



## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job title:** Advocate  
**Hours:** Full time, 37 hours a week  
*We will consider a minimum of 30 hours per week for the right candidate*  
**Starting salary:** £23,004 FTE  
**Accountable to:** Advocacy & Independent Visitor Service Lead  
**Base:** Manvers Street, Bath, BA1  
**Contract:** Permanent

### Who we are

Off the Record Bath & North East Somerset (OTR) is a mental health and wellbeing charity that gives local young people a safe space to be heard and be themselves. We provide a range of free services for young people, including counselling, listening support, youth participation, advocacy, support for care leavers and a LGBTQ+ focused youth group.

You'll be joining us at an exciting time as we evolve our Advocacy and Independent Visiting team.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of what we value as an organisation. OTR is committed to equal employment opportunities regardless of race, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability or any other status protected by law.

### Purpose of the role:

As an Advocate you will be part of the ShoutOut! Advocacy team responsible for providing advocacy support to children and young people, ensuring they are informed of and understand their rights so they can fully participate in decisions impacting their lives. You will work one-to-one with children and young people to ensure their needs are met, voices are heard, and that they are empowered to advocate for themselves.

### Your attributes:

We are looking for someone who is proactive and has excellent communication. Your enthusiasm and personality are as important to us as your experience to date.

If you can't tick off every point in the job description below but feel you have the right transferable skills to succeed in the post, please do still apply.

If you would like an informal, confidential conversation about the role before applying, please email the Advocacy and Independent Visitor Service Lead [alisonhiscocks@offtherecord-banes.co.uk](mailto:alisonhiscocks@offtherecord-banes.co.uk) to arrange a time for a chat.

### Key duties and responsibilities:

1. Work as part of a team under the guidance of the Advocacy and IV (Independent Visiting) Service Lead and Senior Advocates to reach BANES commissioned targets for ShoutOut! Advocacy.
2. Provide direct professional advocacy casework support to children and young people, ensuring that children and young people are informed of their rights so they can make informed choices.
3. Under the direction of the Service Lead and Senior Advocates, you may provide advocacy for:

- children in care
  - care leavers
  - child protection conferences
  - young people with a disability making a transition
  - 16/17 and homeless
  - young people going through the complaint's procedure
  - children with EHCPs
  - SEND tribunals
4. Meet with children and young people on a one-to-one basis, working in a positive and proactive way to obtain information and advocate this information to others as directed by the client.
  5. Adapt communication and resources to ensure advocacy is accessible to children and young people with a range of abilities and means of communication.
  6. Work in partnership with children/young people, their families/carers and others in delivering the service, ensuring that children and young people's thoughts wishes and feelings are listened to and appropriate action is taken.
  7. Maintain records using our reporting system and the organisation's database, including the benefits and difference the work makes to young people.
  8. Enable and promote the confidence and knowledge for a young person to develop their own advocacy skills.
  9. Input strategically into multi-agency forums and partnership work with families/ carers to ensure that young people's views and experiences influence service delivery, development, and evaluation.
  10. Ensure young people's views shape the ShoutOut! service as it develops, and influences changes in local authority practice.
  11. Make sure young people understand the role of their advocate and length of involvement through the use of written agreements / contracts.
  12. Support the development of the ShoutOut! Advocacy service but inputting into projects and pieces of work to make processes more effective and streamlined.

### **General**

1. Participate in the day-to-day work of the organisation – such as reporting, attending team and other meetings as required, and taking a flexible approach to general administrative and support tasks
2. Be an ambassador for OTR, actively promoting our vision and work
3. Ensure the effective implementation of the organisation's policies and overall organisational objectives, including Health & Safety policies and procedures, taking responsibility for their own personal health, safety and welfare in the workplace.
4. Following safeguarding policies and procedures in all aspects of the work with children and young people.
5. Actively promoting good equal opportunities practices across all aspects of work and taking positive steps to counter discrimination however and wherever it occurs.
6. Participate constructively in supervision and staff development opportunities including training and team building initiatives.
7. Contribute to co-operative working across all the services within OTR.

