



**310 employees**

162 females

148 males

# **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT**

**2023**

New Forest Care 

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## Introduction

**New Forest Care is a bespoke residential, education and therapeutic childcare provider, dedicated to providing unconditional care to the most vulnerable children. Our approach is flexible and adaptable, working in partnership with local authorities, parents and carers. We are advocates of our children, and putting their safety and well-being first is at the centre of our decision making. Our people are at the heart of this and so we understand the importance of being open and fair in how we pay them.**

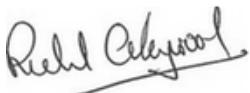
Through our values we are committed to supporting equality of opportunities regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic background and disability. Everyone's welcome and supported in their development, at any stage of their career with us.

2022/2023 presented new challenges with the cost-of-living crisis. For some, increased energy costs along with all of the other price rises, now mean that basic living costs are exceeding earnings. In 2022, based on feedback from our annual survey, we considered how we could remain competitive with our salaries and offer support with the increased costs everyone was facing. This led to a major review of salaries for Care and Education, as well as enhancing our sickness and holiday benefits. Also, in recognition of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, in December 2022 we awarded a cost-of-living payment to our lower paid earners. This will be reflected in our bonus data outlined within this report.

Despite the challenges we all continue to face, at NFC we have remained committed to developing our people by promoting from within our own talent pool, and supporting people to study courses outside of NFC, all whilst seeking to improve diversity at all levels.

Fostering a diverse and inclusive culture is a continuous journey, and we're building initiatives, policies and benefits to ensure that all NFC colleagues feel empowered to fulfil their potential. Gender pay gap reporting plays a key role in this by supporting our drive to improve gender diversity across all levels within the company.

This is our fifth year publishing our gender pay gap, and I can confirm that the information contained in this report is accurate and has been calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.



**Richard Collier-Keywood**  
Chairman



Across New Forest Care  
we are committed to our core values

**Children First | Fairness | Dignity**  
**Excellence | Teamwork | Sustainability**



## What is the Gender Pay Gap?

Employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish certain information annually showing different calculations of any pay gap between their male and female employees. These figures will be published on our website and on the designated government website.

The Gender Pay Gap is defined as ‘the difference in the average hourly wage of all men and women across a workforce, regardless of their role’. This is different to Unequal Pay which is defined as ‘paying men and women differently for performing the same (or similar) work’, which is unlawful. In summary, it is possible to have a gender pay gap and to pay men and women fairly.

## How is this calculated?

To generate our Gender Pay Gap report, we firstly look at all jobs and all rates of pay across the company.

The data is taken from a ‘snapshot date’, which will always be 5th April in any given year. For the purposes of this report, the snapshot date is 5th April 2023. Bonus reporting is based on the 12 months preceding this date.

The data shows the difference between the mean and median pay and bonus earnings of our male and female employees.

- **Mean gender pay gap:** the difference between the mean (average) hourly rate of pay for full-pay relevant men compared to full-pay relevant women.
- **Median gender pay gap:** the difference between the median (midpoint) hourly rate of pay for full-pay relevant men compared to full-pay relevant women (when listing from lowest to highest pay).
- **Mean and median bonus gender pay gap:** calculated the same way as the above but looking at the difference between the bonus pay paid to relevant male employees and relevant female employees.
- **Quartile pay bands:** the proportion of male and female full-pay relevant employees in each hourly pay quarter.

### What do the mean and median results actually tell us?



A positive percentage shows that our female employees have lower pay or bonuses than men.



A negative percentage shows that our male employees have lower pay or bonuses than females.



A zero percentage shows that there is equal pay or bonuses between our male and female employees – no gender pay gap.

We recognise that gender identity is broader than just 'men' and 'women' but due to the statutory requirements for gender pay gap reporting, our calculations are based on male and female employees.

The data includes all roles across the company, including those performed by clinical, education and care teams, as well as more office-based positions such as Shared Services. Pay ranges vary significantly depending on roles within these divisions.

Pay is not limited to basic pay, but also includes other types of pay such as shift premium pay, and allowances (such as payments for extra responsibilities and car allowances). It doesn't include overtime.

Bonus pay includes any additional pay relating to performance or incentives, whether discretionary or contractual. Some examples of paid bonuses that have been included in this data are bonuses relating to Thank You Rewards, Christmas, Ofsted Inspections and Recruitment such as Welcome and Referral bonuses.

According to the Office for National Statistics (November 2023), 'the gender pay gap has fallen by approximately a quarter among full-time employees, and in April 2023 it stands at 7.7%'.



