Neurodiversity Policy

1. Introduction

Home from Home are committed to promoting an inclusive environment for neurodiversity in our nursery. As part of this, we will provide appropriate workplace support to any of our employees who are neurodivergent.

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways that the brain works and interprets information. Those who are neurodivergent will process information in a different way to those who are neurotypical. Common examples of neurological conditions that may be experienced by employees and fall within the scope of this policy include, but are not limited to:

- The autism spectrum, which affects a person's perception of the world and their interaction with others
- dyslexia, which can cause difficulties with how a person processes language and has an impact on their reading, writing, spelling, memory, etc
- dyspraxia, which can affect a person's physical and mental co-ordination
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), which can cause inattention, impulsiveness and hyperactivity.

Although we recognise that neurodivergence can cause difficulties for affected individuals, we will always aim to focus on the strengths that are brought to the workplace. This policy is to be read in conjunction with managing stress at workplace policy.

2. Contents

The following sections are included in this policy document:

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3. Employer Responsibilities

This policy is in reference to our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments for employees who have a disability where they suffer a substantial disadvantage within the workplace, in comparison to non-disabled employees.

Employees will not be treated unfairly or suffer any other form of detriment at work due to neurodivergence. They will be given the same opportunities as other employees and will not be refused employment, overlooked for promotion and training opportunities or denied any other workplace benefits due to neurodivergence.

4. Employee Support

We recognise that many neurological conditions are "spectrum" conditions, meaning that they can affect individuals in varying ways. We will ensure that any measures implemented will be suited to each individual by undertaking a process of consultation with them. We will not adopt a "one-size-fits-all" approach, nor will we stereotype individuals based on common characteristics associated with their neurodivergence.

5. Notification

If an employee has been diagnosed as or believes that they are neurodivergent, we would encourage them to disclose this information to their line manager or the nursery manager Sophie Eade.

We appreciate that employees may feel uncomfortable sharing this information, however, any information disclosed as part of this process will remain confidential and will be treated with sensitivity at all times.

The line manager will seek to have an open and honest discussion with the employee about their neurodivergence, how it affects then and the impact that it may have on their duties. The discussion will then focus on adjustments that can be made to the role to remove any barriers that neurodivergence may create. A Wellness action plan (See appendix 1) will be completed alongside to support this.

It may be necessary for a "needs assessment" to be arranged to help us identify exactly how the neurodivergence affects the ability for the employee to perform their role. We will then be able to use the results of the assessment to understand which adjustments will be most helpful to the individual.

Any information obtained for this purpose will be held in accordance with our obligations under data protection legislation.

6. Workplace Adjustments

The organisation is legally obliged by the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to an employee's role or working conditions if they have a disability that places them at a disadvantage when performing their role and we will ensure compliance with our obligations in this regard.

As we operate in a regulated environment, we must also ensure any workplace adjustments for the role can meet our statutory requirements with regard the Childcare Act 2006.

In order to assist the employee in the daily duties, we will explore making adjustments to the role or working environment with the aim of reducing the effect that neurodivergence is

having on them. We acknowledge that neurodivergence affects each individual in different ways so no adjustment will be made without fully discussing it with the employee first.

As an illustrative guide, we have set out the below examples of adjustments that may be made to reduce or remove disadvantages faced by neurodivergent employees in the workplace.

- Identify changes to the environment. E.g., working in a quieter place
- Amending working duties
- Offering flexible working arrangements such as permitting employees to start earlier or finish later or reduce or change hours of work.
- Providing visible instructions next to office equipment and machinery such as photocopiers.
- Allowing employees to use equipment such as noise-cancelling headphones.
- Providing employees with lockers and name labels to help them organise their work and equipment.
- Providing a mentor/buddy to employees when learning new tasks.
- Allocating work areas with more natural light.

This is not an exhaustive list and all applicable adjustments will be discussed and explored with neurodivergent employees on an individual basis to ensure the adjustments put in place are appropriate to their individual circumstances. The effectiveness of any adjustments will be reviewed on a regular basis and may be subject to change if it becomes apparent that these are no longer fit for purpose. This review will be carried out proactively between the employee and their line manager in line with our duty to make reasonable adjustments.

7. Creating An Inclusive Environment

We are committed to ensuring neurodivergent employees in our organisation feel comfortable in discussing neurodivergence, should they wish to, and the impact it has on them. We will raise awareness by:

- providing training to managers on supporting neurodivergence
- arranging activities and education campaigns on neurodivergence for all staff
- creating a support network for neurodivergent employees to ensure a safe place to go to discuss issues they may be having and to share coping strategies
- encouraging neurodivergent senior employees to talk about the impact it has on them
- creating wellbeing champions.

8. Discrimination and Harassment

We aim to provide a safe working environment for all employees. If an employee feels they that have been exposed to unwanted conduct because of neurodivergence, we encourage them to use our bullying and harassment procedure. (Please see the bullying and harassment policy for more detail).

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and also in line with any changes in statutory guidance

10. Version Control

Version	Date	Status	Comments	By
1	1st November 2024	1st draft for Review		Sophie Eade
2	July 2025	Reviewed		Sophie Eade
3	May 2026	Reviewed		Sophie Eade

Appendix 1

Wellness Action Plan

A WAP reminds us what we need to do to stay well at work and details what our line managers can do to better support us.

It also helps us develop an awareness of our working style, stress triggers and responses, and enables us to communicate these to our manager.

The information in this form will be held confidentially and regularly reviewed by you and your manager together You only need to provide information that you are comfortable sharing and that relates to your role and workplace.

This form is not a legal document but it can help you and your manager to agree, together, how to practically support you in your role and address any health needs.

It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that data gathered in this form will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone without the permission of the member of staff, certain circumstances may require confidentiality to be broken.

1. What helps you stay mentally healthy at work? (For example, taking an adequate lunch break away from your desk, getting some exercise before or after work or in your lunchbreak, light and space in the office, opportunities to get to know colleagues)
2. What can your manager do to proactively support you to stay mentally healthy at work? (For example, regular feedback and catch-ups, flexible working patterns, explaining wider organisational developments)

3. Are there any situations at work that can trigger poor mental health for you? (For example, conflict at work, organisational change, tight deadlines, something not going to plan)
4. How might experiencing poor mental health impact on your work? (For example, you may find it difficult to make decisions, struggle to prioritise work tasks, difficulty with concentration, drowsiness, confusion, headaches)
5. Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to experience poor mental health? (For example, changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from colleagues)

6. What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or help you to manage the impact? (For example, extra catch-up time with your manager, guidance on prioritising workload, flexible working patterns, consider reasonable adjustments)
7. Are there elements of your individual working style or temperament that it is worth your manager being aware of? (For example a preference for more face to face or more email contact, a need for quiet reflection time prior to meetings or creative tasks, negotiation on deadlines before they are set, having access to a mentor for questions you might not want to bother your manager about, having a written plan of work in place which can be reviewed and amended regularly, clear deadlines if you have a tendency to over-work a task, tendency to have particularly high or low energy in the morning or in the afternoon)
8. If we notice early warning signs that you are experiencing poor mental health – what should we do? (For example, talk to you discreetly about it, contact someone that you have asked to be contacted)

9. What steps can you take if you start to experience poor mental health at work? Is there anything we need to do to facilitate them? (For example, you might like to take a break from your desk and go for a short walk, or ask your line manager for support)
10. Is there anything else that you would like to share?