

# Family Friendly Employment Employer's Toolkit

Encouraging a better  
work-life balance

Employment policies you  
can implement to recruit  
and retain parents and  
carers in Westminster



PREPARED BY:



ON BEHALF OF:



City of Westminster

# Introduction

This toolkit highlights good practice in family friendly employment policy. Its purpose is to introduce you to policies that can help you attract the best new staff, make the most of your talented workforce, improve staff wellbeing and reduce staff turnover. It also showcases employers who are already demonstrating initiatives in this field to inspire you.

The policies introduced below are already working successfully for leading employers and we want to encourage you to introduce similar ones to provide better opportunities for parents and carers living in Westminster. These policies can be implemented for all staff across your organisation, helping your employees balance their working life with demands outside of work.

They are relevant to all sizes of organisation, in all sectors.

A checklist is provided at the end of this document so you can carry out a self-assessment on your family friendly policies.

## The Case for Action

The proportion of the working population who have caring responsibilities is growing, and they have the potential to be a valuable resource to businesses. However lack of flexibility and the cost of childcare can prevent parents and carers from returning to or staying in work.

- The **average cost of full time nursery** (50 hours per week) for children under 2 is £284 a week in London or over £14,000 a year<sup>1</sup>.
- **42% of lone parents** in London are out of work<sup>2</sup>.
- **40% of mothers** in couples in London are workless, compared to 27% outside the city<sup>3</sup>.
- The proportion of quality flexible jobs across the UK is **lowest in London at 7.2%**<sup>4</sup>.
- A full range of family friendly benefits means working parents are **80% more likely** to stay with their employer<sup>5</sup>.

We often consider people with caring responsibilities to be parents, but employees are increasingly responsible for other family members such as their parents and grandparents. This is an issue that relates to both men and women. While women are still more likely to be primary care givers in a family, 62% of fathers believe that men should spend more time caring for their children<sup>6</sup>. Frequently offering these policies will benefit not just parents and carers, but all your staff.

As an employer you are able to attract and retain this growing pool of labour. You can select the most relevant policies to ensure that your employees are able to balance their professional and personal lives.

<sup>1</sup> Childminder and nursery costs from Family and Childcare Trust, 2015

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/CPAG-Poverty152-Hard-work-parental-employment-in-London-Autumn2015.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/CPAG-Poverty152-Hard-work-parental-employment-in-London-Autumn2015.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [http://timewise.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Timewise\\_Flexible\\_Index\\_2016.pdf](http://timewise.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Timewise_Flexible_Index_2016.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Rutgers University study (<https://www.myfamilycare.co.uk>)

<sup>6</sup> <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/886/>

<sup>7</sup> [www.childcarevouchers.co.uk](http://www.childcarevouchers.co.uk)

Working  
parents  
make up over  
1/3 of the UK  
workforce<sup>7</sup>





***“The aim of the flexible working policy is to enable The Crown Estate to attract and retain skilled employees... [and help] individuals to better balance work and other commitments”***

The Crown Estate,  
Flexible Working Policy

## The Business Case

Businesses need to operate efficiently and productively to survive, so the policies detailed here support this. The evidence for gains to business is clear:

- In a multi-national survey 83% of those companies that had adopted flexible working had seen increases in productivity, while 61% had seen an upturn in profit<sup>8</sup>.
- Boston College showed a range of gains to businesses from offering workplace flexibility including: enhanced recruitment and a wider talent pool; reduced staff turnover; greater engagement and commitment, higher customer satisfaction, increased job satisfaction, increased cost savings and profits, a high return on investment within the private sector, and a reduction in absenteeism and presenteeism (attending work when unwell)<sup>9</sup>.
- Homeworking can be hugely valuable to its business. BT estimates that every individual who works in this way saves £6,000 per year in corporate costs<sup>10</sup>.
- The average cost of replacing an employee has been estimated at £30,614, with the largest part of this relating to lost productivity as the worker learns the role<sup>11</sup>.
- Offering family friendly policies helps you retain staff, reduce turnover and hiring costs. BT found that offering this option saw the proportion of those returning to work after maternity leave climb to 96-99%, saving the company around £1m per year in recruitment and induction costs alone<sup>12</sup>.
- Offering and advertising family friendly policies attracts candidates who otherwise would not have applied. Attracting the right staff is likely to become increasingly difficult for those employers that do not offer work flexibility. 78% of those looking for work believe family friendly policy is important, while 54% of all workers saw flexibility as an important reason why they took their job<sup>13</sup>.
- Employees in their mid-twenties are twice as likely to view flexibility positively compared to those in their fifties, meaning organisations seeking to attract new talent will need to prioritise this<sup>14</sup>.
- Family friendly employment facilitates a more diverse workforce, which often benefits businesses. For organisations targeting customers who are parents or carers, employing parents can give greater insight and understanding of the customer group.
- A third of all vacancies across Westminster were considered hard-to-fill, equating to 5,993 roles<sup>15</sup>. Offering policies which attract parents and carers and help them return to work, could give employers access to a larger talent pool to potentially fill these roles.
- A 2014 UK government overview of cost/benefit evidence shows that “the majority of businesses believe implementing flexible working arrangements is unproblematic and incurs very few costs”<sup>16</sup>.
- The specific cost per flexibility request was estimated by BIS in 2010 as £241, a small amount to spend to gain all of the benefits detailed here.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.cipd.co.uk/pm/peoplemanagement/b/weblog/archive/2016/02/09/flexible-working-boosts-profits-and-productivity-say-majority-of-employers.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> [http://workplaceflexibility.bc.edu/need/need\\_employers\\_coverage](http://workplaceflexibility.bc.edu/need/need_employers_coverage)

<sup>10</sup> <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/886/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.hrreview.co.uk/hr-news/recruitment/it-costs-over-30k-to-replace-a-staff-member/50677>

<sup>12</sup> <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/886/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/886/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.hrreview.co.uk/hr-news/strategy-news/flexible-working-does-actually-boost-productivity-new-survey-finds/61206>

<sup>15</sup> UKCES, 2013 Employer Skills Survey

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.psi.org.uk/site/project\\_detail/costs\\_and\\_benefits\\_to\\_business\\_of\\_adopting\\_work\\_life\\_balance\\_working\\_practice](http://www.psi.org.uk/site/project_detail/costs_and_benefits_to_business_of_adopting_work_life_balance_working_practice)





# Approaches and Initiatives

There are a variety of measures you can implement over and above your statutory employer responsibilities that can help to provide better opportunities for parents and carers living in Westminster. These are outlined in 6 sections below.

## 1 Company Culture, Communication and ‘Open Door’ HR Policy

### Encourage a culture of openness, from the top down

Family friendly employment practices will be easier to implement if an understanding of the advantages of these is embedded in the culture of the company. When senior managers and line managers are aware of the benefits of flexible working to both the business and the employee, they are able to confidently promote practices and encourage employees to use them. There is less likely to be discrimination against those requesting flexible working and a more open environment in which to make those requests.

### Communicate internally

Visible signposting using familiar methods of communications ensures that employees clearly understand company policies and their own eligibility for them, and feel that you support them as parents and carers. Communications could be through the company intranet, email newsletters, and leaflets or in person for staff without regular access to computers.

### Royal Opera House

The Royal Opera House employs approximately 1,000 people across a broad spectrum of professions. There is a variety of work styles and patterns across these professions but the central belief across the board is one of support.

The Royal Opera House operates a fair and consistent approach to flexible working requests with the requirements of each job dictating the response. Successful requests are often granted on a six month trial basis. Their ‘open door’ HR policy combined with an HR-led approach to flexible working requests ensures that all requests are considered within the same framework, and are based on previous decisions made.

