

Date of e-mail



Dear Applicant

Re: **Post of Family Assessment Practitioner**

Thank you for your interest in the above post.

Please find enclosed:

1. An application form including monitoring form
2. A job description and person specification
3. Information regarding the organisation and the project
4. Information regarding the post and conditions of service
5. St. Michael's Equal Opportunities Policy statement

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Please complete the application form and monitoring form and return to me to the email address [admin@stmichaelsfellowship.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmichaelsfellowship.org.uk) by **Monday 20 May 2018**.

In the event of you being shortlisted, an informal visit to the centre will take place on **Thursday 24 May** followed by a final interview on either **Wednesday 30 May** or **Thursday 31 May**. Please keep these days free in case you are shortlisted. Informal visits *do* form part of our selection procedure, and feedback will be given to the interviewing panel following the interviews.

In completing your application, you will find it useful to read all the information enclosed especially the job description and person specification. When you write your supporting statement you must demonstrate that you fulfil the essential requirements of the person specification. For this reason curriculum vitae are not acceptable.

This post will give the successful applicant substantial unsupervised access to vulnerable adults and children, therefore St. Michael's has adopted a rigorous system of checking. In the event of you being shortlisted telephone references will be pursued initially. St. Michael's reserves the right to contact any previous employers including your two referees of choice. The successful applicant will also be subject to an enhanced check through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

You will see that the application form requests detailed information about your history, from school to the present day, this is in order to meet the recommendations of the Warner Report. Any information given will not interfere with our standards of E.O.P. practice i.e. information will not be used in a discriminatory way.

As we receive a large response to our job vacancies we are unfortunately unable to reply to those candidates who are not shortlisted. If you have not heard within one week of the closing date please assume that your application has been unsuccessful.

Yours faithfully

Sue Pettigrew  
Director

## FAMILY ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER

### The Organisation.

St. Michael's Fellowship is an independent voluntary organisation that acts for the welfare and safeguarding of children. For over a 100 years we have worked residentially with parents so that they might safely and sustainably meet their child's needs – working together to keep families together. We are a dynamic, creative organisation which over the years has taken a lead in the development of services both residentially and in the community to meet the changing needs of families and communities.

St. Michael's Fellowship operates four residential family assessment centres and we have an excellent reputation for the quality of our work with families, and the support we provide our staff who work in these centres. Our residential centres are set up to provide a homely rather than institutional atmosphere. Our aim is to provide a Comprehensive Assessment of risk, and an assessment of a parent's ability to parent their child and meet their child's needs in an environment which can be challenging, is educational and supportive, and offers the parents the time and space to evaluate their own abilities. Staff in the centres approach their work from a 'child's eye' perspective, and maintain an open mind whilst applying a critical evaluation to what they observe. We achieve this by

- Good social work practice
- Independent assessments
- Keeping abreast of current thinking.
- Working in partnership with families and local authorities
- Commitment to anti-discriminatory, anti-racist practice
- Individual work with families
- Therapeutic approaches to aid assessment
- Clear, evidence based recommendations to assist planning for children
- Open recording systems, leading to reports for court
- Resettlement service for families

### What you can expect from us

With the emphasis in all of St. Michael's work firmly on the welfare of the child, it is inevitable that in some cases the outcome of the residential work is that a child does not stay with the parents. In such cases staff will communicate openly, and in a way that helps, to 'hear' a very difficult and complex message. We recognise that our work with families with a variety of needs is demanding and can be stressful. We support and enable staff by

- A culture that is committed to providing opportunities for personal and professional learning and development
- Offering experience and training to enhance career development
- Engaging in the ASYE/EPD programme.
- Supervision that is embedded in the culture of St Michael's; every two weeks and ongoing opportunities of informal support/supervision.
- Team consultancy, team building/support days.
- Clinical supervision where appropriate
- Clear guidelines provided regarding practice, interventions, ways of working, guidance
- Induction
- Valuing the views of staff to bring about change
- Supportive
- Pleasant working environment
- Away days
- Massage

## **With whom we work**

At the heart of our work lie values of compassion and respect for the parent as an individual, and a belief in the capacity of every human being for positive change. With these values we work to break the cycles of disadvantage, change family dynamics, and create new opportunities for children. Families come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, many with complex histories. We meet their individual needs with sensitivity and through anti-discriminatory, anti-racist practice to give all parents a real opportunity to achieve change.

