

Job Description

Participation Officer (12 month temporary contract)

35 hours per week, including weekends and evenings

£26,692 per annum

At includem we value and celebrate people's diversity and believe this strengthens our team. As an organisation serving children in care and care leavers, we are keen to receive applications from people with experience of care and recognise the importance of having care experienced staff within our team. We are seeking an individual who is committed to promoting children's rights, hearing the voices of those we support and ensuring that they can influence the decisions and structures that affect them. We believe that the life experience of the Participation Officer will be key to delivering the change we need to best promote children's rights.

JOB PURPOSE: To deliver a 12 month project to develop a comprehensive culture and practice of participation with the children, young people and families that includem support, in line with the aims of The Promise. This will be achieved by reviewing current policies and practices in promoting the views, experiences and rights of the children, young people and families and the development and implementation of a participation framework.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- To review relevant includem policies, processes and practices to ensure that children, young people and families are able to contribute to decision making, policy making and service planning which affects them in an informed and supported way, and in a way that support and promotes their rights.
- To review and enhance participatory skills and confidence of staff at all levels of the organisation to ensure meaningful participation of children and families in activities, consultations and events in order to represent their views and experiences of the care and support they receive.
- To model participation practices by working alongside support delivery staff and directly with children and young people and families, to identify appropriate and accessible ways for them to participate meaningfully in activities designed to help them share their views and experiences and influence practice across all levels of the organisation.
- To ensure that processes are identified and agreed to ensure the views of those children and young people about includem services and issues affecting them are recorded and considered in planning and decision making at an individual and service level.
- To develop, along with children, young people and families and support delivery staff a participation framework, with consideration to the strengths, gaps and challenges identified in the review period of the project, framework to ensure that this will represent the views, opinions and experiences of children and young people both in internal service development and improvement and to a range of external audiences, including decision makers and policy makers at a local and national level.

- To develop an agreed method of consultation and involvement that supports the wider work of includem in supporting children and young people to contribute to includem's campaigning and influencing work.
- To recommend changes to policies and practices to ensure that participation of children, young people and families is embedded across all of includem's services.
- To work with staff across all roles of the organisation to ensure that all includem services can demonstrate the active and meaningful participation of children and young people in decision making, policy making and service planning.
- To develop, in conjunction with relevant staff, appropriate methods of recording, monitoring and evaluating the views and opinions of children and young people to inform decision making, policy making and service development.
- To recognise the confidential and sensitive nature of personal information relating to children, young people and families, and how this should be communicated, used, published, shared, recorded and handled appropriately.

QUALIFICATIONS

Desirable: SVQ level 3 in a relevant discipline.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Essential:

- Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of effectively supporting and promoting children and young people's meaningful participation.
- Knowledge and understanding of, and commitment to, equality of opportunity, anti discriminatory practices, and inclusion.
- The ability to communicate clearly and sensitively
- Demonstrate self-motivation, team working and ability to use initiative
- Flexibility to work weekends and evenings when required and to travel to includem offices across Scotland
- Become a member of the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) Scheme (paid for by includem)

Desirable:

- Experience of working in a social care setting within one of the following areas:
 - Youth work
 - Community learning and development
 - Children and young people with disabilities services
 - Children and young people in either a residential or community setting
- Experience of group facilitation to promote meaningful activities and events for children and young people
- Demonstrate an ability to work in partnership with a wide range of agencies

SCOPE OF PLANNING AND ORGANISATION

- The post holder will report to the Head of Policy and Participation.
- The post holder will have regular contact with their line manager to determine project scope and work plans but will be responsible for planning and prioritising their work within these plans.

- The post holder will develop processes and procedures as required to implement a children's rights approach to participation and engagement.
- The post holder will attend and contribute to all meetings relating to the planning and delivery of participation and engagement work, including staff training and development.
- The post holder will participate in the ongoing development of this work across Scotland, through contributing to monitoring and evaluation all participation and engagement activities and working with The Promise Team to report findings and developments.

SCOPE OF JUDGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

The post holder will work alongside the Head of Policy and Participation to plan and develop a relevant project and work plan and associated activities and will use their knowledge and initiative to make recommendations to the line manager.

The post holder will develop their work in such a way as to ensure that it operates with regard to good practice and any mandatory or legislative requirements relating to child protection, confidentiality, vulnerable adults, health and safety and safeguarding issues.

RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- Regular liaison with the Head of Policy and Participation, Head of Strategic Development and Innovation, Director of Service Delivery, Policy Officer, Head of Service, Service Managers and their staff teams, and other key staff.
- Liaise with other key staff and colleagues as required, including commissioned researchers.

External

- Develop and maintain links with The Promise Team and other external agencies and actively contribute to relevant meetings as required
- Promote inclusion through networking with other agencies (e.g. initiating, developing and maintaining links with services to support and facilitate participation and engagement). Agencies will include local authorities, health services, schools, youth networks and other local or national networks.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The post holder should be prepared to work flexibly as some evening and weekend work will be expected. Travel to our offices across Scotland will be expected once current restrictions are eased.