Job Description:

Post: Childcare Connector
Hours: 30 hours; fixed term to 31 March 2028
Salary: £29,600 - £34,042 pro-rata
Location: Edinburgh
Reports to: Regional Coordinator

Overview

Established in 1944, One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS) is the leading charity working with single parent families in Scotland. We provide expert advice, practical support and campaign with parents to make their voices heard to change the systems, policies and attitudes that disadvantage single parent families.

We work alongside single parents and their families, placing them at the centre of everything we do. Creating ways to overcome barriers, changing their lives and fulfilling their potential. We also celebrate the many achievements of single parents and their children.

Our vision is to see a Scotland where single parent families are celebrated in all their diversity, are treated fairly and live free from discrimination and poverty.

Our mission is to amplify the voices of single parent families in their unique role as sole carers and providers and together challenge stigma, poverty and inequality to achieve change.

Our values are trust, equity, justice, collaboration and compassion. These are the principles or standards that we consider important in life. They shape behaviour and guide our decisions and actions.

Our strategic objectives shape and guide all roles at OPFS. They are the pillars that underpin all our work. We all will:

1. **Support** single parents to build on their strengths and attributes to achieve their goals.
2. **Strengthen** single parent families' wellbeing, enabling children to be happy and thrive.

3. **Influence** policies to eradicate child poverty taking an intersectional, equalities approach to policy making.
4. **Involve** single parents, experts by experience, to co-produce OPFS services and policy priorities.
5. **Challenge** societal attitudes and behaviours to fully support and respect single parent families.

Role and responsibilities

The Childcare Connector will support single parents to overcome childcare barriers that prevent them from accessing and sustaining employment, education, training, volunteering and other progression opportunities.

Working within the OPFS My Life and Me framework, the postholder will provide specialist childcare information, advice, guidance and practical support to help parents understand childcare options, access funding and secure sustainable childcare arrangements that support their family and future goals.

Working in partnership with childcare providers, employability services and other local organisations, the postholder will help parents access coordinated support and reduce childcare as a barrier to work, learning and progression.

Our Support for Families Service delivers holistic support for single parents and their children, guided by the six My Life and Me priority areas: Money, Health & Wellbeing, Home, Work, Education & Training, Children, and Relationships. Through a person-centred and strengths-based approach, we provide:

Money

- Support to maximise income, improve financial wellbeing, access benefits and grants, manage debt, and respond to financial crises

Health & Wellbeing

- Emotional and practical support to improve mental health and wellbeing, including counselling, therapeutic interventions, wellbeing programmes, and support to reduce isolation and build resilience

Home

- Support with housing-related issues, advocacy, and access to specialist services to help families maintain safe and secure housing

Work, Education & Training

- Pre-employability and progression support, including confidence building, skills development, volunteering opportunities, training pathways, and tailored support to overcome barriers to employment and learning

Children

- Family support and group programmes that promote positive outcomes for children, strengthen parenting capacity, support child development, and provide opportunities for children to participate in activities that enhance wellbeing

Relationships

- One-to-one and group support that helps parents build positive relationships, strengthen family connections, develop peer support networks, and reduce social isolation

Key responsibilities

Childcare advice and support

- Provide information, advice and guidance to single parents on local childcare options, including funded childcare, wraparound care, and holiday provision
- Support parents to understand childcare funding, including Universal Credit childcare costs, up-front costs local authority funding and education-related childcare support
- Work with parents to identify childcare solutions that support employment, education or training goals
- Assist parents with childcare applications, funding and transitions into childcare, providing practical support where required
- Maintain ongoing contact to ensure childcare arrangements remain suitable and sustainable

Family support and casework

- Build positive relationships with parents using strengths-based and trauma informed approaches
- Undertake holistic assessments using the OPFS My Life and Me framework to identify childcare needs and wider barriers
- Manage a caseload of parents, providing tailored one-to-one support
- Identify additional support needs and refer families to appropriate OPFS services and external agencies
- Support parents to build confidence, make informed decisions and manage periods of change

Crisis intervention

- Respond to childcare breakdowns that place employment, education or training at risk
- Work with childcare providers and partner agencies to identify practical solutions
- Help parents develop contingency childcare plans and provide additional support where needs are complex

Partnership working and community engagement

- Develop effective partnerships with childcare providers, schools, local authorities, Jobcentre Plus, employability services and community organisations
- Promote the Childcare Connector Service through outreach, networking and partnership meetings
- Maintain knowledge of local childcare provision, funding opportunities and referral pathways

Monitoring, evaluation and service development

- Maintain accurate and confidential records using OPFS CM systems
- Record outcomes, complete reports, case studies and funding returns, and gather parent feedback to evaluate impact
- Contribute to service development by identifying emerging childcare issues, developing resources and supporting consultation, evaluation and continuous improvement

Organisational contribution

- Promote OPFS values of justice, equity, trust, collaboration and compassion
- Contribute to wider organisational developments, partnerships and projects
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the post

The job description is a broad picture of the post at the time of preparation. It is not an exhaustive list of all possible duties, and it is recognised that jobs change and evolve over time.

Personal specifications

Essential experience

- Experience of working with families, children or vulnerable adults within a family support, employability, childcare, education or community setting
- Experience of providing advice, guidance or casework support
- Experience of partnership and multi-agency working
- Experience of maintaining accurate records, monitoring outcomes and producing reports
- Experience of supporting individuals experiencing multiple barriers
- Experience of delivering information sessions or groupwork

Knowledge

- Good understanding of the childcare landscape, including funded early learning and childcare, wraparound care, holiday provision and childcare for children under 3 years
- Knowledge of childcare funding, including Universal Credit childcare costs and other childcare funding streams
- Understanding of the barriers faced by single parents accessing employment, education and training
- Knowledge of strengths-based, trauma-informed and person-centred approaches
- Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities
- Awareness of poverty, inequality and social inclusion issues affecting families

Skills and abilities

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to build positive, trusting relationships with parents
- Excellent organisational and time management skills
- Ability to manage an independent caseload
- Ability to work collaboratively with a wide range of partners
- Competent IT skills, including Microsoft Office and CM systems
- Full driving licence and access to a vehicle

Desirable

- Relevant qualification in Community Development, Social Care, Early Years, Employability, Family Support or Advice Work
- Experience of supporting parents to access childcare funding
- Knowledge of local childcare providers and family support services
- Experience of working within the third sector

One Parent Families Scotland

Terms & conditions

Confirmation of appointment: Permanent contract. Confirmation of appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a 3-month probationary period, two references and a PVG check.

Salary: £29,600 - £34,042 (pro-rata for part-time hours)

Hours of work: 30 hours; fixed term to 31 March 2028.

Location: Edinburgh

Holidays: Annual leave entitlement is 25 days and 12 Public holidays (pro rata)

Pension: You will be auto enrolled in our pension scheme with a 3% contribution from you and 7% contribution from OPFS.

Training and support and supervision: You will receive induction training and frequent support in the first three months. Thereafter you will receive monthly individual support and supervision and annual appraisals. Regular team meetings will be held, and staff have access to internal and external training.

Equal opportunities and family friendly employment: OPFS aims to be an equal opportunity and family friendly employer. OPFS has Investors in People Gold status.

Further information

The closing date for applications is Friday 20th November at 11:59pm.

If you need to make an application in an alternative format on the basis of a disability or long-term health condition please email jobs@opfs.org.uk for guidance.

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