

Men in Childcare



Changing the world one child at a time



Men in Childcare at LEYF

Welcome to the London Early Years Foundation (LEYF), a family of 39 nurseries across London where wonderful experiences are a part of every day learning. We are proud to promote the inclusion of both men and women in the workplace as we know the benefits this balance brings to our children, the organisation and the whole Early Years sector.

For the last eight years, LEYF has been campaigning for more Men in Childcare (MiC) and we are proud that 8% of our workforce are male compared to a national average of just under 3%. Despite this, more needs to be done. We will continue to champion the inclusion of men in early years as we know that a

balanced approach helps shape children's view of the world, their aspirations, choices and social achievements.

This handbook will give you an overview of what it is like to work at LEYF, our research and campaigning, and how you can become part of our family.

Working in our Nurseries

At LEYF, we have men working alongside their female colleagues at all levels from Apprentice to Senior Manager. We are careful not to stereotype. We have women teachers who love to play football with our children and male teachers who are great at story time.



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'There's no one way to be a man. Men can be colourful. Men can be expressive. Men can be emotional and silly and gleeful'.

Author unknown

There is a lot of research that shows the benefits of Men in Childcare. LEYF has also done its own research including asking our children what they thought of men working with them. And do you know what? They don't care if their teachers are male or female, they just want whoever is best at an activity.

Fitting in

Everyone at LEYF is very warm and welcoming. When you start, we will try to place you in a nursery that has another male

member of staff. Studies show that when men join a nursery regardless of their level or experience, they find it reassuring to have another male staff member in the team.

We will also assign you a male 'buddy' or coach. This person may not necessarily be based at your nursery, but will be available to support you and give advice.

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Your buddy will be _____ from _____ nursery and they can be contacted on _____ .

Once you have passed your probation and feel comfortable in your role, you will also have the opportunity to become a buddy to a new male member of staff.

Coaching at LEYF

Our coaching approach is available to everyone at LEYF. This is how we support you to understand LEYF's values, become familiar with our pedagogy and find your place in our organisation.

We have a great Learning and Development programme delivered through our Academy. You can choose from a full, varied and exciting programme. We aim to give you the training opportunities you need to develop in your role and grow your career when you are ready.

There are also opportunities to take an active part in the action research that goes on in our nurseries. This is designed to support continuous improvement and celebrate new and innovative

practice. By providing training alongside coaching we aim to support you in your role as we value all our staff and want you to stay with us.



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Research at LEYF

Recently we began to work very closely with the University of Wolverhampton to find out what the children in our nurseries think about male and female teachers. We presented the findings at many conferences locally, nationally and internationally. Recently, we attended the EECERA Conference in Greece to present our research on what children think of men in childcare.

The EECERA conference showcased our work but also helped to establish partnerships with colleagues who are sympathetic to the argument for men in childcare. We will be continuing the work started with the University of Wolverhampton but expanding the partnership to include universities throughout Europe to look more deeply into the recruitment and retention of male Early Years teachers.

Men in Childcare at LEYF

Join our working group

If you are interested in working with LEYF to champion a more diverse workforce you are very welcome to join our MiC group. We meet four times a year. The dates for 2020 are:

31st January 10:00 - 16:00

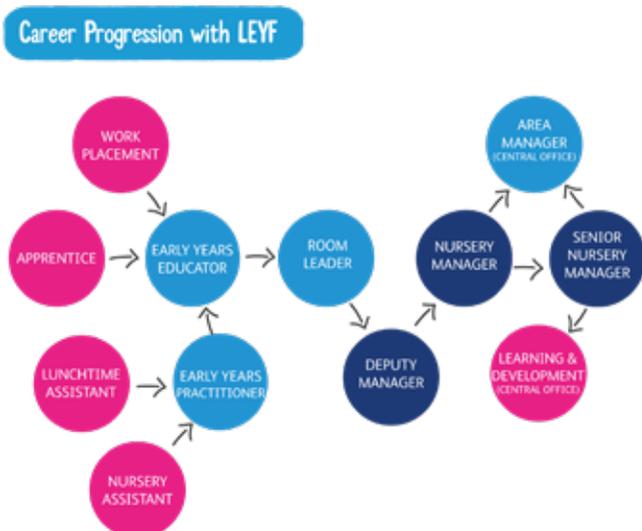
6th April 10:00 -16:00

20th July 10:00 - 16:00

9th October 10:00 - 16:00

At these meetings there are open discussions, panels and guest speakers and we encourage all male (and female) teachers who attend to have their say. We also send representatives to different Men in Childcare conferences to present our research. If you attend a conference, we ask that you bring back your findings and present to the group.

Our Central Office teams work with us to tell the story of why it's good for children and staff to create positive and inclusive nurseries. We are continuing to research and test ideas as to how we can better recruit more men and how we portray men in our marketing materials, as we know these are opportunities to change perceptions with key audiences.



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Career Opportunities

Within LEYF there are different pathways for all new teachers to progress as well as opportunities to become 'Champions' within different areas.

In the nursery, teachers can move on to become room leaders, deputy managers, managers or senior managers and there are training opportunities to support you in your chosen career. Some people progress and join



our Learning & Development team or become part of a Central Office team for example joining Finance, Recruitment, Customer Service or Marketing.



As a social enterprise, LEYF is a very innovative organisation and we are always looking for ways to improve the lives of the many children who attend LEYF nurseries. Recently we opened the world's first Early Years Chef Academy with a specific accredited qualification for chefs working with children under the age of eight.

Our own chefs are pioneering the qualification, leading the country in how to ensure healthy nutritious food is available for children. We will continue to look for more innovative ways of supporting children including sharing and extending good practice.

We look forward to welcoming you to LEYF



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