



The Secret Garden Outdoor Nursery

CARE MANAGER / LEAD PRACTITIONER ROLE PROFILE

Job Title	Care Manager / Lead Practitioner
Reports to	Directors
Contract	Permanent, 5 days per week - 40 hours (but may be the potential for some flexibility - please ask). 6 month probationary period
Salary	£33,280 - £34,500
Location	Letham woods, Fife, KY15 7RS
Closing date	Friday 21st June 2024
Interview dates	Week commencing 1 st July 2024
Start date	August 2024

About the Nursery:

The Secret Garden is a pioneering and highly regarded Outdoor Nursery. One of the first fully outdoor nurseries in the UK, it has been operating as an outdoor nursery since 2008 and has been visited by students and educators from all over the world, wanting to learn more about its ethos and practices. The Secret Garden is based in a very special woodland in Letham, Fife. It is a not-for-profit organisation with a strongly embedded ethos and has a fantastic team of around 20 staff and 4 volunteer directors.

The Role:

The Secret Garden is seeking a Care Manager / Lead Practitioner to lead our exceptional staff team and manage the general running of the nursery. This is a role with many diverse aspects. Time will be split between working in the woods with children and staff (minimum of 1 regular day a week plus covering additional days as needed), and working from an office space onsite (up to 3 days a week), and will include attending / leading a weekly staff meeting on Friday afternoons. There may be some flexibility within the working hours - please feel free to ask.

The role demands superb organisation and communication skills, as well as a great capacity for multi-tasking, staying calm under pressure, and responding to unexpected circumstances with cheerfulness, flexibility and creativity. A passion for nature and early years education and an openness to the Secret Garden ethos are essential.

The successful candidate will be committed to our Secret Garden values of Connection, Community, Curiosity and Integrity, and to carrying forward work on diversity and inclusion within the Nursery in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Tasks and Responsibilities:

Lead & manage the Nursery in line with the Secret Garden ethos and values	Qualified to SCQF level 7 (practitioner qualification) - <i>essential</i> Management experience <u>and/or</u> Qualified to SCQF level 9 (management qualification) - <i>essential</i> Knowledge of Hand in Hand parenting - <i>desirable</i> Nature connection experience - <i>desirable</i>
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<p>Work regular full days (at least one full regular day a week plus additional cover) with the children in the woods in all weathers, leading and mentoring staff by example. <i>Note: A full day in the woods with children starts at 8.15am and finishes at 5.15pm.</i></p> <p>Be on the emergency cover rota 3 days a week - available to work a full day outdoors (instead of in the office) at short notice if required.</p>	<p>Experience of working with Early Years children outdoors – <i>essential</i></p> <p>Physical capacity and enthusiasm for working outdoors in all weathers - <i>essential</i></p> <p>Inner resilience and the capacity to stay cheerful and motivated in challenging conditions, as well as to support children and staff with developing their resilience – <i>essential</i></p> <p>A flexible, curious, and creative response to challenges – <i>essential</i></p>
<p>Ensure high standards and qualities are maintained throughout the Nursery, that policies and procedures are kept up-to-date and are being fully embedded in practice. Remain abreast of current developments in childcare and education policies and practices.</p>	<p>Excellent organisation skills and a general aptitude for continuous learning for self and staff team – <i>Essential</i></p>
<p>Report regularly to the Director team providing any documentation/reports they may require</p>	<p>Excellent interpersonal and communication skills – <i>Essential</i></p>

<p>Ongoing preparation for and facilitation of Care Inspectorate visits/inspections and being ready to implement any required recommendations. Oversee relationship with Care Inspectorate and all necessary documentation.</p>	<p>Good knowledge of Care Inspectorate frameworks – <i>desirable</i></p>
<p>Liaise with partners in the Local Authority, preparing annual evaluation documentation and nursery improvement plans</p>	<p>Experience of leading the development and delivery of strategic documents – <i>desirable</i></p>
<p>Lead the staff team to deliver the Nursery's Nature as Teacher curriculum in line with best practice guidance for the sector.</p>	<p>Willingness to learn about and experience the Secret Garden curriculum - <i>essential</i></p> <p>Leadership and delegation skills – <i>essential</i></p>
<p>Leading role in human resources, recruitment process, staff training, development requirements and mentoring.</p>	<p>Experience of delivering training and/or mentoring; HR experience - <i>desirable</i></p>
<p>Establish meaningful relationships with parents/carers and staff/students/volunteers to ensure high quality early learning experiences for every child</p>	<p>Excellent communication and people skills, team player and firmly positive outlook in pursuit of challenging objectives – <i>essential</i></p>
<p>Conduct / oversee regular risk assessments and site assessments to ensure the woodland remains a safe and enriching environment for the children</p>	<p>Experience conducting and creating site specific risk assessments – <i>desirable</i></p>

<p>Building connection with the wider community around the nursery including the local village community</p>	<p>Experience organising and hosting community events – <i>desirable</i> Collaborative and creative approach to problem solving – <i>essential</i></p>
<p>Oversee enrolment processes - including the fair allocation of spaces. Support general Nursery administration</p>	<p>A fair, honest & open way of working with excellent listening skills - <i>essential</i></p>
<p>Marketing and managing the online presence of the Nursery.</p>	<p>Experience of online marketing platforms and strategies – <i>desirable</i></p>
<p>To take responsibility for the effective business management of the Nursery, ensuring record keeping is timely, well-organised and accurate. Manage nursery budgets and oversee all financial projects.</p> <p>Work with the Directors and Administrative Manager to ensure the Nursery's sustainable operational and financial performance.</p>	<p>Management qualification <u>and/or</u> experience – <i>essential</i></p> <p>Experience managing budgets - <i>essential</i></p> <p>knowledge of relevant technologies including but not limited to, Microsoft Office applications – <i>essential</i></p>
<p>Child Protection Lead</p>	<p>Relevant Child Protection training – <i>desirable</i></p>
<p>Other desirable qualities:</p>	<p>Registered with PVG and SSSC (or equivalent)</p> <p>First Aid qualification</p>

	Training and/or experience in equality and diversity issues.
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