



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you



YMCA
DOWNSLINK GROUP

Application Pack
2025

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Welcome



Thank you for your interest in working for YMCA DownsLink Group.

The mission of YMCA DownsLink Group is **to help children and young people have a fair chance to be who they want to be.** We do this by providing a safe home, increasing life skills and self-confidence, and improving emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Our values are We do what's right, We work with heart, We build real connection and they underpin everything we do.

We hope that you are inspired to read on and find out more about what we do, and how your skills and experience can contribute to our work to transform children and young people's lives.

Our success very much depends on the work and support of our staff and our volunteers. People are the most important asset we have – they are the ones who make a difference!

People team

recruitment@ymcadlg.org

About Us

YMCA England and Wales

YMCA DownsLink Group is a member of the federation of YMCA England and Wales. The YMCA is the largest and oldest youth charity in the world and a global movement responding to the needs of young people and communities.

We are proud to be part of the wider YMCA federation. Whilst we are self-governing, we contribute to the federation's vision and purpose: an inclusive Christian movement transforming communities so that all young people can belong, contribute and thrive.

YMCA DownsLink Group

We are the largest regional charity in Sussex and Surrey working to prevent youth homelessness and support children and young people's emotional and mental health. We employ 330 people and have 80 volunteers.

We help children and young people have a fair chance to be who they want to be. We do this by providing a safe home, increasing life skills and self-confidence, and improving emotional wellbeing and mental health. Each year, we support thousands of children and young people up to the age of 25 across Sussex and Surrey. You can find out more about the impact of our work [here](#).

Our impact in numbers



Our Strategy

Our Strategy 2023-2026 includes updated organisational mission and values, clearly lays out who we are and what we are aiming to achieve and outlines the three key priorities for our organisation for the coming years, as well as the three key enablers that inform how we work.

Our mission

To help children and young people have a fair chance to be who they want to be. We do this by providing a safe home, increasing life skills and self-confidence, and improving emotional wellbeing and mental health

Our values

We do what's right

We work with heart

We build real connection

You can view our new [2023-2026 Strategy here](#).

You can also view our latest [Reports and publications here](#).

Why work for us

Our Benefits

Health and Wellbeing

Health Cash Plan with Health shield

Claim money back for dental, optical, physio costs, alongside access to mental health support, remote GP appointments and counsellors.

Employee Assistance Programme with Health Assured

Range of confidential support services available to you and your immediate family:

- Telephone helplines available 24/7
- Formal counselling, either in person or telephone sessions
- Online video counselling and online CBT

Occupational Health

We work with Apollo Direct who offer occupational health assessments to support staff with their health/wellbeing.

Family friendly

*Life Assurance Cover

In the event of your death, your nominated individual(s) will receive a one-off payment equivalent to x2 of your annual salary.

Flexible Working patterns

(role and service needs dependant)

- Flexible working hours
- Opportunities to work from home

Maternity leave

(Enhanced package – dependant on length of service)

Plus

- Free Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check: You will need a DBS check to clear you to work with children and young people. We will help you with the application and cover the cost, including the Update Service subscription fee.
- Long service awards
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Blue Light Card
- Company sick pay scheme

Annual leave

Incremental annual leave

27 days a year + bank holidays (pro-rated for part-time)
After 5 years' service, increases by 2 days (pro-rated for part-time)

Pension

- A contributory pension scheme with Legal & General. Employees contribute a minimum of 4% of salary (you can opt out) and YMCA DownsLink Group will contribute 3% + 1% tax relief from the government.
- Pension and financial advice appointments with Engage Wealth Management.

Training and Development

An extensive programme of formal learning opportunities, supported by an organisation-wide culture of learning starting with your induction, mandatory and role specific training. Dedicated learning hub with an ever-growing library of courses and resources for continuous professional development.

Professional Development and Support packages

- Regular one-to-ones and an annual appraisal with your line manager
- Operational team meetings / Team Development days
- Reflective Practice Supervision (all frontline, operational staff, and heads of service)
- Clinical Supervision (all clinicians - counsellors and therapists)

* Not applicable for sessional and bank worker roles

Developing our people

As an organisation, our purpose is to support young people to belong, contribute and thrive, and it should not be any different when it comes to our own colleagues. The Learning and Development team at YMCA DownsLink Group provide a wide variety of formal learning opportunities but learning here is more than just training courses.

We are committed to everyone completing the mandatory training required for their role and providing ongoing opportunities for continued professional development to aid development in current posts and career progression if desired. Our Learning Hub has access to a range of learning resources across a range of areas.

