



Sands
Application Information
Public Affairs Officer

July 2023

About Sands

Sands exists to save babies' lives and ensure that anyone affected by pregnancy loss or baby death receives the support and care they need.

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 more than 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 policy and practice and supports research to better understand the causes of deaths and save babies' lives.

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

Since 1978, Sands has grown into a UK-wide charity with a powerful vision shared by dedicated supporters, healthcare professionals, partners, staff and bereaved parents and families.

Sands has grown its income by more than double since 2019 to £7m 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 Services

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.

Sands 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 Aviva 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.

Life Insurance

All Staff are covered by a Life Insurance Policy which pays 3 x annual salary to nominated beneficiaries. Staff also have access to Canada Life's WeCare wellbeing platform including 24/7 online GP, mental health counselling and financial and legal support. Additionally Staff have access to Bereavement Counselling and a Probate Helpline.

Flexible Working

All Staff can 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

This role in our award winning public affairs and campaigns team plays a pivotal part in delivering impactful campaigns which influence public policy to save babies' lives and ensure that anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the care and support they need.

A key part of this role will be co-ordinating the work of the influential All-Party Parliamentary Group on Baby Loss for which Sands provides the secretariat and will involve travel to London.

You will be a great communicator with experience of using a variety of tactics and public affairs approaches to influence public policy and political agendas, along with the ability to build relationships at all levels with politicians, civil servants, other charities and professional bodies.

A high level of flexibility and proactivity is essential, together with the ability to work well across different teams and on your own initiative. You will have the skills to be able to absorb and understand complex issues and get them across in a clear and concise way. Your written work will be of high quality and you will be adept at planning meetings and events.

You will therefore need to demonstrate a well-organised approach, be able to cope with demanding situations and meet tight deadlines.

In addition to the above, you will understand and empathise with the needs of bereaved parents and have an excellent understanding of diversity and inclusion.

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.

CVs and supporting statements should be sent as attachments to an email in either Word or PDF format. The title of the attachments should be your first name, surname and either CV or supporting statement e.g. "Robert Harvey CV"

Please also complete the Diversity and Equality Monitoring Form and send this with your application.

Closing date for applications : 21 August 2023

Interview Date: week commencing 4 September 2023

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

Job Description

Job Title:	Public Affairs Officer
Responsible to:	Head of Public Affairs & Campaigns
Department:	Research, Education and Policy
Location:	Home based with travel to London
Contract:	Permanent
Salary:	£33,750 per annum plus £312 Home Worker Allowance per annum
Hours:	Full Time – 35 Hours per week

Main Purpose

To deliver public affairs work which supports Sands external influencing activity to save babies lives and ensure that anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the care and support they need by placing these firmly on the agenda of parliamentarians, political parties and government departments:

1. Help build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in Westminster, Whitehall and devolved nations
 - Draft high quality public affairs content such as parliamentary questions and briefings for senior staff and politicians
 - Build and maintain productive relationships with MPs and their staff and ensure key information about Sands political contacts are up to date and stored in the relevant place, including the Sands database
 - Create and disseminate impactful resources to communicate policy asks and positions to political stakeholders
 - Monitor and record parliamentary activity of relevance to Sands
 - Deliver parliamentary events
 - Co-ordinate activity at political party conferences
 - Create and maintain public affairs resources for use across Sands
 - Work with colleagues in the devolved nations as required
2. Lead on the secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Baby Loss
 - Liaise with MPs and peers who are officers of the group, and their staff to:
 - organise meetings of the group, note take and distribute afterwards
 - maintain APPG on Baby Loss contacts, databases and APPG Register

- grow the membership of the group and increase awareness of its activity
 - deliver APPG campaigns, reports, meetings, events and debates
 - ensure APPG future planning and activity log is up to date and think ahead to future campaigning asks
 - maintain the APPG presence on Twitter.
3. Assist in public affairs aspects of campaigning activity including media and press inquiries
- Monitor political and policy developments in priority areas, update colleagues and where appropriate, assist in developing a response
 - Undertake evidence gathering projects to support Sands policy and public affairs work, including collating and analysing data and presenting findings in an accessible and engaging way
 - Ensure that the views of bereaved parents and families inform Sands public affairs activity and provide opportunities for Sands volunteers to lobby key stakeholders
 - Work with colleagues to support the production of press releases and responses to media inquiries, distributing to key political contacts
 - Ensure parliamentary work complements policy and campaigns activity during integrated campaigns
 - Support the creation of e-actions and other communications to key stakeholders

General

- Manage external suppliers as required
- Undertake any other tasks and responsibilities as reasonably required by The Head of Public Affairs and Campaigns and the Director of Research, Education and Policy, Chief Executive and Board of Trustees. Liaise regularly with other Sands departments/teams and keep up to date with what they are doing, working flexibly across the organisation
- Occasional evening/weekend working is likely.
- Promote the Sands vision and values at all times.

Person Specification

Skills/Experience		
Importance	Criteria	Assessment
1. Essential	Excellent interpersonal skills including proven ability to build and maintain productive relationships with key influencers and stakeholders, including politicians, campaigners and bereaved parents	Application and interview
2. Essential	Experience of supporting the delivery of public affairs aspects of impactful campaigns	Application and Interview
3. Essential	Experience in the use of a range of public affairs approaches, and in delivering political events	Application and Interview
4. Essential	Ability to absorb and understand complex issues and communicate them effectively to political, public and professional audiences	Application and Interview
5. Essential	Excellent verbal and written communication skills with experience of drafting briefings, digital content and other public affairs communications	Application and interview
6. Essential	Ability to represent Sands professionally, remaining politically neutral	Application and Interview
7. Essential	Experience of drafting media releases to support public affairs work	Application and Interview
8. Desirable	Experience of drafting media releases to support public affairs work	Application and Interview
9. Desirable	Experience of using a database	Application and Interview
Core Competencies		
Importance	Criteria	Assessment
10. Essential	Well organised with considerable attention to detail	Application and Interview
11. Essential	Able to work well in a team with the ability to support colleagues when required, as well as on your own initiative	Application and Interview

12. Essential	Have a flexible approach, and the ability to cope with demanding situations and work to tight deadlines	Application and Interview
13. Essential	Excellent understanding and advocacy of issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion	Application and Interview
14. Essential	A demonstrable commitment to and empathy with Sands' aims and comfortable working within a bereavement environment and talking to bereaved people	Application and Interview
15. Essential	Able to maintain a high level of confidentiality regarding sensitive and confidential information	Application and Interview
16. Essential	Able to travel to London for work events and meetings	Application and Interview
17. Desirable	Able to work occasional evenings and weekends and to undertake occasional travel throughout the UK	Application and Interview