Working with Sparks Fostering

Description

Working with Sparks

https://sparksfostering.org/wp-content/uploads/speaker/post-8538.mp3?cb=1735409368.mp3

Sparks Fostering recruits staff and panel members across England. The work is mostly remote, with local visits and meetings where they are needed, and the pay is set against the work actually done. This page sets out the roles, what they pay, and how to apply.



The work and the pay

We are transparent about both. The work is mostly remote, you set the hours that suit you, and the pay follows the work completed rather than a notional full-time post.

How the work runs

Most of the work is remote and online, but all staff must be available for local visits and meetings when these are needed. You work the hours that suit you. We support motivated staff to progress, and we try to make this a place people stay.

How the pay works

Pay is directly related to the amount of work completed. We are open about the rates on this page

rather than asking you to apply to find out, and they compare well with other providers.

Driving and area cover

Local visits are part of every role that supervises a fostering household, so we will ask whether you drive and which areas you can cover.

The roles

Four kinds of role, with what each pays and what we look for. Where we are not recruiting we say so, and you can still send a CV to be kept on the list.

Panel members

Panel membership is currently full. You can still send a CV to be kept on the waiting list.

Panel members are paid **£155 per panel**. Panel chairs and experienced social workers are paid **£205 per panel**. There is no additional fee for induction, appraisal or training.

Members read and review fostering assessments and other documents, and contribute to the discussion. They also give feedback on how Sparks is performing, based on the reports they receive. Assessments are long and detailed, so good literacy and analytic skills are needed, along with a real interest in what children in care need.

Panel work is flexible — members attend when they are available, with an expectation of at least one panel every two months. Induction is completed within 10 weeks of signing the engagement agreement, with an appraisal once a year and training at least once a year.

The panel chair needs a sound understanding of the fostering process, the authority and competence to chair, the ability to analyse and explain complex information and to identify the key issues, and excellent spoken and written communication. **The chair must be independent of Sparks Fostering.**

Social workers

Social work is allocated when new foster carers join the agency, so send your CV with a view to being contacted when work becomes available.

Qualified social workers are paid **£200 a month per fostering household**, and **£200 a month for each child living there** — £400 where a child has additional needs. So supporting a household with one child with complex needs pays £600 a month. Assessment work is paid separately at **£45 an hour**.

The work is supervising and supporting foster carers, completing fostering assessments, supporting applicants through the application, attending panel and professional meetings, and supervising support workers. Out-of-hours support may be needed where there is no allocated support worker.

You need a professional social work qualification and registration with the regulator, good interpersonal skills, and written work of court-report quality. Full employment checks are carried out. Support workers

who want to qualify as social workers are supported to do so as far as is reasonably practicable.

Registered managers

Registered manager roles come with **partnership opportunities**. If that interests you, write to us and say so.

You need a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services — or you enrol within six months and complete within three years. At least two years' experience relevant to fostering in the past five, and at least a year supervising and managing professional staff. We can support a social worker to gain that experience. You should be confident carrying out management audits and producing management reports, and we can train you to do that work.

Responsible Individual and Agency Decision Maker

Both roles are currently filled, so we are not recruiting.

The Responsible Individual undertakes the training the role needs, attends quarterly management reviews to assure the sound running of the service, acts on any concern they identify or that is raised with them, and notifies Ofsted and other relevant organisations of significant changes to the agency.

The Agency Decision Maker is an experienced social worker who decides on the approval or deregistration of foster carers on the panel's recommendation, considers any Independent Review Mechanism recommendation where that applies, checks that panel process has been followed and that all the paperwork is in, and records the decision. They need at least three years' post-qualifying experience in childcare social work, knowledge of childcare law and practice, experience of foster care and family placement work, and training in assessment.



How to apply

It starts with a CV. Email it to **info@sparksfostering.org**, saying which role or roles you are interested in. You will have a reply within two working days telling you whether to go on to the next step.

Step 1 — Your CV

Email your CV to **info@sparksfostering.org** and say in the email which role or roles you are interested in. You will get a reply within two working days.

Step 2 — A sample of writing

If we ask for one, send a sample of assessment writing to the same address. Alternatively, watch the video we send you and answer the question ‘Why did the foster carer struggle with the child’s behaviour?’ in no more than 250 words.

Step 3 — Declaration

If we ask you to, complete the declaration form we send you, and let us know when you are available for interview.

Step 4 — Interview

These are the questions we ask, so you can think about them beforehand:

- Why do you want to work for Sparks Fostering?
- How does working for Sparks fit with your career plans?
- What did you think of the Sparks policies and guidance on this website? They are under Policies and Guidance in the main menu.
- What have you found challenging in previous employment — the work, the employers or colleagues?
- What skills, abilities and knowledge would you bring to the team?
- Do you drive, and which areas can you cover?

Step 5 — Checks

Employment checks are carried out: an Enhanced DBS check, professional references, personal references and ID checks. A contract is issued once the checks are complete, and then you get training, support and supervision.

Support with applying

If any part of the process is a barrier, say so when you send your CV and we will work round it.

If you are care-experienced

Adults with care experience are given additional support to complete the application. Tell us when you send your CV and we will set that up.

Equality and diversity

Recruitment, like everything else we do, follows our Equality and Diversity policy, which is published under Policies and Guidance.

You could be welcoming a child to your home soon

Apply to Foster Now

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Author
user