## Our Data

### Interpreting the data – what's changed since 2022?

#### Overall Headcount



This is the fifth year we have published our gender pay gap report, giving us the opportunity to compare our data from 2019 through to 2023.

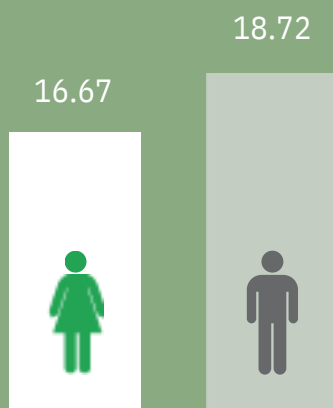
Our overall headcount at the snapshot date has decreased slightly since our 2022 report but despite this, we continue to employ more females than males for the second year in a row since we started reporting on the gender pay gap. Our calculations are based on 310 employees; 162 females and 148 males.

## Pay Gap

For the first time since reporting on our gender pay gap, we have seen a slight increase in our mean (average) pay gap for full-pay employees, from 9.82% to 10.97%. In monetary terms, the mean hourly difference in ordinary pay is £2.05 in favour of men, compared to £1.52 in 2022. Despite this, our mean pay gap continues to sit below the level seen in 2019, pre-COVID-19 (17.42%) and it's positive to see that our mean hourly rate for both men and women has increased. Our median (mid-point) pay gap has also increased slightly from 4.09% to 6.72% but still remains lower than the national average.

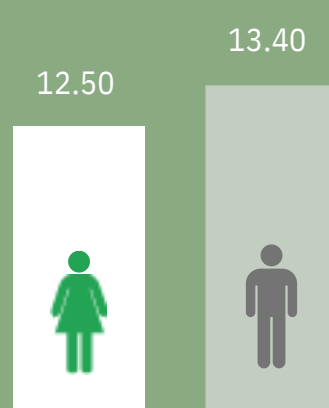
#### Difference between male and female hourly pay

##### Mean hourly rate (£)



Mean pay gap | 10.97% (male)

##### Median hourly rate (£)



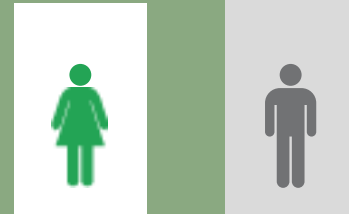
Median pay gap | 6.72% (male)

## Bonus Gap

The number of people who received a bonus out of our relevant employees was 50% of men and 47.5% of women – a reduction from 76.1% and 68.3% respectively from the previous year. This is largely impacted by the decision to award £175 as a cost-of-living supportive payment to our lower earners, in place of a one-off bonus to everyone. This was split into 2 payments made in December 2022 and January 2023. Also, since August 2022, our ‘thank you’ rewards have been issued in the form of Amazon Vouchers instead of through PAYE, so this is only partially reflected in our data.

### Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus

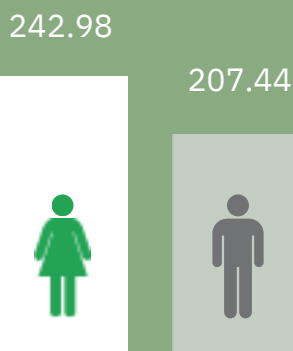
47.5%      50%



Whilst the percentage of men receiving a bonus was greater, more women than men actually received a bonus; 77 women and 74 men. We’ve also seen a reduction in our mean bonus gap from 24.32% to -17.13%, in favour of women. In monetary terms, women received on average £35.54 more as a bonus than men. Our data from 2022 showed that ‘thank you’ reward nominations were more in favour of men, however, our current figures show that an equal number of men and women received a ‘thank you’ bonus.

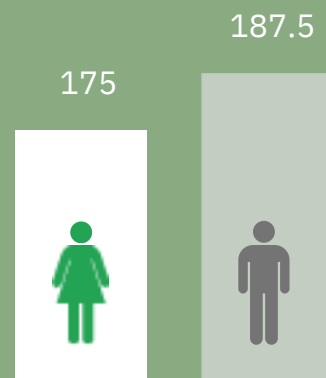
### Difference between male and female bonus

#### Mean Bonus (£)



Mean bonus gap | -17.13% (female)

