

JOB DESCRIPTION: Communities for Children: Early Years and Children Specialist

Job Title:	Early Years and Children Specialist
Hours:	28 hours per week
Reports to:	Communities for Children Programme Manager
Salary Banding:	C
Location:	Wishaw, North Lanarkshire

Job context

Corra Foundation exists to make a difference to the lives of people and communities. It works with others to encourage positive change, opportunity, fairness and growth of aspirations which improve lives. Corra wants to see a society in which people create positive change and enjoy fulfilling lives.

In 2020 Corra launched a ten-year strategy. It is long term because making a difference on the big challenges will take time. At its heart is the strong belief that when people find their voice, they unlock the power to make change happen.

Since 2015, People in Place has been working alongside local people and partners across Scotland with a focus on collaboration, co-production and community leadership. The design and delivery of long-term programmes like Getting Alongside Communities, Every One Every Day and a Community Leadership Collective has helped Corra to develop extensive skills, expertise, learning and resources to support place-based work and participatory approaches.

We are delighted to be partnering with Children in Need to deliver the new Communities for Children programme in Wishaw.

Communities for Children is a £15 million funding programme focused on reducing the impact of child poverty across the UK, and where possible, tackling the root causes. In partnership with BBC Children in Need, City Bridge Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund and Pears Foundation, the programme will

support ten areas with high levels of child poverty, providing long-term funding to help local communities design and deliver their own solutions. By placing power and resources directly in the hands of communities, the programme aims to create lasting change for children and families facing the toughest challenges.

Communities for Children will build strong local partnerships, support community leadership and amplify the voices of children and young people - particularly those who are too often left unheard. Through this approach, the programme aims to challenge stigma around child poverty, re-design ineffective systems and share learning to benefit communities across the UK.

We expect that the programme will run over a 5-year period comprising:

- An initial 12-month Discovery Phase
- A further 4-year Delivery Phase following the test-learn-adapt approach at the core of the Communities for Children programme.

Job purpose

The Early Years and Children specialist will be instrumental in supporting the ideas and experience of children and young people to inform all aspects of the Communities for Children programme.

They will support the development of ideas and activities and directly deliver a range of participatory approaches. They will facilitate meaningful participation in the programme by children and young people, ensuring that their views support programme design and decision making processes.. This could include, but is not limited to Participatory budgeting; Community-led grantmaking; public service design; play and place-based approaches.

Working closely with Communities for Children, other Place Team and Corra colleagues, they will be required to act autonomously, using problem solving, within provided general guidelines.

The jobholder will report to the Programme Manager, Communities for Children.

As with other Corra staff, there will be the requirement to be flexible and to provide support for other aspects of Corra business as and when required.

Structure

This role sits within Corra's People in Place team. An organogram of Corra's structure is available.

Main activities and responsibilities

RESEARCH

- Use public data and partner knowledge (including third and public sector children and young people's services) to build a picture of the local area.
- Work with children and young people to build a picture of their local community and map this against public and partner data.
- Identify and map the places, spaces and ideas that matter to children and young people.
- Develop an understanding of local plans and national strategies that relate to children and young people and the programme.

ENGAGEMENT

- Use a variety of creative and age-appropriate methods to engage with children and young people in the community, including those considered 'seldom heard'.
- Work with children and young people to actively encourage participation, engagement and action, nurturing their ideas and supporting them to happen.
- Mindfully and actively transfer skills and knowledge to the children and families, supporting people to develop links and networks whilst building capacity and confidence.
- Develop strong collaborative relationships with a range of cross-sector partners working with children and young people including community groups, charities, children and family teams, health and education.
- Support community use of an Ideas into Action budget to enable the development and delivery of new ideas and activities.
- Work with the Programme Manager and the rest of the Communities for Children team to ensure policies are adhered to, with consideration to any relevant legislative requirements, in particular safeguarding, where appropriate.

LEARNING AND EVALUATION

- Use a variety of methods, including play-based learning, to engage children and young people in evaluation processes.
- Use a variety of methods to capture and share learning including self-reflection, reports, blogs, community stories and case studies.

- Ensure the learning and practice from Wishaw informs and responds to programme-wide learning.
- As required contribute to the wider Communities for Children team, their learning partner, and other Communities for Children areas to support the programme-wide evaluation and learning.

Corra team

Participate fully as a member of Corra's team, demonstrating commitment to the organisation's values, attending staff meetings, support and supervision sessions and training as required. If required, support the work and promotion of any other area of Corra's business in fulfilling its strategic aims.

Relationships

The jobholder will work closely with the Communities for Children and other Place Team staff, wider Corra colleagues and partners. They will also develop trusting relationships with children, young people and their families.

Key skills

- Experience of direct work alongside children and young people and supporting their ideas, imagination and voices to be heard.
- Strong track record of using co-design and age-appropriate creative engagement methods to develop programmes, processes and events.
- Excellent relationship building, listening and facilitation skills in online and in-person settings.
- Strong project and time management skills.
- Experience of building effective, cross-sector, partnerships involving children and young people
- Experience of using participatory approaches and place-based working.
- Understanding of policy and practice relating to children, young people and families.
- Experience of working alongside local communities and of managing community groups or projects.
- Be enthusiastic, self-motivated and have the ability to work autonomously and as part of a team.
- Understanding of creative evaluation and monitoring principles and approaches including play-based learning and storytelling.

Working conditions

This role will be based in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire with travel required across Scotland (mostly Glasgow and Edinburgh) and a flexible approach to hybrid working. There may be occasional travel to other parts of the UK where Communities for Children programmes are being delivered.

The jobholder is line managed by the Communities for Children Programme Manager. Regular support and supervision meetings as well as bi-annual appraisal meetings will take place.

Corra is committed to its staff, including through a focus on learning and development. Corra is a Scottish Living Wage employer and is happy to consider flexible working.