Reflective Practice Supervision (RPS)

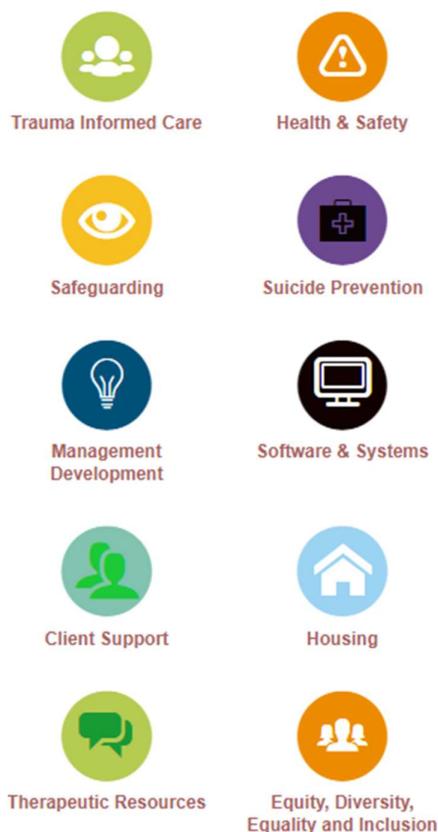
All staff working directly with clients have access to regular group Reflective Practice Supervision. These sessions are designed to enable our staff to remain mentally and emotionally well enough to continue to carry out their challenging roles effectively. They allow time to process the emotional impact of situations they see, hear and experience, support them to maintain their emotional resilience and to maintain professional boundaries and independence.

Clinical Supervision

For therapeutic roles, we offer access to clinical supervision where staff can utilise the knowledge and experience of their supervisor to improve their own clinical performance.

Completing the Application Form

- ▶ To apply online, click on the 'Apply' button, fill out the application and attach your CV.
- ▶ If you cannot fill the form online, please get in touch with our People team by emailing recruitment@ymcadlg.org to request an application form in Word format. Alternative formats are available on request (e.g. Dyslexia friendly font).
- ▶ Please read through the application pack and job profile in full before submitting your application. Make sure to provide demonstratable evidence that you meet all essential criteria provided in the job profile – this can include transferable skills.
- ▶ Please note that an offer is made subject to receiving a minimum of two satisfactory employment references, evidence of your right to work in the UK and Enhanced DBS (Adult and Child Barred List) check.
- ▶ We use external providers for DBS checks and reference and background checks.



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

An inclusive workplace

We are striving to build an inclusive workplace where all staff and volunteers feel valued and respected. We are committed to policies and practices of equity, diversity, and inclusion across everything we do. We support all our people to make sure their behaviour is consistent with this commitment.

As such, we encourage applications from people from all sections of the communities that we serve. We particularly welcome applications from People of Colour and minoritised white communities, people who are LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities and neurodiversities because these groups are currently under-represented in our workforce.

[Please click here to view our latest Gender Pay Gap Report – 2024](#)

We need your help to enable us to monitor our progress in building a more inclusive workplace and a more diverse workforce. When you apply for a role, we will ask you to complete a Diversity Monitoring Form. The information does not form part of the selection procedure nor can be seen by anyone; it is solely for monitoring purposes in accordance with our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Work Policy. If you prefer not to disclose any information, select “prefer not to say” when completing the form. Data will be analysed and presented in statistical format with no personal identifying details.

Accessibility and advertising

If you require assistance and / or have any questions regarding the application process, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are local to our Head Office in Hove, we can provide you with a paper copy of the job advert, job description, and application form. If you are not local, we can post these documents to your preferred address. If you require a copy of the job advert, job description, and application form in another format, please let us know. We welcome discussions about specific requirements or adjustments to enable participation and engagement in our work and activities.

We short-list based solely on the information in your application form and CV, so please ensure that you complete the application fully and that you address each point on the person specification so that we can consider your suitability for the role. Applicants shortlisted for interview will be notified on the outcome.

Please be mindful that roles may be advertised with a hard closing date or a rolling closing date. With a rolling closing date, applications may be reviewed as they are received, and interviews scheduled. An offer may be made at any time and, if accepted, the role may be closed before the closing date.

Privacy

- ▶ YMCA DownsLink Group collects personal data relating to job applicants as part of our recruitment process. We are committed to protecting the personal details that we process.
- ▶ We will also collect personal data about you from third parties, such as references supplied by former employers and information from criminal records checks, where appropriate. We only seek information from third parties when a job offer has been made to you.
- ▶ We store your personal data in a range of different places, including on your application record, in HR management systems and on other IT systems (including email).
- ▶ For more information, see our [Privacy Policy](#).

Interview Guidance

- ▶ For some roles, the expected interview dates can be found on the job advert for the role. Please try and keep some time free on these days to interview.
- ▶ Look through this job pack and our [website](#) in preparation for your interview. We believe passionately about the work we do and seek people who feel the same.
- ▶ If you are invited to interview, do let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments.
- ▶ At YMCA DownsLink Group we are very proud of our values and are keen to find out what values are important to you. It is likely that we will discuss this at your interview and ask that you prepare accordingly.
- ▶ Interviews will be conducted by a small panel from the relevant team. This will include the line-manager for the role.
- ▶ For some roles there may be two stages to the interview process before an offer is made. These will likely consist of a first stage virtual interview/telephone screen and a second stage interview where you may visit the service (if applicable) or meet relevant team members. There may also be opportunities to meet young people, the wider team and the Head of Service, or Director. Please note that the interview structures may vary from role to role.
- ▶ You may be asked to attend your initial interview via Zoom or MS Teams.
 - Find a private, well-lit space, with a good internet connection, to ensure the interview runs as smoothly as possible. Check your connection, microphone, camera in advance.
 - We recommend that you log-in to the Zoom or MS Teams link at least 5 minutes before the start of the interview so that the panel can make the most of your allotted interview time.

