

## Candidate pack – September 2018

### Introduction

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Volunteer Coordinator N. Ireland at Adoption UK.

Adoption UK is the leading charity providing support, awareness and understanding for those parenting or supporting children who cannot live with their birth parents.

Created more than 40 years ago by adopters for adopters; now with more than 11,000 members we provide a strong supportive community and the largest voice of adoption in the UK. Our community is connected by the need to understand the challenges of adoptive parents and to celebrate the rewards together.

We work closely with our colleagues in local authorities and voluntary agencies to provide the best support. As an adoption support agency, we have been consecutively rated as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted for our services.

We help adoptive families build brighter futures through supporting adopted children fulfil their potential.

We offer hope and understanding by providing vital support, training, community, and voice to all those involved in the adoption process which includes prospective adopters, adoptive families and professionals.

Our services are unique because they are developed by adoptive families for adoptive families.

We campaign tirelessly to ensure that adoptive families receive the support and encouragement they need to help make adoptions work.

E-J Havlin

Director, Adoption UK Northern Ireland

# Volunteer Coordinator – Northern Ireland

## Our Purpose

We offer the benefit of peer support, using a deeper level of understanding from experienced adoptive parents, enabling adopters and prospective adopters to benefit from those further along the path of adoption.

All adopted children have suffered the loss of being separated from their birth families.

Unfortunately, many have experienced neglect and/or abuse in those families. Early trauma at a crucial time in their lives can lead to emotional, behavioural, educational and development difficulties. This in turn may affect their ability to form secure relationships in the future.

We are uniquely placed to raise awareness and understanding of the complexities of adoption by combining the knowledge and expertise from leading authorities in the field with the real-life experiences of adoptive parents.

We take the latest research and findings in child development and neuroscience and translate them into practical strategies for parents.

We offer a non-judgemental and safe environment in which to share the challenges and rewards of adoptive parenting. As a large community of adoptive parents, we also have a strong voice and thus power to influence and challenge current prevailing beliefs amongst governments and the public.

## Our Vision

Our vision is a world where all children and young people unable to live with their birth parents can find security and happiness with permanent families who have the right support to build brighter futures.

## Our Values

**Supportive** – we are a community, always here for each other

**Determined** – to make a difference

**Hopeful** – we believe all children can enjoy positive futures

**Understanding** – we use our knowledge and empathy

**Open** – we are transparent and accessible

## Our Mission

In pursuit of our mission we:

Provide **peer to peer** support through our online information, message boards, helpline and different levels of individual support, depending on need. All those providing this support communicate from their lived experience of adoption and/or professional expertise.

**Influence decision makers** through the knowledge and experience of our members and the wider adoption and long-term fostering communities. We carry out research, develop case studies and contribute to empirical evidence of what it is like to be an adopter or long-term carer of a child who is unable to live with their birth family in the 21st century.

**Provide training and publications** that set out to inform adopters, carers and professionals alike of the neurological and psychological effects of early childhood trauma and attachment difficulties. Adoption UK helps parents and carers to transform the lives of children, so that they can better overcome and come to terms with what has happened in their lives.

# Volunteer Coordinator – Northern Ireland

## Job Description

<b>Job title:</b>	Volunteer Coordinator	<b>Hours of work:</b>	Part-Time (17 hours per week)
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Director - N. Ireland	<b>Duration:</b>	Permanent
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Volunteers	<b>Salary:</b>	£22,159 (£10763 pro rata)

**Location:** Belfast Office of Adoption UK. There will be travel throughout N. Ireland and unsocial hours required at evenings and weekends.

## Introduction

The concept of a local peer support group network is at the heart of Adoption UK and the focus of this post is to grow and support this network across N. Ireland.

## Main purpose of the job

To develop, manage and monitor local support groups across N. Ireland;

To recruit and support volunteer Support Group Coordinators. Ensuring that they are kept updated and informed of relevant issues relating to adoption and that advice, support and training is provided to help volunteers in supporting group members;

To develop new support opportunities for members in response to need, including liaising with local authority and voluntary adoption agencies, social work departments, and other organisations involved in the related provision.

## Main duties and responsibilities

- To recruit adoptive parents to be Volunteer Support Group Co-ordinators and Volunteer Helpers.
- To provide advice, support, and training for Support Group Co-ordinators and Volunteer Helpers in their roles working with adoptive families.
- To support Group Co-ordinators to plan meetings and events in their area. Including the provision of cover for Support Group Coordinators when they are not available to provide support for adoptive families, including facilitating support group meetings if required.
- In conjunction with the Helpline Adviser/Administrative Coordinator in the N. Ireland Office collate, analyse and report on feedback, evaluation forms and progress reviews from Support Group Co-ordinators and support services to provide impact reports as required by the Director.
- To liaise with, and report back to Adoption UK about the operation of local support groups across N. Ireland. To develop new groups and other areas of voluntary activity. To liaise with the Director in all aspects of partnership work and projects relating to volunteer activity.
- To assist organisational events along with other members of Adoption UK N. Ireland.

