

# Children & Families Social Work - Policy and Practice Lead

## Recruitment Pack

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this post.

Social Work Scotland is the professional body for social work managers and leaders. We are a membership organisation with over 350 individual and corporate members. We exist to promote and support the development of the social work profession, and to inform, influence and improve public policy and public services.

We are excited to be recruiting for a Children & Families Social Work Policy and Practice Lead at a time of profound change. Scotland's social work landscape is evolving rapidly, with developments that will shape practice for years to come. The launch of the Scottish Social Work Partnership, and the National Social Work Agency, delivery of the Promise with the many related strands of change and improvement including redesign of the children's hearing system, improving care experience and changes to the care landscape; developments and implementation of changes in youth justice, secure care and child protection; and an increasing focus on whole family support and tackling poverty. These interconnected strands present both significant opportunity and complex operational challenge - requiring leadership that is visionary, collaborative, and grounded in practice.

The post has a key role in facilitating the engagement and leadership of our Children & Families Social Work Standing Committee members, Chief Social Work Officers and the Social Work Scotland Board. In partnership with colleagues in Social Work Scotland and as part of the Scottish Social Work Partnership, this post also offers a chance to join up interdependent but disconnected policy agendas, constructing a more coherent and enabling operational environment for social work as a whole. The post will have a role in supporting national projects currently hosted by Social Work Scotland, such as reform of Joint Investigative Interviewing of Children, implementation of Self-directed Support legislation, and national development of Interagency Referral Discussions.

If successful in securing the post, you will have the opportunity to build relationships with the leadership of the social work profession in Scotland, in operations, regulation, advocacy, policy making, education and academia. You'll also build or strengthen links across the Children & Families sector, within Scotland, the UK and internationally. You will be a visible representative of the profession, and you will help Social Work Scotland's members to realise opportunities and resolve challenges. At the core of Social Work

Scotland is a commitment to assisting the profession be the best it can be for the individuals, families and communities who need social work or social care support; the Children & Families Social Work Policy and Practice role is central to us delivering on that commitment.

To apply for this post, please submit a covering letter/email and a completed application form. Your covering letter should be between 800 and 1000 words and should set out why you want the job, summarise your relevant experience, and explain how you meet the job's 'Person Specification'. Please state in your application form if you do want us to contact references prior to interview. Secondments welcome.

Please find included in this pack:

1. Key information, including contact details and summary of the recruitment process
2. Information about Social Work Scotland
3. Job description
4. Person specification

Completed application forms should be sent to [admin@socialworkscotland.org](mailto:admin@socialworkscotland.org) by **11:59pm on Sunday 8 March 2026.**

**For informal discussion contact [admin@socialworkscotland.org](mailto:admin@socialworkscotland.org)**

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Corinne Groeneveldt**  
Operations Manager, Social Work Scotland

## 1. KEY INFORMATION

<b>Employer</b>	Social Work Scotland Ltd. Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY
<b>Work location</b>	Mix of working from home and office-based  Social Work Scotland's office is based at Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY
<b>Position type</b>	Full time (35 hours per week)
<b>Salary</b>	£62,000 - £67,000 per annum
<b>Contract</b>	Fixed-term contract of 2 years.  Following the end of the contract, we'd look to offer career progression opportunities within the team, or a contract extension, where appropriate.  All posts at Social Work Scotland are subject to a probation period, the precise length of which will be indicated in an offer letter.
<b>Our commitment to equality, inclusion and diversity.</b>	We are an equal opportunities employer, and we are committed to building an inclusive workplace where everyone is treated fairly and respectfully.  <b>We particularly encourage applications from care experienced, disabled and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.</b>  We have a range of flexible working policies available to staff, provided that the responsibilities of the position can be met within the preferred work schedule.  Should you require any adjustments for your interview, please inform us and we will endeavour to support your needs.
<b>Pension</b>	Auto enrolment pension provided by The People's Pension, with an employer's contribution of 6% and an employee contribution of 5% as standard. (Pension

