Participation & Family Engagement Worker

Job Specification & Terms and Conditions

Job Title and Grade	Participation & Family Engagement Worker
Closing Date	25th November 2026 at 5pm
Location of Post	Oberstown Children Detention Campus
Contract Type	Full -time Permanent
Salary Scale	The salary for this post ranges from €37,931 to €73,969 per annum and secure unit Allowance €2756.77 per annum pro rata
Working Hours	Full-time 39 hours per week. Successful candidate maybe required to work on a roster, including Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, and such additional hours from time to time as may be reasonable and necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties subject to the limits set down in the working time regulations.
Annual Leave	23 days annual leave pro rata, plus 10 bank holidays
Reporting Relationship	The person appointed to the position of Participation & Family Engagement Worker will work with the advocacy officer and be accountable to Senior Manager for services & integration The post holder will work in partnership with multidisciplinary colleagues across the campus and will establish collaborative relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including young people, families, statutory agencies and community organisations, to promote participation and improve outcomes for young people and their families.
Purpose of the Post	The Participation and Family Engagement Worker is responsible for promoting, developing and embedding a culture of meaningful participation and family engagement across Oberstown Children Detention Campus. The post holder will ensure that Families and young people are supported to express their views, participate in decisions that affect their lives and influence the development, delivery and evaluation of services in accordance with a rights-based approach. Working collaboratively with young people, families, carers, advocacy services, campus staff and external agencies, the post holder will create opportunities for children, young people and their families to actively contribute to care planning, service development, policy review and campus life. The role will support collaborative decision-making that recognises the strengths, experiences and perspectives of both young people and their families, while

	ensuring that the rights, wishes and best interests of the child remain central to all participation processes. The Participation and Family Engagement Worker will lead the implementation of the Oberstown Participation and Family Engagement Strategy, embedding participation as a shared responsibility across all campus departments. The post holder will promote innovative, inclusive and evidence-informed approaches that enable children, young people and families to influence individual decisions, organisational practice and strategic development. The role requires the development of trusting, respectful and trauma-informed relationships with young people and families, recognising the importance of participation in promoting wellbeing, strengthening family relationships and supporting successful reintegration into the community. The post holder will champion the principles of the Lundy Model of Participation, the National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensuring that participation is meaningful, inclusive, accessible and results in demonstrable influence and feedback. The Participation and Family Engagement Worker will contribute to continuous quality improvement by evaluating participation and family engagement initiatives, identifying emerging needs, promoting innovation and supporting a culture of learning, accountability and continuous improvement across the campus. The post holder will also provide practical and emotional support to families throughout a young person's placement, promote positive family relationships and help families access appropriate services and prepare for reintegration.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The Participation and Family Engagement Worker will:

- Build trusting, respectful and authentic relationships with young people to promote meaningful participation throughout their time in Oberstown.
- Ensure children and young people are supported to express their views, wishes and feelings and that these are listened to, respected and given due weight in accordance with their age, maturity and evolving capacity.
- Champion children's rights and promote a rights-based culture across the campus.
- Lead the implementation, monitoring and continuous development of the Oberstown Participation and Family Engagement Strategy.
- Embed participation across all campus departments, ensuring that participation is recognised as everyone's responsibility.

- Develop innovative opportunities for children and young people to participate in decisions affecting their daily lives, care planning, education, recreation and service development.
- Facilitate Children's Council meetings, forums, consultations, workshops, surveys and other participation initiatives.
- Ensure children receive timely, meaningful feedback demonstrating how their views have influenced decisions and service improvements.
- Develop child-friendly information, resources and communication tools to support informed participation.
- Promote inclusive participation practices that enable every young person to contribute regardless of communication needs, disability, language, culture or individual circumstances.
- Support young people to develop confidence, self-advocacy, leadership and decision-making skills.
- Promote participation as a protective factor that enhances wellbeing, resilience and positive outcomes.