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- To maintain and develop existing links with partners in the Trust and voluntary adoption agencies and other organisations involved in the related support in N. Ireland, with the aim of encouraging the take-up and use of existing Adoption UK services.
- To work as part of the Adoption UK Team in N. Ireland to instigate, develop and promote new services for the purpose of supporting families and the charity.
- To contribute to local and national staff training, events, updates and meetings.
- To comply with Adoption UK GDPR, Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Child Protection, Confidentiality and other policies.

This job description is a guide to the nature of the work required and may involve other such duties as deemed necessary by the Adoption UK. It is not wholly comprehensive or restrictive.

This job description will be reviewed with the post-holder at significant points for the Adoption UK.

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## Person Specification

### Who we are looking for

You should have the capacity to understand and empathise with the issues of concern for prospective adopters and adoptive families and able to demonstrate a sympathetic approach to helping and supporting people.

Commitment to equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices at all times is essential.

As a member of a small, multidisciplinary team, a flexible and adaptable approach to work, professionalism and the ability to prioritise and manage your workload is essential.

Willingness to travel and work weekends and evenings as required.

You should be committed to understanding and representing the aims and objectives of Adoption UK and to working collaboratively with the wider voluntary sector and others.

Committed to continuous personal development.

### Qualifications and training

#### Essential

- Relevant Professional Qualification or equivalent demonstrable experience.

#### Desirable

- Training qualification.

### Knowledge and Experience

#### Essential

- Understanding of support needs of adoptive families;
- Experience of training provision;
- Experience of providing volunteer support;
- Experience of group work;
- Project Management – planning, reporting & evaluation;

#### Desirable

- Personal or professional experience of adoption;
- Experience of working in a support capacity with individuals or parents/families;
- Experience of event management;
- Experience in organising or participating in social media networks such as Facebook groups.

### Skills and Abilities

- A valid driving licence and regular access to vehicle for work;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- Good IT/computer skills;
- Ability to work under own initiative;
- Work to tight deadlines and under pressure;

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- Highly organised working practices;
- Good telephone/listening skills;
- Ability to work as part of a team

### Benefits

Adoption UK terms and conditions of employment offer generous staff benefits, including:

- Pension provision equivalent to 3% of salary.
- 25 days' annual holiday (pro rata for part-time staff), rising to 27 days after two years' service and 30 days after five years' service.
- Enhanced entitlement to sick pay.
- Enhanced entitlements to maternity, paternity and adoption leave and pay.
- Childcare Voucher Salary Sacrifice Scheme

## Volunteer Coordinator – Northern Ireland

### How to apply

To apply for this position, please send a completed application form. A CV will not be accepted.

Applicants will be shortlisted for interview on the basis of the criteria listed in the Personal Specification for the role advertised. Please give your reasons for applying and provide further information on how your experience, knowledge, skills, abilities and qualities meet the criteria required for this role. Please also supply any other information which you feel is relevant to your application including your current salary and where you saw the position advertised

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, the information you provide in your application, and in any accompanying papers, will be used to assess your suitability for the post advertised. It will not be released to anyone who does not require it for this purpose. If you are employed, this information will form the basis of your employment file within Adoption UK, otherwise it will be destroyed six months after the post is filled, unless you give us permission to hold it on file.

You are also invited to complete and return the equal opportunities monitoring information form. The information on the form will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes. The form will not be treated as part of your application.

Finally, please ensure that you have included mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the indicative timetable.

### Applications:

Should be made via the Adoption UK website:

<https://www.adoptionuk.org/jobs>

or

Emailed to [hr@adoptionuk.org](mailto:hr@adoptionuk.org)

or

Applications can also be posted to:

E-J Havlin, Director Adoption UK N. Ireland,  
63-75 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GB

### Timetable:

Published advert closing date:

5<sup>th</sup> October 2018, 5pm

Panel interviews at Belfast Office of Adoption UK:

17<sup>th</sup> October 2018

These dates may be subject to change and applicants will be advised in advance should this happen.

### Recruitment Process:

Should you decide to make a formal application, you will receive feedback within five working days of the closing date. The successful appointment is subject to a satisfactory criminal records disclosure and written references.

### Queries:

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or wish to have an informal discussion, please contact HR on 01295 752240 or alternatively via email at

[HR@adoptionuk.org](mailto:HR@adoptionuk.org)