



Life Skills Officer – Supported Accommodation (16+) (Bank)

Purpose of Job: To create a nurturing and supportive environment for young people in supported accommodation, fostering their well-being and personal development.

Place of Work: Wantage

Work Location: In person

Job Types: Full-time, Part-time

Hours of Work: Shift-based rota, Monday to Sunday
Includes early, late and sleep-ins (average 2 per week)

Pay:

- £15.00–£18.00 per hour (dependent on experience/qualifications)
- £40.00 sleep-in allowance per night

Reports to & Responsible to: Registered Homes Manager

Level of Screening: Enhanced DBS (Children & Adults) + online checks (KCSIE 2025 compliant)

Experience: Support Environment with Children: 1 year (preferred)

Benefits:

- Supportive and friendly working environment
 - Opportunity to be part of a growing organisation
 - Company pension scheme
 - Flexible working where possible
 - Competitive salary (dependent on experience)
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Who We Are

Orchard Therapeutic Care Ltd provides high-quality supported accommodation for young people aged 16–18. Our model is grounded in safety, consistency, nurture, and therapeutic principles. We support young people to:

- Build independence
- Develop emotional resilience
- Gain practical life skills
- Establish positive routines
- Prepare for adulthood, education, or employment

Our homes offer a supportive, structured environment where young people are encouraged and empowered to grow.

Where You Fit In

As a Life Skills Officer, you will play an essential role in helping young people develop the practical, social, emotional, and behavioural skills needed for successful independence.

This is not a passive or supervisory role – you are an active practitioner, shaping daily routines, mentoring young people, and supporting young people through challenges, setbacks, and achievements.

You will:

- Provide nurturing, trauma-informed support
- Build trust and meaningful relationships
- Teach, model, and reinforce life skills
- Ensure safety, safeguarding, and consistent routines
- Contribute to placement plans, risk assessments, and goal-setting
- Work in partnership with external agencies, families, and professionals
- Work alongside young people to support them to be independent in their homes.
- Act as a positive role model and mentor.

You will be a positive, reliable, and compassionate role model, promoting stability, responsibility, and growth.



Main Duties & Accountabilities

- Support young people to develop essential life skills including:
 - Cooking and meal planning
 - Support young people to clean and organise their home and space
 - Shopping and budgeting
 - Using public transport
 - Managing appointments
 - Personal hygiene and self-care
 - Taking responsibility for their living environment
 - Model appropriate behaviour, communication, and problem-solving.
 - Encourage young people to build resilience, confidence, and independence.
 - Support positive routines including sleep, diet, structure, and school/college attendance.
 - Maintain a safe and nurturing environment at all times.
 - Identify, record, and report safeguarding concerns promptly.
 - Understand and apply thresholds for referral to social care and emergency services.
 - Contribute to risk assessments, behaviour support plans, and safety plans.
 - Implement boundaries and consistent expectations in line with trauma-informed practice.
 - Promote a culture of vigilance and wellbeing.
 - Provide emotional support using trauma-informed and THRIVE approach.
 - Use de-escalation strategies during challenging behaviours.
 - Build secure, trusting relationships through consistency and reliability.
 - Support young people with emotional regulation, communication, and resilience.
 - Encourage participation in hobbies, interests, groups, and healthy activities.
 - Work collaboratively with:
 - Social workers
 - Leaving care teams
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ABOUT THE POSITION (CONT.)



- Education providers
 - Health services
 - Police and emergency services
 - Therapists and specialists
 - Support family time/contact where appropriate.
 - Attend professional meetings, reviews, and multi-agency planning sessions.
 - Maintain comprehensive records including:
 - Daily logs
 - Incident reports
 - Placement plans
 - Keywork summaries
 - Risk assessments
 - Health logs
 - Goal-tracking
 - Use MIS systems accurately (e.g., Leif, Microsoft systems)
 - Ensure all documentation is timely, factual, and compliant with regulations
 - Actively contribute to team handovers, meetings, supervisions, and training
 - Participate in reflective practice and professional development
 - Support new staff or agency workers through role modelling good practice
 - Follow all organisational policies including safeguarding, medication, behaviour management, and health & safety
 - Maintain professional boundaries at all times
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What Success Looks Like

- Young people demonstrate increasing independence and confidence.
- Placement plans show measurable progress.
- Young people feel safe, supported, and valued.
- Consistent routines are maintained across the home.
- Strong, trusting relationships are evident.
- Safeguarding concerns are identified early and handled appropriately.
- Records are thorough, accurate, and professionally written.
- You demonstrate reliability, empathy, resilience, and professionalism.

Safeguarding

At Orchard Therapeutic Care (part of the Hitchcox Group), safeguarding is central to all we do. We are committed to promoting the welfare and safety of every child and young person in our care. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff are expected to demonstrate vigilance, curiosity, and professional accountability.

We follow robust safer recruitment practices including:

- Enhanced DBS
- Online checks (in line with KCSIE 2025)
- Verification of references
- Employment history checks

All staff receive mandatory safeguarding training and regular updates.

This role requires adherence to statutory legislation, supported accommodation regulations, and internal safeguarding policies.

Other Information

This job description outlines the main duties but is not exhaustive. You may be required to undertake additional tasks that align with the needs of the service. The job description will be reviewed annually and may be updated following consultation.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR



Qualifications

- NVQ Level 3 in Children & Young People / Health & Social Care (or willing to work towards)

Knowledge

- Understanding of safeguarding and child protection
- Awareness of social disadvantage, trauma, and discrimination
- Knowledge of adolescence, child development, and therapeutic approaches

Experience

- Minimum 3 years working with young people (residential preferred)
- Experience supporting complex or high-risk cases
- Experience supporting semi-independence or life-skills work
- Experience writing reports or keywork summaries

Skills & Abilities

- Ability to build relationships and set boundaries
- Strong communication skills (verbal & written)
- De-escalation, conflict management, and emotional support
- Organised, reliable, and able to work independently
- Competent in IT systems (Microsoft Office, Leif)

Personal Qualities

- Resilient, nurturing, calm under pressure
- Flexible with shifts and sleep-ins
- Positive, patient, and able to work with challenging behaviours
- Committed to young people's growth and safety

Other Requirements

- Full UK driving licence and willingness to transport young people

Application: please contact recruitment@hitchcoxgroup.co.uk
