



WILLOW  DEN

WHERE CHILDREN THRIVE OUTDOORS

# SENIOR EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONER OUTDOORS

## Background

Willow Den Scotland is a fully outdoor nature-based early learning and childcare (ELC) organisation. Our nurseries are designed for children aged 3 years to school age and will be located in a range of locations across Scotland. We will measure our achievements through the success of our profit-for-purpose model and our social impact.

Willow Den was founded in 2020 by Inspiring Scotland to increase the availability and accessibility of outdoor nurseries across Scotland, enabling more children to thrive outdoors. Inspiring Scotland has been supporting the development of outdoor play through its various funds since 2008, establishing Willow Den as a trading arm is a continuation of this work.

Our **vision** is for every family to have the choice for their child to play and learn outdoors

Our **mission** is to improve children's health and well-being in Scotland through access to fully outdoor Early Learning and Childcare.



## Role Description

The Outdoor Senior EYP will work with the Manager playing a key role in embedding quality at Willow Den. We are seeking an enthusiastic, highly organised senior confident in early years practice with the ability to plan and oversee tasks, time and resources to ensure children experience exceptional outdoor early learning and care.

A passion for delivering fully outdoor play-based learning for young children is essential. But that is not all. We are looking for a Senior who will 'walk the talk', who can support the creation of play and learning experiences that are high quality and child-led.

This role is suited to someone who likes tasks and creativity. You must ensure compliance tasks are completed regularly and that support staff with purposeful and spontaneous planning.



## Responsibilities

- Support the Manager in planning, designing, and continually developing our outdoor spaces
- Hold a Key Worker role providing positive experiences and interactions for children
- Support the Manager with organising the day to day tasks
- Supervise the team in the manager's absence (training/illness/leave) and ensuring standards of care are maintained
- Lead by example by providing a role model for children and staff
- Complete and support others to carry out regular risk assessments
- Work with the manager and staff team to create high quality provocations and positive learning experiences
- Supervise the setting up of learning spaces and ensure implementation of the daily routine



### Responsibilities cont.

- Carry out senior administrative duties, encouraging meaningful observations ensuring children's files, learning/personal plans are accurate and up to date
- Support the Manager ensuring planning is carried out and there is a balance of purposeful and spontaneous planning, evaluations, and next steps.
- Regularly update your professional knowledge and develop skills related to your role
- Build relationships and clear communication with parents, families and some agencies
- Support the Manager in embedding planning for improvement using the Care Inspectorate Quality Framework and HGIOELC to ensure positive outcomes for children
- Proactively support EYP's, support staff, and students in their day to day role
- Provide a role model as a reflective practitioner
- Use technology to communicate children's progress
- Support the Manager to ensure policies and procedures are understood and implemented
- Take part and contribute to policy reviews

## Skills & Abilities

- Active listening and responding
- Problem solving and solution focussed
- Good IT skills in Microsoft word essential
- Excellent organisation and record keeping
- Be able to demonstrate how to follow children's interests
- Excellent communication skills



## Person Specification

### Essential Criteria

- Qualified to SCQF level 7 (HNC/SVQ 3) as a minimum
- Experienced in a Senior EYP role or similar, or, for practitioners seeking promotion see desirable skills
- Good understand and knowledge of Realising the Ambition
- Full, clean PVG membership
- Must be able to register with SSSC as Lead Practitioner
- Experience ensuring compliance with regulations, policies and procedures (staff/students/volunteers)
- Understand the need for self-evaluation for improvement using HGIOELC and/or the Care Inspectorate's Quality Framework for Daycare
- Good understanding of the National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare
- Experience with Health and Safety procedures and Risk Assessments
- Competent with online communication, and completing children's learning journals to a high standard
- Highly organised and able to sustain completion of regular tasks over time
- A passion for outdoor play-based learning



### Desirable criteria

- Able to build and maintain a fire for heat and warmth
- Practitioners seeking promotion should demonstrate experience taking responsibility for specific pieces of work (Fire Warden, CP Depute Co-ordinator, Outdoor Play Champion)
- Understanding the impact of positive interactions
- Able to create experiences and spaces that provoke curiosity with children outdoors
- Knowledge of reflective planning/planning in the moment
- CPD demonstrating skills and knowledge of outdoor play (fire building/risky play/messy maths, etc.)
- Experience supporting the nursery with Care Inspectorate inspections





## Personal Qualities

- Confident in providing feedback to staff and families to ensure the best outcomes for children
- Approachable and friendly
- Caring and nurturing
- Good verbal and written communication skills
- Positive, 'can-do' approach
- Passion for outdoor learning
- Collaboration and team working comes naturally

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## Terms of Engagement

- Reporting to the Nursery Manager
- Hours of work: Full time / Flexible working patterns available
- Contract Basis: Permanent
- Salary: £25 - £27K (based on skills and experience)
- Employer pension contribution 7%
- Location: North Edinburgh



## How Do I Apply?

Please apply via our website [www.willowden.scot](http://www.willowden.scot) with your C.V. and a covering letter detailing how you believe your skills and personality fit with the role.

The application process expects informal online conversations followed by formal in person interviews including a visit to the nursery setting. You will be given the opportunity to showcase both your ELC knowledge and senior/supervisory skills.

Closing date: 29th January 2022

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