SÓLÁS AUTISM AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME COORDINATOR – Job Description

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| **Job Title**: | Autism and Social Communications Programme Coordinator |
| **Hours:** | 37.5 hours per week. There will be occasional evening and weekend work within this post. The post works on a Time off in Lieu (TOIL) system. It is expected that the post-holder will work flexibly to meet business requirements and cover leave/absence within the Autism and Social Communications Programme.  Monday to Friday 9.30am to 5.30pm (with half hour lunch break). |
| **Base:** | Sólás Office: 165-169 Donegall Pass, Belfast, BT7 1DT |
| **Responsible to:** | Sólás Director |
| **Responsible for:** | The implementation and development of the Sólás Autism and Social Development Programmes in line with good practice and exceeding minimum standards for childcare provision.  The Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing this service to children with autism and their families. The postholder will be responsible for managing staff, the appropriate and best practice inclusion of volunteers in the Programme, adherence to required standards, networking and developing partnerships in the local community and statutory sector, developing a relationship with colleges to accommodate student placements. He/she will also be required to work alongside the Sólás Director and other Sólás Programme Coordinators to ensure that the Autism and Social Development Programmes are financially viable and contribute effectively to the wider Sólás organisational objectives. |

**Salary: £22,937**

**Role Summary:-**

The Autism and Social Development Programmes in Sólás are for children with autism and younger children displaying autistic tendencies who may yet not have an official diagnosis. The programme includes: an afterschools programme running Monday to Friday during term time, a term time Saturday morning club, a summer scheme programme, a family support programme and an early intervention programme (starting in September 2016), The Autism and Social Development Programme is closely connected with the Sólás Champ Youth Programme which currently offers support to young people with special needs aged 13 to 17 years.

The Coordinator will be responsible for the overall implementation, development and sustainability of the Autism and Social Communication Programme with a focus on ensuring adherence to very high quality services and outcomes; compliance with all relevant statutory service standards; quality improvement; overseeing staff and volunteers; dealing with the statutory services involved in children’s care, and the effective management and development of staff/ volunteers. The Coordinator will also be responsible for building strong relationships with parents, and ensuring that the Autism and Social Development Programme has a noticeable presence within Sólás, the wider community and the networks and partnerships serving children with autism and their families in the Greater Belfast area.

**Key Responsibilities:**

Ensure the smooth running of the Autism and Social Development Programmes so as to meet the needs of the children, families, community and wider Sólás objectives.

Manage and supervise the staff and volunteers to deliver the Programmes in line with legal, statutory and organisational requirements ensuring that the Programmes exceed good practice recommendations.

Manage operational activities, relevant to the efficient and effective delivery of Autism and Social Development Programmes.

Respond to all referrals to the Autism and Social Development Programmes ensuring suitability of need and appropriate placement of children and staff to the various programmes.

Work closely with colleagues within Sólás as well as members of relevant multidisciplinary teams/networks and other professionals to ensure a comprehensive and seamless support service for children with autism or showing autistic tendencies and their families.

To work as an integral member of a team made up of all Sólás Programme Coordinators (from the various Sólás programmes), ensuring the contribution of the Autism and Social Development Programmes to the wider organisational objectives.

Ensure the administrative requirements of the Autism and Social Development Programmes are met appropriately and effectively.

Ensure the regular monitoring and review of the Autism and Social Development Programmes maintaining appropriate recordings of such and implementing any identified improvements to the Programmes.

Ensure that the Autism and Social Development Programmes adhere to and contribute to procedures and practices within Sólás.

Liaise with local partners to advocate for children with additional needs, in particular social communication needs, and their families within their local community and the wider Northern Ireland community.

Work directly with the parents and immediate family members of the children accessing the Autism and Social Development Programmes.

Ensure that the Autism and Social Development Programmes are contributing to the financial sustainability of Sólás.

To promote the work of the Autism and Social Development Programmes and the other Sólás Programmes at all opportunities

Ensure the Autism and Social Development Programmes in Sólás maintain absolute integrity and confidentiality in relation to personal issues and care of children with additional needs, their parents/ carers and their immediate family networks.

**Personal Responsibilities:**

To adopt a flexible approach to working hours in order to deliver flexible support and care and to support the best interests of the children in our care.

Participate in appropriate training as directed by Sólás and highlight own training needs.

**Organisational Responsibilities:**

Adopt a proactive approach in promoting Sólás and activities relating to the programmes.

Work as an integral member of the Sólás staff team including contribution towards initiatives designed to further the work of Sólás such as the quarterly newsletter, volunteer week activities, Family Fun Day etc.

Ensure that the Autism and Social Development Programme team work as an integral member of the Sólás staff team including contribution towards initiatives designed to further the work of Sólás such as the quarterly newsletter, volunteer week activities, Family Fun Day etc.

Any other duties deemed necessary by the management of Sólás

**N.B. This job description is not definitive or restrictive and may be modified to meet the changing needs of Sólás.**

SÓLÁS ASD CLUB SUPERVISOR - PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

Qualifications:

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| NVQ Level 5 in Health and Social Care or- Third Level Education in relevant discipline such as Education, Psychology, Social Work, with commitment to complete NVQ level 5 in Playwork | √ |  |
| A suitable qualification for working with children special needs | √ |  |
| A Masters in ASD or other relevant qualification in Autism Spectrum Disorder |  | √ |
| Paediatric First Aid Training Completed within the past 3 years. |  | √ |
| Makaton Training |  | √ |
| Designated Child Protection Officer Training Completed within the last 3 years |  | √ |

Experience:

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| At least 2 years experience of working directly with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder | √ |  |
|  |  |  |
| Experience of working with families and social workers involved in the care of children with autism or referring children with autism to services |  | √ |
| At least 2 years experience of supervising staff and volunteers | √ |  |
|  |  |  |
| Experience of overseeing the implementation of the HSC Trust Childcare Standards | √ |  |
| At least one years experience of working within a set budget  Experience of completing funding applications | √ | √ |
| Experience of contributing to policy development and implementation |  | √ |
| Experience of working as part of a team | √ |  |

Knowledge:

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Knowledge and Understanding of the current HSC Trust Childcare Standards | √ |  |
| Knowledge of Health & Safety and Safeguarding Procedures in Registered Childcare settings | √ |  |
| Awareness and Commitment to Section 75 and NI Equality Legislation |  | √ |
| Understanding of the issues for voluntary groups in delivering services for children with Special Needs | √ |  |

Skills:

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| The ability to Communicate Effectively, both orally and in writing.  Excellent listening skills | √  √ |  |
| Good personal Organisation, time management and ICT skills | √ |  |
| Ability to work under own initiative as well as take instruction from senior management | √ |  |
| Ability to Monitor outputs, and outcomes, evaluate projects and report results | √ |  |