



# SENAC

Special Educational Needs Advice Centre

## **APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK ADVISOR SEN ADVICELINE SERVICE**

SENAC is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland 101355

Limited Company NI48698

Graham House, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH

**Dear Applicant,**

**Thank you for your interest in this opportunity to join a dedicated team committed to the provision of charitable services to support vulnerable children and their parents and carers. Included in this pack is information about SENAC and the role of Advisor for SENAC's Adviceline Service to assist your decision to apply for this post.**

### **About SENAC**

The Special Educational Needs Advice Centre (SENAC) is a regional charitable organisation, set up in 2003 to provide independent special educational needs (SEN) advice on the application of the statutory SEN System.

The charity was set up by families of children with SEN as a solution to the lack of independent advice on SEN within Northern Ireland. Our primary aim is to advance the education of children and young people with special educational needs and disability and to safeguard and progress children's rights and parent's rights within the SEN system.

Each year SENAC supports and advises hundreds of families and professionals. We may be contacted directly by a parent or receive referrals from over 70 different organisations and agencies across Northern Ireland. We also deliver community-based workshops on SEN with over 150 participants each year.

Our services exist because many children do not receive the appropriate assessment to identify their needs and/or do not receive the additional or specialist educational provision and interventions needed to aid learning and inclusion.

Parents are unsure how to engage in SEN dialogue and decision-making on behalf of their child and can struggle to understand or navigate the statutory SEN system and processes and require advice and support.

SENAC is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors with a diverse range of skills, background and experience and includes parents of children with special educational needs who have used SENAC's services.

## **Our services:**

- A confidential telephone SEN Adviceline providing immediate advice and information to parents/carers/professionals.
- An Education Advocacy service working with families, schools, and the Education Authority to advocate directly for a child's educational needs and secure appropriate provision.
- A Community Support and Information Service providing front line information and resources to community/family support groups/Family Hubs and other organizations, and delivery of community-based workshops on SEN.
- A Tribunal Support and Representation Service for families appealing Education Authority decisions to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

# SEN Advisor for SENAC's Adviceline Service

This post is funded by Ulster Garden Villages and the LFT Charitable Trust

## SENAC's SEN Adviceline Service

Advising on SENAC's SEN Adviceline Service is a hugely rewarding role and your advice will make a difference not only to the caller but to their child whose educational needs is at the heart of every enquiry we receive.

Enquiries to the service can be varied. Parents may be emotional, worried and/or confused as to how to help their child get the SEN provision they need, or they may just want reassurance that they are doing the right thing. It is your ability to listen, apply your knowledge of the SEN system, identify the advice and information most relevant to the circumstances, and explain what is required that will make the difference to both the caller and their child.

The role requires an empathetic and professional approach, an ability to communicate the complex processes of the SEN system simply, and the ability to use careful active listening to ensure accurate and useful advice is provided.

The Adviceline is often the first point of contact with SENAC. You will be representative of the Charity and the integrity of its advice and support to families and professionals.

You will be required to deliver the Adviceline at the times advertised and agreed with SENAC. Each Adviceline session will be available for 3 hours on week-day mornings to receive incoming calls. A further one-hour additional time is allocated for Advisors to log calls and advice provided on SENAC's Service database, respond to email enquiries, forward any further information, and make return calls where required. Each 12-hour post will be 3 mornings per week x 4 hours, 10.00am-2.00pm, flexibility within working pattern can be discussed. This role is suitable for homeworking once training is complete, and/or office based if preferred.

### Training:

You will receive comprehensive training for this role, including handling enquiries, understanding of, and applying the Statutory SEN system. All

SEN advice is based on the current SEN Legislative framework. Training for this role requires reading and understanding the legislation and its application to the practical SEN decision-making of the Education Authority and schools.

**Please consider carefully, the full criteria and job description below. To apply please complete the Application Form and return via email to [heather.larkin@senac.co.uk](mailto:heather.larkin@senac.co.uk) by the closing date. Please ensure you complete the Application Form as instructed, ensuring you have demonstrated that you meet the criteria for this role. Candidates will be shortlisted for interview based on the information provided in the Application Form demonstrating all criteria for this position have been met.**

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

## Role Details and Job Description

<b>Title:</b>	SEN Advisor, Adviceline Service
<b>Location:</b>	Office, Home Based or Hybrid as agreed
<b>Hours Per Week:</b>	Part-time 12 hrs per week.
<b>Working Pattern:</b>	3 weekdays per week 10.00am-2.00pm.
<b>Salary:</b>	£10,074 gross per annum
<b>Reporting To:</b>	SENAC's Advice Co-ordinator
<b>Contract:</b>	Fixed Term of 2 years from date of appointment
<b>Key Benefits:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People's Pension Scheme with 3% Employer Pension Contribution.</li><li>• 28 days pro rata paid annual leave plus public and bank holidays.</li><li>• Flexible approach to where you work.</li><li>• Free onsite parking at SENAC's office.</li></ul>
<b>Additional info:</b>	Appointment will be subject to satisfactory references and a satisfactory Criminal Records Check

### Main function of Role:

To provide advice and information on all aspects of the statutory special educational needs system in Northern Ireland primarily through SENAC's Adviceline Service.

## Job Description: Tasks And Duties

- To deliver a confidential telephone SEN Adviceline Service for parents at the times agreed and directed by SENAC's Advice Co-ordinator.
- To provide SEN advice, information, and guidance to callers on the Adviceline and enquiries received via email.
- To return calls and respond to messages and requests for advice.
- To follow up any enquiry received which requires further advice or information to be sourced and provided.
- To maintain a record of each call and the advice provided as instructed and input all data relating to each call and enquiry on SENAC's Services Database in line with SENAC's Data Protection policy and processing of data practices and compliance with the relevant statutory requirements including the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- To report as required under SENAC's Safeguarding policy any safeguarding concerns arising from the Adviceline or any communication with service users to SENAC's Designated Officer.
- To refer parents/callers who require advocacy or additional advice to SENAC's Advice Co-Ordinator
- To attend all training events as required by SENAC.
- To provide cover on the Adviceline when requested to do so.
- To liaise with the Data and Impact Officer on any issues or queries arising from the input of data and use of SENAC's Database
- To maintain the confidentiality of SENAC records and service users in accordance with statutory requirements and SENAC's policies and practices.
- To assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the Adviceline service.
- To attend staff and committee meetings as required.
- To contribute to the overall strategic development of the organisation.

# Personnel Specification

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>Experience</b>	A minimum of twelve months' experience in an advice-giving role, i.e. provision of advice in an in-person role or via telephone advice in an employed or volunteer capacity.  Processing and handling of confidential and personal client data.	
<b>Skills/ Attributes</b>	Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written.  Ability to understand and disseminate complex information to clients in a simpler form.  Excellent organisational skills	

## How to apply

If you meet the requirements and criteria for this post, please email your completed Application Form ensuring the information provided in your application fully demonstrates with examples how you meet the criteria for this role to [heather.larkin@senac.co.uk](mailto:heather.larkin@senac.co.uk) by 5.00pm on the closing date Friday 2nd of February 2024. Applications received after this time and date will **not** be considered for shortlisting.

Candidates will be shortlisted for interview based on the evidence within their Application Form that each criterion for this position has been met.

The decision to shortlist applicants to the next stage of the recruitment process will be based on the Essential Criteria set out in the Personnel Specification.

If you are shortlisted for interview, further information on the interview will be forwarded. **Applicants not shortlisted will be notified.**

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this information.**

**To learn more about SENAC please visit [www.senac.co.uk](http://www.senac.co.uk)**