The Royal Opera House Benevolent Fund supports employees during their employment and beyond. The Royal Opera House Benevolent Fund provides

confidential advice, emotional support and financial assistance to those past and present employees and their dependants of the Royal Opera House and Birmingham Royal Ballet who need help<sup>17</sup>.

*“The Royal Opera House Benevolent Fund provides confidential advice, emotional support and financial assistance to those past and present employees and their dependants of the Royal Opera House and Birmingham Royal Ballet who need help”*

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.roh.org.uk/about/benevolent-fund>



## St. Martin in the Fields

### Open environment

As a small company of just 130 employees with a core age group between 20 and 35, working at St. Martin in the Fields 'feels like family'. With this approach, the company understands that being a family friendly employer is one of the best ways to retain talent.

St. Martin in the Fields realises that an individual's circumstances can change. Whilst staff realise that not every flexible working request can be met, they know they can voice any requests and are actively

encouraged to do so. Each request is considered on its own merits and attempts are always made to meet them, within the requirements of the business case. Very often, hours are agreed with line managers at the beginning of employment and written into a contract. On a more informal basis, there are systems in place that allow people to take time off to attend things such as doctor's or dentist's appointments.

### Promote an open and honest environment

By opening discussions on issues such as flexible working, employees will be more aware of company policies and will feel more comfortable making requests. Open discussion engages staff, builds trust and can promote the understanding that each request will be considered on an individual basis. Consulting staff who will, or may, be affected by policies in future is good practice to ensure they have their interests heard.

### Encourage communication between line managers and employees

To be successful, flexible working requires trust, good management and good communication. Employees can help this process by managing expectations and keeping their managers informed of their whereabouts, particularly before working at home or alternative locations. If line managers communicate clearly with their employees, employees will understand what is expected of them in return.

### Develop business-relevant policies

Initiatives are most effective when they are both people-driven and business-focused. You can engage with staff to understand what the issues are that specifically affect them so that initiatives are relevant and useful to your workforce. This way, you can go beyond introducing initiatives purely for compliance purposes or to match competitor peers.

### Train your line managers

Training your line managers to respond to flexible working requests and your work-life balance policies will ensure they are better placed to support their staff. It will also provide consistency in approach across your organisation, ensuring that all staff receive the same treatment. Consideration can also be given to training line managers and employees on flexible working and HR policy at the same time. This allows both parties to fully understand what is expected of each of them and provides a more holistic and comprehensive approach. Setting up company-specific training and information resources either online or in paper format will enable ongoing training and support line managers to consult and implement them.



## 2 Advertising and Reputation

### Promote openness to flexibility and your family friendly policies in job advertisements

Many employers offer a wide range of family friendly policies, but do not include details of these when advertising roles. Advertising your approach to flexible working and other policies attracts a larger talent pool and makes the job more accessible to candidates. It encourages them to be upfront about their caring commitments from the outset.

### Use logos and join campaigns to demonstrate your approach

The 'Happy to Talk' logo is a simple way to alert candidates to a willingness to engage in conversation without commitment. It is promoted by Working Families. Visit [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk) for more information.

You can join campaigns such as Hire Me My Way [www.hiremyway.org.uk](http://www.hiremyway.org.uk) which aims to increase the number of flexible roles available.

### Advertise on targeted websites

You can advertise any of your jobs which are available as part-time or a job-share roles on targeted websites:

[www.timewisejobs.co.uk](http://www.timewisejobs.co.uk)

[www.shareyourjob.com](http://www.shareyourjob.com)

[www.recruiters.workingmums.co.uk](http://www.recruiters.workingmums.co.uk)

### Build a reputation

Establishing a strong reputation as a family friendly employer will happen over time. This will enable you to attract the most talented employees and retain staff that you've invested in. Having strong policies, and implementing these well is the starting point. Engaging in promotional activities to publicise your employment flexibility in trade journals, corporate media, social media and other mechanisms will also support this. Consider applying for awards run by various family-focused organisations or the national press on the best employers.

You can also gain accreditation Family Friendly UK Accreditation scheme run by the Family and Childcare Trust, which enables you to demonstrate your approach to your staff and customers.

## 3 Flexible Working

### Allow and promote different types of flexible working

Flexible working is the foundation of excellent family friendly employment policy as it allows employees to balance a professional life with the caring duties they have outside work.

All employees have the legal right to request flexible working once they have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks. There are additional policies you can offer over and above this.

There are business benefits of offering roles as part time:

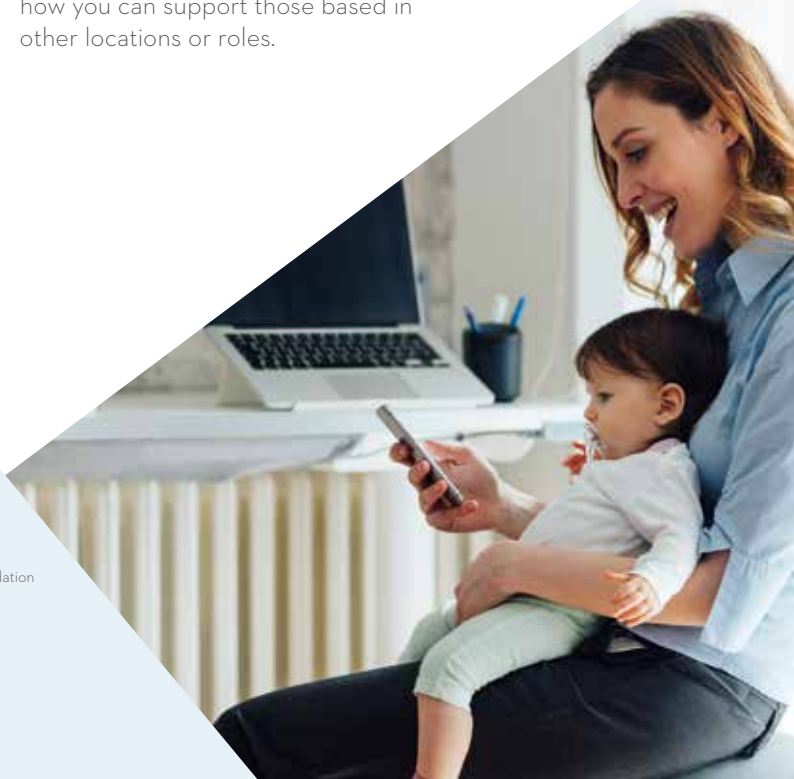
- Acquire experienced talent at an affordable cost;
- Recruit for hard to fill/niche roles; and
- Realise cost efficiencies by more precisely matching tasks to appropriate skills/salary levels<sup>18</sup>.

There are several approaches to the implementation and management of flexible working. In some cases allowing line managers to assess the individual's situation whilst also considering the needs of the team and the business. In other cases, flexible working is led by HR, which encourages consistency across departments and creates company-wide precedence and protocol.

Flexible working arrangements can be formal or informal. Formal flexible working arrangements allow employees to make a permanent or long-term change to their working hours. Informal flexible working arrangements allow employees flexibility on a more ad-hoc basis, for example, flexi-time.

You may already have policies in place for your office-based staff, but also consider how you can support those based in other locations or roles.

<sup>18</sup> Building a sustainable quality part-time recruitment market; 2014; Joseph Rowntree Foundation





## Exhibition Road Cultural Group

As a small charity, funding is limited for the Exhibition Road Cultural Group. For Executive Director Emily the driver to offering part time opportunities is to get “the experience you need at the price you can afford. Offering roles part-time has enabled us to attract more experienced, specialist staff who can really make an impact. It gives us many of the

benefits of a bigger team – different voices and perspectives – but on a very tight budget.”

This approach has also enabled them to attract the best staff as “being able to work four days per week was a real incentive for one team member moving into the cultural sector from the private sector”.

