



EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE

Who Cares? Scotland Job Specification

Post title	Advocacy and Participation Worker
Salary range	£24,147 – £30,184 per annum
Hours of work	35 hours per week – some evening and weekend work required. Hours can be worked flexibly
Contract	Permanent
Area	East Lothian
Base location	Edinburgh / Haddington
Responsible to	Advocacy and Participation Manager, South East
Last update	February 2024

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 relationship-based independent advocacy and a broad range of imaginative participatory opportunity for Care Experienced young people across Scotland; we work alongside corporate parents and communities of all sorts to broaden understanding; we work with policy makers, leaders and elected representatives locally and nationally to shape law, policy and practice on the basis of all that can be learnt from the voices of those with experience of care - working together to build on the aspirations of [The Promise](#) and secure positive change.

Purpose of the post

Advocacy and Participation Workers work directly with children and young people with experience of care primarily in an individual advocacy role. This means we listen to what they say and support them to ensure their voices are truly heard regarding the decisions which are being made about their lives.

We also facilitate a very broad range of participatory and engagement opportunities and create the conditions for collective advocacy. This often brings young people together,

allowing them to develop confidence, a sense of belonging and the opportunity to identify common issues. We ensure their voices are heard by care corporate parents and communities, creating positive change.

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

The post-holder will be joining Who Cares? Scotland and working within the South East team 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.

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, Care Experienced, subject to formal processes and structures. This will be required within Midlothian and in other Local Authorities where children and young people are living away from their own Local Authority.
2. Assist children and young people in preparing for, and effectively participating in child's plan meetings, children's hearings, child protection case conferences and other formal processes across East Lothian.
3. Provide other engagement/participation/consultation opportunities for children and young people as part of Who Cares? Scotland local and national work.
4. Facilitate awareness raising and training for care corporate parents, including within schools.
5. Keep detailed records of work undertaken with young people and undertake monitoring of statistics.
6. Prepare liaison reports which are based on the agreed outcomes for your areas of responsibility.
7. Create opportunities to meet with Care Experienced children and young people and introduce the service, in line with agreements with the appropriate local authority.
8. Raise awareness of Who Cares? Scotland and the range of the service and opportunities on offer amongst care experienced children and young people, professionals and carers.
9. Work in partnership with professionals, carers and organisations to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people through supporting the Care Experienced voice to be heard.
10. Adhere to Who Cares? Scotland policies, procedures and values at all times.

11. Carry out any other duties commensurate with the post as identified by your line manager.

Communication

The post holder will have key contacts with:

- Children and young people from East Lothian
- Partners across Midlothian (Local Authority, other public sector Corporate Parents, the Third Sector)
- The broader Who Cares? Scotland team, in the South East team and across Scotland.

Teamwork alongside strong individual initiative will be crucial for the effective operation and imaginative development of the work.

Working environment

The base for this role will be split between our Edinburgh office in Granton and East Lothian social work offices in Haddington, however flexibility and home working are also supported. Flexibility and significant travel will be required given the remit of the role and some evening and weekend work will be necessary. A full driving licence and access to a car 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
- Learning and development
- 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.

Knowledge:

- The Children's Hearing System

- The issues affecting children and young people in care or with experience of care
- The care system in Scotland
- Children's rights
- Child protection issues
- Independent advocacy and its principles
- 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 manage your time and workload to effectively prioritise and meet deadlines
- Ability to effectively plan and evidence work
- Shaping participatory opportunity
- 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

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 particularly welcome applications from people with experience of care who meet the criteria for the post.