We work with families, either single or two parents, with one or more children, where the majority are aged 0-5 years, but could be older, and where there are concerns surrounding their ability to parent. For example

Parents may have additional difficulties:

- Teenage parents from the care system
- History of mental illness
- History of substance misuse
- Learning difficulties
- History of domestic abuse

Children are likely to be subject to a child protection plan and may be:

- The subject of interim care orders
- In foster care
- Failing to thrive
- Presenting behavioural difficulties
- Demonstrating language delay
- Have special educational needs

Concerns:

- Abuse of a previous child
- Abuse of a current child; emotional, physical, sexual
- Capacity to learn parenting skills
  - to keep child safe
  - to put child's needs first
  - to meet child's emotional, physical developmental needs
  - to form attachments
  - to recognise support needs
  - to recognise signs of their own mental illness

Assessments involve a mix of informal education, one to one, video feedback, parenting skills support, sensitive and close observation and direct work, to facilitate and empower 'good enough parenting.' Parents receive daily feedback based on written recordings made by staff on shift. Placements are reviewed regularly and are generally for between six and twelve weeks.

Not all placements result in the family moving into the community together. The information provided by the staff team enables social workers to make recommendations and the courts to make decisions regarding the future of children. Staff may therefore be required to give evidence in court.

## **Remuneration**

Salary ranges from £26,871 - £31,141 inclusive of London Weighting plus sleep-ins at £45 per night. There is an opportunity for the salary to rise to £33,626 in recognition of service and quality of work. If a qualified social worker starting salary will be £29,424.

Incremental increases occur, when entitled and possible, on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

A cost of living increase is awarded when possible.

Contributory personal pensions are available under the auto-enrolment scheme. After a period of 3 years' service an employee can join St Michael's pension scheme with an employee minimum contribution of 6% and an employer minimum contribution of 8%.

Annual leave: 5 weeks plus Bank Holidays, increasing to 6 weeks after 5 years' service.

### **What we want from you**

To join a staff team of 7 involved in a shift system of working. This entails working a certain number of hours per calendar month: 28 day month = 156 hours, 30 day month = 167 hours, 31 day month = 172 hours.

- To bring your creativity, commitment and motivation to our work
- To develop supportive working relationships with your colleagues within the centre and within the organisation as a whole.
- To actively contribute to the ongoing development of the centre
- Work a rota system where the rotas aim to give staff alternate weekends off
- Usually one weekend off will comprise three or four consecutive days
- Other days off are taken during the week
- Staff members, with the exception of the Manager, average 6 sleep-ins a month, payment £45 per sleep-in.
- Examples of Shifts: 4pm–11 or 12midnight sleep-in 7am–3pm, 2pm -11pm sleep-in 7am-12pm
- Days 8am-4pm, 10am–6pm, 11am –7pm, 12 –8pm
- Mondays to Fridays, a minimum of two staff on duty
- Evenings, after 7 or 8pm, and weekends are generally worked alone but there is always management support available.

Staff duties are varied, and as well as contributing to all family assessments staff demonstrate their respect for the families and their work environment by also ensuring that the quality of the environment is maintained by general cleaning.

## ASSESSMENT CENTRES

### Crawford House



Is situated in Balham within walking distance of the Northern line tube and main line rail station and with good bus network connections. The house is spacious with attractive facilities for both families and staff and a garden with play equipment for children. Crawford House works with families with any issue but because of its size has been able to work with larger families. In terms of trends, whilst there is a generic nature to the challenges that staff address with the families, Crawford House works with more families with substance misuse issues than our other schemes.

At the most recent Ofsted inspection Crawford House achieved the rating 'Good' with Outstanding features.

[www.stmichaelsfellowship.org.uk](http://www.stmichaelsfellowship.org.uk)

## 52 PALACE ROAD



Palace Road is situated within walking distance of Tulse Hill railway station. It has developed significant experience of working with young parents, although we also work generically, with families where there are a range of issues which may compromise parenting capacity, such as mental ill health or substance misuse and/or learning difficulties.

The accommodation at 52 Palace Road is based in a large Edwardian house, set on three floors. It has the facilities to offer 6 families a residential placement to assess their parenting ability and to develop and promote their parenting skills, although it is more common to work with a maximum of 5 families in placement.

Our most recent inspection from Ofsted took place in April 2016 and we were found to be an **OUTSTANDING** provider, a rating we have held since 2007.

**Working together to keep families together.**

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## **46 HERNE HILL**



'46' is a Residential Family Assessment and Support Centre situated in Lambeth close to Brockwell Park, local shops and local amenities. It is within walking distance of Herne Hill mainline rail station and a short bus ride from Denmark Hill or Loughborough Junction. There are good bus network connections, including to Brixton underground station. The large Edwardian house with facilities for up to four families blends in with the local community and has homely and well maintained facilities for both families and staff. The service has developed a wealth of experience working with families where parents have additional learning needs, along with families where there are more generic presenting needs.

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## 84 HERNE HILL ROAD



84 is within walking distance of Loughborough Junction train station. The nearest underground station is Brixton followed by a short P4 bus that goes in the direction of Dulwich and Lewisham stopping outside of the centre. Bus routes – 35, 45 & P4 Brixton – Dulwich – Lewisham.

84 is a residential family assessment centre that works with families with a variety of difficulties but have particular experience working with families where there are mental health issues.

