



Head of Policy and Influencing NI Information Pack

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Introduction

Dear Candidate

Thank you very much for your interest in becoming the Head of Policy and Influencing in Northern Ireland for the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS).

The successful candidate will be joining the organisation at a hugely exciting time in its evolution as we build further on our role as the leading influencer and advocate on behalf of deaf children across Northern Ireland, the wider UK and beyond.

We work around agile principles and we organise ourselves into self-organising chapters. You'll be in a chapter of like-minded and skilled specialists, experts and emerging experts in our 'Activate' chapter who have skills around campaigning and influencing across the UK. You can read more about our structure elsewhere in this information pack.

We are looking for someone with a specialism in policy and campaigning in Northern Ireland at a senior level.

A natural collaborator, you will proactively manage relationships with politicians and other key decision makers as well as acting as senior representative for the organisation in the media and on high level groups, coalitions and networks.

We've put a little information about our organisation in this information pack, but there's so much more to learn from our website at www.ndcs.org.uk.

We're working with our NI search partners, Engage, who will be very happy to field any initial queries you might have about the role.

If you think you could thrive with us and are open to new concepts and ideas we would love to hear from you.

Mike Hobday

Chief Policy Officer

Alison Worsley

Chapter Lead – Activate



Who we are

The National Deaf Children's Society is a £25 million turnover charity, with 227 FTE staff (figures at March 2022). We're dedicated to making every moment count – from the time a child's deafness is identified to their first day at school and beyond.

We're here to transform the futures of as many deaf children and young people as possible, in the UK and around the world.

We provide services to the families of deaf children and we influence national and local governments across the UK to remove the barriers to the success of deaf children. We will ensure that the NHS in Northern Ireland is effective at identifying deafness in babies and children and follows the quality standards that Ministers approved recently. We want education to provide early years support for the families of newly identified deaf children and we want nurseries and schools to have specialist support so that deaf children learn in an environment that meets their needs.



Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision

Our vision is a world without barriers for every deaf child.

Our mission

Together we overcome the social and educational barriers that hold deaf children back.



Our values

We're game changers: We innovate, push boundaries and ask challenging questions. We try new things and we're not afraid to fail.

We champion every deaf child: We're people-centred and put deaf children's needs at the heart of everything we do. We're here for every deaf child with every level of deafness.

We make an impact: We're ambitious and we won't stop until we've broken down every barrier. We work fast to give families what they need and make a lasting difference

We're united: We stand side by side with families, professionals and supporters. Together we're an unstoppable force for deaf children's rights.

Our beliefs

1. Deaf children can do anything other children can do, given the right support from the start.
2. Effective language and communication skills lie at the heart of deaf children and young people's social, emotional and intellectual development.
3. Families are the most important influence on deaf children and young people, and need clear, balanced information to make informed choices.
4. Deaf children should be involved in decisions which affect them as early as possible.
5. Deaf children should be valued by society and have the same opportunities as any other child.

What we do

Services for professionals

We offer a wide range of services for professionals who work with



deaf children and young people. These include information resources, training courses. We also offer a range of commissioned programmes that we can deliver directly to their service users.

Services for families

Families are the most important influence on deaf children and deaf young people, and families need clear, balanced information to make informed choices. We provide a helpline to point them in the right direction, and offer support



through our Advice and Guidance Officers. Education Appeals Specialists help families get the best for their children. We have a range of publications and online events, and facilitate membership of key parents forums and panels that help shape service provision.

We also have lots of information online to help families find the right technology for their child.

Events for parents, carers and families

Our events are suitable for families of children and young people with all types and levels of deafness. They cover a variety of topics and issues, from finding out your child is deaf or has a hearing loss, to supporting them as they become a young adult.



Membership is completely free, and provides access to benefits like one-to-one support and tailored information, and much more.

