

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MANAGER: SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Background/context

SCMA is the only national organisation in Scotland specialising in supporting all aspects of childminding practice. We are a membership organisation with over 3200 members (over 80% of the childminding workforce), we are an advocacy body (through which we provide a professional voice for childminding and work to ensure that national policy and standards as they impact upon childminding are influenced by evidence and the experiences of childminders), we provide professional learning and qualifications support for our members and we are also a national Third Sector service provider delivering an increasing range of contracted services to support the development of childminding, children and families.

### Organisational Development & Strategy

SCMA is at a key point in our organisational development. Following the appointment of a new Chief Executive in April 2019 we undertook an active programme of engagement with our Board Members, staff and wider membership regarding the future direction of SCMA and childminding. In parallel, we had discussions with external stakeholders, we reviewed the data trends in relation to our workforce and childminding, and undertook a large-scale in-depth membership survey ‘#TellSCMA Childminding and You 2020’. Collectively, we used this information to develop a new and ambitious 3-year strategy, as part of a longer 10-year journey. This strategy was approved by SCMA’s Scottish Executive Board in March 2020 just before COVID-19 struck. We paused our strategy implementation at this point, in order to prioritise our response to supporting members and the wider childminding community during the pandemic.

Last year, we reviewed our new strategy for currency in light of COVID-19 and believed that the need for it to be implemented was stronger than ever. The issues which it was developed to address have only intensified.

Our new three-year strategy was launched in May 2021:

*Changing the Narrative: Strengthening Childminding, Supporting Families and Increasing Choice*

It includes 15 actions, covering the following five key areas:

- **Membership:** helping members to recover and sustain their businesses and ensuring our membership support adapts to changing needs; providing them with what they need, when they need it and in the most appropriate form.
- **Policy, Representation and Influencing:** continuing to provide a strong professional voice and using evidence and childminders’ experiences to influence and support national and local policy.
- **Workforce, Learning and Quality:** reversing the declining trends within our workforce, and supporting on-going skills development and learning at all career stages.
- **Children and Families:** further development of Community Childminding and our other services to meet the increasing demand from families in need, increasing support for school-age childcare and developing childminding in areas where provision is low.
- **Value of Childminding:** changing outdated perceptions of childminding, increasing the value attached to it by parents, policymakers, other providers and the wider public to create more demand for childminding.

## **Our Services**

We currently deliver a range of services across Scotland, ensuring that childminders are able to improve the quality of their delivery through professional learning, providing high-quality, nurturing childcare and family support. At this time this includes the following:

- **Professional Learning**

Our Learn with SCMA function offers a range of Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) opportunities to support childminders with ongoing quality improvement. Over 90% of childminders consistently score Good or Above across all quality criteria, through independent inspection by the Care Inspectorate, the highest of any childcare provider. We provide interactive/virtual learning courses and events as well as our e-learning courses delivered on an online platform. We are an SQA accredited centre and also deliver qualifications support to meet the requirements of those delivering funded ELC.

- **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)**

Working in partnership with 9 local authorities, we have locality-based field staff who support the involvement of childminders in the delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare hours for 2,3- and 4-year-olds. Service delivery includes recruitment, training, quality assurance, ELC referrals, payments and overall support.

- **Community Childminding**

We are commissioned to provide Community Childminding services in 4 local authority areas (Aberdeen, Fife, Glasgow and Scottish Borders). Community Childminders receive enhanced training to provide short-term childminding placements for children and families who would benefit from early intervention support. These vital services have helped over 900 families in need in the last 3 years, demand exceeds our capacity to supply and we believe this has the potential to be developed in other local authority areas and indeed nationally. Click on the link to see more information, including our Community Childminding Briefing Sheet. <https://www.childminding.org/community-childminding>

- **School-Aged Childcare**

We have secured funding and are currently implementing enhanced school-aged childminding provision across 5 local authorities. This targeted service supports a range of low income families who meet certain criteria for example lone parents, Black & Ethnic Minority, Additional Support Needs etc and will support families into and to remain in work, increasing household income with a view to reducing the impact of child poverty. It will also provide key learning and modelling to inform future expansion and sustainability of school-aged childcare with childminders.

**Visit our website to learn more about SCMA, our wide range of activities and increasing influence on behalf of childminders and families. <https://www.childminding.org>**

## **Professional Learning Manager**

Due to retirement, we are currently seeking a Professional Learning Manager to help drive forward our CPL strategy as part of the overall Organisational Strategy and the key strand: Workforce, Learning and Quality. We are currently in the early stages of conducting a review of our Professional Learning delivery, with a view to informing our strategic and operational planning going forward. This is an exciting time to join us and play an active part in shaping and taking forward our ambitions.

We are looking for someone who has significant experience and understanding of professional learning within an early learning/childcare environment and has the drive and enthusiasm to work with us on the next stage of our CPL journey. You will be motivated, able to forward plan, work at pace and be passionate about bringing learning to life for childminders.

We require a skilled communicator with a solution-focused approach and an ability to get on well with others and be a valued member of #Team SCMA.

The post is home/head office based, days to be agreed. Some travel within the central belt and occasionally wider may be required as restrictions allow. Equipment and broadband/IT connections will be provided.

Full-time 36 hrs per week £38,202 - £ 41,208

## **Working for us – Benefits**

Our staff matter to us. Previously achieving a Silver award in Investors In People, we subsequently developed our own internal approach to ensuring the success of our organisation through our people – aptly named “Engaging Our People”.

In addition, we offer the following benefits:

- Generous Annual Leave entitlement
- Flexible working
- Contributory Pension Scheme
- Life Cover– 3 x gross annual salary
- Health Assured - Employee Assistance Programme

## **Application process**

If you believe you have the skills and experience and could make a difference in this role, we would love to hear from you.

All applicants must complete an application form including providing a competency-based statement demonstrating their possession of the experience, skills and knowledge required to fulfil this role. CVs are accepted, but only in addition to a fully completed application form.

If you would like to have an informal conversation regarding this role please contact – Janine Ryan, Head of Childminding Services – [janine.ryan@childminding.org](mailto:janine.ryan@childminding.org)

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