

First Steps (Bath)
Trainee SENCO
Early Years Specialist Service
Senior / Lead Practitioner Grade depending on experience, Spinal Point 19 to 24

Job Purpose

With coaching and training arranged by the setting manager to support and plan the day-to-day delivery of high-quality play and learning experiences within the early years specialist service. To attend training to provide the skills and attributes to hold the Special Educational Needs Coordinators role for the Early year's specialist service. To deputise for early years specialist service manager where necessary manage in their absence, providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe, stimulating, and enjoyable environment. To work in partnership with parents and carers, shared placement early years settings, partner organisations and other managers and staff within First Steps (Bath), regarding special educational needs and children who are at risk of reaching a good level of development.

Job Description – main duties

- To work towards becoming the lead for Senco responsibilities for children attending the specialist service and share the practice across shared early years settings. Through support from the Manager and other First Steps staff who take on SENCO roles and responsibilities.
- To move towards being confident to undertake joint working with a range of agencies to enable children and their families to access other services, attending multi-agency meetings and/or taking on the Lead Professional role where appropriate, and working within child protection procedures where necessary.
- To develop an understanding of quality to be able to promote excellent practice, training and contribute to raising the quality of early years provision within the early year's specialist service and shared placement settings.
- To build the skills and knowledge required to deliver mentoring support, and specific training regarding children's needs to early years staff working in the specialist service and those in shared placement settings.
- To promote a positive attitude amongst other practitioners in having high expectations of all children and their abilities to achieve their full potential.
- To plan and provide safe and appropriate learning and development activities in a range of contexts and using a range of resources, taking account of diversity, different ages, interests, and abilities, and promoting equality and inclusion.
- To actively support the development of children's language and communication skills
- To be mentored by the setting manager to ensure that staff model and demonstrate positive values, attitudes, and behaviour, and support them with effective behaviour management strategies.
- To promote a positive culture of team work and collaborative working between colleagues, including contributing to staff meetings and to the development of policies and practices through the senior team, and sharing in collective responsibility for their implementation.
- To maintain appropriate electronic and paper records and prepare written reports or plans as required.
- To ensure a safe working environment for children, staff and families including the arrangements for the daily securing of the building.

- To deputise for the early year's specialist service Manager as required.

This is not an exhaustive list, and the post holder may be required to undertake other duties commensurate with the grade.

Reporting to: Bath Opportunity Preschool Manager

Based at: Bath Opportunity Preschool, Early Years Specialist Service, Broadlands Academy Saint Francis Road, Keynsham BS31 2DY.

Person Specification

Experience

- Experience in a senior or lead position (desirable)
- Experience of supervising, training, mentoring or coaching staff, students, or volunteers (desirable)
- Experience of working to the Sen code of practice
- Extensive experience of working with children in an Early Years setting (at least two years)

Qualifications

- At least 5 GCSEs at A* - C / 4 - 9 or equivalent, including Maths and English
- Qualified to at least NVQ level 3 in a relevant subject, e.g., early years or social care.
- Qualified Teacher, Social Worker, or Early Years Professional (Desirable)
- Working towards completion of the Dingley's inclusion package of training

Skills

- Excellent oral and written communication skills, with the ability to relate well to people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Ability to supervise and support staff.
- Ability to celebrate progress and to hold people to account to manage effective meetings, including chairing multi-disciplinary meetings and/or meetings with parents.
- Ability to organise and prioritise work.
- Competence in standard IT applications such as Word, Excel, internet, and email.
- Ability to handle information securely and confidentially.

Knowledge

- Understanding a range of services to support children with SEN within a local community.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Welfare Standards, Child Protection procedures, SEN Code of Practice

Personal qualities

- Able to encourage a culture of respectful and constructive relationships with children, parents, and carers, listening to them and respecting their views.
- Commitment to working in partnership with families, anti-discriminatory and inclusive work.
- Able to respect and uphold First Steps values and to implement policies and procedures including confidentiality and child protection.

General

- Enhanced DBS check required.
- Full driving license and use of a vehicle for work purposes
- Car insurance to include business use.

Effective Date: September 2025