Job Description

Job title	Policy and Public Affairs Officer (England, Wales, Scotland)
Accountable to	Head of Policy and Campaigns
Objectives	- To influence policy and help conduct campaigns to achieve The Fostering Network's policy and campaign priorities across the UK. - To research, analyse and gather evidence from the organisation's practice base and membership engagement to inform the development of policy and campaigns on foster care and children's social care and produce written outputs on these. - To ensure the organisation is kept up to date with policy and research developments affecting foster care and children's social care.
Hours per week	England – 36 hours Wales and Scotland – 21.6 hours a week
Location	Hybrid England - Hybrid with travel to London Office, SE1 2 days a week Wales – Hybrid with travel to Cardiff office once a week Scotland – Hybrid with occasional travel to Edinburgh, flexible (office in Glasgow)
Status	Permanent
Disclosure required?	No

Responsibilities and accountabilities

Policy and research

1. Help to consult on, research and develop policy positions that can influence UK policy and practice, are clear for our multiple audiences, and can be easily communicated through a variety of channels.

2. Carry out research, surveys and analysis of fostering services, foster carers and other stakeholders to ensure that The Fostering Network's policies and reports are evidence based and draft briefings, responses to government consultations and reports to achieve its campaign priorities.

Campaigns

3. Through close working with the relevant teams across the organisation, ensure the organisation's campaign priorities and policy positions are informed by its members, evidence from its practice base and its foster carer and/or children and young people's advisory boards.

4. Develop and engage with a network of campaigners who support and work with The Fostering Network to help achieve its campaign priorities.

5. Develop and maintain key relationships with stakeholders locally, nationally and regionally including officials and parliamentarians in the country of focus.

6. Work with the communications team to develop new, and review existing, web content, social media and other communications channels to engage supporters in our policy and campaigning activity.

Management

> None

Budget

> None

General statement

It is the nature of The Fostering Network that tasks and responsibilities are in many circumstances unpredictable and varied. All employees are therefore expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises and undertake tasks that are not specifically covered in their job description.

Person Specification

Our Values

As an organisation, we believe that we make a difference to foster care and our people values are expressed in the work that we do:

We are TRUSTED

We are TOGETHER

We are VITAL

Knowledge and Experience

Essential

1. Experience of policy development and preparing responses to external policy proposals and drafting reports and briefings

2. Experience of conducting research and analysis

3. Experience of campaigning, lobbying or parliamentary experience.

4. An understanding of how central and local government structures work, including devolved institutions and relevant legislative frameworks

5. An understanding of communications principles and channels, particularly knowledge of and experience of using digital and social media in influencing work

6. Experience of developing stakeholder relationships

Desirable

7. An understanding of issues affecting children in care or of current issues in foster care

8. Experience of managing and building a supporter base

9. Experience of lobbying policy makers in central or local government and of working to influence opinion formers

10. Experience of working to amend primary and/or secondary legislation or guidance

11. Experience of working with children and young people

Skills and Abilities

Essential

12. Good verbal and written communications skills, with the ability to communicate complex issues simply and effectively

13. Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to deal confidently with a range of people at all levels, both internally and externally

14. Analytical and numeracy skills, in order to extract and interpret useful information from survey data and other information sources

15. Excellent planning and organisational skills, ability to prioritise workload, deal with conflicting demands and meet tight deadlines

16. Ability to think creatively and to spot and maximise campaigning opportunities

17. Ability to work as part of a team

Desirable

18. Able to communicate in Welsh, both spoken and in writing (Wales post only)

Attitudes

Essential

19. Awareness of equalities issues and commitment to anti-discriminatory policies and practice

20. Prepared to work flexible hours

21. Prepared to travel within the UK on occasions and with adequate notice.

Additional Information
Pay and conditions of service

Band	The Fostering Network Band 5
Salary	£22,138 - £27,000 per annum (pro rata for Wales and Scotland post)
Annual Leave	25 Days plus five The Fostering Network days
Probationary period	Six calendar months.
Notice period	Six working weeks One week during probationary period.
Hours of work	36 per week England Post Only 21.6 per week Scotland and Wales
Pension	Optional. Money-purchase scheme and salary sacrifice option is available with AEGON: Employee contribution is 3% of gross annual salary Employer contribution is 5% of gross salary.
Season Ticket Loan	An interest free season ticket loan is available to all staff immediately.
Wellbeing	Mental Health First Aiders Employee Assistance Programme. This is a free, confidential counselling service to all staff, as well as a general advice service provided by BUPA
Trade Union	The Fostering Network recognises the trade union Unite and members of staff can join if they wish.