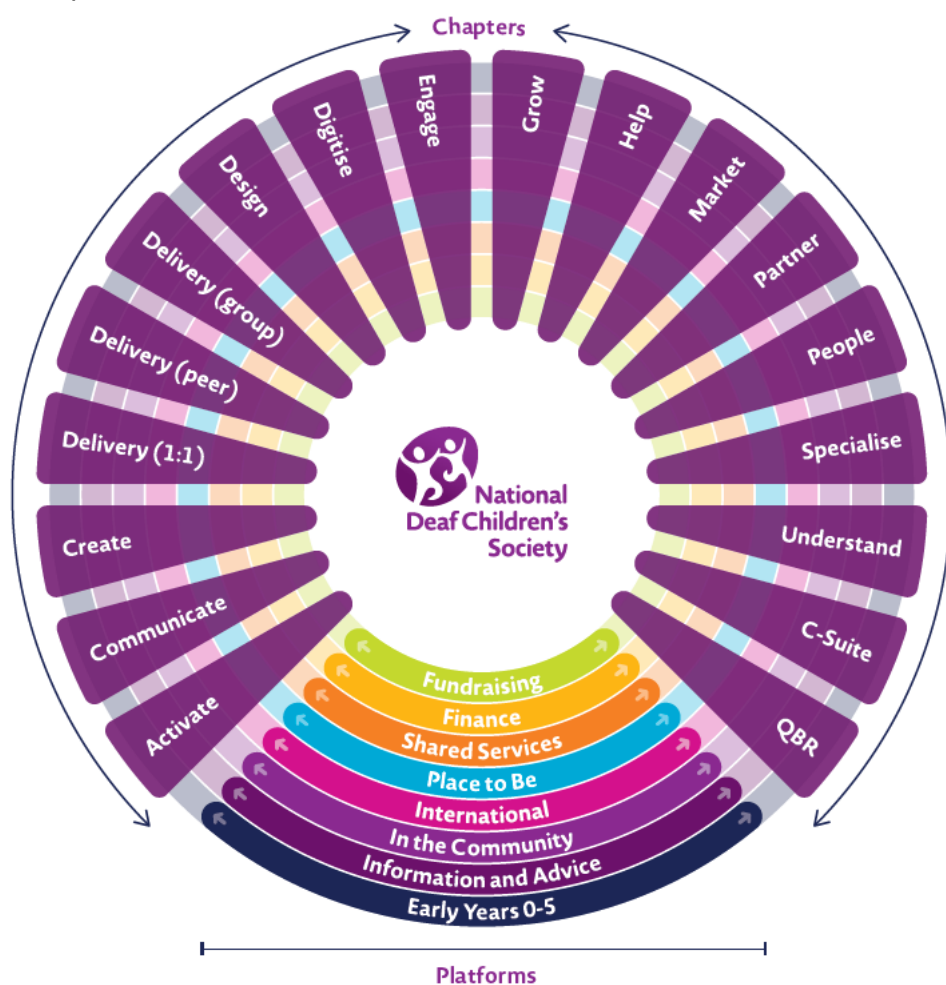
Connecting families

Our 'Connecting Families' team works to ensure we can provide opportunities for people to connect with other families with deaf children and young people, however they want to. Be it online, by accessing [Your Community](#) or social media channels, or meeting up and joining in with their local deaf children's society.

How we're organised

Our new strategy started in April 2023 and we transformed ourselves into an Agile Organisation to support its delivery.

Agile organisations are characterised by a flat hierarchy, self-organizing teams, and a focus on collaboration and innovation. We're removing our old, traditional team structures and directorates. In the NDCS's agile structure, the charity uses a series of "platforms," which are based on the key areas of its strategy, for example 'early years support'; 'information and advice' and 'in the community'. Each platform has a "Lead" who is responsible for setting priorities and commissioning "squads" to undertake pieces of work. Squads are cross-functional teams that are composed of people with different skills and expertise.



Staff at the NDCS are organised into "chapters," which are groups of people with similar skills; in this case the "activate" chapter, consisting of people who have skills around campaigning and influencing across the UK. Chapters are self-organising, which means that they are responsible for setting their own goals and priorities. This gives staff the opportunity to take ownership of their work and to collaborate with others in different areas of the charity.

Here are some of the benefits of the NDCS's agile structure:

- Increased collaboration: The agile structure encourages collaboration between people from different teams and departments. This can lead to better decision-making and more innovative solutions.
- Increased efficiency: The agile structure eliminates unnecessary bureaucracy and allows teams to focus on getting things done. This can lead to faster delivery of projects and services.
- Increased agility: The agile structure allows the NDCS to adapt quickly to changes in the environment. This is important in a fast-paced and ever-changing world.



Overall, the NDCS's agile structure is a well-designed approach to organising a charity. It is designed to help the charity achieve its strategic goals in a more efficient and effective way.

Role Description

Head of Policy and Influencing (Northern Ireland) and Chapter Member – Activate

This role sits within the Activate Chapter and is supported by the Chapter Lead.

