

# St James' Church: Children and family worker

## Purpose of Role

We are employing a children and family worker for St James' Church, Uplands, Swansea to grow the number of children and families who are part of the worshipping church family, and to deepen their discipleship.

## Salary, Hours and Contract length

Salary is £22,000 - £25,000 pro rata (based on 35 hour week), with starting point depending on qualifications and experience. Hours of work are 21 hours per week, which may require flexible working over a month - some weeks are inevitably busier than others. A plan of weekly and monthly sessions to work will be mutually agreed. At least 3 out of 4 Sunday morning services will be worked per month. If the successful applicant is not an experienced youth worker we will seek and fund additional training opportunities.

The post is for an initial 2 year term with a six month probationary period. However we have partial funding to extend this into a third year, and it is likely that the post will be made permanent.

## Background

St James currently has four families who are in regular attendance, plus a further two whose attendance has been less regular since Covid, but are still part of the church. We believe there are real opportunities for mission with young people and families here, but we are struggling to re-launch children's work as we come out of the pandemic. In particular:

- We lack someone who will lead the Sunday school. The previous main Sunday school leader left the church just before lockdown, during a period of ill-health. We have three people who are able and willing to support delivering a Sunday school, but they are not able and willing to lead it.
- We are concerned that lack of current provision for children will lead to families leaving the church and going elsewhere. This will make it much harder to develop children's work in the future - we need to be able to invite new families to work already ongoing. This would have a major long-term implication for the church's life and mission.

Positively, we believe there are real opportunities for growing children and family work:

- We have good links with the local Home Education Network through two families who are homeschooled, and we are looking to work with the network to support their delivery of religious education, and provide social opportunities
- There are very good relationships with Ffynone House, a private school (11-18) next to the church, which can be further developed
- Members of the congregation have gifts of music and drama which can support children's involvement in church
- A very active Eco Church group at St James already involves the younger people in the congregation, with plenty of scope for further development
- The PCC and congregation are mission-minded and keen to enable any positive developments.
- The church has grown in the last year and has ambitious plans for further growth.

## Core activities include

- Co-leading and redeveloping a Sunday school programme
- Supporting children to take active roles in the main Sunday service
- Co-leading a monthly home education network faith and social session
- Developing congregation members to help lead children and family work
- Being the safeguarding officer for the parish if it is not possible to fill the post from within the congregation.

## Other possible activities

It is expected that the post-holder will lead two or three of the following additional activities, as agreed with the project steering group:

- Setting up and leading a weekly church-based 'hobby' session for children or young people, e.g. cookery; craft; music, drama etc. - aimed towards 10-16s. Activities which can lead into participation in worship services and church life.
- Developing an 'open the book' or other programme for Oakleigh House school (3-11)
- Developing a Messy Church
- Developing a parent/toddler group
- Supporting children through faith steps, e.g. first communion, confirmation
- Taking young people to Spree festival
- Holiday day clubs

## Supervision, support and funding

The post will be line managed by the vicar, Rev Ian Folks. A project steering group will meet at first monthly and then quarterly to provide support, oversee progress and developments, and address sustainability. Funding is from a mix of Swansea and Brecon diocese, the parish and the Austin Bailey Foundation. There will be good additional support from the Swansea and Brecon Children's officers (Rachel Bunting and Sian Parkhouse).

## Person Specification

We envisage that the successful applicant will be someone who is:

- A committed Christian. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 it is a genuine occupational requirement that the post holder is a practicing Christian and we would expect our Children and Family Worker to adhere to our values as a church.
- Able to communicate Christian faith effectively to young people at different ages and stages of faith development.
- Passionate about developing faith in young people and families and has experience doing so.
- Able to develop strong, positive relationships with children and young people
- Willing to be a full part of St James' Church's life and mission
- Experienced in leading Sunday school or other faith-based children's activity
- Able to build a good rapport with families and the wider church congregation
- Self motivated with good organisational skills, and able to manage time
- Reliable and trustworthy.

It is desirable but not essential to have a qualification or training in Christian youth work. The successful applicant is required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.

## Other Duties

- Ensure that a paperwork system is in place and adhered to for consent and safeguarding, in conjunction with the safeguarding officer and vicar.
- Ensure that activities are risk assessed appropriately, in liaison with the parish health and safety officer.
- In year 2 of the post, part of your time may include working with other local Church in Wales churches to help develop childrens' work initiatives.
- Any other duties which may reasonably be expected within the remit of the post.

## To Apply

Please send an up-to-date CV with a letter of application, which addresses the person specification and demonstrates your relevant skills and experience for the post, to [ianfolks@gmail.com](mailto:ianfolks@gmail.com).

