



## Ford Motor Company

Ford is a major global company which manufactures and distributes vehicles and parts and provides other related services. In the UK there are 12,500 employees who work at seven main sites. The company's British research and development HQ in Essex is responsible for developing engines and transmissions for all Ford vehicles in Europe, as well as the company's commercial vehicle range.

In 1999 Ford was involved in a very high profile case at the Dagenham plant. This happened at the same time as the Macpherson report and a general public debate about racism in British public life. In 2001 Ford introduced the Diversity and Equality Assessment Review (DEAR) - a robust and disciplined action plan.

Jane Tottingham is Diversity and Inclusion Manager: *"Ford has been totally committed to developing the action plan and working in partnership with unions and other organisations to eliminate exclusion and challenge inappropriate behaviours. Since this time, the action plan, along with robust policies and procedures, has achieved immense cultural change across the organisation."*

As part of DEAR Ford established harassment helplines, a joint committee on diversity, regular audits and 17 experts were recruited to implement the strategy. A publication *Diversity at Ford* is published three times a year and 56,000 copies are distributed around Europe. The DEAR approach has meant that the company has been able to measure progress on a variety of fronts including the continual gathering of the views of employees.

Women make up only 7.7% of the Ford workforce and female representation at shop floor level remains very low at 3.8%. Nevertheless, the female graduate intake has more than doubled in the past five years. One clear measure of success has been the increase in the representation of women at all levels of management.

Ford has an exceptional maternity leave scheme with 100% of pay for 52 weeks. Fathers and partners can also receive two weeks full pay. One indicator of the seriousness of the Ford approach to diversity and supporting parents is that even in difficult times they have no plans to change this.

Flexible working is open to everyone at Ford but is clearly a challenge in the three shift pattern or where there is a 24 hour line working arrangement. Nevertheless there are now 49 part time workers on the line. *"We now have increasing acceptance of flexible working and are continuously challenging expectations. There is a female board member who has a flexible arrangement and we are using our internal media to role model and communicate our success stories."*

Ford is aware that 70 to 80% of purchasing decisions about which car to buy are influenced by women. This will become increasingly the case as fewer women currently own cars. *"We need to incorporate the female perspective into car design and manufacturing processes. Inclusive policies and practices and support for all working parents will help to achieve this."*

It is clear that the changes at Ford have been profound and will continue into the future. *"There is a real commitment to diversity and inclusion which continues throughout the current economic climate. In the longer term, the concept of flexible working continues to be a business priority and is articulated in our scorecard objectives. It is an effective way to support all individuals, whatever their personal circumstances and it makes good business sense in a dynamic and fast moving global industry."*

## Supporting Statement

**Organisation:** Ford Motor Company

**Approximate number of employees:** 12,500 (UK)

**Sector:** Manufacturing & Engineering

**Brief description of nature of business:** Manufacture and Distribution of Vehicles and Parts and other related services

**1. Why is your organisation a good place for parents to work today? We are looking for evidence (eg, maternity return rate, men working flexibly, extra support for carers, senior level diversity) as well as any programmes or initiatives which mark you out from your competitors.**

### **Best in Class Maternity and Parental Support Policies**

Employees receive 100% pay for 52 weeks maternity and adoptive leave. Paternity leave of two weeks at full pay is available for fathers or partners.

Ford offers fully paid NCT membership and ante-natal classes, in-house maternity and return to work workshops, new fathers' workshops and on site nursery facilities for full time and emergency childcare.

Approximately 98% of maternity leavers return on average p.a. – estimated cost saving = £2m. p.a.

Ford's salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme currently has an 8% take up (from population of 11% with pre-school children)

Ford is confident that these measures have a positive impact on parents in the workplace. In comparison to total population, satisfaction rates amongst parents of pre-school children are consistently higher:

- 68% of parents with pre-school children say Ford values and respects employees (vs. 59% of total population)
- 78% of parents with pre-school children really enjoy working for Ford (vs. 72% of total population)
- 82% of parents of pre-school children are proud of Ford as a place to work (vs. 76% of total population)

### **Wide range of innovative working practices**

All employees are eligible to apply for a flexible work arrangement including: Part time, flexible working hours, job share schemes, telecommuting, homeworking and career breaks.

Take up is actively encouraged through the scorecard objectives and progress is measured through the annual "Pulse" (engagement) survey and the "Your Views Count" diversity survey.

Profiles of flexible working arrangements are included in corporate communications and workshops on IT tools to support homeworking and flexibility are held to encourage take up rates.

Ford is confident that these measures are having a positive impact on parents in the organisation

- 78.4% of parents of pre-school children say that Ford would consider ways of adapting work arrangements to fit personal circumstances (vs. 65% total population)

## Support Mechanisms

Ford provides a wide range of employee resource groups, each with an executive sponsor on the European Board: - Women in Finance, IT, HR, Women's Product Panel, Engineers for the Next Generation, Ford Carers UK Group. These groups offer mentoring, support, coaching, counselling and development opportunities.