Salary range:	£41,175-£48,634 per annum (35 hours) Grade N1
Hours:	21 hrs
Location:	Home-based (Northern Ireland) with some attendance at the Belfast Office
Contract:	Permanent
Level of disclosure check:	Basic

Principal contacts

a) Internal

- Chapter Lead – Activate
- Chapter Members – Activate (responsible for campaigning and influencing across the UK) and in particular the Policy and Campaigns Officer (Northern Ireland)
- Chief Policy Officer
- Other chapters, particularly; Communicate, Engage, Partner, Understand and Specialise (for example working with specialist policy advisers, media officers and researchers)
- All Northern Ireland-based staff

b) External

- Politicians across all political parties, including party staff and special advisers
- Senior civil servants
- Professionals and professional bodies
- Voluntary sector organisations, campaigning organisations and think tanks
- Media
- Funders
- Families with deaf children and individuals including local groups

About the Activate Chapter

We will influence, persuade and engage with decision-makers across the UK to ensure that deaf children and their families receive the support they need from public bodies and services.

About the role

This role is pivotal to engage decision makers and opinion formers in Northern Ireland. You will use your understanding of the political context in Northern Ireland and the UK to build relationships, influence, and campaign to achieve positive change for deaf children and their families in Northern Ireland.

As a Chapter Member at the National Deaf Children's Society, you'll be in a Chapter of like-minded and skilled specialists, experts, and emerging experts. In the Activate Chapter this means people who have skills around campaigning and influencing across the UK.

Chapters are self-organising, and every member has a vital role to play, sharing their skills, knowledge and experience and learning and developing together. Led by the Chapter Lead all Chapter Members will value and respect each other's contribution and learn and develop collaboratively.

With a specialism in policy and campaigning in Northern Ireland at a senior level, part of your time would be spent using your skills, knowledge and expertise to work in squads of between six to nine people on exciting and customer focused product development (for example specific campaigns, or research projects). This involves following agile values and principles and working collaboratively with the product owner and colleagues to deliver on the strategic objectives and value for our customers.

You'll be given direction on what needs to be achieved and the freedom to achieve it. You may be working on a few squads at any one time. Alongside this there will be a degree of operational tasks (for example engaging with key organisations, networks and coalitions) which will be delivered in your chapter with support and directed from the Chapter Lead.

What might a day in the life look like?

- Proactively managing relationships with politicians, other key decision-makers and senior civil servants in Northern Ireland, representing the organisation with credibility and influence.
- Acting as a senior representative for the organisation in Northern Ireland in the media and on high level groups and coalitions and networks, ensuring the position of our organisation is effectively articulated.
- Advising on approaches; planning and delivering influencing and campaigning activity to achieve the greatest positive impact for deaf children in Northern Ireland.
- Identifying emerging influencing opportunities and campaigns based on local insight and support the delivery of targeted changes in line with our organisational strategy.
- Sourcing relevant data and research and feeding into analysis of key issues affecting deaf children, young people, and their families in Northern Ireland.

- Producing and circulating written materials to engage key stakeholders in our campaigns
- Increasing the number of active campaigners in the Campaigns Network in Northern Ireland and their propensity to take campaign actions
- Maintaining knowledge and demonstrating best practice in campaign strategies; campaigner engagement; campaign messaging; and campaign tools including media and social media
- Maintaining knowledge and demonstrating best practice in influencing strategies/techniques relevant to each nation of the UK, including political engagement, tactics and messaging.
- Supported by the chapter lead you will work in your squads and on operational tasks as well as contributing to evolving 'centre of excellence' for your skill set.
- When working in squads you will work in harmony to build, test, and deliver products and services that create value for customers
- Maintaining a focus on the task in hand, developing features through working in sprints.
- Bring your knowledge, skills, and expertise to develop products incrementally.
- Communicating clearly with squad members and other stakeholders
- Reflecting on progress and performance - always looking to improve and keep momentum.
- Ensuring that customers can directly influence the features of a product and service
- Sharing wisdom, experience, and knowledge with others

Who are you?

- You're passionate about working as part of a team and sharing and developing your skills, knowledge, and expertise in a collaborative environment
- You have a can-do attitude and are focused on achieving outcomes
- You're happy to share your thoughts, skills, knowledge, and experience
- You have an open mindset and embrace new concepts and ideas
- You're a natural collaborator
- You're adaptable within a changeable environment
- You thrive in an agile product design and delivery environment

What will be in your toolkit?

- Strong digital skills and a sound understanding of agile values and principles
- A commitment to the organisation's culture
- Comfort with ambiguity
- Bravery, courage and an appetite for risk taking
- An exclusive focus on customers
- An enthusiasm for giving and receiving continual feedback

Disclosure check

This role requires a basic disclosure check. This post will be working in environments where deaf children and young deaf adults up to age 25 may be present.

Our expectations

We expect all staff to:

- abide by and promote our policy of *Informed Choice*, our Vision and Values, Code of Conduct and *Equal Opportunities Statement*.
- take responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.
- develop an understanding of deaf awareness and British Sign Language (BSL) skills whilst employed with the charity.