	contributions may be made to existing pension schemes on request.)
<b>Equipment provided</b>	<p>Laptop Other IT and/or communications equipment necessary for home working.</p> <p>Social Work Scotland will also provide, where appropriate, equipment to meet specific, individual needs.</p>
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>Flexible working arrangements, in respect of the structure of your working week and contingency of the post which includes travel across the country.</p> <p>We also offer salary sacrifice schemes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike to Work, including Cycle Miles</li> </ul>
<b>Start date</b>	As soon as possible following a formal offer of the post.
<b>Application process</b>	<p>To apply, please provide a completed application form, including details of two work or education related references.</p> <p><b>Completed application forms should be sent to: <a href="mailto:admin@socialworkscotland.org">admin@socialworkscotland.org</a> by <u>11:59pm on Sunday 8 March 2026.</u></b></p>
<b>Interviews</b>	<p>We expect interviews will be held online in the week commencing <b>16 March</b> (may be subject to change).</p> <p>Shortlisted candidates will be invited for a 45-60 min interview involving a mix of experience and competency-based questions. Candidates will also be asked to prepare a short presentation, the details of which will be provided in advance.</p> <p>We will look to hold the interviews in person; however, we can make arrangements for them to be held online if needed.</p> <p>The successful candidate may be invited to a follow up meeting with members of the Social Work Scotland team prior to an agreed start date.</p>

	Two references will be requested following a successful interview.
<b>Contact information</b>	If you have any questions please contact:  <b>Corinne Groeneveldt</b> (Operations Manager, Social Work Scotland) <a href="mailto:admin@socialworkscotland.org">admin@socialworkscotland.org</a>

## 2. ABOUT SOCIAL WORK SCOTLAND

### Who are we and what do we do?

Upholding the values which underpin the social work profession, Social Work Scotland give importance to every individual's experience and voice and seek to make social justice real through all that we do. We embrace change and encourage collaboration. We are committed to creating opportunities for our members and team through which individuals can develop as compassionate, creative and effective leaders.

We particularly encourage applications from care experienced, disabled and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates, as these groups are underrepresented throughout the social work profession.

### Our core objectives (as set out in Social Work Scotland's Articles of Association)

- a. Pursue social justice, human rights and equality for all of Scotland's citizens
- b. Promote the unique role, value and contribution of social work
- c. Articulate the expertise and insight of social work managers
- d. Inform the development and implementation of policy, at national and local levels
- e. Support high-quality and effective leadership within social work and social care
- f. Champion research and evidence as the basis of policy and practice
- g. Facilitate collaboration and practice improvement among social work and social care providers
- h. Shape the direction and development of social work in Scotland

To help deliver these objectives we facilitate a large number of committees and sub-groups, populated by our members. Among these is the Chief Social Work Officers network. Governance is provided primarily by the Social Work Scotland Board, which is made up of company and non-executive directors; it is chaired by Social Work Scotland's Convenor.

### Our Team

We have a core team consisting of 16 staff and host a number of other staff who are with us for a fixed time, working on a specific project (usually in partnership with Scottish Government or other national partners). At the moment we have 12 staff in these posts.

### 3. JOB DESCRIPTION

As Social Work Scotland's **Children & Families Social Work Policy and Practice Lead** you will provide the national team and partners with operational insight and expertise across the diverse range of children and families issues which, on a day-to-day basis, social work is involved in. You will play a key role in national discussions around the Promise, child protection, youth justice workforce capacity and the ongoing development of the profession. You will assist project leads in the delivery of their work programmes, and support colleagues and Social Work Scotland members to realise our organisation's objectives; that includes playing a role in public facing communication about the role and value of social work.

You will link in directly with Social Work Scotland's Children and Families Committee, our Board, local authority Chief Social Work Officers and key partners (such as the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor) to progress the national agenda. You will be a visible representative of the profession, and you will assist others to articulate Social Work Scotland's positions in a number of high-profile forums and settings.

In helping to support effective national leadership of social work in Scotland, you will be expected to ensure the voices of children, families, carers and communities inform all aspects of this role.