## Types of flexible working

### Compressed/condensed hours

Employees can work their contracted hours but in a shortened timeframe. For example, they can work full time hours as 4 day weeks or 9 day fortnights.

### Part-time working

Roles can be offered as part time with hours to suit the business need and employee – with shorter hours worked each day (e.g. to allow for nursery drop-off and pick-up or to care for relatives), or fewer days worked.

### Term-time working

Employees can remain on a permanent contract but can take paid/unpaid leave during school holidays; or work additional hours during term-time and reduced hours during school holidays to ensure they work their contracted hours over the course of the year.

### Job sharing

The responsibilities of one job can be shared amongst two or more employees, so you gain expertise from more than just one person and have full time cover for the job, and your staff members have access to part time roles.

### Career breaks

These allow employees to take time off work for various reasons, with the comfort of having a job to return to.

### Flexi-time

Flexi-time allows staff to build up hours in the event of needing to take time off at a later date.

### Home/remote working

On an informal basis, this allows an employee to work from home or at least closer to home if they have any problems regarding care cover.

On a more formal basis, employees may choose to work from home for a set number of days to perhaps make it easier for them to take a child to nursery or school, for example.

### Job design

Designing a job to meet the needs of a specific candidate from the outset can help them to thrive in it.

This can be led by HR professionals who will look at the tasks that need to be undertaken in a specific team and apportion them in accordance with skills and availability.

Design can include elements of all the flexibilities described above.



### Allow employees to propose their own flexible working solutions

Flexible working works well when it is tailored to an individual, and suits both them and the business. Their needs around flexible working are likely to change over time as their circumstances shift. Having an open discussion and reviewing flexible working arrangements is a way to make sure it works for both parties.

### Offer guaranteed hours and early notice of shifts

Whilst flexible working is very important for parents, guaranteeing set hours each week with fixed shifts or good notice of shifts (e.g. providing rotas a month in advance), is also vital. This allows parents to make childcare arrangements in advance, and make a commitment to childcare such as nursery which generally cannot be booked on an ad-hoc and short notice basis. It enables staff to manage their financial commitments, knowing they have a fixed income. This approach also provides continuity for the business, who will have certainty their shifts are covered each week.

In addition to fixed shifts, additional shifts can be offered to employees on a voluntary basis.

Working hours could be offered within suitable time periods that accommodate for parents/that are convenient for parents.

### The Abbey Centre

Almost half of The Abbey Centre's staff work flexibly. For Chief Executive Lainya their approach is just "not about being a cuddly friendly employer" because "in ruthless business terms we have gained as a business".

Offering flexible working has "helped us to retain staff, and so save the cost to re-recruit and risk of getting someone not right for the role. Too often employers see flexible working as a risk of what they are giving, not what they are gaining."

Staff are managed on their performance against clear objectives – not the hours they are at their desk.

Their Head of Finance and Business Nicola, explains that working condensed hours and working from home is vital to her, as "that one day is the difference between being able to work and not being able to work."

### Tate

Tate's flexible rota enables front of house team members to plan childcare and other commitments weeks in advance. Every 12 weeks employees submit their working hour preferences for future rotas. This can include condensed hours at times,

then much reduced hours – for example during school holidays, as long as contracted hours are worked during the rota period. If operational requirements are met, all requests will be accepted.

### The Nickelodeon Store

Store Director Clare "doesn't believe in zero hour contracts". Therefore, all staff are recruited on a permanent basis, with fixed shifts. This enables staff to arrange childcare and other plans, knowing their working patterns and income will be consistent each week.

Their reason for this is that "as a business, you know the hours you trade and the hours you need staff. It is much easier to manage with fixed shifts and you can feel confident that you have your shifts covered."

Their approach benefits their businesses because it attracts a wider workforce. "We want a mixed workforce, of different ages. You get the best out of your team when everyone learns from each other and brings different skills. I'm here to run a business and take money, but I need the right people in the right place and the way we operate supports that."

## 4 Employee Benefits

Complementary to a comprehensive flexible working package, employers can also offer a selection of benefits to attract and retain parents and carers.

### Types of employment benefits

#### Parental/Maternity/Paternity Entitlements

##### *Enhanced Leave and Pay*

An enhanced parental leave package is anything over and above statutory allowances. It can include additional pay or additional time off.

Businesses can also offer incentives for parents to return to work following the parental leave (e.g. offering enhanced packages for those returning, or offering an additional payment once parents have been back at work for a period of time).

##### *Childcare Vouchers*

Businesses can offer childcare vouchers as salary sacrifice schemes at parents and guardians. They allow employees to pay for childcare from their pre-tax and National Insurance (NI) salary, which can save them around £1,000 a year and financially support their return to work.

Establishing a voucher scheme can save the business money through reduced NI payments. Employers can establish their own scheme or use one of the many companies who can administer the voucher.

The childcare voucher scheme is due to close to new entrants in April 2018 and be replaced by the Government-run Tax-Free Childcare.

##### *Keeping in Touch (KIT) Days*

Employees can work and be paid for up to 10 days during their parental leave – these are optional for both the employer and employee. KIT days allow employees to remain part of the team and keep up to date with any developments in the business, without losing any maternity pay.

#### Emergency Leave

Offering additional days on top of an employee's leave allowance to cover emergencies provides parents and carers with the assurance that should they need to take a day off from work because of circumstances out of their control, their employment is not compromised. These can be offered as unpaid or paid.

#### Back Up Care

Back up care is a provision for care when usual arrangements break down or where there are last-minute changes (e.g. when the person usually carrying out childcare is sick). It helps staff to attend work as normal, and works best when it is provided flexibly and with minimal booking requirements. It is organised and paid for by an employer.

#### Staff Networks

Network groups, such as a Parents' Network or Carers' Network encourage employees to discuss common workplace issues with others in a similar situation, share ideas and raise awareness of particular issues within the organisation, with the ultimate aim of improving working life. These are a key tool for you to consult with parents and carers to ensure your policies meet their needs.

#### Holiday Clubs and Activities

Larger employers could offer childcare clubs and activities for employees' children during school holidays free of charge or at low cost. This reduces the cost of childcare and can also support staff interaction and morale.

#### On-site Childcare

Whilst more challenging in central London locations, some employers offer nursery facilities on site at subsidised rates.

## McDonald's

One example of a flexible working initiative is McDonald's Family and Friends Contract. This initiative allows employees from the same family (or a group of friends) to share or cover each other's shifts, so long as they work in the same restaurant. The initiative gives employees freedom and in doing so, increases job satisfaction and

employee engagement. It also allows employees to manage their caring responsibilities.

The business case for this initiative points towards increased efficiency, retention of a skilled workforce and reduced recruitment costs<sup>19</sup>.

## My Family Care

### Care Provision

My Family Care provides support to a business' working parents and carers. It consists of an online portal providing employees from their members not only with a wealth of information and advice but also with several tangible benefits. Parents can

search for and book nannies, nurseries and childminders for emergency childcare with as little as 30 minutes' notice. A set number of sessions can be funded by the employer. They also organise back up care, be it for children or elderly relatives, and school holiday cover.

## 5 Know your statutory responsibilities

Ensure that you have good knowledge of your responsibilities as an employer both during pregnancy, and for parents and carers, to ensure that you meet these alongside implementing any of the additional policies covered in this paper. Your key responsibilities include:

- The right to request flexible working, by all employees who have worked for you for 26 weeks or more.
- Statutory maternity leave and pay.
- Paid time off for antenatal care for pregnant employees (including antenatal or parenting classes if recommended by a doctor or midwife).
- Unpaid time off work for two antenatal appointments for the father or pregnant woman's partner.
- Protection against unfair treatment, discrimination or dismissal.
- Shared parental leave and pay.
- Adoption leave and pay.
- Paternity leave and pay.
- Unpaid parental leave.

