

Sands
Application Information
Head of Bereavement Support Services

May 2022

About Sands

Every day in the UK, 13 babies are stillborn or die shortly after birth.

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity and exists to reduce the number of babies dying and to support anyone affected by the death of a baby, before, during or shortly after birth.



Sands provides bereavement support services both nationally through its Freephone helpline, mobile app, online community and resources, as well as locally through a network of around 100 regional support groups based across the UK and run by trained befrienders.



Sands works in partnership with professionals, trusts and health boards and offers a range of training programmes and bereavement care resources to ensure that every bereaved parent and family receives the best possible care wherever they are in the UK.



Sands promotes improvements in practice and supports research to better understand the causes of baby deaths and save babies' lives.

Sands raises awareness of baby loss and works with governments, key influencers and other stakeholders to make reducing the number of babies dying a priority nationally and locally.

Over the past 44 years, Sands has grown into a national charity with a powerful vision shared by dedicated volunteers, fundraisers, members, donors, healthcare professionals, partners, staff and bereaved parents and families.

Sands has grown its income by over 40% since 2012 and, as part of our strategic plan, is focusing on how we can make the biggest difference to the lives of bereaved families and save babies' lives. To find out more, visit www.sands.org.uk

our vision at Sands is for a world where fewer babies die and anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the best care and support for as long as they need, wherever they live in the UK.

Join us and help create a world where fewer babies die.

Sands Staff Benefits

Annual Leave

Staff receive 28 days annual leave per annum pro rata, plus bank holidays. Staff will be required to take 3 days annual leave during the period between Christmas & New Year.

Employee Assistance Service

As part of its commitment to employee wellbeing, Sands offers all Staff access to the Bupa Employee Assistance service which offers free and confidential counselling and wellbeing support. Support is available on a range of issues including legal, financial, emotional, health and work related concerns.

Sand Cycle to Work Scheme

Sands has teamed up with Cycle Solutions to provide a Cycle to Work Scheme, which you can join to make considerable savings on the cost of a new bike and equipment.

Sands Pension Scheme

Subject to eligibility, you will be automatically enrolled into the Aegon Personal Pension scheme as soon as your employment commences. You can decide whether to remain in the scheme and/or make additional voluntary contributions if you wish.

Flexible Working

All Staff are able to apply for flexible working with effect from their first date of employment.

Maternity Pay

Staff on maternity leave are paid their full salary for the first 26 weeks of their period of leave.

Leave for the Death of a Baby or Pregnancy Loss

Any member of Staff affected by the death of baby or pregnancy loss will be granted leave paid at their normal salary, regardless of the type of loss.

Sands is a vibrant, growing charity!

With a clear strategy, Sands is repositioning as a learning, developing organisation which aims to achieve excellence through people and offers a collegiate, collaborative working environment – making it an especially exciting time to join the charity!

Sands is an inclusive and diversity-friendly employer. We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age or any other category protected by law.

About the role

Sands is looking to recruit an outstanding and people-focused candidate to lead our Bereavement Support Services Team. This is a high-profile role which is responsible for ensuring that all those approaching Sands for support receive an excellent service that meets their individual needs, that the quality of support provided remains consistently high and all team members are appropriately managed and supported. The role provides an opportunity to make real change by driving the organisational and team strategies to make the support that Sands provides accessible to bereaved families from all backgrounds within the community, as well as groups at higher risk of experiencing stillbirth and neonatal death.

With demonstrable experience of delivering and managing bereavement support services at a strategic level, you will possess an excellent understanding of grief theory and bereavement support and be qualified accordingly. Additionally, you will have experience of working with, and providing services to diverse communities and have a good understanding of their specific needs.

As this role will require you to lead a highly-motivated and diverse team who are all home-based, you will have excellent people management skills and be able to support your team accordingly.

You will have outstanding verbal and written communication skills and be able to develop high quality services which remain responsive to the changing needs of external stakeholders. With excellent relationship building skills, you will demonstrate a high level of empathy in all aspects of your work.

A high level of project management skills is essential, as is the ability to produce complex statistical reports and analyse data and trends. A thorough understanding of safeguarding in the context of baby loss and a commitment to ensuring excellent practice is also required.

To apply:

Please submit your CV, together with a supporting statement that demonstrates how you meet the criteria in the person specification to recruitment@sands.org.uk. Please also complete the Diversity and Equality Monitoring Form and send this with your application.

