**South Yorkshire Chaplaincy & Listening Service**

**Children’s Listener**

**24 hours per week across 4 days between 9am-3pm, term-time only**

**FTE role Salary: £24,570 pro-rata; 3% contribution to auto-enrolment pension scheme; pro-rata 25 days annual leave + bank holidays**

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| **Organisation** | South Yorkshire Chaplaincy and Listening Service |
| **Website** | [www.sycls.co.uk](http://www.sycls.co.uk) |
| **Address** | Alpha House  10 Carver Street  Sheffield, S1 4FS |
| **Organisation Background Information** | We are a small, rapidly expanding, charity (CIO 1174021) whose stated objective is ‘the preservation and protection of good physical and mental health through the provision of Listening and Chaplaincy Services and confidential Pastoral Care and advice for individuals both inside and outside the workplace throughout South Yorkshire.” At our core is the Christian ethos to care holistically for people and our services provide either emotional, mental health and/or spiritual support as a one-off or on a continuing basis. Essentially, we are an independent, confidential service supporting people through the challenges of life.  We partner with organisations to support them in providing a culture and environment of holistic well-being for the people within their care; and empower local volunteers to engage with those facing life’s challenges. This means our (mostly volunteer) Listeners and Chaplains operate within a wide range of contexts: Primary and Secondary Care, Businesses, Engineering, Schools, Sports Clubs, Fire Service, working with Patients and their Families, Staff, Students, Local community. We work with organisations on an on-going basis but also respond to an organisation following a specific crisis or issue. In addition, we provide training in Listening Skills and other well-being related subjects.  Our partnership approach means emotional support is offered within a community context, not only supporting individuals, but supporting that community to provide an enhanced culture of well-being. |
| **Listening Service Background** | One of the ways we partner with organisations is by providing on-site Listening Services. Our Listeners visit an organisation to provide one-to-one Listening appointments for the people within that organisation. The Listening model we use is a form of Active Reflective Listening: its focus is to enable and empower the speaker to identify and process their thoughts and feelings around a current situation or issue: sometimes offloading is sufficient; other times it helps the speaker to identify a course of action they can take; or it may be preparatory for counselling or other forms of more structured support. |

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| **Children’s Listening Services Project Background Information** | We were approached by a school with an Outstanding SEN Ofsted rating and a growing awareness of the mental health impact on some siblings of children with special educational needs from family strain, sibling behaviour or dealing with their own feelings. Therefore in 2020 we launched a small pilot scheme providing a **Listening Service for Siblings** where family difficulties were impacting on the child’s mental health and wellbeing.  The service provided a safe space to process their thoughts and feelings, be understood and identify strategies to build resilience; an early intervention project for those showing low-level signs of anxiety and distress to develop their own emotional well-being.  A UK study estimates there are two such siblings per class. A recent US study shows siblings are three times more likely to have psychological well-being problems. Mental health challenges can start at an early age and practitioners recognise that 70% don’t get early enough intervention. Feedback from the project was excellent and since January 2022 we have been developing the service across a number of schools in Sheffield.  Feedback includes reference to a “safe space for the child to talk to someone outside their situation without being judged or upsetting family members; ability to speak out their feelings, emotions and thoughts rather than bottling them up, leading to them being better regulated in school and at home.”  Further to this Sibling Service, we launched a **Bereavement Listening Service,** for children experiencing bereavement through death, separation or long-term illness of a primary carer, who would benefit from 1-1 listening support. The Childhood Bereavement Network estimates 40,000+ children annually bereaved of a parent (1 in 20). The last national survey (2004) found 3.5% of children (1 per class) experienced parental bereavement: this was pre-COVID and doesn’t include death of other relationships or separation. The British Medical Journal reported that COVID has had a disproportionate impact on children’s mental health whilst research also found that “children living in disadvantaged areas are more likely to be bereaved.” Many of the schools we serve are situated in some of Sheffield’s more disadvantaged areas.  The post-holder will be required to deliver both of our Children’s Listening services to enable us to build our capacity for delivering both services across a range of schools. |

