

# Employers For Childcare

## Job Description

<b>Job Title:</b>	Policy and Research Officer
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Head of Charity Services
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Salary:</b>	£30,984 - £32,798 (NJC Scale SO2)
<b>Contracted hours:</b>	37.5 per week
<b>Contract type:</b>	Permanent

### Main Responsibilities

Together with colleagues you will help to drive Employers For Childcare's policy and influencing work to achieve our vision - that parents with dependent children can get into, and stay in, work. This will involve:

- preparing materials that support our policy, campaigning, influencing and engagement activity
- developing, producing and reporting on key pieces of research to inform Employers For Childcare's campaigning work
- engaging with key stakeholders such as elected representatives, parents, childcare providers and employers
- supporting in the delivery of effective communications in relation to key developments impacting on working parents, childcare providers and the economy.

### Specific Duties

#### **Policy**

- Keep up to date with key developments on relevant policy, social and economic issues – particularly in relation to childcare, early education, the benefits system and parental employment - and provide information and analysis to the wider team.
- Monitor proceedings in the Northern Ireland Assembly and at Westminster, and produce briefings as required for internal and external audiences, including MPs, MLAs, peers and their stakeholders.
- Provide effective secretariat duties for the All Party Group on Early Education and Childcare
- Attend other relevant All Party Group meetings and monitor proceedings at Stormont Committees.
- Using evidence, develop responses to policy development and external consultations as relevant to the achievement of Employers For Childcare's vision.
- Support the establishment of clear policy positions on key issues and maintain an up-to-date, effective and engaging organisational manifesto for election periods.

## **Research**

- Work with the Head of Charity Services to scope, design and conduct policy-relevant research that advances our understanding of issues aligned to the vision of Employers For Childcare.
- Prepare research materials including questionnaires, briefings and communications to ensure that research is conducted to a high standard, using appropriate methodologies.
- Analyse and translate research findings into strategic outcomes, policy documents and presentations for oral briefings.
- Produce stakeholder appropriate reports for publication and dissemination.
- Deliver presentations on research findings at events and conferences.
- Respond to external and internal research enquiries from colleagues, government departments, academics and members of the public.
- Keep up to date with relevant research that is published globally, and share summaries with colleagues.
- Use research to support in the identification of funding opportunities of relevance to the charity, and in drafting applications.

## **Public affairs**

- Deliver public affairs activity and stakeholder engagement to support the organisation's influencing priorities and maintain strong networks and partnerships.
- Track and log stakeholder contact including the management of political stakeholders.
- Attend, and support others to attend, meetings and events representing the organisation, including developing high-quality briefings.
- Support the delivery of a strong, effective social media presence, aligned with the organisation's campaigning, influencing and engagement activity, including planned posts, responding to external developments and live activity from events.
- Write a range of high quality written and digital materials including website articles, and briefings, and input to press releases designed to influence the policy and practice of key stakeholders.
- Collate and summarise press coverage of topical issues and prepare briefings for colleagues.
- Work with colleagues to gather and record case studies for use in campaigning and communications.

## **Self and Organisational Development**

- Participate actively in internal meetings to update and share information with colleagues, and to learn from them in turn.
- Participate in staff training and development activities as required to ensure an in-depth knowledge of organisational services, operating systems, processes and procedures.
- Take ownership of own training and development by putting forward personal training needs, undertake such training as is required to meet these needs and fully utilise all training and support materials which are available.
- Work flexibly and across teams and organisational functions as required.
- Participate in external promotional events at times and venues required including occasional evenings and weekends, and travel as required to meet the needs of the organisation.
- Demonstrate a calm, controlled, pleasant and warm manner with all clients and colleagues, alongside a flexible and cooperative approach, treating stakeholders, clients and colleagues with courtesy and respect at all times.

- Undertake any other reasonable duties appropriate to the achievement of the organisation’s goals and targets.

**Information Security**

- Comply with the organisation’s Security & Confidentiality policy at all times, ensuring the highest levels of information security, data protection and confidentiality.

**This job description is neither exhaustive nor exclusive and may be reviewed depending upon operational requirements and staffing levels.**

**Personnel Specification**

The Personnel Specification shows essential skills, abilities knowledge and/or qualifications required to be able to carry out the duties of this post. Please therefore address, in completing the application form, each criterion listed in the specification, drawing upon all of your experience, whether at work or on a voluntary basis.

**Job Title: Policy and Research Officer**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Essential Criteria</b>
Qualifications and Experience	<p><b>Qualifications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third level qualification in a relevant discipline</li> </ul> <p><b>Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of two years work experience in a policy, research and/or public affairs role, to include recent relevant and proven experience of planning and undertaking social research and/or policy analysis.</li> <li>• Engaging effectively in national or local level influencing, campaigning and/or advocacy, and with a wide range of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Undertaking policy analysis and horizon-scanning, and analysing complex information such as research, data, policy and legislation to produce clear written and verbal briefings or communications for internal and external audiences.</li> <li>• Using social media to disseminate information that is tailored to the relevant audience.</li> </ul>

Factor	Essential Criteria
Skills and Aptitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of social science research methods and tools.</li> <li>• Ability to confidently engage and build constructive working relationships with colleagues and a wide range of external stakeholders at all levels and across all sections of the private, public, political, community and voluntary sectors.</li> <li>• Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to read, review, understand and present complex information clearly and succinctly in plain English to a range of audiences, and to put forward clear, persuasive arguments.</li> <li>• Capacity to analyse and interpret complex policy documents, briefs and arguments, and debates.</li> <li>• Excellent presentation skills and the ability to adjust the format, style and content of communications to suit requirements.</li> <li>• Energy, commitment and enthusiasm to achieve results of the highest standard, courage to succeed and tenacity to achieve with excellence.</li> <li>• Ability to organise workload to achieve set objectives where there may be conflicting demands and priorities.</li> <li>• Good problem-solving ability and ability to work both collaboratively and on own initiative whilst demonstrating the determination to see jobs through to satisfactory resolution.</li> <li>• Computer literate to include extensive use of internet, email, word processing, spreadsheets, PowerPoint, desktop publishing and databases.</li> </ul>
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A knowledge and understanding of issues facing working parents, families with dependent children and employers in Northern Ireland.</li> <li>• A solid understanding of the Northern Ireland political, economic and social contexts.</li> </ul>
Special Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work flexible, unsocial hours at times and to travel throughout Northern Ireland, UK and elsewhere at times demanded by the job.</li> <li>• You must be resident in the UK and eligible to work.</li> <li>• This post is subject to a basic criminal record disclosure check. This will be applied for through AccessNI.</li> </ul>