Closing date for applications : 29th May 2022

Interviews: w/c 6th or 13th June 2022

As we have limited staff resources, we are unable to provide candidates with feedback about their applications. **Interviews will be held online via Zoom.**

Job Description

Job Title:	Head of Bereavement Support Services
Responsible to:	Director of Volunteering & Bereavement Support
Location:	Home-Based
Contract:	Permanent
Salary:	£49,000 per annum plus £312 Home Worker Allowance per annum
Hours:	35 hours per week

Main purpose of the job:

This is a new and key role at Sands heading up the UK's leading bereavement support services team for baby loss. It is an opportunity to make real change by driving the organisational and team strategies to reach more people and higher risk groups, through traditional and digital/innovative channels.

Leading a dedicated team of 14+ you can shape the future of service delivery, and ensure Sands provides support whenever and wherever people need us.

You will work with colleagues and teams across the organisation to ensure best practice is embedded at all key touch points and play a role ensuring that significant events and moments in the year are providing the right support, information and activities.

You will work with the team, Director and CEO to help drive change and best practice in the sector through thought leadership and implementation of best practice.

The overall aims of this role are to;

- drive the bereavement support strategy for Sands to deliver choice, excellence and support for all
- ensure that innovation and thought leadership enable Sands to continue to evolve, improve and develop the bereavement support that is offered
- ensure that excellent bereavement support is embraced and fully integrated across all teams at Sands
- effectively inspire, support and manage the BSS team
- ensure that those approaching the organisation receive excellent support services that meet their needs;
- ensure that all support services have the capacity to grow in order to meet demand in both diversity and capacity, with particular focus on digital support;

- ensure that the quality of all support offered remains consistently and demonstrably high and that there is a constant striving for diversification and improvement;
- Provide safeguarding expertise and process as Deputy Safeguarding Lead for Sands

Principal tasks and responsibilities:

Strategy, planning and budget management

- Provide thought leadership with an innovative and strategic approach
- In conjunction with the Director of Volunteering and Bereavement Support, develop and implement an effective strategy for Bereavement Support Services across the UK and inspiring others working in this area
- Demonstrate impact; set and report on annual objectives and KPIs for the Bereavement Support Services (BSS) team
- Maintain strategic oversight of the BSS team ensuring opportunities are maximised and planning is joined-up
- Develop, monitor and maintain the annual budget for BSS activity and support opportunities to secure external funding
- Be a member of the Leadership Group contributing to key decisions relating to strategic direction as well as delivery of objectives
- Lead and/or contribute to relevant cross-organisational projects and programmes for Sands

Leadership and development of Sands Bereavement Support Services

- Motivate and lead the BSS team which currently comprises of 2 Bereavement Support Leads, 12 BSS Officers (2 specialist for Black and Black British/ South Asian support) and a digital co-ordinator
- Set individual and team objectives. Coach, support and encourage continued professional development amongst team members
- Review, manage and improve staff performance as required
- Lead change programmes, including supporting behavioural change, working across Sands with different teams to provide leadership and direction
- Work with colleagues and across the Sands Community to provide the best bereavement support, emotional wellbeing and improved mental health
- Offer internal support opportunities for colleagues across teams
- Identify the key changes needed in support of our strategic objectives

i) Sands services

- Ensure that Sands services offer consistently excellent bereavement support to anyone who contacts the organisation through their preferred channel, and to those receiving support via social media. Sands support channels currently comprise:

Online community
Online support spaces
Social media posts and interaction
Telephone Helpline

- Strategically plan the continuous development of support across the Sands Community support, taking an innovative approach to ensure that they meet the needs of bereaved people from all backgrounds and reflect Sands online voice and identity.
- Audit all Sands' support channels and online spaces for quality and impact
- Maintain 'Helplines Partnership' accreditation status.
- Organize external validation of services in consultation with Director and CEO.
- Co-create the bereavement support offer for social media alongside the Engagement Team for Sands calendar of events eg Baby Loss Awareness Week and Sands Awareness Month
- Work closely with the Assistant Director of Income and Engagement and In Memory Manager to develop Lights of Love, Garden Day, Baby Loss Awareness Week and In Memory work as well as accompanying merchandise/materials.
- Ensure effective and collaborative working with the Engagement Team to enable excellence in BSS content, responses to requests for support and smooth processes.

ii) Sands Bereavement Support Materials

- Ensure that all Sands' bereavement support materials are factually accurate, reflect up-to-date practice in bereavement support and are accessible and inclusive.
- Design new bereavement support materials as needed.
- Liaise with external providers to commission materials and resources eg translations, parent engagement projects, audio visual assets, alongside the Engagement team.

iii) Sands Bereavement Support Events

- Support the delivery of Sands annual Remembrance events, working in collaboration with Assist. Director of I&E, and Community Events & Engagement teams ensuring they provide excellent bereavement support, reflect Sands' strategic aims and any wider campaign/awareness focus based on cross-team strategies.