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| **Primary Focus of this role** | *Key aims and objectives*  To provide a 1-1 Listening Service for primary aged children and some Year 7. |
| **Overview of Role** | *What will the job entail (briefly)*  Provide an on-site Listening Service at primary schools (and some secondary) during pre-designated hours each week, representing SYCLS in a positive manner.  *The Service involves:*  Treating the children with respect and dignity, giving time and focus to listen to their situations.  Working closely with the SEN lead/class teacher and being aware of issues to flag up, subject to the Schools’ confidentiality, disclosure and safeguarding protocols.  Liaising with the allocated project lead at each School in addition to attending one-to-one supervision with a SYCLS Project Co-ordinator.  Recording outcomes and providing regular reports.  Attending regular SYCLS team meetings. The monthly SYCLS team meetings and supervision play a key role in feeling part of the SYCLS staff team, which currently consists of 16 people.  Attending ongoing training, supervision and CPD events. |

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| **Listening Service** | *The Listening Service across the schools will operate on the following basis:*  Referrals are made to the Listening Service by school staff using a referral form signed also by the child’s main carer.  Our Children’s Lead organises a timetable for each Listener based on the schools’ needs and numbers of children needing to access the service. This means that each Listener travels to schools across Sheffield.  Sessions take place in an allocated room in each school.  Records are kept on outcomes, safeguarding reporting and any need to break confidentiality (Listeners sign confidentiality agreements and operate in line with safeguarding and disclosure policies). |
| **Expectations of Post-holder** | This role requires an empathic approach to children in distress.   * Passion for SYCLS ethos, vision and values * Warmth, sensitivity, compassionate and empathic listener * Demonstrable experience of working with children * Belief that children are important, unique and worth listening to – an ability to help them express their thoughts and feelings freely * An understanding of how to provide an environment which allows children to feel comfortable, enabling them to share their feelings – through relational skills, play and the use of appropriate resources * To follow the listening model and adapt appropriately to meet the needs of primary-aged children * Organised approach to appointments and rotas with the flexibility required of working in a busy school environment * Excellent interpersonal skills and comfortable liaising with external professionals * Ability, and happy, to work independently (each Listener visits their list of schools alone therefore requiring comfortableness in travel and visiting different schools) whilst adopting a team approach with the other Listeners * Demonstrates an understanding of appropriate behaviour in a school environment * Demonstrates understanding of mental health and working with children in distress * A basic understanding of additional needs/ASD/ADHD although training will be given * A basic understanding of the impact of loss and grief – again training will be given * A real interest and desire to support children facing a range of life challenges * IT savvy for professional & friendly emails, occasional report writing (Word), and recording outcomes on Excel. |

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| **Additional Information** | The successful applicant will join a Children’s Listening team of 4 other part-time staff. They work as a team in terms of information sharing, support etc however each Listener works independently in their allocated schools with allocated individual children.  This role will involve working with children, therefore the successful candidate will need an enhanced DBS check as a final stage of the recruitment process.  The successful candidate will complete SYCLS core Listening training programme, including Listening to Children, with an assessment and sign-off. In addition, the core training will include Children and Grief and Safeguarding Children in Education.  SYCLS provide regular, ongoing, modules in project-related subjects and the Listener will attend 2-3 SYCLS CPD days per year.  The role is for 24 hours per week – 9am-3pm for 4 days a week. This is a term-time only contract although will require some hours to attend induction training over the summer in this first year of appointment, so the successful candidate is ready to start visiting schools in September.  We will be asking for references from an employer as part of the recruitment process. |

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| **Estimate of travel**  This role is based in schools across Sheffield. The role therefore requires travel between venues. We organise working days into geographical areas as much as possible but there will be a need and willingness to travel between schools on the same day. There will also be a requirement to attend SYCLS offices (S1) for supervision, training and team meetings.  Applicable mileage costs incurred to visit schools will be reimbursed. |

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| **Time Frame**  Interviews will be held on **Tuesday 22nd July**, therefore we welcome CV applications by **Friday 11th July 12noon** stating your experience, relevant training and qualifications, and giving examples of how you meet the Post-holder expectations. Please also include a covering letter stating why you are interested in the position. These should be emailed and addressed to Linda Gascoyne, Co-CEO at linda@sycls.co.uk  If you are interested in being considered for job-share, please include in your covering letter the hours and days that you wish to be considered for. |