## 6 Recruit locally

Working locally means that staff can more easily balance work with their caring responsibilities. By having a reduced travel time to and from work, childcare requirements and costs can be reduced for your staff supporting their work-life balance. In return, you have more local staff who are less likely to experience travel difficulties and this can help you network into your local community, bringing soft benefits including an upturn in perception of the business.

Support can be provided for employers to recruit locally via Cross River Partnership's Recruit London initiative, by contacting Anna Elliott at [anna@recruitlondon.org.uk](mailto:anna@recruitlondon.org.uk) or **07875 765 751**.

<sup>19</sup> ([http://www.efa.org.uk/data/files/Good\\_practice/mcdonalds\\_flexible\\_working.pdf](http://www.efa.org.uk/data/files/Good_practice/mcdonalds_flexible_working.pdf))







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Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study: Nickelodeon

The Nickelodeon Store in Leicester Square opened in 2015 and is the only one of its kind in Europe. It is run under licence by US company, Entertainment Retail Enterprises LLC. The average headcount is 30 staff, most of whom work part time.

Store Director Clare **“doesn’t believe in zero hour contracts”**. Therefore, all staff are recruited on a permanent basis, with fixed shifts. This enables staff to arrange childcare and other plans, knowing their working patterns and income will be consistent each week.

Their reason for this is that **“as a business, you know the hours you trade and the hours you need staff. It is much easier to manage with fixed shifts and you can feel confident that you have your shifts covered. Zero hour contracts can work against the employer, as you may have a number of people who cannot work a shift.”**

For Clare, it is also **“the right thing to do. It’s the way we operate as a business. Whatever decision I make, I’ve got to be able to sleep at night and make sure that decision is for the right reason. People have got to be able to pay their bills – this is the reason most people work”**.

At interview stage, new employees are asked when they can work, and shifts are agreed which suit both the employee and the business. This mutual agreement makes for a happier team.

Staff are asked for their wider availability above the shifts they are contracted to complete, so they can access overtime to cover any gaps in the schedule (e.g. due to holidays). Those who cannot offer additional availability, or can only work limited hours, are not viewed negatively.

Shifts are planned three weeks in advance, so staff have notice of overtime and can make arrangements. As they are asked to provide notification of holidays at least three weeks in advance, this also works for the business as they know they can arrange cover.

During their induction, The Nickelodeon Store covers their open door policy to encourage staff to be open and honest **“because, whatever the problem there is always a solution”**.

Clare also believes that people who are parents can bring additional skills to their role due to their caring responsibilities: **“they manage their time, manage a budget, pay rent, look after their children, multitask, they are smart people.”**

Their approach benefits their businesses because it attracts a wider workforce. **“We want a mixed workforce, of different ages. You get the best out of your team when everyone learns from each other and brings different skills. I’m here to run a business and take money, but I need the right people in the right place and the way we operate supports that.”**

For more information, visit: [www.nickelodeonstore.co.uk/pages/the-nickelodeon-store-london](http://www.nickelodeonstore.co.uk/pages/the-nickelodeon-store-london)



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# Case Study: Baker Street Quarter Partnership

Baker Street Quarter Partnership is a Business Improvement District (BID) which, with over 170 business members, drives forward positive change to create a thriving and prosperous community for everyone. Baker Street Quarter Partnership is a small, not-for-profit organisation in Westminster, with less than ten employees.

BSQP find that there are benefits and challenges in implementing family friendly employment policies as a small company. Policies and changes are more easily implemented and communicated to the team. However with fewer resources it can harder to ensure coverage of service provision with staff working different hours, and understanding employment legislation is no small task. Baker Street Quarter Partnership use Xpert HR to provide up to date advice on their legal responsibilities and best practice in HR policy.

Baker Street Quarter Partnership wants to inspire loyalty in their employees through being supportive and understanding that people do have a life and responsibilities outside of work. The company recognises that it needs to ensure fairness and applies the same flexible working principles to parents and non-parents alike. They recognise that as a not-for-profit organisation they can't always match large, private-sector organisation salaries. Providing great flexible working options is a recognised as an important benefit to their staff and enables them to attract exceptional staff that they may not have been able to otherwise.

Roles at Baker Street Quarter Partnership are advertised with statements that the organisation is open to discussions about different working hours. By advertising their flexible working policies when recruiting, the organisation starts engaging with employees as early as possible on what working hours and practices can work beneficially for Baker Street Quarter Partnership and the team member.

To ensure that the team understand each other's availability in this flexible environment, everyone is required to keep their Outlook calendar updated with their working hours and locations. This enables the team to work efficiently when planning meetings and communications within the team. Employees are also encouraged to separate their work and life responsibilities to enable them to dedicate focused time to each.

For more information, visit:  
[www.bakerstreetq.co.uk/about](http://www.bakerstreetq.co.uk/about)

Fun fact:

*'On our last team building day we were locked in room until we solved a load of crystal maze style puzzles - we only beat the clock by 2 minutes....'*



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## Case Study: The Capital Arches Group

The Capital Arches Group is owned and operated by Claude Abi-Gerges, a McDonald's franchisee. In total, Claude has 19 restaurants across central London including his newest in Leicester Square, Westminster. He employs 1,350 staff within the business with 5 in his Head Office in Holborn as well as a team of 4 Business Consultants.

Claude takes a family friendly approach towards recruitment for a number of reasons, Operations Support Manager Carolina explained ***“it helps us to recruit and improve staff retention. McDonald's is a family friendly restaurant and we want our staff to reflect our customers.”***

The key way that the Capital Arches Group support parents and those with caring responsibilities is through flexibility in their working patterns. At interview stage, candidates are asked to state their preferred working hours and are then put forward for a vacancy in a restaurant with a suitable role for them. For example, a restaurant in the City of London is busiest Monday - Friday lunchtimes, so those who want to work weekdays 10am - 2pm could potentially access shifts there. Shifts are available around the clock: 24 hours a day, seven days a week so staff can select what works best for them. Whilst hours are currently flexible, they are being reviewed to investigate whether staff would prefer moving to fixed number of hours instead. Consistency in working patterns is currently available for staff that prefer to work the same shifts and hours each week, enabling them to balance work with their personal commitments.

Recently, one restaurant was closed for eight weeks for refurbishment. During this time, staff were relocated to other restaurants across the group, with the same number of hours and shift patterns offered.

Claude's organisation has many examples where families and friends work in the same restaurant and this is encouraged. Further, a referral incentive scheme has recently been introduced where staff receive a bonus once a family member or friend they have

recommended has been employed and successfully passed their probationary period. In fact, across McDonald's, an approach is supported to allow family and friends to cover each other's shifts when needed. This works for the business, as it ensures shifts are covered and staff are offered flexibility according to their needs.

Claude also supports the progression of staff - there is regular promotion within the business and there are many examples of staff starting as Crew Members and over time progressing through the various ranks to become Assistant or Branch Managers, running multi-million pound branches. All staff receive yearly performance reviews with performance-related pay rises awarded as well as pay increases as they develop and progress through the ranks.

Regular social activities are arranged for staff at restaurant level - such as bowling, dinners and paintball activities - as well as regular group wide events including sports days, football tournaments, Super Team competition and Christmas party; and work is already underway for next year's summer fun day for staff.

Claude believes this approach is good for his people and good for his business, with a highly diverse satisfied workforce - from students to working parents, to mothers returning to work after maternity leave - choosing his employment ahead of others and benefiting from the flexible working hours on offer.

For more information, visit: [www.people.mcdonalds.co.uk](http://www.people.mcdonalds.co.uk)

PREPARED BY:



ON BEHALF OF:



City of Westminster



November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study:

## The Crown Estate

### *Engagement through flexibility*

The Crown Estate is a leading UK real estate business. It actively manages and invests in a £12bn portfolio that includes Regent Street and much of St James's in Westminster.