iv) Sands Volunteers

- Work closely with the volunteering team to ensure volunteers across Sands receive the support and input needed eg Sands United, Sands Support Groups

- Ensure the Befriender Programme Coordinator provides spaces for volunteer befrienders to de-brief on a monthly basis, online or via other suitable media.
- Ensure a consistently high-quality befriending service overseeing the recruitment and screening of candidates based on BSS standards.
- Review and audit befriender training content to ensure it remains consistent with current grief theory and BSS best practice
- Oversee and support the work of all BSS staff working with Befrienders

v) Sands Training Team

- Ensure specialist knowledge of bereavement and grief theory are included in Sands training packages
- Liaise with HR to organize and run Bereavement Awareness training for all new staff
- Alongside HR support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of staff in relation to bereavement support

vi) Sands Fundraising & Engagement Teams

- Maintain close links with the Fundraising Teams acknowledging the close links between In Memory fundraising, tribute funds, legacy-giving and the bereavement journey
- Contribute to development of appeals processes and fundraiser support content

vii) Introduce quality systems

- Ensure provision of statistical data on delivery of bereavement support services.
- Introduce KPIs and impact assessment to measure service performance and use the results to propose improvements to the service
- Regularly review trends emerging from issues raised by service users who contact Sands via any outlet.
- Ensure data is available to support fundraising bids and communications campaigns.
- Systematically evaluate service user response to all Sands bereavement services to ensure these remain relevant to target audiences.
- Work with Support Leads to ensure all staff providing direct support via our channels and those moderating BSS online spaces receive a full induction and training programme which meets THP accreditation standard and ongoing professional development needs.
- Train BSS Staff on an ongoing basis in response to new issues which emerge from the line or trends noted by other teams at Sands.
- Extend quality assurance to ensure that all staff/ responding via BSS support channels are appropriately trained and supported.
- Monitor Safeguarding data on a regular basis and act as the second line of support for BSSO's in a safeguarding situation
- Ensure that BSS are compliant and uphold Data Protection procedures and work with BSS Digital Coordinator to ensure relevance to BSS of any data collected
- Ensure relevant staff receive clinical supervision according to Sands' clinical supervision policy.
- Store supervision records for audit

As an Ambassador for Sands

This role requires you to foster excellent working relationships with all bereavement support service stakeholders across the baby loss community such as: bereaved parents; health professionals; researchers and funders and professionally represent Sands at external conferences and fora as required.

i) Develop excellent working relationships

- Be a 'hands on' manager and develop warm, empathic and trusting relationships with all bereavement support services staff.
- Facilitate, alongside the Support Leads supportive and inspiring face to face/virtual awaydays with the BSS team.
- Offer regular 1-1s with direct reports, both face-to-face and virtually.
- Be available when necessary for emergency communications as Head of Team.

ii) Other regular duties

Attendance at internal meetings

- Regularly attend and actively contribute to the Sands Senior Management Group' meeting.
- Attend other Sands' meetings as required, including staff away days.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role as required by the Director of Volunteering and Bereavement Support, Chief Executive and Board of Trustees.

This Job Description is not contractual and is liable to change over time with prior notice given.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Importance	Criteria
Essential	An outstanding, 'hands on', people manager with a positive, warm, management style, who can support and motivate staff to achieve their potential. Able to develop empathic and trusting relationships with all bereavement support services staff
Essential	Experience of delivering excellent support services through a variety of channels including in the community including telephone, email, online forum and social media.
Essential	Highly organised and experienced in successful project management.
Essential	Experience of successfully managing a telephone helpline.
Essential	A deep understanding of grief theory and bereavement support.
Essential	Experience/qualified in training and CPD required to provide support services.
Essential	Willing to keep up to date with developments within the bereavement and trauma fields.
Essential	Experience of working within a diverse community in an holistic and non-judgemental way. Able to challenge positively.
Essential	Experience of successfully introducing and maintaining a QA system that is externally recognised
Essential	A thorough understanding of safeguarding in the context of baby loss and a commitment to ensuring excellent practice
Essential	Able to develop high quality services which remain responsive to the changing needs of external stakeholders
Essential	Experience of producing excellent statistical reports and measuring data and trends.
Essential	Outstanding verbal and written communication skills and experience of drafting well written papers and reports.
Essential	Commitment to travelling to meet staff as required.
Essential	Able to represent Sands professionally.
Essential	A demonstrable commitment to Sands aims
Desirable	Experience of working with volunteers
Desirable	Holding a clinical supervision qualification
Desirable	A fully qualified counsellor or psychotherapist, accredited by a recognised body