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Registered Charity No. 1100722

Job Description: Development & Projects Officer

Location:	Countywide; Bedfordshire, administrative base at Head Office, Bedford. Home working arrangements essential due to Covid restrictions
Salary:	£18,735 - £25,796
Hours:	37.5 hours per week
Accountable to:	Board of Trustees
Line Manager:	Service Manager
Reporting staff:	Assistant Development Officers, Senior Team Leaders, Team Leaders, Support Workers and Volunteers

Job Summary:

The post holder will facilitate and develop services for autistic children and young people and their families across Bedfordshire. The post involves a significant level of staff / volunteer recruitment and management in order to deliver services.

The post also requires a considerable amount of organisational skills and multi-tasking to ensure that the services run smoothly and are clearly communicated to our current and prospective members.

The Development & Projects Officer will work as part of a team, which provides and continues to development a range of services countywide in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough.

MAIN TASKS:

1. To oversee and organize the social activity programs for children and young people. We currently run the following projects: -

- Summer Activity Schemes in Bedford and Luton
- Loads of Autistic Fun (L.O.A.F) – 4 Family activity groups held at Bedford, Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard and Luton on Saturdays.
- Wanted Fun Groups – 4 youth groups held in Bedford, Leighton Buzzard, Luton and Biggleswade.
- Additional Services – additional social & leisure opportunities across the county
- Skills 4 Success – A social skills programme for 16-19 year olds

In order to run these groups and activities the post holder will need to:-

- **Recruit** staff and volunteers to run the schemes, following a process that includes conducting interviews, DBS checks and ensuring references and received.
- To meet with the LOAF, Wanted Fun and Summer Scheme leaders, to plan, develop and evaluate sessions. This includes ensuring that all registers and other paperwork are updated and available for each session, as well as supporting field staff through supervisions and regular meetings.
- Assist with the organisation of training for field staff. This may involve helping to deliver particular topic areas to staff, and also booking in outside agencies.
- Support the field staff out of hours, where appropriate, on a needs-led basis
- To visit groups and services, where appropriate. Some evenings and weekends will be required across the year.

- Book activities and venues, confirming dates/times with staff and families. This includes summer schemes, term-time groups and additional services.
- Update the site files for each programme, to ensure that we are adhering to Ofsted and Autism Bedfordshire good practice guidelines.
- Line manage the deliver of summer scheme, this will be the first three weeks of the summer holidays
- Conduct risk assessments to ensure safety within services run
- Undertake relevant Safeguarding training to assist the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Identify changes or needs within existing service and feedback to the Children's Services Manager.
- Work closely with the Finance Dept to: - ensure that staff payments and volunteer expenses are efficiently handled; that family payments are made for the services.
- Attend the schemes to support the Team Leaders and ensure that all is working well.
- Work closely with the Funding Team and Children's Services Manager to evaluate and review the programmes – to provide up to date information on services and compile reports. In addition, change and improve the way we provide services based on these evaluations.
- Form positive relationships with other wider Autism Bedfordshire teams to ensure services are run successfully through good communication.

2. To take helpline calls. (We receive on average 50 calls a month on a wide range of issues such as diagnosis, education and behaviour difficulties), this role includes:-

- Listening to the caller, providing information and signposting.
- Record all helpline correspondence accurately for monitoring and evaluating.
- Ensuring that any new information for parents is recorded and entered onto the helpline database, Website and Newsletters.
- Liaising with other agencies and practitioner to help support the family.
- With consent from the families, feeding back to the statutory authorities about the needs of the families we support.

3. To provide up to date information for our Newsletters, Website and Social Media. Grapevine is the Children's Services e-newsletter which is managed within the team and shares information on local services. Pathway is the Autism Bedfordshire newsletter which is compiled and edited by the Administrator. All office staff provide information for this newsletter.

4. To organize events for parents/carers and associated professionals. We provide several training events each year, to inform and update parents/carers on a variety of topics. The post holder would be required to book and arrange venues, speakers, advertise the event and be present on the day to ensure the smooth running of the event.

5. To deliver parent training and support. The post holder would provide information and guidance for the parents as appropriate and support the delivery of wider training where appropriate.

6. To regularly attend training events to ensure up to date knowledge. This includes safeguarding, safer recruitment, paediatric first aid, autism-based topics and health & safety. The post holder will also need to share learning across the wider team.

7. To help deliver the Skills4Success programme. To be the lead in planning and delivering our Skills4Success courses to 16-19 year olds. Topics include Social Skills & Communication, Travel Training, Pre-employment & Volunteering, Money Management and Cooking Skills.

8. To liaise with other voluntary and statutory sector agencies. This may include:-

- Representing and championing the needs of autistic children & young people at statutory meetings.
- Referring cases from the helpline to other agencies.
- Networking and finding out what services are available for families in Bedfordshire.

9. Deliver presentations to support the Children's Service Manager to devise training programs and present them, where appropriate, for example for recruitment, training and professional presentations.

10. Person Centred Planning & Support To support with the development of this new initiative/project.

OTHER INFORMATION:

- All staff are required to respect the confidentiality of all matters that they may learn relating to their employment, other members of staff and to the general public.
- All staff are expected to adhere to the regulations regarding the Data Protection Act 2018.
- The duties of the post may be subject to variation from time to time. However, changes will only be made in consultation with the post holder.

SAFEGUARDING:

- Autism Bedfordshire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults in its care. The post holder is often required to be the named officer for groups they are overseeing and attend relevant training.
- To ensure that this is achieved we expect all employees to share this commitment and staff working with these vulnerable groups will be recruited and selected in line with safer recruitment policies and practises including the completion of an enhanced DBS check.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY:

- Autism Bedfordshire is an equal opportunities employer. The aims of the equal opportunities policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion or any disability nor disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Person Specification –Development & Projects Officer

Listed below are the requirements of the job in terms of what the candidate will need to offer to be able to perform the job in the first instance. The cross (X) indicates whether these requirements are essential or desirable.

Skills and Experience	Essential	Desirable
Excellent organisational skills and ability to keep records	X	
Excellent communication skills	X	
Good written and presentation skills	X	
Listening/Counselling skills and advocacy	X	
Ability to multi-task, including planning and prioritising	X	
Competent IT Skills	X	
Leadership and Management	X	
Commitment to Equal Opportunities	X	
Ability to work independently	X	
Self-Motivating	X	
Ability to cope under pressure	X	
Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to network	X	

Work Experience	Essential	Desirable
EYFS, Ofsted, CQC knowledge/Quality Control		X

Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Autism (across the spectrum)/SEN/Disability	X	
The role of the voluntary and Statutory sector		X

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Relevant qualification	X	
Management Qualification		X

Additional requirements	Essential	Desirable
Willingness to work flexible hours with agreed evenings/ weekend work and summer holidays	X	
Car owner/driver	X	
Willingness to undertake a DBS check	X	