It offers family friendly policies to support its strategic objective ***“To encourage a high performance culture and be known as a great place to work, so the best people want to join, stay and thrive”***. To this end The Crown Estate offers enhanced maternity, paternity and shared parental pay. For example, eligible employees are entitled to up to 26 weeks of full pay on maternity leave, while the statutory weekly rate for two weeks' paternity leave is also boosted to full pay. An enhanced shared parental leave policy of 14 weeks' at full pay is paid subject to certain requirements.

The Crown Estate has also introduced a web-based family-friendly solution called My Family Care to help support employees in managing their care requirements. This online portal provides member's employees with a wealth of information, advice and tangible benefits such as four free care sessions a year to use for eldercare, adultcare and/or emergency childcare.

The Crown Estate supports the principle of flexible working, recognising that it can be of benefit to the individual and the business, improving work life balance and allowing the business to retain skilled employees. Flexible working requests are considered carefully in line with its policy to help ensure a fair and consistent approach.

For more information, go to:  
[www.thecrownestate.co.uk/freedom-of-information/publication-scheme/policies-and-procedures](http://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/freedom-of-information/publication-scheme/policies-and-procedures)

*The family friendly policies offered by The Crown Estate support its strategic objective*

***“To encourage a high performance culture and be known as a great place to work, so the best people want to join, stay and thrive”***

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ON BEHALF OF:



City of Westminster



November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study: Exhibition Road Cultural Group

The Exhibition Road Cultural Group is a small charity which aims to promote and develop South Kensington as a home of arts, science and inspiration. They are a partnership of cultural and educational organisations which has been in operation for 10 years.

They have a small workforce with three part-time staff, a part-time volunteer and a contractor and consider themselves family friendly. As a small charity, funding is limited and for Executive Director Emily the driver to offering part time opportunities is to get ***“the experience you need at the price you can afford”***.

The key thing Emily considered when creating job roles was “What skills and experience do we really need and what can we afford to pay. Offering roles part-time has enabled us to attract more experienced, specialist staff who can really make an impact. It gives us many of the benefits of a bigger team - different voices and perspectives - but on a very tight budget.”

This approach has also enabled them to attract the best staff, as Emily explained ***“being able to work four days per week was a real incentive for one team member moving into the cultural sector from the private sector”***. One of their team also works part time for another organisation alongside her role at the Exhibition Road Cultural Group, enabling her to have a varied career and build up experience in a different area.

Staff have weekly contracted hours and generally have set times, but there is flexibility offered to respond to personal circumstances as these arise. For example, during school holidays staff may work condensed hours, or full time one week to enable reduced hours the following week, providing work requirements can be accommodated with this. This works both ways, and flexibility is requested from staff to respond to changing work circumstance.

When there is a business need (e.g. board meetings), or to support other team members, staff may be asked to change their working pattern temporarily.

The Exhibition Road Cultural Group’s flexible approach and working from home also enables them to operate with very limited desk space, something that would be a huge challenge with full time office-based staff.

They find the key to good flexible working is really good ICT, something that can be a real challenge as a small charity.

Their approach supports the successful running of the organisation and “flexible working is successful. It means that everyone is motivated and really dedicated. When they are working, they are really working hard”.

For more information, visit:  
[www.discoversouthken.com/about-us](http://www.discoversouthken.com/about-us)

Photo: Creative Quarter an annual event coordinated by the Exhibition Road Cultural Group gives young people the opportunity to explore creative careers. ©V&A



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City of Westminster

November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

## Case Study: Green Element

Green Element is an environmental management consultancy that advises organisations on how to develop their relationship with their environment. Their clients include accountancy firm Grant Thornton and advertising agency adam&eveDDB.

This small company has five staff members and does not have a fixed office location – staff work from client sites or from home. Two of the staff members are single parents and one will shortly become a father.

Green Element considers themselves a very family friendly business, with flexible working a key part of their business model. Staff can and can complete their hours when they choose as long as business needs are met. This enables employees to arrange childcare, but also be flexible as their circumstances change. Staff are assessed based on the work they produce, rather than the hours worked. All staff (whether they have caring responsibilities or not) have the same access to flexible working, so their work-life balance is supported.

Managing Director Will Richardson, considers being a family friendly business vital because ***“it’s the right thing to do. You’ve got to make it work for the people working for you – they are the business.”*** He does not enforce fixed working hours because ***“when you are running a business you want good quality and high standard work. How you get to that end goal – does it matter?”***

Technology has helped enormously with the flexibility Green Element can offer – all staff work together online on Skype once a month to keep the team communicating, and also hire office space to work together regularly.

Being family friendly is balanced against business needs and pragmatism is key. For example, as the business secures more international work, any staff filling job roles created will need to commit to travelling. Family and work life does sometimes clash, but there has only been one occasion in three years when illness of a child meant a staff member missed a vital meeting – the business coped and the client understood.

Work is shaped around family circumstances: for example two staff members were needed to run a training session in Sheffield. One stayed overnight, so could start the session at 9am, with the second joining at 11am once she had completed the school run and travelled. This worked well for the client, and meant both work and personal commitments could be met.

Stability is considered key. Turnover is low, and staff will be given six months’ notice if the business ever needed to downsize.

As a small business, one of the barriers to implementing more policies is finance. However, additional policies are being considered as the business (and profit margins) grow such as enhanced parental leave. Statutory responsibilities are met by using resources such as the ARAG legal directory which includes guidance and templates. Will believes the key to developing new policies is to talk to people about this agenda, and sharing knowledge.

For more information, visit:  
[www.greenelement.co.uk](http://www.greenelement.co.uk)



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City of Westminster

November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

## Case Study: Improbable

Improbable is a theatre company with a core artistic practice of improvisation which has been operating for 20 years, and wants to bring art to the centre of society. They are a charity with eight employees (a mix of part time and full time), four of whom are parents.

Improbable considers themselves to be family friendly, but need to balance this alongside the practicalities of running a small business. Staff can work from home, and especially those who work part time have flexibility over when they work. They recognise this approach may not work for all job roles, with the more senior roles or traditionally office-based roles being less flexible.

A new parental leave policy has been agreed recently, and there is enhanced pay for maternity, shared parental and paternity leave. Childcare vouchers are offered but have not been taken up by staff to date.

Freelancers are key to the success of Improbable, but it is a style of working which can be challenging to match with caring responsibilities as whilst there is flexibility there is not the stability of hours to commit to childcare. It can also make it more expensive for parents to bid for work compared to others, as they have to factor in childcare costs. To combat this, Improbable has set aside funding in their core overheads budget for childcare so freelancers can bid for work and compete based on their costs without childcare, and can access additional funding from the core childcare budget to cover childcare costs. This funding is also available for Improbable staff for activities outside their usual pattern of work. It does not need to be used in traditional ways – for example, childcare support has been used so a partner could accompany a staff member on a trip.

Improbable want to have an open conversation with any staff or freelancers who would feel concerned about their caring responsibilities. They encourage these conversations by being open and inviting people to discuss personal aspects of their life. They are considering formalising this, and providing an information pack to freelancers with this approach and promoting their family friendly policies and approach when roles are advertised in future.

**Improbable sometimes allow staff to bring their children to events, and there is guidance in place to support this. To balance the needs of all staff, if a request is made to bring children to an event this will be checked with other staff first.**

They would like to do more, but the main barrier is the cost. As the organisation grows, they would like to increase parental leave pay and the childcare funding available.