Family Engagement, Support and Participation

- Develop and maintain positive, respectful and collaborative relationships with parents, carers and families.
- Create meaningful opportunities for families to participate in service development, policy review and evaluation where appropriate.
- Support families to understand their rights, responsibilities and opportunities to participate throughout the young person's placement.
- Facilitate family consultations, focus groups, information sessions and engagement forums.
- Ensure family participation complements, and never overrides, the rights, wishes and best interests of the young person.
- Promote collaborative relationships between young people, families and multidisciplinary teams.
- Identify barriers preventing family engagement and develop inclusive approaches to improve participation for all families.
- Develop accessible and family-friendly information resources to improve understanding of Oberstown's services and participation opportunities.
- Gather, analyse and report on family feedback to inform quality improvement and organisational learning.
- Promote strengths-based, restorative and trauma-informed approaches to family engagement.
- Act as a key point of contact for families, providing practical information, guidance and support throughout the young person's placement.
- Identify family support needs and facilitate access to appropriate services.
- Support families to maintain meaningful contact and positive relationships with young people.
- Assist families in navigating campus procedures and overcoming barriers to engagement.

Participation Leadership and Service Development

- Promote participation and family engagement across all operational, care and corporate departments.
- Support managers and staff to embed participation within everyday practice.
- Provide advice, guidance and coaching to colleagues regarding children's participation and family engagement.
- Research emerging national and international best practice and recommend service improvements.
- Contribute to policy development, service planning and organisational strategy.
- Develop participation resources, guidance documents and toolkits.
- Promote co-production approaches involving children, young people and families in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.

Partnership Working

- Work collaboratively with residential care, education, psychology, healthcare, advocacy, social work and other multidisciplinary professionals.
- Develop effective partnerships with external agencies, statutory services, community organisations and participation networks.
- Represent Oberstown at local, regional and national participation and family engagement forums.
- Promote collaborative approaches that support successful reintegration into families and communities.
- Contribute to individual care planning, transition planning and reintegration planning where appropriate.
- Liaise with multidisciplinary teams to identify family support needs, strengthen referral links with statutory, voluntary and community services and coordinate appropriate responses.
- Liaise with multidisciplinary colleagues to identify Support families in preparing for a young person's return to the family or community, including access to appropriate supports.
- Support families in preparing for a young person's return to the family or community, including access to appropriate supports.

Rights, Advocacy and Inclusion

- Promote the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making and the Lundy Model of Participation.
- Advocate for the inclusion of seldom-heard groups and actively reduce barriers to participation.
- Ensure all participation activities are safe, inclusive, accessible and culturally responsive.
- Promote equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Evaluation, Quality Improvement and Governance

- Develop systems to monitor, evaluate and measure the impact of participation and family engagement activities.
- Collect, analyse and report qualitative and quantitative participation data.
- Prepare reports, presentations and recommendations for senior management and governance groups.
- Identify trends, learning and opportunities for continuous improvement.
- Contribute to inspections, audits, service reviews and organisational self-assessment processes.
- Ensure participation outcomes inform policy, practice and strategic planning.

Communication and Information Sharing

- Maintain accurate, timely and confidential records in accordance with organisational policies and data protection legislation.
- Produce reports, briefing papers and presentations as required.
- Communicate effectively with children, families, colleagues and external stakeholders.
- Ensure information is presented in accessible, age-appropriate and family-friendly formats.
- Promote transparent communication by providing feedback on participation outcomes.

Safeguarding and Professional Practice

- Work in accordance with Children First legislation and Oberstown safeguarding policies.
- Ensure all participation activities uphold the safety, dignity and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and demonstrate the highest standards of ethical practice.
- Participate in supervision, reflective practice, mandatory training and continuing professional development.
- Work flexibly to meet service needs and undertake duties appropriate to the grade of the post.
- Carry out all responsibilities in accordance with Oberstown's mission, vision, values and strategic objectives.

General Responsibilities

- Promote a culture of participation, collaboration and continuous improvement across the campus.
- Support innovation and evidence-informed practice.
- Foster positive relationships with children, young people, families, colleagues and partner agencies.

- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the grade that may reasonably be assigned by the Senior Manager, Services and Integration.