FAQs

▶ **When can I expect to hear back from an application?**

If you do not hear back from us within 4 weeks of the closing date, you can assume that you have not been successful this time. If you are shortlisted, you will be contacted by either the hiring lead or a member of the People team to arrange an interview.

▶ **Can you provide feedback on my application?**

Due to demands on the hiring leads time, they cannot reply to every applicant. However, if requested they will provide feedback to candidates who interviewed but were unsuccessful.

▶ **Who sees my application?**

Your application will be initially reviewed by the hiring lead, they will then shortlist with other panel members.

▶ **How long will you keep my application form?**

In accordance with GDPR guidelines, your application form will be destroyed within 12 months of submission of your application. If you wish to have your information removed prior to this, please contact the People team by emailing recruitment@ymcadlg.org.

► **I have missed the deadline for the role can I still apply?**

In some circumstances we may be able to accept late applications at the hiring leads discretion. This is usually within 48 hours of closure; contact the People team as soon as possible by emailing recruitment@ymcadlg.org if you want to submit a late application.

► **Will I get a copy of my online application once I've completed it?**

No, you will receive a confirmation email that your application has been received.

► **I have made a mistake on my online application form; how can I fix it?**

Once your online application has been submitted, it can't be amended. If the role is still open, you can resubmit a new application or you can email recruitment@ymcadlg.org with the details, your email will be uploaded to your application.

► **I need some more information on the role before applying, how can I get this?**

If you have further questions having read the job advert, job profile and application pack, you can reach out to the hiring lead, their contact email can be found on the job advert or email recruitment@ymcadlg.org.

► **I do not meet all the criteria, should I still apply?**

Yes! If you're enthusiastic about this opportunity but your experience doesn't align perfectly with every requirement, we encourage you to apply anyway and demonstrate how your experience is transferrable. You may be just the right candidate.

We offer wide learning and development opportunities, and it may be possible to get specific training, or support with learning on the job. However, if there are essential criteria for the role, such as having a specific qualification, driving licence and access to a car, we will be unable to consider you without these – please contact the People team by emailing recruitment@ymcadlg.org if you have any questions.

Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

YMCA DownsLink Group actively promotes equality of opportunity for all, and applications are welcome from a wide range of candidates.

We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any applicant because of a criminal record or other information revealed. Criminal records and other information will be considered for recruitment purposes only when they are relevant.

We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience. We ask all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record. Depending on the nature of the position applied for, YMCA DownsLink Group may request details of your entire criminal record or only of 'unspent' convictions as defined in the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#).

We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to a designated person within YMCA DownsLink Group and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. We would point out that for the successful candidate, this information will be verified by requesting a Disclosure statement from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed.

Failure to reveal information that is relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or subsequent dismissal.

We ensure that all those in YMCA DownsLink Group who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders e.g., the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Application forms and guidance notes will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the candidate being made a conditional offer of employment. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with YMCA DownsLink Group. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of any offences. However, as the nature of the YMCA DownsLink Group's work brings its staff and volunteers into contact with children, young people (those under 18 years old) and/or vulnerable adults, a criminal record or other information which makes an application unacceptable for a position of trust will render the applicant unsuitable.

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, this policy complies with the DBS Code of Practice.

Declaration of Criminal Background and Guidelines for Working with Young People and/or Vulnerable Adults

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 sets out to help people who have been convicted of a criminal offence and have not been convicted again in a specified period. This period is known as a rehabilitation period.

Once a rehabilitation period has expired and no further offending has taken place, a conviction is 'spent'. Once a conviction is spent, the convicted person does not have to reveal it or admit its existence in most circumstances.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) gives some exemptions from the Act, whereby details of 'spent' convictions must be declared. One of these exemptions is working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. When recruiting people to work in such positions of trust an employer is entitled to ask for details of all convictions, spent and unspent.

Having a conviction will not necessarily bar you from consideration for the post. Criminal records will be considered only when they are relevant to the position for which you are applying. The information you provide will remain confidential. If you are made a conditional offer, YMCA DownsLink Group will apply for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.

DBS Disclosures are provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service, an executive agency of the Home Office. Enhanced disclosures provide details of a person's criminal record including convictions, cautions, reprimands, and warnings; they also contain details from lists held by Government departments of those considered unsuitable for this type of work. Organisations using the DBS process must comply with the Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on request.

If you have any queries, please do get in contact with the People team by emailing recruitment@ymcadlg.org

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