



## Job Description – Support Worker

### Introduction

Columcille supports adults with learning disabilities, some of whom also have mental health needs, in a creative day support service. We provide activities including arts & crafts, cooking, woodwork, gardening, pottery, drama, keep fit, holistic therapies and dance within a friendly and encouraging community setting. Seasonal and festival celebrations, as well as outings also form part of the rich social life of the centre. Some one-to-one outreach support to individuals is provided from individual's homes to access community resources. Columcille has a strong social aspect and a positive atmosphere where people feel safe and respected, and for many people who attend, this is as important as the activities they do.

For more information go to our new website [www.columcille.org.uk](http://www.columcille.org.uk)

Columcille opened in 1996 and is part of the Garvald family of organisations. Our work is inspired by the ideas of Rudolf Steiner in the beginning of the last century, and its development into social therapy, as well as contemporary complimentary approaches including person-centred practice, and positive behaviour support. We work with each person as a unique individual, supporting personal development to lead a full life.

Since the service started in the mid 1990's Columcille has always been guided and formed by the needs and wishes of each individual who has attended rather than an overly rigid adherence to a method or approach. We are flexible and responsive to each person and being guided by each individual is fundamental to our approach.

Two aspects of our structure are important. On the one hand it is important that what we offer has meaning and purpose and involves productive work. This 'produce' could be making a craft product that is sold at our autumn fair and appreciated by others; or it could be making a healthy lunch for others to enjoy; or learning a part in a play or a dance that is then performed for others. On the other hand, it is also important that Columcille provides a safe and happy place to simply be. For some individuals, the most important thing that we offer is a stable, social community, where people are known beyond any label or reputation, and are treated with respect, love and dignity. In both aspects, the individual is developing, growing and becoming more fully human.

## **Purpose of the role:**

To provide support to service users to learn new skills, develop socially, and achieve positive outcomes meaningful to them. **The role we are recruiting for will provide 1-1 support to individuals within the centre and the wider community. This will involve providing care and support to some individuals with complex needs, for example epilepsy, autism, mobility difficulties, as well as personal care. It is essential that applicants have relevant experience. It is also anticipated that the role holder will be one of a small team of staff who support our dance group on a Friday afternoon.**

## **Main responsibilities:**

1. Build relationships with service users using a person-centred approach.
2. Support individuals to participate in workshops and other creative activities in Columcille or the wider community.
3. To read, understand and follow personal plans and agreed procedures.
4. Being attentive to group dynamics, seeing the needs of the whole group and being proactive in responding to those needs.
5. Provide personal care upholding individual's dignity, which may include support with mobility, using the toilet, eating and drinking, and taking medication.
6. Respond positively and calmly to any behaviour that challenges, seeing behaviour as a form of communication and using agreed procedures and approaches.
7. Work as a team member, communicate professionally and with respect for colleagues.
8. Take on the role of keyworker for a few individuals, which involves writing short reports and attending reviews.
9. Provide cover in the café at tea break and lunch rota as required.
10. Assist with tidying workshops and shared spaces each day and help maintain a clean and safe therapeutic work environment.
11. Maintain professional boundaries and always work to promote the wellbeing of the person using the service.
12. Follow all health and safety procedures and ensure safe working practice.
13. Participate in staff training and other staff meetings as required for the role.
14. Be guided by Columcille policies and procedures and the SSSC Codes of Practice.

## **Person Specification**

Please refer this person specification when completing your application form.

### **Experience**

It is essential that applicants have previous experience of support work with people which may include supporting people on the autistic spectrum, providing support to individuals with mobility difficulties, epilepsy or behaviours that challenge.

### **Values and attitudes**

Able to demonstrate an understanding of person-centred values in practice.

Respect.

### **Skills & Personal Qualities**

Warm and friendly manner

Ability to show initiative

Empathy and good listening skills

Resilience

Show interest in getting to know individuals, and understand them

Demonstrate an understanding of behaviour as communication.

Willingness and capacity to provide personal care.

An openness and interest in using the principles of social therapy\* in work.

Ability to reflect on own practice and learn from experience.

### **PVG Scheme**

It is a requirement that all social care staff become a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme.

## Main Terms and Conditions

- Salary:** Starting salary of £23,712 for full-time posts of 38 hours, pro-rate for part time, rising annually to £27,457 after 6 years. Annual increments paid on anniversary date for first five years. Salaries are paid on the 28<sup>th</sup> of each month except December and January.
- Hours:** **36.5 hours per week:**  
Monday 0900 – 1700  
Tuesday 0900 – 1600  
Wednesday 0900 – 1630  
Thursday 0900 – 1600  
Friday 0900 – 1600
- Holidays:** 36 days full-time, pro-rata for part-time. Holiday year January to December. Minimum two weeks' notice required to request holidays. Staff take fixed holidays when the Centre is closed.
- Probation period:** Six months
- Notice periods:** In probationary period one week and after that four week.
- Sick Leave:** During probationary period statutory sick pay. On completion of probationary period 13 weeks sick leave on full pay and 13 weeks sick leave on half pay, calculated on a twelve-month rolling basis.
- Line Management:** Staff are accountable to the Manager, who provides regular support and supervision.
- Policies:** Full details of all terms are available in Policies and Procedures stored in the office and form part of staff induction.

### Social Therapy:

One contemporary description of some of the core principles underlying an approach which is based on social therapy can be found here. This is in no way meant to be prescriptive, but rather provide a helpful framework and suggestions for thinking about.

It refers to “social environments” which allow for people with and without support needs to develop together, and this describes what Columcille has strived to be and do for the last 28 years.

<https://inclusivesocial.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2024-03-Whitepaper-Social-Therapy.pdf>