

Working with Sparks Fostering

Description

Working with Sparks Fostering

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

[Previous Page](#)

[Next Page](#)

Thinking About Fostering?

Take This Short FREE Quiz

Recommend someone to foster?

Find out Bonus Payments For Referring Foster Carers

Refer A Staff Member?

Find out Bonus Payments For Referring A Staff Member

Sparks Fostering recruits staff and foster carers throughout England.

Thank you for your interest in working with Sparks Fostering – we are confident that you'll be interested in what we have to offer, and we hope that you will feel excited about the possibility of working with us.

Sparks Fostering work is mostly remote/online, but all staff must be available for local visits and meetings when required. We allow staff to work the hours that suit them; the pay is directly related to the amount of work completed; and we support motivated staff to progress. We also provide a comfortable, supportive and rewarding working environment to encourage stability and longevity in work.

We are transparent about the work and the pay. We value work/life balance, and we give fair pay

(which is considered generous in comparison to other providers).

To proceed, review the following job descriptions and person specifications to see how you could fit in with the Sparks team.

Please click the icons to read further about each role

Panel Members

Sparks Fostering currently has full panel membership; however, you can send your CV if you wish to be kept on the waiting list.

Job Description:

- Panel members are paid £120 to review a full (initial) fostering assessment and £35 per hour for the panel meeting. Panel chairs and experienced social workers are paid £160 per full (initial) report and £45 per hour for the panel meetings. Reviews are paid at 50% of the full assessment fee and each 'any other business' item is charged at 25% of the full assessment fee (hourly panel meeting fees remain the same).
- Panel members read and review fostering assessments (and other documents as required) and contribute to discussions about them.
- Panel members must also be able to give feedback about the performance of Sparks Fostering, based on the reports provided to them.
- The panel chair ensures that each member of the fostering panel is able to contribute meaningfully to discussion about panel business. The panel chair ensures written minutes of panel meetings are accurate and clearly cover the key issues and views expressed by panel members and record the reasons for its recommendation. And the chair completes the annual performance reviews of other panel members.
- Panel members are expected to engage in induction (to be completed within 10 weeks of signing the engagement agreement) and annual appraisals (once/year). Panel members are invited to training at least once a year. There is no additional fee for this aspect of the work.
- Panel members are expected to understand and adhere to expectations around [record keeping and confidentiality](#).
- Panel work is very flexible and panel members can attend when they are available – there is an expectation that panel members would attend at least one panel every two months.
- Panel members can also work as recruiters, support workers or social workers if they meet the person specification.

Person Specification:

- Panels are multi-disciplinary teams with relevant experience; panel members include health professionals, education staff, current or previous foster carers, care experienced young people or adults, social care professionals, elected council members, or faith/community leaders.
- Fostering assessments are lengthy and detailed, so good literacy and analytic skills are required.
- Panel members must show motivation to learn about the needs of children in care and should have had a look through the information on the Sparks Fostering website.

- The panel chair is required to have a sound understanding of the fostering process; the authority and competence to chair the panel; the ability to analyse and explain complex information; the ability to identify key issues, problems and solutions; and excellent interpersonal, oral and written communication skill.
- The panel chair must be independent of Sparks Fostering

Social Workers

Social work can only be allocated when new foster carers are taken on by the agency, so any interested applicants should submit their CV with a view to being contacted when work becomes available.

Job Description:

- Qualified social workers are paid £200 per month per foster carer and also £200 per month for every child who is in the fostering placement (£400 for a child with additional needs). So social workers are paid £600/month to support a fostering family with one child with complex needs.
- Social workers may also complete the fostering assessments and are paid £45/hour for the work.
- Social workers complete fostering assessments, offer advice and support to applicants and attend panel. Social workers offer any support needed to applicants to help them to complete the application process.
- Qualified social workers provide professional supervision and support to foster carers, provide supervision to support workers, and attend professional meetings.
- Social workers may need to provide out of hours support if there is no allocated support worker or if the support worker is struggling.
- Current support workers who wish to become social workers are supported by Sparks Fostering as far as is reasonably practicable.

Person Specification:

- Social workers have professional qualifications and are registered with the social work regulator.
- It is expected that social workers have read the information about fostering on the Sparks Fostering website.
- Social workers need to have good social skills and good written skills. Written work must be 'court-report' quality.
- Full employment checks are carried out.