Their reason for being family friendly is that Rachael thinks *“bringing up children is a really important thing for society so we should help to facilitate our employees to have the capacity to do this alongside their work for Improbable. From a diversity perspective, you are cutting off a huge amount of people if you don't. There are lots of very talented people who have caring responsibilities for family members, and we should be trying to make it easier, not harder, for them to work for us.”*

For more information, visit: [www.improbable.co.uk](http://www.improbable.co.uk)

Photo: Hannah McPake and Tony Bell in THE TEMPEST ©Tophar McGrillis

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Improbable

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City of Westminster



November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study: The National Gallery

The National Gallery is an art museum in Trafalgar Square, Westminster. It is an exempt charity, and a non-departmental public body of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It has 220 employees working across a range of functions including finance, HR, conservation, curating and framing. Catering, cleaning and security functions are run by external organisations.

The gallery consider its family friendly approach ingrained within the culture of the organisation, and has always had this culture.

They do whatever possible to accommodate the flexible working requests made, and the majority of these are approved. This includes staff working part time hours, working from home, varied start/finish times and varied hours in term-time/school holidays.

There are potential operational challenges when many staff within a department work flexibly. However the organisation is committed to making flexible working successfully, and HR works closely with each department to support and offer advice so any potential challenges can be overcome.

In addition to flexible working, the National Gallery offer enhanced parental leave pay. Staff with at least one year's continuous employment receive 22 weeks of full pay, 17 weeks of statutory pay, and 13 weeks unpaid.

Staff who have worked for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of birth are entitled to 39 weeks' leave with Statutory Maternity Pay and to up to 13 weeks' leave, which is unpaid. These provisions are available to mothers and fathers taking up shared parental leave. Unpaid career breaks are available, and are sometimes requested following maternity leave to allow parents to take additional time away from work. During paternity leave full salary is paid for two weeks for employees who have worked for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of birth.

When advertising job roles, benefits such as childcare vouchers are promoted. Some roles are advertised as part time, usually to give more staff resources when an existing staff member reduces their hours.

**The organisation has recently been through change and is developing a new employment model, which includes flexible benefits which will offer the option of purchasing more annual leave which can benefit parents.**

The approach to flexible working is available to all staff across the organisation. HR works to make sure that the policy is implemented consistently across all departments, and all managers promote the same ethos and openness to requests.

**The National Gallery feels their approach supports their retention of staff, as if they weren't able to accommodate flexible working requests they would end up losing valued staff.**

For more information, visit: [www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about-us/jobs/working-at-the-gallery](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about-us/jobs/working-at-the-gallery)



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THE  
NATIONAL  
GALLERY

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City of Westminster



November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

## Case Study: Playne Design

Playne Design is an independent studio of designers and communication professionals working for clients across different sectors of business. The core team is made up four full-time staff, with an additional eight who work as freelance contractors, allowing the company to respond to demand and create individual project teams for their clients. Playne's London office is in Borough, but for convenience they regularly meet clients and co-workers at Impact Hub Westminster in Haymarket. Their main studio is based on the Sussex coast in Hastings.

Creative director and co-founder Clare Playne says, ***"Respecting and supporting people's work/life balance is incredibly important to us. We spend more time with colleagues than we do with our loved ones, so it's really important to enjoy our jobs"***.

Offering flexibility is just one of the ways the company attracts and retains skilled staff. Playne offers flexible working patterns to all staff, not just those who are parents or have caring responsibilities. Clare believes that ***"each employee is different – understanding the individual is important. We listen, but don't pry"***.

A flexible approach allows for varying working patterns based on staff needs. For one employee, who found public transport claustrophobic thus causing panic attacks, the working day was shifted to allow the individual to drive to work and avoid rush hour traffic. More recently, a staff member has gone from full-time employment to a freelance role in order to accommodate a desire to explore a new industry alongside their existing career. Playne also offered a later start time to an employee whose partner worked night shifts, so that they could spend time together in the mornings before work. Another employee, who moved to Barcelona to be with a partner relocating to Spain, successfully continued employment with Playne for a further three years – not just from a different city, but from a different country. Sabbaticals are also offered to long serving staff.

Playne's way of managing staff is not a 'clock in – clock out' approach – there is an expectation that flexibility works both ways. The company frequently works to challenging schedules, sometimes requiring extended working hours to meet tight deadlines. Clare explains, ***"As the team are supported and respected in their jobs, they are happy to do this"***.

Playne has particular experience in supporting working parents. Clare worked on behalf of The Maternity Alliance to produce a document setting out how to improve conditions for parents, as part of a lobbying campaign for the introduction of paid paternity leave. The impact of her work contributed to a successful change in legislation.

For more information, visit:  
[www.playnedesign.co.uk](http://www.playnedesign.co.uk)



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City of Westminster

November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study:

## Royal Opera House

### *The central tenet of support*

The Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, Westminster, employs approximately 1,000 people across a broad spectrum of professions – technical support staff, production staff, visitor services, administration and performers/artists. There is a variety of work styles and patterns across these professions but the central belief across the board is one of support for their staff.

**The Royal Opera House operates a fair and consistent approach to flexible working requests with the requirements of each job dictating the response to each request. Successful requests are often granted on a six month trial basis.**

Their open door HR policy combined with an HR-led approach to flexible working requests ensures that all requests are considered within the same framework, following protocol and precedence.

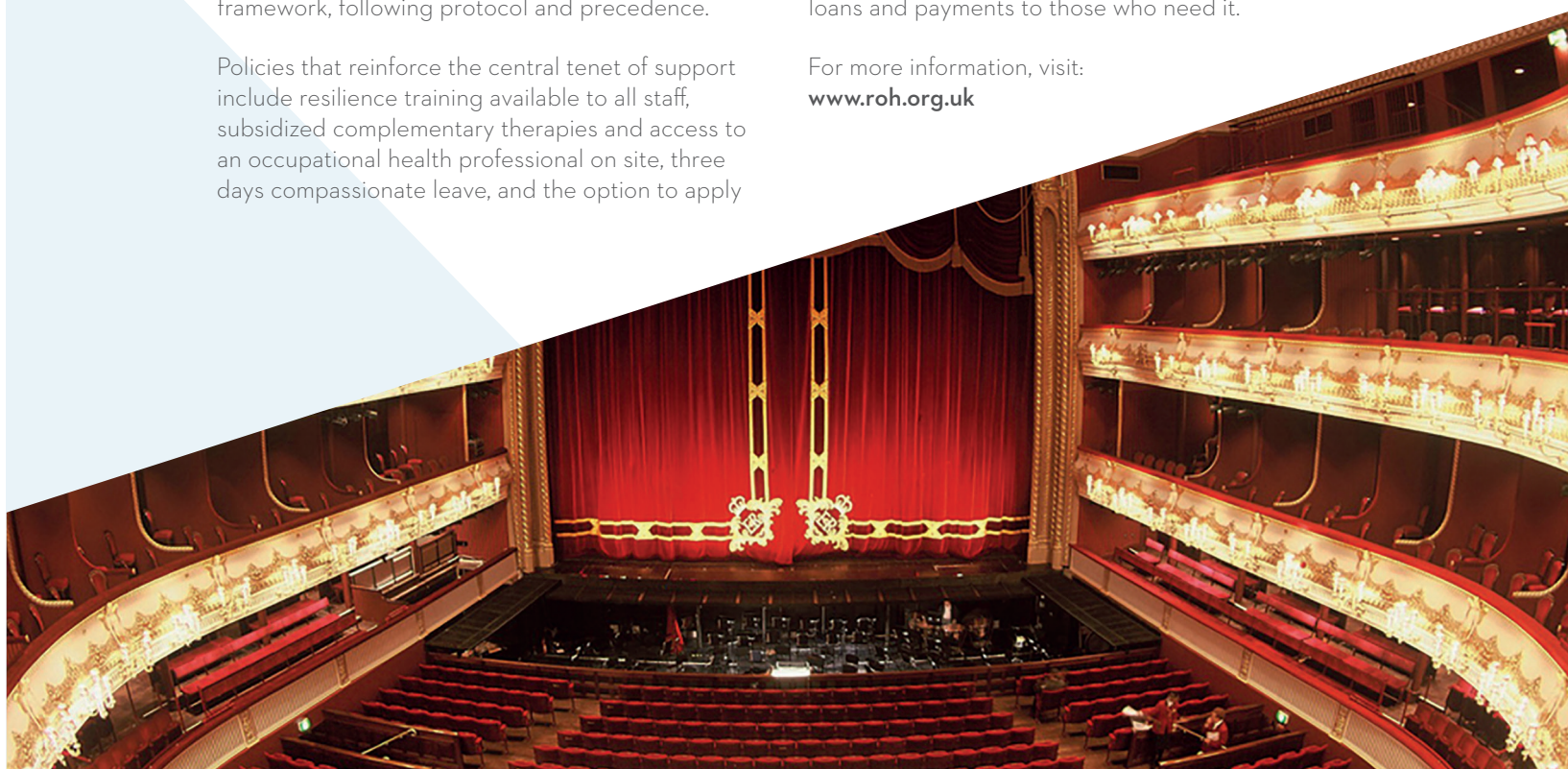
Policies that reinforce the central tenet of support include resilience training available to all staff, subsidized complementary therapies and access to an occupational health professional on site, three days compassionate leave, and the option to apply