#### Median Bonus (£)

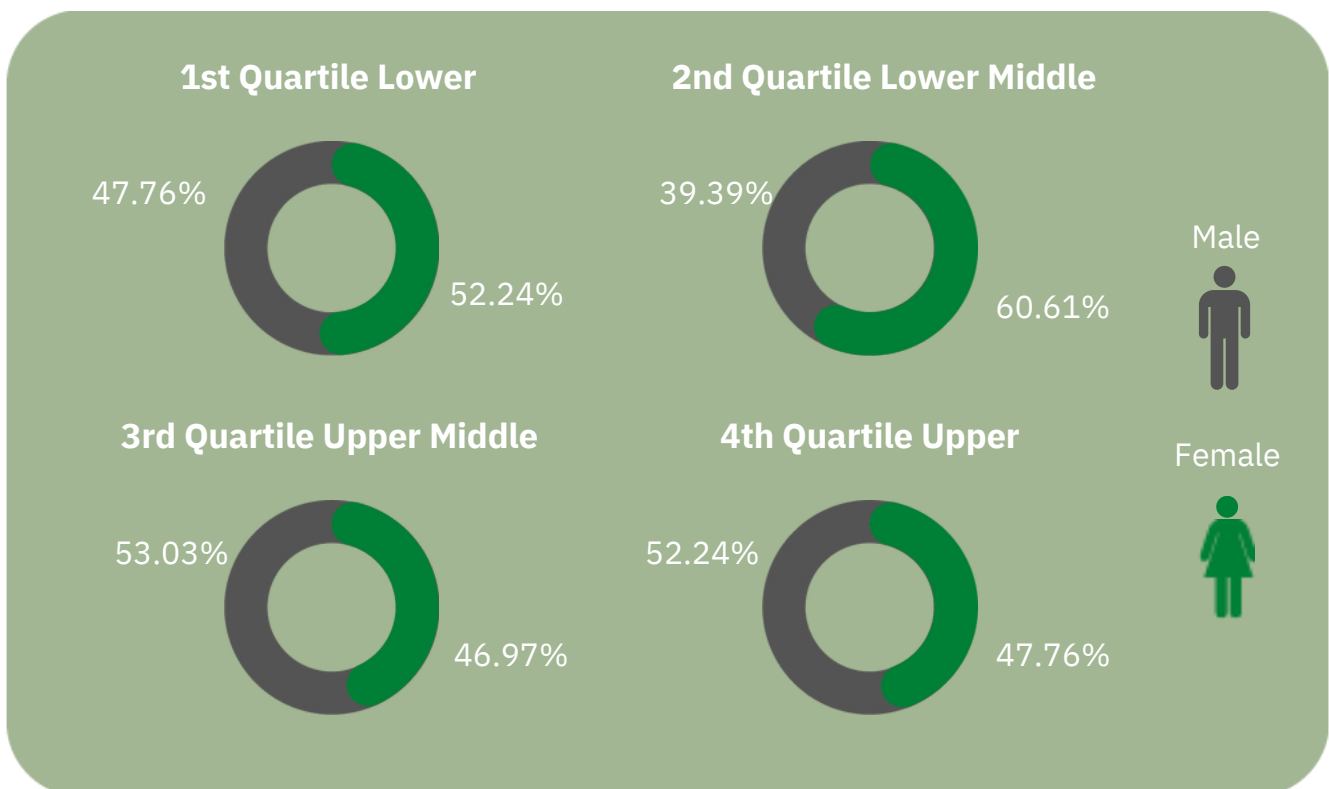


Median bonus gap | 6.67% (male)

We have seen a reduction in our median (mid-point) bonus pay for all employees by almost half, from 12% to 6.67%. In monetary terms, the median bonus difference is £12.50 in favour of men, compared to £30 in 2022. Whilst the reduction is positive, this shows that there is still some disparity in the distribution of bonuses across the company. Having lower representations of women in our most senior positions (upper quartiles) continues to impact this as higher bonuses are typically awarded to more senior positions, where remuneration is higher.

## Quartiles

Imagine if we lined up everyone who works for New Forest Care in order of their hourly pay rates and we split them into four equal-sized groups, we'd get what's known as four pay quartiles. Like with other companies, our gender pay gap arises from an imbalance of men and women across all job levels, despite continuously encouraging the promotion and appointment of women to middle and upper management roles. Whilst we have seen an increase in our number of female employees over the last 2 years, and 42% of our senior managers are women, our two upper quartiles continue to have a higher percentage of men, which means that we still have more men in our most senior roles, continuing to impact our gender pay gap. This arises in part from our long-standing Board of Directors being predominantly male.



The pay quartiles represent a quarter, or 25% of the workforce, ranked by pay. The pay quartiles are then broken down by gender.