Your **key responsibilities** will be to:

#### ***[Strategic / Policy / Workforce]***

1. In partnership with relevant Social Work Scotland Chair/s, lead on children and families social work issues for the organisation, establishing working relationships with key partners (including SG Policy Teams and Social Work Professional Advisors, OCSWA, CELCIS, CYCJ, the Promise, COSLA, etc.).
2. Provide advice and guidance on matters of children and families social work policy and practice to colleagues, Social Work Scotland members and partners.
3. Engage with and take direction from Chief Social Work Officers and the Children and Families Standing Committee, helping to establish, communicate and deliver on Social Work Scotland priorities / objectives / positions.
4. When required, represent Social Work Scotland's members on national groups and forums, or in collaborative work with national partners, or giving evidence to parliamentary or other inquiries.

#### ***[Member Engagement and Support]***

1. Provide practical support to the Social Work Scotland Children and Families Standing Committee and its Sub-Groups, assisting the Chair(s) and administrative colleagues to set the agenda, agree work-plans / outputs, organise and facilitate meetings, keep records (of meetings and membership) and manage member engagement / participation.
2. Support Social Work Scotland members to represent the association on national groups and forums, providing briefing and guidance as required.
3. Support Social Work Scotland Chair/s to provide professional social work leadership at the national level, by maintaining connections with relevant partner organisations and Scottish Government's policy teams and Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor, taking ownership of and delivering on discrete outputs, keeping Committee and Sub-Group members informed about relevant research and national developments, etc.
4. Maintain active connections with Social Work Scotland colleagues and members to ensure cross-Committee issues (e.g. transitions, substance misuse, mental health, etc.) are given attention and profile; includes the establishment of ad-hoc Special Interest Groups, as required.
5. Facilitate the drafting of responses to consultations and calls for evidence, on behalf of Social Work Scotland.
6. Develop briefings and learning opportunities (e.g. seminars, workshops) for Social Work Scotland members and partners, in collaboration with SWS' Communications and Events Manager.

***[Management]***

7. Provide line management to relevant project leads and other staff as needed. (Line management includes development of work-plans, coaching and support, supervision and feedback. For social work qualified staff, you will support them to maintain their SSSC registration.)
8. When required, hold corporate responsibility for specific national projects hosted at Social Work Scotland.

#### 4. PERSON SPECIFICATION

A qualified, experienced social worker (ideally bringing Service Leader level experience), you are passionate about the value of social work and the development of the profession and social services. You are familiar with the policy development and implementation cycle, keen to bring your insight and experience into national discussions. You are a proven leader, able to take people with you, but also able to reflect and adjust your own position when necessary. You are a credible representative of the profession, able to secure the trust and confidence of your peers.

You must be interested in expanding your knowledge base and understanding other's perspectives. Sound research and analytical skills help you do this. You are sensitive to others positions and needs, and able to plan and facilitate strategies which move us, with partners, towards shared goals. You are excited about this chance to assist Social Work Scotland's members to think through the issues of the day, and to support them to realise the opportunities that are available.

The post holder will have the following attributes:

##### **Essential Criteria**

1. Strong interpersonal skills, able to quickly build relationships and trust.
2. Broad but nuanced understanding of contemporary children and families' social work and social policy issues, across national, local and practice levels.
3. Educated to a degree level, with a professional social work qualification.
4. Minimum of two years' experience in a children and families social work management position.
5. Demonstrable experience in partnership working and leading change, influencing colleagues and partners to achieve specific outcomes.
6. Coaching and mentoring skills, able to support colleagues to develop and improve.
7. Demonstrable high-quality spoken and written communication skills, able to synthesise varied information (including research and statistics) to construct coherent, evidence-based positions.
8. Highly organised, able to plan and deliver to specific timescales.
9. An ability to work flexibly and proactively, using initiative to manage a diverse workload.

10. Competent using MS Office (Outlook, Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc.)

**Desirable criteria**

1. Experience in a senior management position within a Scottish local authority, with responsibilities relating to children and families social work and / or social care.
2. Experience of working at the national level, engaging with Scottish Government, the Scottish Social Services Council, Care Inspectorate, etc.
3. Project management skills and/or experience.
4. Familiarity and knowledge with change methodologies, including specifically quality improvement and implementation science.
5. A track record of written output (including local policies and procedures, consultation responses, etc.)

Social Work Scotland is a small team of people who work closely together, and we work hard to make our organisation feel supportive, respectful, and inclusive. It is important to us that the person who joins in this role will benefit from this environment but also contribute to it with their own skills and personality.