Annual Diversity and Worklife Programme offering workshops on parenting issues including: "Understanding Children's Behaviour", "Dealing with Tantrums" "Helping with Homework", "Preparing for Exams" and workshops on parental concerns such as understanding food labelling and making healthy consumer choices.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Ford offers a 24 hour free confidential helpline providing assistance to all employees on a wide range of personal or work related issues. Service providers are specifically trained in:

- **Childcare and Eldercare** – providing guidance on finding a childminder, childhood illness, puberty and adolescence, advice on benefits, help from social services/suitable care and residential homes
- **Marital/Family** – guidance on children, divorce, separation, family conflict

## Corporate Social Responsibility

Each employee is entitled to 16 hours paid leave p.a. to participate in corporate citizenship work in the community – e.g. local schools, hospitals etc.

All employees are entitled to £200 p.a. to participate in a development programme or worklife initiative. Courses could range from learning a language, music, cookery lessons, sports or fitness activities or relaxation and meditation classes.

Ford Britain Trust donates over £200,000 p.a. to organisations and charities in the community which have links to Ford employees – schools, clubs.

Ford assesses the impact of the above and monitors progress through regular diversity and equality audits and employee perceptions surveys (see below).

### **2. Please describe up to three milestones, changes or initiatives which helped the organisation become the great place for working parents that it is today.**

**2001**- Introduction of robust internal diversity audit procedures – Diversity and Equality Assessment Review (DEAR) – including commitment to regularly survey employees on how they believe they are treated at work in relation to diversity and inclusion issues. With six areas of focus (including policies, communication, corporate citizenship) and five levels of attainment, Ford has implemented a robust and disciplined process for managing diversity in the workplace.

DEAR progress has improved from the baseline audit in 2001 of 44% red; 47% amber; 9% green to results in 2008 of 81% green, 19% amber and 0% red.

"Your Views Count" employee perceptions survey feedback has improved in the latest results as follows:

- 76% are proud of Ford as a place to work (increase of 5%)
- 72% really enjoy working at Ford (increase of 2%)
- 59% say that Ford values and respects employees (increase of 5%)

**2002** - Launch of Dignity at Work Policy and corporate wide awareness raising programme. To date 92% of employees have been trained in Dignity at Work and a register of 283 trained Dignity at Work Investigators is maintained

**2002 – 2004** Introduction of supportive range of benefits and policies for parents (outlined above).

Part time (currently 3% take up), flexible working hours (including one board member and many senior managers currently operating FWAs), job share schemes, telecommuting (2% take up), homeworking and career breaks. In addition to the take up rates for formal schemes, there is a wide range of informal flexible arrangements in operation and almost all office based employees have the technical functionality to work remotely on an *ad hoc* basis.

**3. What was the driving force behind these initiative(s)? This might have been, for example, a particular business challenge, internal or external; leadership shown by an individual; employee demand for change, etc.**

Ford has a long standing appreciation of, and engagement with, diversity - monitoring ethnicity of our employees since 1968 and having equal opportunity policies in place since the early 1980s.

A step change in diversity in the early 2000s stemmed, in part, from a high profile incident relating to race discrimination allegations in Dagenham during 1998 where the urgent need for workplace culture change was highlighted.

Ford has recognised the wider business case for supportive employer initiatives and the need to embrace all groups in the workplace in order to not only attract and retain the best talent, but also to truly represent the voice of a diverse customer base.

On gender, for example, Ford knows that women influence 70% of car purchasing decisions. Ford also knows that women are under utilised in the labour market, particularly within SET industries, and that they represent an increasing opportunity in a shrinking talent pool.

In order to attract women to the company, Ford needed to be recognised as an employer who actively encourages worklife balance, has supportive policies for diverse groups and tolerates nothing less than total dignity and respect in the workplace.

**4. How do you think that your initiative(s) or practice, past or current, have influenced other employers?**

Ford annually benchmarks its policies and procedures with external organisations to ensure best practice. Endorsements for the success of Ford's diversity programme are highlighted through the following:

- May 2008 – Ford invited to speak as best practice employer at CIPD Diversity and Equality Conference
- July 2008 – Ford participates in Roffey Park Research "an exploration of strategies that work" and presents at their conference
- July/August – publication of Government's "Diverse Britain 2008" including case study on Ford's Diversity Programme
- November – 2008 – Institute of Development Studies publication – Case study on Ford's comprehensive Diversity Strategy.

Through the above, we know that other employers have been influenced by our programme and have looked to adopt specific elements of the Ford strategy within their own inclusion programmes.

In the last year, Ford has worked separately with organisations such as BAE systems, KPMG, IBM, Lafarge, Transport for London and Sodexo to review and enhance their inclusion initiatives. Through these informal networks, we know that Ford's comprehensive, inclusive policies have influenced other major employers and that, through sharing best practice, Ford can help to influence the wider agenda on working families across all sectors.