Our most recent inspection from Ofsted took place in September 2015 and we were found to be an **OUTSTANDING** provider, a rating we have held since 2011.

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## Job Description

### **POST: Family Assessment Practitioner**

Responsible to: Manager or in Manager's absence to the Deputy Manager.

#### **General**

1. To help create and maintain a nurturing and learning environment within the house.
2. To ensure a high standard of social work practice.
3. To ensure a reasonable standard of child care and general house management.
4. To keep abreast of current legislation which informs and prescribes our work, paying particular attention to the Children Act 1989, 2004 and the Children & Families Act 2014
5. To work within the Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2015
6. To work in accordance with the Organisation's Health and Safety policies.
7. To work in accordance with the Fellowship's Equal Opportunities policies.
8. To do sleep-in duties and work a rota as required.
9. To perform domestic duties as required by the Manager or Deputy.
10. To perform such additional tasks as may be required by the Manager.

#### **Work with Families**

1. To be involved in the system of keyworking.
2. To work in partnership with parents, colleagues, social workers and other agencies to improve the service offered to families.
3. To liaise closely with the staff team in establishing the desired content of contracts and plans of work for each parent.
4. As a keyworker to liaise closely with parents and social worker in drawing up contract and plan of work.
5. To work with and alongside parents on the tasks of daily living.
6. To enable parents to acquire the skills of parenting and independent living.
7. To monitor and supervise parents where necessary in the care of their children.
8. To be involved in the assessment of parents in the care of their children.
9. To share with parents the content of all reports personally compiled before wider distribution.
10. To encourage parents to participate in house activities and groups.
11. To inform parents of the community facilities available to them and to encourage their appropriate use.
12. To be involved in the resettlement of a family as required in consultation with the Resettlement Worker.

#### **Administration**

1. To keep records of the day to day running of the house using the house diary, message book and daily report sheets on individual families.
2. To write reports for reviews, court, end of placement etc. as appropriate using computer.
3. To attend case conferences, reviews, planning meetings as required.
4. To attend court hearings and give evidence when appropriate.

5. In consultation with the Manager or Deputy to liaise with outside agencies in order to make use of resources available in the community to enhance the work with parents and children.
6. To stimulate referrals and be involved in the selection of new families.
7. To carry out various administrative tasks as appropriate e.g. collection of weekly charges.
8. To attend House Committee meetings as required.
9. In consultation with the Manager or Deputy to liaise with outside agencies in promoting the work of St. Michael's Fellowship by receiving visitors, students etc.

### **Staff Development**

1. To attend supervision with either the Manager or Deputy and appraisal sessions, participating in the production of own appraisal.
2. To attend appropriate training courses as arranged in order to meet those training needs identified by appraisal and to enhance professional development and skills in line with the Organisations' training policies.
3. To attend group consultancy sessions with outside consultant.
4. To attend weekly staff meetings

These are the normal duties which the employer requires at the date of appointment. However, it is necessary for all staff to be flexible and all employees may be required from time to time to perform other duties as may be required by the employer for the efficient running of the organisation.

This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

## Job Specification

### **POST: Family Assessment Practitioner**

#### **SKILLS:**

Essential: Interpersonal  
Literacy, a high standard  
Accurate recording  
Report writing  
Word processing

Desirable: Counselling  
Assessment

#### **PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:**

Essential: To have worked with people from multi-cultural backgrounds  
To have worked as a member of a team  
To have worked with children and/or parents  
To have worked with adolescents (52 Palace Road)  
To have worked with people with a history of psychiatric illness (84 Herne Hill Road)  
To have worked with people with learning disabilities (46 Herne Hill)

Desirable: To have worked residentially  
To have worked in a residential family unit  
To have worked with people who have been abused  
To have worked with families  
To have worked with people with a history of psychiatric illness

#### **KNOWLEDGE:**

Essential: Independent living skills  
Parenting skills  
Partnership with parents  
Child development

Desirable: Current legislation especially Children Act '89, 2004 and Children & Families Act 2014  
Signs of child abuse  
Child abuse procedures  
Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2015  
Use of written agreements  
Keyworking  
Importance of play  
Effects of abuse on a parent  
Child care  
The benefits system  
Psychiatric illness  
Child sexual abuse  
Open access to files

## **QUALIFICATIONS:**

Essential: None

Desirable: CQSW  
Diploma/Degree in Social Work  
C.S.S.  
First Aid  
Clean driving licence  
Counselling certificate

## **OTHER QUALITIES RELATING TO POST:**

A sense of humour  
Flexibility  
Commitment  
Non-judgmental  
A skill that could be shared  
Willingness to learn

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

St. Michael's affirms the principles contained in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child. We recognise the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family without distinction and without discrimination of any kind, recognising and valuing differences in the child's or his or her parent's, legal guardian's or other carer's race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, political, or other opinion, national ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. We believe in the promotion of the common good and the achievement of natural and social justice.