vacancies, in order to attract applications from all sections of the community, FUNdays Club will, as far as reasonably practicable:

- Ensure advertisements are not confined to those publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants with a particular protected characteristic
- Avoid setting any unnecessary provision or criteria which would exclude a higher proportion of applicants with a particular protected characteristic

Where vacancies may be filled by promotion or transfer, they will be published to all eligible employees in such a way that they do not restrict applications from employees with a particular protected characteristic.

However, where, having regard to the nature and context of the work, having a particular protected characteristic is an occupational requirement and that occupational requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, FUNdays Club will apply that requirement to the job role and this may therefore be specified in the advertisement.

The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. All applications will be processed in the same way. The staff responsible for short-listing, interviewing and selecting candidates will be clearly informed of the selection criteria and of the need for their consistent application. Person specifications and job descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Wherever possible, all applicants will be interviewed by at least two interviewers and all questions asked of the applicants will relate to the requirements of the job. The selection of new staff will be based on the job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do, or to train for, the job in question.

With disabled job applicants, FUNdays Club will have regard to its duty to make reasonable adjustments to work provisions, criteria and practices or to physical features of work premises or to provide auxiliary aids or services in order to ensure that the disabled person is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

If it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this will be discussed objectively, without detailed questions based on assumptions about any of the protected characteristics.

Training and promotion: FUNdays Club will train all line managers in FUNdays Club policy on equal opportunities and help them in identify and deal effectively with discriminatory acts or practices or acts of harassment or bullying. Line managers will be responsible for ensuring they actively promote equal opportunity within the departments for which they are responsible. FUNdays Club will also provide training to all employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to equal opportunities and dignity at work and what they can do to create a work environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Where a promotional system is in operation, it will not be discriminatory and it will be checked from time to time to assess how it is working in practice. When a group of workers who predominantly have a protected characteristic appear to be excluded from access to promotion, transfer and training and to other benefits, the promotional system will be reviewed to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination.

Terms of employment, benefits, facilities & services: All terms of employment, benefits, facilities and service will be reviewed from time to time, in order to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination because of one or more of the protected characteristics.

Equal pay and equality of terms: FUNdays Club is committed to equal pay and equality of terms in employment. It believes its male and female employees should receive equal pay where they are carrying out like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. In order to achieve this, FUNdays Club will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria.

Bullying & Harassment: This policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, for example, during business trips and at work-related social events. Bullying is offensive or intimidating behaviour or an abuse or misuse of power which undermines or humiliates an employee.

An employee harasses another employee if they engage in unwanted conduct related to an anti-harassment protected characteristic, and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the other employee's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other employee.

An employee also harasses another employee if they engage in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the other employee's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other employee.

Finally, an employee harasses another employee if they or a third party engage in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or that is related to gender reassignment or sex, the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the other employee's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other employee, and because of that other employee's rejection of or submission to the conduct, they treat that other employee less favourably than they would treat them if they had not rejected, or submitted to, the conduct.

The unwanted conduct will still amount to harassment if it is based on the anti-harassment protected characteristic of a third party with whom the employee is associated and not on the employee's own anti-harassment protected characteristic, or if it was directed at someone other than the employee, or even at nobody in particular, but they witnessed it. In addition, harassment can include cases where the unwanted conduct occurs because it is perceived that an employee has a particular anti-harassment protected characteristic, when in fact they do not.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person intended to offend. Something intended as a "joke" or as "office banter" may offend another person. This is because different employees find different levels of behaviour acceptable and everyone has the right to decide for themselves what behaviour they find acceptable to them.