for a six-twelve month career break. Maternity pay includes two weeks at 100% and twelve weeks at 90%. Two weeks of paternity leave is paid at full pay.

The focus at the Royal Opera House is very much on a benevolent attitude that shies away from a more corporate environment. The Royal Opera House Benevolent Fund supports employees during their employment and beyond, providing loans and payments to those who need it.

For more information, visit:  
[www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)

Photo: The Royal Opera House auditorium. ©Rob Moore ROH 1998



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November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

## Case Study: Spektrix

Spektrix provides ticketing, marketing and fundraising software accessed through the internet to support arts organisations. The company was established nine years ago, and has now grown to having 73 staff.

The company has a young workforce, with an average age of 26. Whilst few staff are currently parents or carers, the business feels it is important to have the right policies and approach in place to support staff as they grow with the company, and to benefit their current workforce.

Group Managing Director Libby Penn thinks ***“our people are the greatest asset to our business, and we would never want to compromise on having the best people. The way we have built our business allows us to do this. Once you have the best people, you do whatever it takes to level the playing field so they can do the best job for you.”*** For Spektrix, the way they support this is to offer flexibility for all staff, not just those who are parents and carers.

All staff can work flexibly: with varied start times, working from home, condensed hours, and part time roles. For Libby, ***“as long as you work your contracted hours, when and where you work those hours is in your gift”***. Libby also believes that the work-life balance should be maintained for all staff, and ***“our clear goal is that our people manage their workload so they can do it in their contracted hours – if they can’t we have a problem we need to manage together.”*** When there is a peak in workload to meet a deadline, staff work collaboratively to achieve this and can take time off in lieu or be paid for overtime depending on the role.

As a **technology company**, Spektrix is well established to ensure all staff can work remotely – and use tools such as Google Hangout to support this. The quality of experience for remote workers is a challenge and they have employed a team member dedicated to employee engagement, whose role includes making the experience of working from home effective for staff.

For more information, visit:  
[www.spektrix.com](http://www.spektrix.com)



PREPARED BY:



**SPEKTRIX**

ON BEHALF OF:



**City of Westminster**



November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study: Tate

Tate's statutory mission is to promote the public understanding and enjoyment of art, and its vision to achieve this is through championing art and its value to society. Tate do this through activities in their four galleries across the UK (Tate Liverpool, Tate St Ives, Tate Britain and Tate Modern), their digital platforms, and collaborations with national and international partners. At the heart of Tate is the Tate collection – the national collection of British art from 1500 to the present day, and international modern and contemporary art from 1900 to the present day.

Tate aims to become a truly inclusive organisation, with a workforce and audience as diverse as the communities it serves. There is a commitment to this from the most senior levels of the organisation, and across all departments. Tate approaches diversity and inclusion through organisational development; ensuring that accountability for diversity and inclusion, and the business case for achieving it, are properly embedded through the organisation's strategy.

Tate has a range of flexible working practices which are designed to help the organisation attract and retain employees, including those with young children or other caring responsibilities.

**Flexible working is made available to all Tate employees, both those who work in front of house and in office-based roles, with different options depending on the requirements of the role.** These options include compressed hours, part-time working, job sharing, home or remote working (for office staff), and a flexible rota (for front of house staff). These options give employees the flexibility to balance their work and home life, while ensuring that the organisation is able to run effectively.

Tate's flexible rota enables front of house team members to plan childcare and other commitments weeks in advance. Every 12 weeks employees submit

their working hour preferences for future rotas. This can include condensed hours at times, then much reduced hours- for example during school holidays, as long as contracted hours are worked during the rota period. If operational requirements are met, all requests will be accepted.

Tate have demonstrated that this type of flexibility, which enables people with caring responsibilities to work when they find it convenient, but also to plan well in advance to ensure cover for their care, can work really well for both employees and employers.

For more information, go to:  
[www.tate.org.uk/about/working-at-tate](http://www.tate.org.uk/about/working-at-tate)

Photo: ©Tate (Marcus Leith)



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November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study: The Abbey Centre

The Abbey Centre is a charity and social enterprise based in Great Smith Street, Westminster. It runs a meeting and conference centre, café, and a community association supporting the communities of south Westminster to improve their quality of life. It has 23 staff members, who operate the centre from 8am – 10pm seven days a week.

The Abbey Centre has been through significant change over the past five years in relation to its working practices, starting from a point where none of its staff worked flexibly to now when almost half do so. Like all processes of change, this has not always been easy or a smooth journey but Chief Executive Lainya has been passionate about pushing this through because “for a small investment you reap that benefit. It’s a win-win”. The organisation has an open approach to flexible working, accepting both formal requests and requests on a more informal basis.

Staff members work condensed hours, reduced hours, varied start/finish times, and can work from home. One employee takes a two month break each year to visit family abroad: taking all their annual leave plus unpaid leave. This enables them to spend proper time with their family, then be focused on work for the other 10 months of the year.

Some challenges in implementing this new way of working has come from the views of staff members on their colleagues working flexibly. This has been addressed through actively making flexible working open to all staff; not just parents, but also those with caring responsibilities or who are seeking a different work-life balance. Head of Finance and Business, Nicola explained “**policies need to be transparent, detailed, and the ways of working to be embedded within the company.**”

The Abbey Centre’s approach is to trial new ways of working, and have an ongoing dialogue with each team member. This enables changes over time as family dynamic shifts and to find a way of working that suits both the individual and the organisation.

Nicola, explains that working condensed hours and working from home is vital to her, as “**that one day is the difference between being able to work and not being able to work.**”

To support their approach they start with the assumption that people are rational and honest. Staff are managed on their performance against clear objectives – not the hours they are at their desk.

Lainya explains that their approach is just “**not about being a cuddly friendly employer**” because “**in ruthless business terms we have gained as a business**”. Offering flexible working has “**helped us to retain staff and so save the cost to re-recruit and risk of getting someone not right for the role. Too often employers see flexible working as a risk of what they are giving, not what they are gaining.**”

For more information, visit:  
[www.theabbeycentre.org.uk/community](http://www.theabbeycentre.org.uk/community)



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City of Westminster

November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

## Case Study: John Lewis Partnership

The John Lewis Partnership runs 46 John Lewis shops, 349 Waitrose supermarkets, an online business, a production unit and a farm. It's Head Office is on Westminster's busy Victoria Street. It has over 90,000 employees and all permanent staff are Partners who own the business and share in the benefits and profits. Encouraging a great work and life balance is part of the John Lewis Partnership constitution and they have a range of policies which are family friendly.