Confidentiality

In the course of employment, the successful candidate will have access to, or hear information concerning the medical or personal affairs of young people and/or staff, or other service business. Such records and information are strictly confidential and, unless acting on the instructions of an authorised officer, on no account must information concerning staff, young people or other service business be divulged or discussed except in the performance of normal duty. In addition, physical and electronic records must never be treated in such a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them and must be left in safe custody when no longer required.

Professional Knowledge & Experience

Candidates must be able to demonstrate clearly at interview that they possess the full range of competencies as set out below.

Competencies

Eligibility Criteria Qualifications and/ or experience

Communication and Engagement

- Excellent interpersonal, communication and active listening skills.
- The ability to build trusting, respectful and professional relationships with children, young people, families and colleagues.
- Strong facilitation and presentation skills with experience adapting communication to suit different ages, abilities and communication needs.
- The ability to communicate highly sensitive and complex information with empathy, professionalism and confidence.

Participation and Family Engagement

- A strong commitment to children's rights and meaningful participation.
- The ability to empower children, young people and families to influence decisions affecting their lives.
- Skills in facilitating family engagement and supporting collaborative working between young people, families and professionals.
- The ability to identify and remove barriers to participation for individuals from diverse backgrounds and with differing needs.
- Experience supporting co-production and collaborative service design.

Planning and Organisation

- Excellent organisational and time management skills.
- The ability to manage competing priorities and work independently using initiative.
- Strong project planning, implementation and evaluation skills.
- The ability to collect, interpret and present participation outcomes and performance information.

Professional Practice

- A commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Emotional resilience, sound professional judgement and the ability to work effectively in a complex and demanding environment.
- A flexible, solution-focused and reflective approach to practice.
- A commitment to continuous professional development and lifelong learning.
- High standards of integrity, accountability and professionalism.

Teamwork and Leadership

- The ability to work effectively as part of multidisciplinary teams.
- The ability to influence, motivate and support colleagues in embedding participation and family engagement across the organisation.
- The confidence to lead participation initiatives and promote organisational learning.
- The ability to develop productive partnerships with statutory agencies, community organisations and external stakeholders.

Other Requirements

- The successful candidate will be expected to:
- Work in accordance with all Oberstown policies, procedures and values.
- Promote a culture of participation, inclusion, equality and respect throughout the campus.
- Maintain the highest standards of confidentiality, professional ethics and information governance.
- Participate in supervision, appraisal, mandatory training and continuing professional development.
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the grade of the post as assigned by the Senior Manager, Services and Integration.

Professional Responsibilities

The Participation and Family Engagement Worker will:

- Demonstrate a commitment to the mission, vision, values and strategic objectives of Oberstown Children Detention Campus.
- Promote a culture that values children's rights, participation, family engagement, equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Work in accordance with the principles of trauma-informed, restorative and relationship-based practice.
- Uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, integrity and accountability.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Participate in regular supervision, performance development, reflective practice and continuing professional development.
- Complete all mandatory training required for the role.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across all departments to embed participation and family engagement into everyday practice. Participate in quality improvement initiatives, audits, inspections and service reviews.
- Contribute to research, evaluation and innovation projects that improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

Qualifications and/or Experience

- Applicants must, on or before the closing date for applications, possess the following:

Essential Qualifications

Applicants must, by the closing date for applications, hold:

- Full CORU Registered as a Social Care Worker

Essential Experience

Applicants must demonstrate:

- A minimum of five years' post-qualification experience working directly with children, young people and/or families in health, social care, youth justice, education, disability, family support or a related setting.

Desirable Experience

- Experience facilitating meaningful participation and engagement with children and young people using rights-based, child-centred and trauma-informed approaches.
- Experience engaging with parents, carers and families to strengthen relationships, improve communication and support collaborative decision-making.

- Experience planning, coordinating and evaluating participation initiatives, consultations, workshops, focus groups or service improvement activities.
- Experience working collaboratively within multidisciplinary and multi-agency environments.
- Experience producing reports, analysing qualitative and quantitative feedback and using evidence to inform service development.
- Experience balancing the rights, wishes and best interests of children while working constructively with families and professionals.
- Experience providing practical and emotional support to young people and families, including knowledge of family support and referral pathways.