Behaviour which a reasonable person would realise would be likely to offend an employee will always constitute harassment without the need for the employee having to make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable, for example, touching someone in a sexual way. With other forms of behaviour, it may not always be clear in advance that it will offend a particular employee, for example, office banter and jokes. In these cases, the behaviour will constitute harassment if the conduct continues after the employee has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to him or her. A single incident can amount to harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

Examples: Bullying and harassment may be verbal, non-verbal, written or physical. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, other conduct of a sexual nature
- Subjection to obscene or other sexually suggestive or racist comments or gestures, or other derogatory comments or gestures related to an anti-harassment protected characteristic
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances or threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Jokes or pictures of a sexual, sexist or racial nature or which are otherwise derogatory in relation to an anti-harassment protected characteristic
- Demeaning comments about an employee's appearance
- Questions about an employee's sex life
- The use of nick names related to an anti-harassment protected characteristic
- Picking on or ridiculing an employee because of an anti-harassment protected characteristic
- Isolating an employee or excluding him or her from social activities or relevant work-related matters because of an anti-harassment protected characteristic.

Reporting complaints: All allegations of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with seriously, confidentially and speedily. FUNdays Club will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of discrimination or harassment from employees.

If an employee wishes to make a complaint of discrimination they should use FUNdays Club grievance procedure as outlined in this employee handbook.

With cases of harassment, while FUNdays Club encourages employees who believe they are being harassed or bullied to notify the offender (by words or by conduct) that his or her behaviour is unwelcome, FUNdays Club also recognises that actual or perceived power and status disparities may make such confrontation impractical. In the event that such informal direct communication is either ineffective or impractical, or the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, employees should follow the procedures set out below:

If an employee wishes to make a complaint of harassment, whether against a fellow employee or a third party, such as a parent, carer, school staff, client, customer, contractor or supplier, they should follow the steps detailed below:

1. First of all, report the incident of harassment to their line manager. If they do not wish to speak to their line manager, they can instead speak to an alternative manager, Director or to the Managing Director.
2. Such reports should be made promptly so that investigation may proceed and any action taken expeditiously.
3. All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously. The allegation will be promptly investigated and, as part of the investigatory process, the employee will be interviewed and asked to provide a written witness statement setting out the details of their complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained during the investigatory process to the extent that this is practical and appropriate in the circumstances. However, in order to effectively investigate an allegation, FUNdays Club must be able to determine the scope of the investigation and the individuals who should be informed of, or interviewed about the allegation. For example, the identity of the complainant and the nature of the allegations must be revealed to the alleged harasser so that he or she is able to fairly respond to the allegations. FUNdays Club reserves the right to arrange for another manager to conduct the investigation other than the manager with whom the matter was raised.
4. Once the investigation has been completed, the employee will be informed in writing of the outcome and FUNdays Club conclusions and decision as soon as possible. FUNdays Club is committed to taking appropriate action with respect to all complaints of harassment which are upheld. If appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser.
5. Employees will not be penalised for raising a complaint, even if it is not upheld, unless the complaint was both untrue and made in bad faith.
6. If the employee's complaint is upheld and the harasser remains in FUNdays Club employment, FUNdays Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the employee does not have to continue working alongside him or her if they do not wish to do so. FUNdays Club will discuss the options with the employee.
7. If the employee's complaint is not upheld, arrangements will be made for them and the alleged harasser to continue or resume working and to repair working relationships.

Alternatively, an employee may, if they wish, use FUNdays Club grievance procedure as outlined in this employee handbook to make a complaint of harassment.

Any employee who is found to have discriminated against or harassed another employee in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action under FUNdays Club disciplinary procedure. Such behaviour may be treated as gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. In addition, line managers who had knowledge that such discrimination or harassment had occurred in their departments but who had taken no action to eliminate it will also be subject to disciplinary action under FUNdays Club disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring equal opportunities: - dignity at work & valuing diversity: FUNdays Club will regularly review its Equal Opportunities: Dignity at Work & Valuing Diversity policy to ensure that it is compliant with the law and that it continues to ensure fairness to all whether or not a characteristic is protected by law.

FUNdays Club will regularly monitor the effects of selection decisions and personnel and pay practices and procedures in order to assess whether equal opportunity and dignity at work are being achieved. This will also involve considering any possible indirectly discriminatory effects of its working practices. If changes are required, FUNdays Club will implement them. FUNdays Club will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.