

Who Cares? Scotland Job Specification

Post title	Advocacy and Participation Worker
Salary range	£24,147 – £30,184 per annum
Hours of work	1 x 28 hours per week role – some evening and weekend work required. 1 x 35 hours per week role – some evening and weekend work required.
Contract	Permanent
Area	Highland
Base location	Working from home with travel throughout the Highland area to meet with Care Experienced children and young people.
Responsible to	Advocacy and Participation Manager, North
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 posts

The purpose of these posts is to help nurture an environment where the voices, views and experiences of Highland's Care Experienced children and young people (up to the age of 26) and any young person involved in child's plan processes or with social work involvement.

Advocacy and Participation Workers provide independent advocacy support to children and young people 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 support the facilitation of 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 partner agencies including the Highland Council and with other public services, to ensure that the voices of 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.

Main duties and responsibilities

1. To provide high quality independent advocacy supports to Highland's children and young people, helping ensure their voices are heard and their rights upheld.
2. To have an adaptable communication approach that recognises barriers to communication.
3. To assist children and young people in preparing for and effectively participating in meetings, children's hearings and other decision-making processes.
4. To ensure that the networks through which children and young people can connect, develop and grow as individuals are maximised, including opportunities across the North and nationwide.
5. To work effectively with partners to involve and engage a growing number of children and young people.
6. To raise awareness of the experiences and voices of children and young people across a wide range of audiences.
7. To support a programme of engagement and participation activities for children and young people across the Highland's.
8. To facilitate group opportunities for and with children and young people as directed by the requirements of Who Cares? Scotland.
9. Provide other engagement/participation/consultation opportunities for children and young people as part of Who Cares? Scotland local and national work.
10. Keep detailed computerised records of work undertaken with young people you support and comply with data protection legislation.

11. Assist in the preparation of liaison reports which evidence the work and advocacy supports provided within the Highland Council area.
12. Raise awareness of Who Cares? Scotland and the range of the service and opportunities on offer amongst Care Experienced children and young people, professionals, carers and organisations.
13. Work in partnership with professionals, carers and organisations to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people through supporting their voices to be heard.
14. To develop excellent working relationships with relevant organisations and partners.
15. To work as a part of a team within a geographically dispersed area, whilst having strong individual initiative.
16. To implement professional boundaries and have clarity of the advocacy role.
17. Adhere to Who Cares? Scotland policies, procedures and values at all times.
18. 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 Highland within a variety of settings including (but not limited to) school, residential school, foster placements, kinship care or home settings.
- Partners and professionals across the Highlands area, including the Local Authority, Corporate Parents and other Third Sector agencies.
- National and regional networks that support children and young people.
- The North area team and the broader Who Cares? Scotland team.

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

Working environment

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:

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

- Working in partnership with young people, empowering them to shape their own lives and make decisions about their own lives.
- Inter-agency and inter-disciplinary working to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Developing best practice through regular support and supervision, training and development opportunities.
- Able to reflect on your practice and take constructive feedback.
- Compliance with the SIAA (Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance) Principles, Standards and Codes of Best Practice.
- Embrace new ways of working to benefit the children and young people that we support.

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 with children and young people.
- Demonstrable continuing professional development in relevant areas.
- A current full driving license.
- Satisfactory 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 children and young people.
- Awareness of independent advocacy, the SIAA Principles, Standards and Codes of Best Practice and the boundaries of the advocacy role.
- Current developments, policy and practice in relation to children and young people 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.
- 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 and/or engaging with a range of audiences.
- Raising awareness and facilitating information sessions.
- Working in a collaborative, inter-agency and inter-disciplinary way.

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