All Partners have access to the same policies regardless of where they work, but flexible working within their office can be different in practice to within their stores.

For those working in their offices, they support parents by moving away from the traditional Monday-Friday working pattern with a fixed start time and long office hours. Many people work flexibility on an informal basis (e.g. working from home or varied start times). Others have formally reduced their hours, or are working compressed hours. Flexible working is often undertaken on a trial basis to start with, to ensure it works for both the business and the individual.

When doing shift work, a challenge for parents is that childcare cannot be arranged if they do not have fixed hours or a set working pattern. The John Lewis Partnership gives certainty on both for those working in its stores. Partners have contracts for set numbers of weekly hours, and fixed contracted shifts are offered whenever possible for those working part-time. For those on full-time contracts, they will be provided with rotas four weeks in advance and given similar shifts whenever possible. This enables their staff to plan childcare in advance.

The John Lewis Partnership also has job-shares successfully within their stores, for example for a Branch Manager position within London. When advertising job roles, they state that they are happy to talk to people about working flexibly.

Emergency childcare can be arranged at a subsidised rate via Care-4, so parents can book childcare at very short notice when other arrangements fall through.

To ensure policies are applied consistently across the business, there is promotion via the in-house magazine, the intranet and Google Plus groups, which are also used to discuss any issues. A Working Parents Network with 700 members runs events and is consulted when new policies are considered which impact on parents.

Diversity and Inclusion Manager Nicola Paul explained that whilst "the retail sector is being pinched financially, many solutions can be delivered at low or no cost to the business (e.g. early notice of shifts, and fixed shifts).

*She believes that others should not be put off by the "fear that if you give flexible working to one person, everyone will want the same and it will become un-manageable. In reality, that's just not going to happen. To make it work well in practice you need to make it work for the individual's needs."*

Their main reason for being a family friendly employer is that *"we know that having people from all different backgrounds is going to make us a more successful business. Without this, we would be missing out on some great talent in the market. We would be missing out as a business too, by not knowing what parents need, so not being able to cater for them effectively. There are moral and commercial reasons to do this."*

For more information, visit:  
[www.johnlewispartnership.co.uk/work.html](http://www.johnlewispartnership.co.uk/work.html)

PREPARED BY:



*John Lewis Partnership*

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November 2016

Family Friendly Employment

# Case Study: Cross River Partnership

CRP has evolved to be an extremely family friendly small organisation.

As at November 2016, CRP employs 23 staff through its accountable body Westminster City Council. 19 of these staff are women, 83%. The majority of all staff could be classified as carers in some respect, whether that is caring for children, parents, siblings, neighbours, all of the above.

**CRP's whole philosophy is around flexibility – flexibility in the services that it delivers, and flexibility in how those services are delivered. This has stood CRP in good stead and enabled it to flourish and grow as a non-statutory organisation over a long 22 year history. Family Friendly policies are a crucial part of that flexibility.**

CRP's Family Friendly ethos is fully supported by its Director, Susannah Wilks. Susannah is herself a part-time employee, contracted to work for 30 hours per week. CRP negotiates part-time employment contracts with those staff that need them, with employees sometimes contracted to work for as little as 20 hours per week. In some cases CRP staff have also negotiated term-time working.

This flexibility is good for the CRP staff, because it enables them to spend time with their families, and it is good for CRP for a whole range of business reasons. These business reasons include: increased focus and productivity of staff when they are working, because they are not worrying about family issues; increased health and wellbeing of staff; increased motivation of staff; increased loyalty of staff; lower staff turnover; good culture of 'give' and 'take'.

**CRP recognises the transferable skills that carers can bring to the workplace, so it wants to make it as easy as possible for carers to fully achieve their potential in the workplace.**

Carers can bring to the workplace outstanding communication skills; multi-tasking skills; planning skills; organising skills; budgeting skills; tenacity; optimism; creativity. All of these skills are extremely valuable to CRP.

Most of CRP's roles are office-based, and lend themselves fairly readily to family friendly working. Family friendly policies make sound business sense e.g. not booking important meetings during school holiday periods suits many of CRP's funders and clients as well as its staff.

Quote from Susannah Wilks *"I can send more emails from my smartphone in 20 minutes at home waiting for my kids' rice to boil, than I can send in 20 minutes in the middle of an open-plan office with lots of interruptions."*

Family Friendly policies are backed up by the surge of new technologies available to support the flexible worker. CRP staff can log into their work computer files remotely via the Cloud.

CRP recognises that different people work best in different ways, in different places, at different times. Some CRP staff are early birds, others like to start at 10am, others experience surges of creativity overnight! Some CRP staff like to draft funding bids quietly at home, other CRP staff like to brainstorm the ideas for those same funding bids in large groups of noisy colleagues. All CRP work is logged on timesheets, regardless of where or at what time it was undertaken.

In the end it all comes down to trust. Does the employer trust the staff member to do a great job, even if the employer can't see that job being done under their nose from 9-5? At CRP, the answer is a very definite YES!

For more information, visit:  
[www.crossriverpartnership.org](http://www.crossriverpartnership.org)



PREPARED BY:



ON BEHALF OF:



City of Westminster



# Best practice checklist

## 1 Company Culture, Communication and 'Open Door' HR Policy

- ☐ Do you encourage a culture of openness, from the top down?
- ☐ Do you communicate your policies internally?
- ☐ Do you promote an open and honest environment?
- ☐ Do you encourage communication between line managers and employees?
- ☐ Have you developed business-relevant policies?
- ☐ Have you trained your line managers in your policy and approach?

For more information you can visit the CBI's website at [www.cbi.org.uk](http://www.cbi.org.uk), and see their current campaign on the competitive advantage of diversity and an inclusive workplace.

## 2 Advertising and Reputation

- ☐ Do you promote openness to flexibility and your family friendly policies in job advertisements?
- ☐ Do you use logos and join campaigns to demonstrate your approach?
- ☐ Do you advertise your part time or job share vacancies on targeted websites?

- ☐ Have you built a reputation as a family friendly employer and do you communicate your family friendly policies and news?

For more information on the Family Friendly UK Accreditation scheme, visit [www.familyandchildcaretrust.org](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org)

You can advertise your roles on specialist websites such as;

- Timewise: [www.timewisejobs.co.uk](http://www.timewisejobs.co.uk)
- Share Your Job: [www.shareyourjob.com](http://www.shareyourjob.com)
- Working Mum's: [www.recruiters.workingmums.co.uk](http://www.recruiters.workingmums.co.uk)

## 3 Flexible Working

- ☐ Do you allow and promote different types of flexible working?
- ☐ Do you offer guaranteed hours and fixed or early notice of shifts?
- ☐ Do you support and allow employees to propose their own flexible working solutions, and implement them where feasible?

Visit [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk) for more information on flexible working, the Hire Me My Way campaign [www.hiremyway.org.uk](http://www.hiremyway.org.uk), or the Timewise Foundation [www.timewise.co.uk](http://www.timewise.co.uk)

## 4 Employee Benefits

- ☐ Do you implement a wide range of relevant employee benefits, including enhanced parental leave and pay; childcare vouchers; staff networks and emergency leave?

For more information on how to support your employees who are parents, including emergency childcare visit [www.myfamilycare.co.uk](http://www.myfamilycare.co.uk). A number of organisations run childcare voucher schemes, and the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website has guidance on "E18: How can you help your employees with childcare".

## 5 Statutory Responsibilities

- ☐ Do you know your statutory responsibilities, so you can build on these to offer enhanced support?

For further advice and support on your responsibilities, you can visit the Government's website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk), the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk), or the chartered Institute of Personnel and Development at [www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk)

## 6 Recruit locally

- ☐ Do you recruit locally?

Visit [www.recruitlondon.org.uk](http://www.recruitlondon.org.uk) for more information on the Recruit London project.

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