Knowledge

Applicants should demonstrate knowledge of:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- The National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making.
- The Lundy Model of Participation.
- National policy and legislation relating to children, child protection, safeguarding and family participation.
- The Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
- Trauma-informed, restorative and relationship-based practice.
- Equality, diversity, inclusion and culturally responsive practice.
- The legal and policy framework governing children in detention and youth justice services.
- Data protection, confidentiality and information governance requirements.

ICT Skills

Applicants must possess:

- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications, including Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint.
- Experience using electronic record management systems and maintaining accurate electronic records.
- The ability to analyse participation data and prepare reports using appropriate digital systems.

Other Requirements Specific to the Post

Application and Selection Process

How to apply

Applications must be made by submitting the following documents:

- A short cover letter outlining why you wish to be considered for the post and where you believe your skills, experience and values meet the requirements of the position.
- A comprehensive CV, which must include an outline of your education to date (including level on NFQ) and months of work experience to date.

In order to apply for the post of **Participation & Family Engagement Worker,** please forward the above requested information via email to recruitmentmail@oberstown.com before **25th November 2026 at 5pm.**

Selection Methods

Oberstown will run the selection process in accordance with best recruitment practices. The approach employed comprise of a series of assessments administered over a number of stages, which may include:

- Shortlisting of candidates on the basis of the information contained in their application.
- Competitive interview(s).
- Completion of an online questionnaire(s).

Shortlisting

The number of applications received for a position generally exceed that required to fill the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, Oberstown Children Detention Campus may decide that a smaller number will be called to the next stage of the selection process. In this respect, the Oberstown Children Detention Campus provide for the employment of a shortlisting process to select a group who, based on an examination of the applications, appear to be the most suitable for the position. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience.

An expert board will examine the applications against agreed shortlisting criteria based on the requirements of the position. The shortlisting criteria may include both the essential and desirable criteria specified for the position. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications/ experience in your application.

ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED – YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE AN EMAIL IF YOU HAVENT BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR INTERVIEW

Other important information

Oberstown will not be responsible for refunding any expenses incurred by candidates.

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend interview, or a successful result letter, is not to be taken as implying that Oberstown and/or employing authority is satisfied that such a person fulfils the requirements or is not disqualified by law from holding the position.

Prior to recommending any candidate for appointment to this position, Oberstown will make all such enquiries that are deemed necessary to determine the suitability of that candidate. Until all stages of the recruitment process have been fully completed a final determination cannot be made nor can it be deemed or inferred that such a determination has been made.

Should a person recommended for appointment decline, or having accepted it, relinquish it, Oberstown may at its discretion, select and recommend other persons for appointment on the results of this selection process. Candidates should make themselves available on the date(s) specified by Oberstown.

Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2013, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

All enquiries, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those who are directly involved in the selection process.

Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test when and where required by Oberstown, or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as Oberstown require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature will have no further claim to consideration.

Candidates' Obligations

- A third party must not impersonate a candidate at any stage of the process. Any person who contravenes the above provisions or who assists another person in contravening the above provisions is guilty of an offence. A person who is found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine and /or imprisonment.

In addition, where a person found guilty of an offence was or is a candidate at a recruitment process, then:

- Where s/he has not been appointed to a post, s/he will be disqualified as a candidate; and
- Where s/he has been appointed subsequently to the recruitment process in question, s/he shall forfeit that appointment.

Health

A candidate must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the position and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service, which will include sporting and leisure activities as well as an ability to be fully involved in physical restraints where necessary (training will be provided).

Character

Each candidate must be of good character.

Age

Candidates should be aware that a maximum recruitment age will apply to this competition. Candidates must not yet be 67 years of age on the closing date and time for the competition.

Citizenship

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete for posts is confined to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) or to non-EEA nationals with a valid work permit. The EEA consists of the Member

States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply.

Salary

Candidates should note that entry will be at the minimum of the scale and will not be subject to negotiation. The rate of total remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy as applying to public servants generally.

Subject to satisfactory performance, increments may be awarded in line with current Government policy.