



EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE

Who Cares? Scotland Job Specification

Post title	Advocacy and Participation Worker
Salary range	£23,674 – £29,592 per annum
Hours of work	35 hours per week – some evening and weekend work required. Hours can be worked flexibly.
Contract	Permanent
Area	South Lanarkshire
Base location	Hamilton or Bellshill
Responsible to	Advocacy and Participation Manager, Lanarkshire Region
Last update	March 2023

Who Cares? Scotland is Scotland’s only national independent membership organisation for Care Experienced people. Our strategic vision is to secure a lifetime of equality, respect and love for Care Experienced people in Scotland.

At the heart of Who Cares? Scotland’s work are the rights of Care Experienced children and young people, and the power of their voices to bring about positive change.

We provide individual lifelong relationship-based independent advocacy and a broad range of imaginative participatory and engagement opportunities for Care Experienced people across Scotland. We work alongside Corporate Parents and communities to broaden understanding and create change. We work with policy makers, leaders and elected representatives locally and nationally to shape law, policy and practice, working together to build on the aspirations of [The Promise](#) and secure positive change.

Purpose of the post

The purpose of the post is to help nurture an environment where the voices, views and experiences of Care Experienced children and young people are at the heart of decision-making – both for individuals experiencing care, and in the shaping of services for Care Experienced children and young people.

Advocacy and Participation Workers provide independent advocacy support to children and young people with experience of care who have a need for advocacy support. This means listening to what they say and supporting them to amplify their voices to ensure that their

views are heard regarding all decisions which are being made about their lives. At the heart of the advocacy relationship is trust - built through transparent, honest, accountable, and reliable interactions with a skilled and knowledgeable Advocacy and Participation Worker.

You will also facilitate a broad range of participatory and engagement opportunities and create conditions for collective advocacy which brings young people together, allowing them to develop confidence, a sense of belonging and the opportunity to identify common issues. You will help ensure their voices are heard by Corporate Parents and communities, creating positive change. You will work closely with partners, council services and with other public services, in order to ensure that the voices of care experienced children and young people have an impact and help create new opportunities and develop existing ones.

You will be skilled at developing positive relationships with children and young people. You will place young people at the heart of everything you do, helping them live a positive life now and to reach their full potential in the future.

You will be joining Who Cares? Scotland and working within South Lanarkshire within the Lanarkshire regional team. You will be joining at an exciting time, when the voices of those who are in or have experienced care are growing in power, individually and collectively - bringing with them insight, challenge, hope and change. The post-holder will be part of a growing and dynamic team.

Main duties and responsibilities

1. To provide high quality independent advocacy, children's rights and participation opportunities for children and young people, who are looked after or subject to formal processes and structures. We also work with care leavers to ensure their rights are realised and their achievements recognised.
2. Facilitate group-work with children and young people as directed by the requirements of Who Cares? Scotland. The development of the Champions Board activity will be part of this role in collaboration colleagues within council areas.
3. Support the community engagement aspect of the organisation's activity. This is to encourage the broader community to understand and embrace their care experienced population.
4. Consult children and young people locally as part of Who Cares? Scotland national and local work.
5. Keep detailed records of work undertaken with young people and undertake monitoring of statistics.
6. To provide advocacy support to children and young people who subject to Children's Hearings Procedures as per the WCS? CHS Advocacy Contract
7. Prepare quarterly liaison reports and annual reports which are based on the agreed outcomes for your area of responsibility.

8. Regularly visit children and young people, who are looked after or subject to formal processes and structures, and care leavers, in line with agreements with the Local Authority.
9. Assist children and young people in preparation for, and support them to attend, Looked After reviews, children's hearings and other formal processes.
10. Provide children and young people, parents, kinship carers and professionals with information regarding the work of Who Cares? Scotland.
11. To work in partnership with other professionals and organisations to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. Support the Care Experienced voice to be heard through the Champions Board work and local networks.
12. Adhere to Who Cares? Scotland policies, procedures and values at all times.
13. Carry out any other duties commensurate with the post as agreed by your line manager.

Communication

The post holder will have key contacts with:

- Children and young people
- Partners across council areas (Local Authority colleagues, other public sector Corporate Parents, the Third Sector)
- The broader Who Cares? Scotland team across Scotland.
- National partners e.g. CELCIS, Children's Hearing Scotland, SCRA, Care Inspectorate & SSSC

Teamwork, alongside a strong individual initiative will be crucial for the effective operation and imaginative development of the work, and all team members are required to play an active part. This is important in relation to liaison with colleagues and, ensuring that the service provided meets service level agreements and contributing to the national work of the organisation.

Working environment

This role will be office and off-site visit based, but there will be scope for hybrid working with agreement from the Advocacy and Participation Manager, and flexibility and significant travel will be required given the remit of the role. Some evening and weekend work will be necessary. A full driving licence and access to transport is required.

Attitudes and values

Commitment to:

- Children and Human rights
- Working inclusively with an understanding of equal opportunities practices
- Belief that young people can make transformative change happen in their lives if given the opportunity

- Working in partnership with young people, empowering them to shape their own lives, benefitting from the care and support they need
- Developing best practice through regular supervision and training opportunities
- Inter-agency, inter-disciplinary working to improve outcomes for children and young people

Essential knowledge, skills, and experience

Qualifications:

- While we would welcome the knowledge gathered through relevant qualifications, we are just as interested in relevant work experience.
- Demonstrable continuing professional development in relevant areas.
- You will be required to complete a PVG

Knowledge:

- The Children's Hearing System
- The issues affecting children and young people in care or with experience of care
- Awareness of the care system in Scotland
- Children's rights
- Child protection issues
- Legislation relevant to Care Experienced children and young people
- Independent advocacy and the SIAA Principles, Standards and Codes of Best Practice
- Effective participation and engagement
- Current developments, policy, and practice in relation to children and young people experiencing care in Scotland

Skills and competencies:

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both verbal and written
- Ability to form positive relationships with children and young people
- Ability to work both collaboratively as part of a team and on own initiative
- Ability to develop relationships with other professionals including social work, health and education
- Ability to manage your time and workload to effectively prioritise and meet deadlines
- Ability to effectively plan and evidence work
- Experience of providing participatory opportunities and activities
- Ability to travel, and to work some evenings and weekends, with possible overnight stays
- Excellent administrative skills and the ability to produce high quality reports on activity and impact
- Willingness to learn and develop your skills
- A reflective approach to your work and service delivery

- A positive can do attitude

Experience in:

- Working directly with children and young people, both individually and in groups
- Delivering training or engaging a range of audiences
- Working in a collaborative, inter-agency, inter-disciplinary way
- Report writing and evidencing practice and impact

We welcome and encourage applications from those with experience of care.