

JOB DESCRIPTION

We support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to achieve a meaningful and independent place in their community

Housing First for Youth is a new approach to supporting the most vulnerable young people often excluded from society. The approach places young people at the center of support to empower them to make decisions and changes as they feel ready to.

Housing First offers young people their own home and then gives them the intensive support needed to maintain their tenancies and move forward with their lives away from streets or hostels.

JOB TITLE:	Specialist Support Worker (Response and Safeguarding)
REPORTS TO:	Housing First Project Manager (Response and Safeguarding)
SALARY:	Points 23-26, £25,269 - £27,459 per annum.
ADDITIONAL BENEFITS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pension (auto enrolment) and Death in Service benefit of 2 x salary • Health Shield Benefit - provides access to a range of valuable cash benefits and services, such as dental and optical care, physiotherapy, scanning facilities and 24-hour counselling and Advice Line (opportunity to upgrade and add family). • Benenden Health – Private Health Care paid for by Simon Community which gives permanent employees access to 24/7 GP services, medical diagnostics, medical treatment, physiotherapy (option to add family and friends for an additional cost). • Holidays - 25 days per year – increasing by 1 additional day per year of service up to a max of 30 days. Increase is effective from the 1st April each year, once a full year of service has been completed. Additionally, 12 customary holidays (normally Bank and Public Holidays) at normal basic pay rate. • Bank & Public Holidays – paid at premium rates at time and a half and double time. • Additional Hours – paid at time and a quarter (Conditions apply). • Other Benefits – occupational sick pay, enhanced maternity/paternity leave entitlement, career breaks (subject to 2 years' continuous service). • Training – thorough accredited induction training and continued access to ongoing personal development.
DEPARTMENT:	Housing First for Youth Homelessness Services
LOCATION:	Greater Belfast Area: working across a range of communities to support young people You may also be required to work at other sites (temporarily or permanently) due to reasonable operational requirements.
HOURS OF WORK:	Rotational shift pattern (average 35 hours per week) including the requirement to work evenings, weekends and waking nights. Reasonable hours outside of this may be required to fulfil the duties of this position.
ORGANISATION VALUES:	Our values are fundamental to how we work with clients and each other. We are driven by our values of being non-judgmental, existing to support our clients and meet their needs, being trustworthy and focused on ending homelessness and being dedicated to the people we support.

JOB PURPOSE:	<p>This is an exciting and dynamic service, providing bespoke interventions to a small group of six to eight Looked After Children aged 16-21 years, to enable them to live in safety and stability, and have a place to call home.</p> <p>The Specialist Support Worker will be responsible for delivering direct support to a small group of young people with complex needs. The young people will live in the community and the HFFY service will provide 24/7 support to ensure their safety, promote their stability, and build resilience to enable them to manage their tenancy.</p> <p>Core to this role is providing a holistic team approach which in turn ensures effective and consistent support to young people. This holistic strength-based approach is undertaken in partnership with Social Services and Mental Health Professionals to ensure risk is mitigated and appropriate interventions are delivered.</p> <p>The support interventions that are required are flexible and diverse. These may include supporting young people: during episodes of poor mental health; whilst under the influence of substances or alcohol; with concerns regarding sexual exploitation; to build, maintain and feel safe in their home; to attend college or a work placement; to have fun and carry out activities.</p>
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MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the needs of young people are effectively met – promoting independence through support, development, and progression. • Establish supportive relationships with young people and handle problematic and difficult situations in an appropriate and sensitive manner, providing support and advice when needed. • Monitor young people’s physical/mental health and liaise with specialist services as appropriate • Develop focused outcome-based support plans and risk management plans and monitor delivery. • Address issues and challenges because of social isolation and exclusion to facilitate young people’s involvement in the community • Liaise with external agencies where appropriate, to ensure co-ordination and integration of services, and maximise opportunities. • Help support young people to make healthy relationships within the community, encouraging education, work readiness, social, sporting and culturally specific interactions and engagements • Play and active role in staff meetings with the sharing of issues/concerns which may impinge on the smooth running of the service.
Personalised Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivate young people to identify and work towards individual goals consistent with sustaining their independence and wellbeing. • Hold regular meetings with young people primarily in the community; discussing their needs and working with them to identify options. • Support young people in their physical and mental health, alcohol and drug issues and emotional health whilst liaising with specialist services as appropriate. • Where appropriate support and build on contact with family and significant others in the young person’s life.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address issues of social isolation and exclusion, facilitating young people's involvement and integration into the community. • Advise young people on benefit entitlements and ensure that their income from benefits is maximised. • Assist young people in acquiring the necessary skills to effectively live independently and provide advice on training, employment, and related issues. • Support young people in developing resilience, confidence and autonomy in taking a lead in representing themselves, advocating on their behalf where appropriate. • Where required, through the service, act as an advocate, providing support to and on behalf of the young people; attend appeals or tribunals; liaise with GPs, other healthcare professionals, statutory and voluntary agencies. • Assist young people in accessing specialist help, coordinating the involvement of external support agencies as appropriate. • Support and accompany young people to interviews and viewings with housing providers where necessary.
Referral & Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an assessment of the young person's needs and risk to ascertain intervention level required. • Ensure the referral and Induction process for young people is undertaken in accordance with Simon Community N.I. procedures and any Service Level Agreement, where appropriate. • Support and mentor young people in preparation for taking on their tenancy and as they grow into independent living.
Tenancy Sustainment and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing young people with practical support to make their homes habitable, e.g. accessing personal budgets, furniture projects and grants, setting up utilities, supporting young people to deal with minor repairs and maintenance and to take responsibility for their home. • Ensure that the young people understand and comply with the terms of their tenancy. Provide appropriate support where they do not (e.g. neighbour disputes) – in conjunction with housing officers, or other professionals as appropriate. • Support the young people to manage their rent payments, and to keep their properties safe and well-maintained; supporting young people to report repairs where needed. • Ensure the young person is involved in and consulted on all aspects of their support where possible, encouraging them to. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ manage their domestic, personal, and financial resources and develop independent living skills. ○ make full use of available services and information and receive the maximum appropriate benefits through liaison with the Social Security Agency, Housing Benefit Branch, NIHE. ○ maintain or return to independent living. • Support young people through presenting issues or concerns including drug and alcohol misuse, mental health, violence, issues of mistrust, relationship building and personal development.

Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure databases, including OSKA, are kept up to date with accurate and reliable data in line with legal obligations. • Maintain confidentiality of information in line with organisational, GDPR, Data Protection and legislative requirements.
Ensure Health, Safety and Good House Keeping Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always contribute to the physical cleanliness and general condition of facilities. • Always adhere to the Simon Community N.I. health and safety policy. • Record and report any defects and accidents in the property. • Act as deputy fire warden and/or first aider if designated. • Support health and safety risk assessments as appropriate and the implementation of any agreed actions. • Ensure awareness and adherence to the lone working policy.
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to Simon Communities policies and procedures at all times. • Understand and commit to Simon Community's Equal Opportunity Policy • Carry out all duties in accordance with Simon Community quality procedures. • Willingness to work flexibly in response to changing organisational requirements. • Maintain professional boundaries at all times and observe Simon Community's Code of Conduct for employees • Attend supervision, training and meetings as and when required • Work proactively as part of a team
Participation in the Shift System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the shift rota, including nights and weekends, to ensure the provision of 24-hour support.
Other Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out all other reasonable duties commensurate with the role as may be required.

Please note that this job description provides an indication of the roles and responsibilities and is not an exclusive list of the duties that the postholder may be asked to undertake.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

<p>ESSENTIAL CRITERIA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of supporting Looked After Children or homeless and/or vulnerable adults to identify personal goals and meet person-centered targets while working through a process of change. • Experience of working within a fast moving and challenging working environment in the areas of mental health, care for young people, alcohol and drug use, independent living support. • Experience of using a high level of communication skills, both verbally and in writing, using Microsoft Office applications. • Full current driving licence or, if a disability prevents driving, an alternative means of transport to enable the duties of the post to be carried out in full. • NISCC Registered (or willing to become registered if appointed) and willing to be subject to Access NI checks. (Successful applicants must commence NISCC registration process prior to employment).
<p>DESIRABLE CRITERIA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months experience of supporting young people (under 25) who have experienced any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Care System - Justice System - Prison - Institutional Care - Supported Accommodation
<p>KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to work with a group of vulnerable young people delivering 24-hour intensive support service. • The ability to key work a group of young people, coordinating support packages and proactively following up with others to ensure that all support is provided. • The ability to contribute within a team environment • An understanding of the importance of dignity and respect for others • A willingness to support, protect and empower people • A willingness to learn, develop and self-reflect • A commitment to supporting clients in a non-judgmental manner • A commitment to Harm Minimisation approaches to supporting young people • Professional integrity