



Personal Relationship at Work

This chapter applies to all employees of Childhood First. Whilst Childhood First recognises staff working together may form relationship and in some cases close personal relationships, these procedures ensure that all employees behave in an appropriate manner at work.

Notification

Any employee who develops a close personal relationship with a colleague must advise his/her manager immediately.

Supervisory or Management Relationships

Staff who are in a supervisory or management role who develop feelings for a person for whom they have either direct or indirect supervisory responsibility should consider transference issues and discuss this with their own supervisor. Initiating a relationship in these circumstances may be regarded as an abuse of trust and could lead to disciplinary action. See Disciplinary Procedures.

Transfers

When a personal relationship has developed in which one party has supervisory or managerial authority over the other, (whether or not disciplinary action is considered appropriate), Childhood First reserves the right to transfer one or both of the employees to a different team or, if appropriate, workplace.

It may also become necessary to transfer one employee when members of the same team who are not in a supervisory relationship develop a personal relationship, if this is demonstrably impacting on the work and relationships with the children or other colleagues.

In all cases both employees will be consulted and every effort made to reach a satisfactory agreement. A transfer will not in itself constitute disciplinary action.

Unacceptable Behaviour

An employee who is involved in a close personal relationship with a colleague must not allow this to interfere with or influence his/her conduct at work. Intimate behaviour during working time, such as kissing, touching or holding hands, is expressly forbidden. Any breach of this rule will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

Break-down of Relationships

It is acknowledged that when a personal relationship between colleagues breaks down they may find it difficult to work together. However any behaviour amounting to

harassment or discrimination in these circumstances will not be tolerated. Also see Representations and Complaints Procedure, Grievance Procedures, Disciplinary Procedures and Harassment Procedures.

Grounds for Dismissal

Childhood First will not dismiss an employee because of a personal relationship at work or because such a relationship has broken down. Dismissal will only be considered if there is evidence that there has been a serious impact on the charity's work or a breach of trust. In this instance Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

Relationships with External Professional Colleagues

Similar principles will apply to an employee who begins a close personal relationship with an external professional who they meet at work, such as a Social Worker or Consultant. Such a relationship must be declared to the employee's manager, and Childhood First reserves the right to transfer the employee or amend his/her responsibilities to avoid conflicts of interest.

Recruitment of Family Members

The general policy of Childhood First is not to recruit family members of current employees to work in the same workplace or where there would be a direct supervisory relationship. This will not apply retrospectively and does not affect employees who marry or become civil partners as the result of a relationship developed at work.

If an application is received from someone who is a relative of a current employee for a post elsewhere in the organisation, the selection panel will give careful consideration to the appropriateness of such an appointment. Matters taken into account will include the amount of likely contact and the risk of breaches of confidentiality.

For the purposes of this policy, examples of a relative are:

- Wife, husband or civil partner;
- Partner in a long standing relationship;
- Child or parent;
- Brother or sister;
- Son or daughter-in-law;
- Father or mother-in-law;
- Uncle or aunt;
- Nephew or niece.

Key Legislation

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

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