



**Leeds South & West Methodist
Circuit Office**

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Appointment of a Children and Families Development Worker

The Vision

Leeds South and West Circuit seeks to develop work with children and their families. This appointment of a Children and Families Development Worker is being made to build on the effective work carried out by the previous, part-time post holder. We give the ministry of and among children and young people a high priority and we are seeking an individual who also sees the privilege and importance of this ministry. The focus of work for this post will be with children of primary school age and younger, and those who care for them.

It is expected that much of the specific work with children and families will initially be based in the northern part of the circuit, focused at Cookridge, Adel and Bramley Methodist Churches. The post, however, has both a 'hands on' and a training and development element, and we expect that the post-holder will work with churches in other areas of the circuit to support and develop the provision they offer. We seek to initiate and nurture opportunities for younger children and their families to encounter God, and to enable the growth of genuinely all age communities of faith within the circuit.

In and around the circuit there are a number of pieces of youth/ children's work, including Girls' and Boys' Brigades, Scouting and Guiding groups, a children's group (TGI-Kidzone) for 4-10 year olds, and a number of pre-schools and toddler groups meeting on church premises, with varying levels of connection to the church. Godly Play sessions are offered to two of these pre-schools at present and we are extending this provision into a local primary school to support the RE curriculum. The circuit also facilitates young people from the age of 8 attending Methodist Youth Assembly (3Generate).

About the Circuit

We are new circuit formed in Sept 2015. Encompassing approximately the western half of the City of Leeds, the circuit consists of 23 churches, 5 of which are Local Ecumenical Partnerships which are composed of a mix of Anglican, Baptist and URC members. The staffing, currently includes 7 presbyters and 1 deacon and 2 part time administrators and the circuit office and resource centre is based at Wesley Road Chapel Armley.

The Circuit radiates out from the city centre through the western half of inner city/urban Leeds to outlying suburban areas. It covers areas with older style housing in need of redevelopment, housing estates with pockets of deprivation and diverse sections of mixed ethnicities and faiths. It also encompasses the vibrant student areas of Leeds as well as characterful villages and towns with distinct identities and needs. To the south, it has excellent links to the motorway network.

Management responsibilities

The Post will be managed by the presbyter currently responsible for Adel & Cookridge, Rev Jo Lightowler. She will be working alongside the successful applicant and is best placed to see and support the work in this area.

The Circuit will:

- Provide a suitable induction period
- Provide line management through the superintendent minister or another nominated minister
- Provide a management group for work of the appointee
- Support the appointee in continued professional development and training needs.
- Meet all reasonable expenses
- Allow at least two days free of responsibilities each week
- Provide office facilities and appropriate office equipment
- Prepare a personal development plan with the appointee

Job description

The appointee will:

Work with and for children and their families in the LSW Circuit, enabling and supporting existing groups, and creating groups, activities and events which develop the discipleship of children, paying attention to their social, emotional, and spiritual needs.

This will include:

- Working with an ordained colleague to run a monthly Messy Church at Cookridge
- Providing leadership for the Trinity (Bramley) and Adel Toddler groups
- Participating in the development of new ways of working at Adel Methodist Church
- Liaising with existing toddler groups and pre-schools across the circuit
- Participating in the development of work in local schools
- Building relationships with families connected with the churches in which work is based
- Resourcing and equipping parents for a journey of faith with their children, and churches to receive and embrace children, and their families as an integral part of the worshipping community
- Any other duties which are normally appropriate to the job description of a Children and Families Development Worker.

Work with the circuit leadership team, ministers, staff, volunteers and the circuit meeting.

This will include:

- Having a strategic overview of work with younger children and their families in the circuit, and contributing to medium and long term planning in this area
- Providing support and facilitating training for volunteers of all ages.
- Taking a collaborative approach to developing and, where appropriate, leading, all age worship in the circuit
- Developing partnerships with local agencies and churches.
- Providing reports and development plans to the Management Group.
- Participating in ministers' staff meetings, away days and retreats as appropriate
- Playing an active role in the life of the LSW circuit
- Maintaining an appointment diary or similar to enable mutual accountability between post-holder and circuit
- Being line managed by the Superintendent Minister or another minister of the LSW Circuit.

This post is full time (37.5 hours per week), worked to a flexible and mutually agreed pattern.

Person Specification

Skills, Experience and Knowledge

- Ability to develop positive relationships and to build Christian community, unafraid of promoting and enabling change where necessary and appropriate
- Ability to work collaboratively and facilitate the inclusion of all within the church
- Ability to advocate on behalf of children and families, and to mentor, train and support volunteers of all ages.
- Ability to enable creative forms of worship and to reflect theologically with children and those who care for them, including the ability and confidence to articulate your own faith story
- Awareness of, and a strong commitment to, good practice in children's and community work, especially in the areas of Safeguarding, confidentiality and maintaining good boundaries. A satisfactory enhanced disclosure from the DBS will be essential for this post.
- Ability to communicate effectively, including good written and oral skills, as well as experience in creating reports.
- Good administrative skills pertaining to record keeping, planning, communication with children and parents, safeguarding and data protection.
- Able to access all areas within the circuit without undue delay
- Knowledge of the Methodist Church, in particular the Methodist Church's children's and youth provision.
- Please note that a personal Christian faith is a genuine occupational requirement for this post.

Qualifications and Training

- Proven experience working with children and families essential
- Evidence of a commitment to continuing professional development essential
- Qualification in theology, ministry or Christian work with children desirable
- Qualification in work with children in this age range (for example, but not limited to, a primary teaching qualification or relevant NVQ) desirable
- Worship leading/Local Preaching/Lay Reader qualification or equivalent desirable
- Completion of Godly Play three day accredited core training desirable
- 'Open the Book' training desirable
- Experience with Prayer Spaces in Schools or similar desirable

Qualities

- A Christian in good standing with a local church
- Reflective and self-aware
- Able to practice and model good self-care
- A team player who can enthuse others
- Creative and honest
- Disciplined and able to act on own initiative

The initial appointment will be for 2 years, being the period for which funding is in place. The salary will be in the range £20K- £25K pa.