



## **STAFF BENEFITS AND REWARDS POLICY**

### **Policy statement**

As the success of York Childcare (YC) relies on the talent and contribution of all staff, this policy sets out the employment benefits available to all staff. In addition it explains how staff are valued and rewarded for particular contributions and achievements associated with their employment.

YC's policies and practices aim to support the commitment to quality as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of YC.

### **Aim**

The aim of the Staff Benefits and Rewards Policy is to enable YC to attract, recruit, retain and engage the staff needed to promote delivery of a high quality childcare service.

### **Staff Benefits**

These are the core benefits available to all employees:

- 20 days paid holiday pro rata (see Holidays Policy for full details)
- 20 days paid company sick leave pro rata (see Sickness Policy for full details)
- Additional paid annual leave (max 3 days) for length of service with YC (see Holidays Policy for full details)
- Additional paid time off in between Christmas and New Year when nurseries are closed
- Employer contributions into a pension fund (see Pensions Policy for full details)
- Free on-site car parking
- Access to training FOC including First Aid, Food Safety, Moving and Lifting, Safeguarding plus many other sessions based around children's care, learning and development (see Training & CPD Policies for full details)
- Annual flu vaccine
- Broad range of training opportunities, many of which are fully funded with paid weekly study leave, including long term options to gain a recognised qualification (see Training & CPD Policies for full details)
- Opportunities to develop a 'specialism' such as becoming Health & Safety representative or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator through the Additional Responsibilities scheme
- Company membership of various organisations and subscriptions to professional magazines

The following additional benefits are available to staff working in nurseries:

- Provision of a cooked lunch, fresh fruit snacks and drinks whilst at work

### **Staff rewards**

These are all aspects of an employee's remuneration package including pay, benefits, recognition awards and other intangible benefits such as working environment and career development.

### **Principles**

YC's rewards policy and practice reflects the aspirations of the Strategic Plan in seeking to attract and retain staff who can deliver a high quality childcare service.

The organisation's approach to reward is informed by the following principles:

- YC aims to be clear about what people are paid for and why and to be consistent, systematic and transparent in applying a reward policy.
- YC aims to reward people for their knowledge, skills and contribution in the roles they are performing.
- The need for effective financial management informs all aspects of the reward policy and approach and makes the most effective use of resources.
- YC's reward policy upholds the principles of equity and complies with all legal and fiscal requirements. It aims to be as simple as possible and to minimise levels of bureaucracy.

### **Rewards**

YC considers that all staff are rewarded through payment of a salary in accordance with an agreed salary structure. Salary rates are reviewed annually by Trustees. Structural reviews are undertaken from time-to-time to reflect changes to job roles and responsibilities, changes in legislation and to reflect changes to achieve 'best practice' within the early years sector.

Additionally, YC is keen to recognize and reward outstanding contribution, effort and achievement made by individuals and by teams, in its attempt to reinforce organisational values, behaviours and operating principles, fostering a spirit of "one for all and all for one".

The policy applies to all staff (permanent, part time, supply staff).

The objectives of the YC Reward and Recognition Scheme are:

- To foster a "thank you" and appreciation culture overall
- To tangibly reward employees in a small way (i.e. on a very small budget on a close to - time basis)
- To highlight the behaviours the organisation would like to see emulated by other employees
- To reassure employees that while Trustees of YC appreciate employees' ongoing commitment to the organisational goals, they especially value when employees go above and beyond what is expected.

### **Recognition**

Recognition simply involves saying thank you, either verbally or in writing by email or with a thank you card.

### **Recognition Reward**

A reward can be any gift that a staff member would appreciate, but may typically include a plant or chocolates. Approval must be granted from the line manager for any reward exceeding £8.

Examples of occasions when recognition is suitable

- When staff have successfully fulfilled an "additional responsibility" function (eg through a manager requesting issue of a certificate of acknowledgement on each successful period when all additional responsibilities have spontaneously been carried out)
- To acknowledge a significant of length of service (eg certificate and small gift to acknowledge each 5 year anniversary)
- Significant achievements (eg completing a long term course such as a foundation degree, undergoing training on a new concept such as how to use internet devices for tracking children's progress).
- There may be other occasions, which must be gauged on an individual basis to acknowledge the individual achievements of every person.

## **Responsibilities**

The General Manager and HR Assistant (will) lead the Reward and Recognition scheme and ensure that the principles of YC's Rewards' Policy are upheld. They (will) monitor the Recognition rewards to ensure consistency of interpretation and application of rewards given.

Managers will keep a small number of gifts on hand so that a reward gift is available without delay when required. The General Manager and HR assistant will assist in the advance purchase of gifts for keeping on the premises. Reimbursement for gifts not held on the premises (eg a plant) will be claimed through personal expenses claim or through the petty cash system.

The YC accountant must be consulted prior to purchase of any gifts other than those which are already listed, to avoid any breach of benefit in kind regulations.

Requests for certificates of acknowledgement must be submitted to the HR Assistant or General Manager at least one week in advance of when they are needed.

## **Salary Sacrifice Schemes**

Certain benefits are available in exchange for a portion of salary – these benefits are known as Salary Sacrifice Schemes and may be used for the following purposes:

- Childcare Vouchers
- Cycle to Work Scheme

Participating in a Salary Sacrifice Scheme reduces the amount of NI and/or tax employees pay. As a result, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) impose rules upon the scheme.

1. Employees must sign up to a salary exchange scheme for a minimum of twelve months. The agreement can then only be altered if staff experience one of a number of recognised lifestyle changes (see Appendix A).
2. A salary exchange cannot be allowed to reduce pay below the National Minimum Wage, the Lower Earnings Limit for NICs

Exchange of salary to participate in a Salary Sacrifice Scheme must be requested in writing to the General Manager and a written letter of confirmation must be provided to confirm the agreement.

Depending on when a request is submitted it could take between one and two months to receive the selected benefit or make a change to existing benefits. Letters of request for Salary Sacrifice must be submitted to Head Office at least two weeks before the date of payroll processing. In certain circumstances (eg when a decision is required from the Management Board), processing may not be possible until the following month.

## **Benefit selection timescales**

Existing staff will normally select / review their benefits once a year in March, to take effect from April. However new starters and those who have experienced a significant change in their personal circumstances can select or change their benefits at other times.

## **Death In Service**

YC does NOT offer any Death in Service benefits for employees.

## Glossary of terms

Reward	All aspects of an employee's remuneration package – includes pay, benefits, recognition awards and other intangible benefits such as working environment and career development.
Staff Benefits	Core and voluntary benefits available to all employees
Lifestyle Changes	Salary exchange benefits which staff may apply for

## Appendix A

Recognised lifestyle changes which may justify alteration to a salary sacrifice scheme part-way through the year:

- Marriage or civil partnership
- Divorce, legal separation or dissolution of civil partnership
- Death of a partner or dependant
- Pregnancy or the start or end of maternity leave
- Birth or key stage in the adoption of a child
- Start or end of long-term sick leave
- A decrease in notional salary of 20% or more at or end of a three month or longer period of unpaid leave
- A significant change in hours
- Start or end of secondment
- Change to contractual terms and conditions initiated by YC
- A significant change in childcare circumstances or eligibility to apply for childcare grant for children over three years old
- Moving home, theft of bicycle or change of mode of transport to work (Cycletowork scheme only)
- Reaching state pension age