

DAY IN THE LIFE

Little bird

Kayli Olson had a chance to see the corporate world through a child's eyes, when the future workforce and their proud parents tackled some Bird & Bird business basics for a day



For a child at a law firm, a day in the life starts at 9am. Or, it does when it's bring-your-child-to-work day. In summer 2017, Bird & Bird welcomed 25 of its staff's children, all aged eight to 12, to its London office for some insight into the world of their parents' work.

Laura Whelan, CR and diversity manager at the firm, invited Zoe Sinclair, director at Employees Matter, to fill the day with fun, child-friendly activities that went beyond arts, crafts and face-painting.

Whelan explains: "It's our first time doing 'bring your child to work day'. We're excited to be doing something a bit different to our usual seminar and diversity initiatives.

"A day like this really highlights the diversity of a workforce and embraces family-friendly culture. It's not just partners' kids, but children of parents in all areas of the London office."

The children were tasked with creating a new branch of the firm just for kids. The structure of the day was all about understanding both the world of work and the law firm workplace specifically, says Sinclair.

🕒 **10am** – After an hour of ice breakers and team-building involving building the tallest structure possible using straws and tape, the kids get briefed on Bird & Bird bingo. What is a law firm and what components will they have to think about when building

their own?

The bingo sheet is full of recognisable brands in retail – and they play a game to get creative juices flowing. Next it's their turn. Kids are tasked with creating their own name and logo for a new branch of Bird & Bird. Children work hard in table groups to fill up their presentation boards, ready to show parents at the end of the day.

They also get slips of paper to write down 'tweets' throughout the day, showing progress on creating their brands, which will also be posted on their final board for presentation.

🕒 **11:10am** – After a brain-refuelling snack break, it's time for some debate.

Working in groups, the children are each given a job role and told that the hot air balloon they're travelling in is in trouble. In order to keep the balloon in flight, two people have to be thrown out! They debate who should stay in the balloon by highlighting key strengths in their roles. Perhaps good practice for future careers ...

🕒 **12:30pm** – The kids get a break to go take their parents out for lunch, before heading back into a branding

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exercise (making T-shirts of that new branch of Bird & Bird).

🕒 **2:15pm** – And like at any good employer, the children have some emergency, health and safety training – from a professional first-aid trainer. "Would you know what to do if your colleague collapsed in front of you? They were split into two groups and each had 20 minutes of first-aid training," says Sinclair.

"They're doing something that they've never done before, learning about good health and habits in the workplace – and maybe acquiring a skill in the process."

🕒 **3pm** – The final piece in this impressive tower of law firm building blocks is recruitment. Each group had to think about how many people they would ultimately need in their business and write a job advert.

🕒 **4pm** – That's a wrap. Those presentation boards are finished with all the activities from the day, and in come the management (aka parents) to review the fruits of their labour.

Whelan says: "The day was a huge success – it was great to see it all come together at the end with the presentations, and the students were very confident in front of all the parents. It was a good way of supporting the firm's working parents in educating the next generation, as well as showing them where mum or dad spends their day." ▴