# Job Description: Youth Specialist

**Job title**: Youth Specialist

**Place of work:** Travel will be necessary to the various Paws for Progress CIC project sites across Central Scotland and for team meetings at various locations, including our office based at the University of Stirling. For administrative duties, this role can be home-based and/or use office space.

**Hours per week:** 35 hours to be flexibly worked at Paws for Progress sites across Central Scotland, with a portion of this time spent working from home or at the office as required by the organisation (with potential for flexible working agreements depending on specific needs).

**The package:** 28 days A/L + 9 bank holidays. Access to comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme. Generous sick leave package. Access to company vehicle if required for business use transporting dogs.

**Annual salary:** £24,350 Starting Salary + 5% pension contribution, with Pay Progression opportunities available within the role.

**Responsible to**: Operations Manager

**About the organisation:**

Paws for Progress is an innovative and ambitious Community Interest Company dedicated to improving the lives of both vulnerable people and dogs. Our team of 5 staff members provide educational, therapeutic, and interactive dog-assisted services for people most in need of support, in prison and within community settings.

**About the role:**

The purpose of your role is to lead on the delivery of our exciting suite of Personal Development Programmes for young people across Central Scotland. These programmes are highly engaging due to their involvement of friendly and confident dogs.

The role involves working in settings such as schools, youth projects/community organisations, secure units, and prisons. The role focuses on working with disadvantaged/vulnerable children and young people (primarily teenagers) from a variety of backgrounds. For this role, you must be willing to work with at least 1 suitable dog who will thrive on their involvement in these services with young people, preferably living and working with this suitable dog.

As Youth Specialist you will work to achieve Paws for Progress’ Strategic Purpose: **Enabling people and dogs to improve each other’s lives.**

The Youth Specialist will do this through contributing to our 3 Strategic Aims:

* Improve the wellbeing and future prospects of people experiencing challenges by creating opportunities for learning and development.
* Improve the welfare of dogs and rehoming success of homeless dogs.
* Build a sustainable future platform for our work to ensure we can make a lasting difference for both people and dogs.

The role will require the Youth Specialist to be involved in the expansion of our existing service model, with the support of the Development Manager, in addition to ongoing enhancement and improvement of the services.

You will be supported through a learning and development period at the start of this exciting and varied role.

**Key duties and responsibilities**

**Community-based Personal Development Programmes:**

* Deliver interactive dog-assisted Personal Development Programmes for small groups of young people across Central Scotland.
* Support children and young people from a variety of backgrounds to learn, develop new skills, improve their well-being and work towards positive futures.
* Contribute to the facilitation of trauma-informed practices.
* Organise and plan the service schedule, working closely with partnering organisations.
* Monitor and report on these services internally and externally to partners, to funders, and to other key stakeholders.
* Prepare and adapt course materials and student learning resources.
* Support the development of new community-based programmes for young people, working closely with the Development Manager,
* Building and maintaining excellent relationships with existing and new business partners, clients, and stakeholders.
* Complete and maintain Risk Assessments for all services.

**Dog welfare:**

* Transport staff/volunteer dogs to service venues across Central Scotland.
* Ensure dog welfare and enjoyment is always paramount by preparing all dogs involved in your services thoroughly. This includes training them using positive reinforcement and abiding by processes for assessing suitability of dogs for taking part.
* Supervise, monitor, and advocate for the dogs under your care always to ensure they thrive when involved in service delivery.
* Follow processes and abide by policies to ensure that standards for dogs involved in services are maintained at the highest level, ensuring safety and enjoyment for people and dogs.
* Maintain accurate and up-to-date records on dogs involved in services.
* Facilitate education in animal welfare and humane education

**Other duties:**

* Build excellent relationships with existing Paws for Progress staff and an understanding of all Paws for Progress projects.
* Contribute to the sharing of learning and best practice across the full range of Paws for Progress services, working closely with other staff members.
* Assist and provide cover for other members of the Paws for Progress staff team as required.
* Represent the organisation at events, fundraising initiatives, or publicity opportunities when required to share learning and expertise.
* Care for and maintain the Paws for Progress vehicle provided for transporting dogs and equipment to services.
* Maintain and care for all equipment provided to the highest standard.

**General responsibilities**

* Committed to equal opportunities
* Dedicated to the protection and wellbeing of children and young people.
* Committed to compassionate dog-centred and person-centred care, with understanding of emotional needs.
* Dedicated to ensuring the highest level of animal welfare at all times.
* Committed to using positive reinforcement training methods.
* A thorough understanding of the ethos and aims of Paws for Progress CIC.
* Committed to promoting the ethos and aims of Paws for Progress CIC.

# Person Specification - Youth Specialist

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| **Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills and Experience** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Demonstrate considerable knowledge and experience in dog care, training, and behaviour. | x |  |
| Demonstrate considerable knowledge and experience working with and supporting children and young people | x |  |
| Experience of teaching positive reinforcement animal training techniques (groups and individuals) |  | x |
| Considerable experience of providing compassionate dog-centred care, understanding dogs’ emotional needs, and collaborating positively with dogs. | x |  |
| Educated to a considerable/degree level in a relevant discipline or equivalent training and experience i.e. Community Education, Social Work, Teaching, Social Science. |  | x |
| Knowledge of child and vulnerable people legislation |  | x |
| Experience of designing and delivering educational group work and training programmes |  | x |
| Experience of assessing the learning needs of vulnerable children and young people | x |  |
| Experience of inter-agency liaison and effective partnership working. | x |  |
| Proven ability to manage time and prioritise workload | x |  |
| Proven ability to work to deadlines. | x |  |
| Experience maintaining accurate monitoring, evaluation and recording systems |  | x |
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| **Personal qualities** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Keen interest in Animal Assisted Interventions and Human-Animal Interactions | x |  |
| Team player who can also work effectively independently and on own initiative | x |  |
| Client focus | x |  |
| Excellent relationship building skills | x |  |
| Effective communicator | x |  |
| Self-motivated and self-disciplined | x |  |
| Positive outlook and non-judgmental, ‘can do’ attitude | x |  |
| Flexible to the needs of the post and students | x |  |
| Good attendance and punctuality record | x |  |
| Willingness to undertake additional training appropriate to the position | x |  |
| Willingness to adhere to all relevant policies and procedures | x |  |
| Able to build credible relationships with people of all backgrounds and professions | x |  |
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| **Additional requirements** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Full, clean driving license and access to own vehicle for business use (suitable for safely transporting a minimum of 1 dog) | x |  |
| You must be eligible for full PVG scheme membership | x |  |
| Willing to work with at least 1 suitable dog, preferably living and working with this suitable dog | x |  |
| Willing to travel and occasionally work unsocial hours | x |  |