Whilst we expect there to be fluctuations in our data year-on-year, we recognise that there is still more we need to do to reduce our gender pay gap such as increasing the number of women in higher paid roles and more senior positions. Since April 2023, we've appointed a new female interim Headteacher and Head of Therapy, so we anticipate this will help reduce our gender pay gap for 2024. Since our last report, we've also seen the acquisition of OEA, an alternative Education provision and School on the Isle of Wight. As we continue to grow what is already an established and well thought of provision on the island, we will be looking to expand the OEA Team to increase opportunities offered to the OEA students. Our 2024 data will begin to reflect this change.





Our gender pay gap continues to sit below the national average

We employ more females than males for the second year in a row

42% of our senior managers are female

**Year on Year Comparison**

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Mean Pay	10.97%	9.82%	12.20%	12.21%	17.42%
Median Pay	6.72%	4.09%	2.42%	-1.84%	6.73%
Mean Bonus	-17.13%	24.32%	24.99%	15.93%	37.01%
Median Bonus	6.67%	12%	0%	12.50%	0%

## Our Actions

**To help us close our gender pay gap and build a more inclusive NFC for everyone, we are taking tangible, sustainable actions to improve our culture. We know that this will take time, and we're continuing to focus our efforts to champion greater diversity across the company.**

### Inclusive recruitment

Inclusive recruitment underpins our hiring practices. We are proud that more than half (56.79%) of our new starters in the year ending 5 April 2023 were women.

Our partnerships with inclusive and accessible job platforms such as Indeed, TES, Isle of Wight Jobs, and Hants.gov.uk help us reach a diverse audience. We also ensure gender neutral and non-biased wording is used within our job adverts.

### Policies to support families

Our family-leave policies help give our people a better work-life balance and flexibility for those who have caring responsibilities. We've already enhanced the pay we offer during some periods of family leave, including Maternity and Paternity Leave and will continue to review this further to give parents choice and encourage more equal sharing of caring responsibilities to reduce our gender pay gap.

### Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

In 2022, we launched our flagship inclusion committee, JEDI (Justice, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) as part of our diversity and inclusion strategy. Appointed representatives from across the company meet on a regular basis to share ideas on how we can improve diversity and inclusion at NFC.

### Understanding the diversity of our colleagues

Also, this year, we have begun asking candidates to voluntarily disclose their personal diversity information, including gender and ethnicity. This data will help us to identify areas of improvement, enable us to make more inclusive decisions, and allow us to participate in future legislative reporting.

### Prioritising wellbeing at work

We care about the health and wellbeing of our people. This year we've instigated positive action by partnering with Health Assured, to offer all employees and their immediate family an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Their EAP is available 24/7, 365 days a year to give compassionate support, whatever challenges you face.

## Our Action Plan

**We believe that closing our gender pay gap requires cultural change in order to remove barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the company. We will continue to drive change across NFC in the following ways:**

### Short-medium term plan

- Conduct an audit to understand the causes of our gender pay gap. The types of data that we will look at may include:
  - Recruitment processes, including the proportion of men and women applying, being shortlisted for and appointed to posts;
  - Starting pay for men and women;
  - Promotion rates for men and women;
  - Proportion of mothers returning after maternity leave, and those still in employment two years after returning; and
  - Proportion of men and women who have taken up flexible working, and the levels within the company at which take-up is occurring.
- Introduce a pay policy that sets clear and transparent parameters for pay and bonus decisions and requires any negotiated awards to be reviewed by a panel consisting of men and women, in order to provide additional checks to ensure fairness.
- Review our annual performance appraisal process. Frequency of appraisal meetings to increase to quarterly. People's performance will be measured against defined performance standards using a tool known as the 4 or 9-Box performance grid. This will inform pay and bonus awards which will be reviewed by a pay panel.
- Amend our Flexible Working Policy, so that jobs at all levels are open to flexible working from day one of employment, rather than the current 26 weeks. This will widen the pool of talent available to us and increase opportunities for women who continue to shoulder the main responsibility for childcare. It will also support parents who increasingly seek greater work/life balance.
- Be transparent and clear about the types of flexible working we have considered, offered and granted and showcase examples where flexible working is successful.
- Shared Parental leave enables eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after their child is born or adopted, but take up at NFC remains low for both men and women. We will actively promote shared parental leave across NFC to encourage take-up.
- We will continue to review pay structures for all roles.

### Long-term plan

- Improve representation of females in senior positions, particularly at head office. To do this we would ensure that external female applicants are shortlisted for interview or considered for internal promotion, where a vacancy at senior level presents itself.