8. Promote and enable active involvement of young people in planning, improving and making decisions about OTR services.
9. Ensure effective and accessible communication with staff, service users and the general public.
10. Contribute to maintaining and developing effective professional relationships both internally and with outside agencies.
11. Undertake any other reasonable duties consistent with the skills and duties needed for this role, as required.

### **Working pattern and location**

This role is based at our office in central Bath, which is very close to Bath Spa train station and Bath central bus station. The post holder will be based in a shared office with access to meeting rooms.

There is opportunity to work from home when agreed with your line manager, and we operate a flexible working policy which allows your hours to be spread throughout the day/week in agreement with your line manager.

The post holder will be expected to be able to travel throughout the authority and beyond, including to areas where there is no public transport to meet service users, professionals, and to attend meetings and training activities associated with the position. Mileage allowance will be payable for these types of travel.

If full-time working is not an option for you, we are happy to discuss requests for contracts between 30 and 37 hours per week at the interview stage.

The job will require working outside of core office hours, some evenings, including the occasional weekend.

### **How to apply**

If you're ready to proceed, we would love to hear from you. Please visit our website [www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk/work-for-us](http://www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk/work-for-us) to download the application form, and send the completed version, together with our Equal Opportunities monitoring form, to [office@offtherecord-banes.co.uk](mailto:office@offtherecord-banes.co.uk).

**The closing date for applications is Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of April at 9am. Interviews will take place in our Bath office on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of April.**

### **Terms and Conditions**

- Contract: Permanent with a probationary period of 6 months
- Paid leave entitlement: 25 days plus 2 discretionary days and all English public holidays, plus up to 5 extra days to recognise continuous service. This entitlement is pro-rated for part-time employees.
- Two days' paid volunteering leave to enable you to support causes that matter to you (FTE)
- Pension scheme
- Death-in-service benefit
- Training and development opportunities for all our staff

**Appointments will be subject to satisfactory references and an Enhanced level Criminal Records Bureau check.**

The job description is a general outline of the job duties and responsibilities and may be amended as OTR develops. The post holder may be required to undertake other additional duties as may be reasonably required from time to time.

ADVOCATE PERSON SPECIFICATION

<b>Key</b>	Assessed by Application	<b>A</b>
	Assessed at Interview	<b>I</b>
	Assessed by Exercise	<b>E</b>
	Documentary Evidence	<b>D</b>

<b>ESSENTIAL CRITERIA</b>	<b>Evidence</b>			
	<b>A</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Qualifications/Knowledge</b>				
Basic understanding of issues affecting child and young person development, particularly care experienced young people	x	x		
Knowledge of current children’s rights issues and initiatives including the issues faced by disabled children and young people	x	x		
Understanding of safeguarding issues	x	x	x	
Understanding and commitment to equal opportunities	x	x		
<b>Experience</b>				
Minimum of one year’s relevant (or transferable) experience of direct work with children, young people and/or their families	x	x		
Experience of working effectively and developing working relationships with children and young people	x	x		
Experience of advocating on behalf of children and young people (or similar)	x	x		
<b>Skills/Competencies</b>				
Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate effectively and assertively with a wide range of people, both verbally and in writing.	x	x	x	
Ability to confidently communicate with children and young people, establishing and sustaining effective working relationships which empower them.	x	x	x	
Ability to work in a professional manner with initiative as part of a team and at times under pressure.	x	x		
Good organisational, administrative, and prioritisation skills.	x	x		
Ability to deal appropriately with situations which can be sensitive/challenging while maintaining confidentiality.	x	x	x	
IT literate and competent with the use of Microsoft Office.	x	x		

**Other Requirements**

Ability to travel extensively within and outside the local authority, including to areas where there is no public transport	x	x		
Ability to work flexible hours (some evening and weekend work may be required)	x	x		

DESIRABLE CRITERIA	Evidence			
	A	I	E	D
<b>Qualifications/Knowledge</b>				
A relevant professional qualification for working with young people including youth or social work, health and social care.	x			x
<b>Experience</b>				
Experience of working together with other professionals from a range of agencies	x	x		
Experience of alternative/creative methods of communication/communication aids e.g. Widget	x			