



Sands
Application Information

Bereavement Support Services Officer

January 2026

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.

We provide bereavement support services both nationally through our Freephone helpline, 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.

Working in partnership with professionals, trusts and health boards, we offer 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.

Additionally, we promote improvements in practice and support 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.

Over the past 45 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 40% since 2012 and, as part of our strategic plan, is focusing on how we can make the biggest different 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.

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.

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 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 additional services from Legal and General including legal and financial support, a medical helpline, and a health and wellbeing platform. Additionally, Staff have access to a wide range of shopping offers and discounts, plus advice on finding and funding later life care for their loved ones or themselves.

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.

Tickets for Good

All Staff have membership of a platform which offers free and discounted tickets to a wide range of entertainment events.

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 offers support to anyone affected by the death of a baby.

Our Bereavement Support Services team provides a wide range of services including a freephone Helpline, Online Community, Social Media support, memory making resources and print materials in order to provide consistent, high-quality information and support to bereaved families.

In this role, you will provide consistent, high-quality emotional support to bereaved families who seek support from Sands. You will also personally provide support to families via our various bereavement support channels.

The Sands Helpline is currently open from 10.00am to 3.00pm from Monday to Friday, and also between 6.00pm and 9.00pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. You will be expected to work regular shifts on a rota basis.

With proven ability in providing bereavement-centred support in a variety of settings and channels, you will be able to demonstrate a sound understanding of, and empathy with, the issues surrounding the death of a baby.

You will have excellent verbal and written communication skills, and be able to use these appropriately to offer telephone and email support to bereaved families.

The ability to professionally represent the charity's views and positions clearly is essential, as are strong research skills and the ability to keep accurate and clear records in a variety of formats.

You will have effective time management skills and able to manage your own workload. The ability to reflect on your own practice and attend regular accredited clinical supervision is also essential. Previous experience of delivering professional trauma informed support is a pre-requisite for this role

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.

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. "Name CV"

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

Closing date for applications: 10th February 2026

Please note in accordance with past popularity of the role we will no longer accept applications once we receive 100 applications.

Interview Date: Week Commencing 2nd March 2026

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:	Bereavement Support Services Officer
Responsible to:	Bereavement Support Lead
Location:	Home-based, with occasional travel within the UK
Contract:	Permanent
Salary:	£25,257 per annum (£34,000 FTE) plus £232 per annum Home Working Allowance (£312 FTE)
Hours:	26 hours per week

Main Purpose of Job:

This is a key role in the Bereavement Support Services team. The team provides a wide range of services, including the Helpline, Online Community, memory making, and print materials.

The aim of this post is to provide consistent, high-quality emotional support to bereaved families who seek support from Sands.

The primary focus of this role is to work on the Sands Helpline as support officers, listening to callers and responding to emails. The helpline offers telephone and email support and is currently open from 10am-3pm from Monday to Friday; 6pm – 9pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; and has occasional extended opening for specific reasons.

Bereavement Support Services Officers (BSSO) will be expected to cover all regular opening hours on a rota basis. Flexibility to accommodate other external commitments will be considered. Each shift will start 30 minutes before the helpline opens and end 30 minutes after the helpline closes. If colleagues start work when the Helpline is already open, they will be expected to use the first hours of their shift to settle in and organize their work before starting calls and email responses.

The role will be split between work on the helpline and contributing to other strands of bereavement support work.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide immediate, sensitive digital and telephone, email and social media support to bereaved individuals and others who telephone or email the Sands Helpline.
- Lead online Group Support Sessions.
- Document key information from calls and emails and assist the Bereavement Support Leads to collate information and identify patterns, including providing support for the Online Community.
- Work with the team to ensure that the Helpline Partnerships accreditation standard is maintained.

- Support colleagues by handing over after each shift, highlighting issues of note or contact from repeat callers with additional needs.
- Collaborate on providing responses to emails and moderating posts on the Online Community as needed.
- Offer Digital Support via online channels like Facebook, Instagram and dedicated social media pages.
- Supporting other Sands teams in responding to enquiries and requests which include a bereavement support element. This may include attendance at online or in person events, and delivery of presentations and group sessions
- Contribute to team and organization-wide resources around bereavement support.
- To support Sands communication function in the area of bereavement support.
- Participate in mutual call shadowing (listening in and being listened to) as arranged.
- Attend regular group and monthly individual clinical supervision sessions to reflect on work and (Sands will fund these sessions on a monthly basis).
- Attend Team Meetings and training.
- Input to and attend key external Bereavement Support events.
- Use video conferencing to attend team meetings and organisation-wide staff meetings.
- Attend away days.
- Contribute to the ongoing review and development of bereavement support materials, website.
- Any other duties as commensurate with the role.

Person Specification

Importance	Criteria
Essential	Demonstrate an understanding of and empathy with the issues surrounding the death of a baby.
Essential	Proven ability to provide trauma informed support round issues of bereavement.
Essential	Demonstrate a clear, calm and considered telephone manner.
Essential	Excellent active listening skills
Essential	Demonstrate compassion for others and a non-judgemental attitude.
Essential	Evidence of professionalism and boundaries
Essential	Excellent verbal and written communication skills and ability to use these appropriately to offer telephone and email support to bereaved individuals and others contacting the helpline.
Essential	A thorough understanding of confidentiality and safeguarding.
Essential	Ability to represent professionally the views and positions of Sands clearly and distinctly from any personal opinions.
Essential	Demonstrate the ability for accurate and up-to-date record keeping.
Essential	Demonstrate strong research skills to be able to identify opportunities for external relationships or signposting to other organisations.
Essential	Able to manage own workload, be well organised and demonstrate strong time management skills.
Essential	Demonstrate a reliable, positive attitude towards work
Essential	Demonstrate a willingness to work well within a team.
Essential	Prepared to reflect on own practice and attend regular clinical supervision.
Essential	Willing to attend meetings as required.
Essential	Willing to keep skills up to date and attend training as necessary.
Essential	Willing to keep up to date with developments in bereavement support.
Essential	Have access to a private space for receiving and returning calls.
Desirable	A qualified counsellor from a BACP accredited course.