Registered Managers

Job Description:

- RMs are offered partnership opportunities with Sparks Fostering.
- If you're interested in becoming a partner with Sparks Fostering, contact the RM at info@sparksfostering.org.

Person Specification:

- Registered Managers have a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services qualification (or they will enrol for the qualification within 6 months and obtain the qualification within 3 years).
- RMs have at least two years' experience relevant to fostering within the past 5 years. Sparks Fostering can support social workers to gain the relevant experience if needed.
- Have at least one years' experience supervising and managing professional staff. Sparks Fostering can support social workers to gain the relevant experience if needed.
- Be confident in carrying out management audits and producing management reports. Sparks Fostering can train social workers to do this work.

RI and ADM

Sparks Fostering currently has a responsible individual and an agency decision maker so we aren't recruiting for any more.

Agency Decision Makers (ADMs) are experienced social workers.

Job Description:

The RI must

- Undertake such training as is appropriate to ensure that they have the experience and skills necessary for the role.
- Attend quarterly management reviews to ensure the sound running of the service.
- Take action to address any issues of concern that they identify or which are raised with them.
- Notify Ofsted and any other relevant organisations of any significant changes to the agency.

The ADM must

- Make decisions about the approval or deregistration of foster carers based on the recommendation of panel (and all accompanying paperwork).
- Consider the recommendation of the Independent Reviewing Mechanism before making a decision (where this applies).
- Ensure that appropriate panel process have been followed.
- Ensure that all relevant paperwork is received before making a decision.
- Comply with decision making timescales, as outlined in fostering regulations and the Children's Act.
- Attend quarterly management reviews as a senior member of staff.

Person Specification:

The RI must

- Know the Sparks Fostering policies and procedures well (all available to view on the website).
- Understand and follow the processes outlined in the Complaints and Whistleblowing Policy.
- Have a strong understanding of the safeguarding needs of children in care.

- Have good knowledge and experience of law and practice relating to looked after children.
- Have business and management skills to manage the work efficiently and effectively.
- Have financial expertise to ensure that the fostering service is run on a sound financial basis and in a professional manner.
- Not have been bankrupt in the past.

The ADM must:

- Be a qualified social worker with at least 3 years post-qualifying experience in childcare, social work and has knowledge of childcare law and practice.
- Have experience of foster care and family placement work.
- Be trained in assessment.

Next steps – Application

Please note that adults with care experience are given additional support with completing the application process – [click here](#) to read more about the support available to adults with care experience.

Applicants are required to complete the following recruitment steps:

Step 1: CV

Send your CV to info@sparksfostering.org (or via the contact form below) and in your email state which role(s) you are interested in. You will receive a reply within 2 working days to advise if you should progress with the application.

Step 2: Sample of writing

If asked to do so, submit a sample of assessment writing to info@sparksfostering.org.

Alternatively, watch the video [here](#) and answer the question 'Why did the foster carer struggle with the child's behaviour?' Limit your answer to a maximum of 250 words.

Step 3: Declaration

If you are asked to do so, complete [this form \(click link to open\)](#).

Also, please clarify your availability for interview.

Step 4: Interview

If successful, you will be invited for interview.

The following questions will be asked at interview:

- Why do you want to work for Sparks Fostering?
- How does working for Sparks fit in with your career plans?
- What did you think about the Sparks Fostering policies and procedures that are on the website)?
Note, the main policies are visible via a link to 'Core Information' on the bottom menu.
- What aspect(s) of previous employment (including the work, the employers and colleagues) have you found challenging?
- What particular skills, abilities and knowledge do you believe you can bring to the team?
- Do you drive and/or what areas are you able to cover?

Step 5: HR information

Employment checks will be carried out, including an Enhanced DBS check, professional reference checks, personal reference checks, and ID checks.

Applicants may wish to note that all of the Sparks Fostering processes (including recruitment) are in line with the Sparks Fostering Equality and Diversity Policy, which can be viewed [here](#).

A contract will be issued when checks are successfully completed. After this, you will receive training, support and supervision so that you can fully enjoy the experience of being a member of the Sparks Fostering team. Welcome!

[Join Sparks Fostering team](#)

Date Created

November 10, 2022

Author

user