The National Deaf Children's Society is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young adults and expects staff and volunteers to share that commitment.



Person Specification

Who are you and what will be in your toolkit?	How it's measured
Essential Criteria	A - Application I - Interview T - Test or Presentation Q - Qualification
1. Good knowledge of devolution and political systems/structures in Northern Ireland, as well as opportunities to influence them	A, I, T
2. Significant experience in a policy, public affairs or campaigning environment including proven ability to handle complex and sensitive issues	A, I, T
3. Demonstrable success in changing law or public policy through either campaigning or influencing activities	A, I
4. Excellent and accurate creative writing skills with a proven ability to compose effective briefing papers, articles, publicity and campaign materials. You should demonstrate consistent attention to detail and competent editing and proofreading skills.	A, I, T
5. Strong organisational, administrative and research skills, with the ability to assimilate complex ideas and issues quickly, and to identify and develop appropriate solutions and responses.	A, I, T
6. Demonstrable ability to manage multiple priorities against tight deadlines.	A, I
7. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills. You should have the proven ability to represent the NDCS in public and liaise with internal and external contacts at all levels, including politicians, parents or carers of deaf children and others associated with the field of deafness.	A, I
8. You're passionate about working as part of a team and sharing and developing your skills, knowledge, and expertise in a collaborative environment.	A, I
9. You have a can-do attitude and are focused on achieving outcomes	A, I
10. You have an open mindset and embrace new concepts and ideas	A, I

Desirable Criteria

How it's measured

A - Application

I - Interview

T - Test or Presentation

Q - Qualification

1. Strong digital skills and a sound understanding of agile values and principles	I
2. BSL Level 1 or above, a good level of deaf awareness and/or working towards BSL level 1 or above. Understanding and experience of deafness and British Sign Language skills or a willingness to learn.	I, Q
3. Confident in using Customer Relationship Management databases with a good overall understanding of the applications of such systems.	I



How to apply

Please forward a **CV, maximum three A4 sides**, together with a completed **Supplementary Questions form** available from www.engageexec.co.uk, ensuring you have provided your contact details, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with from the recruitment timetable. You will also be asked to submit a separate **equality form** (see below).

The deadline is **Noon on Monday 25 September 2023**. Applications should be made by email to: **patrick@co3.org.uk**

Contact Patrick Minne on 07792 509003 if you have any queries about the role or the application process.

Equality Monitoring and Criminal Convictions Disclosure

Along with the CV and Form, you will be asked to complete and return the Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Criminal Convictions Disclosure Form in a separate document. Neither of these will be disclosed to anyone involved in shortlisting your application.

Disability

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act a person is disabled if they have, or have had, “a physical or mental impairment which has, or has had, a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

If you consider yourself to have a disability relevant to the position for which you are applying, please contact Patrick Minne so that we can process your application fairly, make any specific arrangements for your interview, and make any necessary reasonable adjustments or adaptations, or provide any aids to assist you in completing the duties of the post if appointed.

Equal Opportunities

NDCS is an Equal Opportunities Employer and all applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Timeline

CV, Supplementary Questions and Equality Monitoring and Criminal Convictions forms to be submitted

Noon, Monday 25 September 2023

First Interviews

Monday 2 or Tuesday 3 October 2023 tbc

Second Interviews (may include a seen or unseen task)

Monday 9 or Tuesday 10 October 2023 tbc

Final Interviews

Monday 16 or Tuesday 17 October 2023 tbc



Executive Search

Engage Executive Talent is a leading executive search firm, specialising in the recruitment of senior executives for a wide range of organisations. We have a proven track record of identifying and recruiting top talent for our clients, and we are now looking for a senior executive to join our team. The successful candidate will be responsible for identifying, recruiting and managing the recruitment process for senior executives across a range of industries. The role will involve a high level of strategic thinking and a strong understanding of the recruitment process. The successful candidate will be a proactive, self-motivated individual with a proven track record of successful recruitment. The role will involve a high level of strategic thinking and a strong understanding of the recruitment process. The successful candidate will be a proactive, self-motivated individual with a proven track record of successful recruitment.

Please address any enquiries relating to the advertised position, and your submission, to NDCS's NI recruitment partners:

Patrick Minne



Tel: 07792 509003

Email: patrick@co3.org.uk

www.engageexec.co.uk



Enquiries unrelated to this recruitment can be addressed to:

National Deaf Children's Society

Ground Floor South
Castle House
37-45 Paul Street London
EC2A 4LS

Tel: 020 7490 8656

Fax: 020 7251 5020

Email: ndcs@ndcs.org.uk

Registered Charity: England & Wales (1016532) & Scotland (SC040779)