

A smiling man with dark hair and a black t-shirt is holding a piece of corrugated cardboard. The cardboard has several colorful drawings on it, including orange, blue, green, and yellow shapes. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Learning Support Assistants
Candidate Pack**

A letter from our CEO

I am delighted that you are thinking about joining the team at PiP. I hope this pack helps you understand our work, how we support our students to achieve their goals, and gives you the information you need to apply for the role of Learning Support Worker.

PIP works in the Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea communities to support adults with learning disabilities and autism to achieve their potential, move towards independence, and live their best lives. We were established in 1983 by parents wanting more challenging and ambitious support for their children and we now celebrate 40 years of impact. Our history is rich & varied and we have grown from 25 students a decade ago to over 75 students today.

From our custom-adapted centre on Kensal Road, where we moved in 2022, we run four key curriculum areas: Creative and performing arts; Employability, Health & wellbeing, and Independent Living Skills. Alongside this work we run services like Gig Buddies which supports adults with learning disabilities to access social events and our SW1 service supporting older adults with learning disabilities.

We challenge ourselves to be innovative and deliver a truly unique level of support and opportunities for people with a learning disability and autism. We work hard to empower our students to become as independent as they can be and live a life of their choice, despite the barriers. Everyone on the team is a vital part of ensuring that we do for the people we support while keeping a strong focus on fun.

Learning Support Assistants are vital for our organisation and form a key part of our team. If you who want to be part of a supportive and ambitious organisation where there will be opportunities for personal and professional development and growth, I do hope you will consider applying for the role. If you have any questions I would be happy to discuss the role with you.

Yours sincerely,
Denise Largin
CEO





Who we are:

PIP works in the Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea communities to support adults with learning disabilities and autism to achieve their potential, move towards independence, and live their best lives.

With 26 staff and a Board of 8, we work to empower over 70 adults with Learning Disabilities and Autism every year to achieve their potential, move towards independence and live their best lives. We believe our people are our largest asset and we are investing in expanding our team by around 25% in the next 12 months to deliver an ambitious strategy, meet service demand and ensure our colleagues have the capacity to offer the quality of service we're known for in our community.

Our approach is student-led with our curriculum and each student's timetable the result of a collaborative approach with students, families, and social workers. Student goals can vary widely from learning to cook a meal to securing part-time work, to strengthening friendships or showcasing their creativity. Each student at PiP is referred by our Local Authority partners and with a waiting list of over 40 students we are confident we offer a top-tier service.

Financially we are stable with strong financial reserves and an income mix circa 66% commissioned services and 33% philanthropic partnerships. From this position of strength we plan to invest in the team, new services and projects to expand our provision and secure more impact in our community.

Why we need you:

Our organisation is expanding with evermore people we strive to help and support, so we need to expand our team. This role is part of an investment in new roles for PiP to secure the best impact for our students.

If you see solutions, not problems, are adaptable and resilient and have a person-centred approach in all that you do then we are looking for you to join our team as we grow our services and expand our impact to support more adults with learning disabilities and autism.



Who we support and why:

At PiP, our focus is on teaching and learning life skills; PiP students range in age from 18 to 91 and our average student is around 34 years old.

PiP students have a range of learning disabilities including Down's Syndrome, Fragile X, Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC), dual diagnosis with mental health problems and/or physical health conditions such as Diabetes and Epilepsy.

PiP's team deliver person-centred support to each of our students to identify their strengths, interests and passions. We support them and their families/carers to maximise opportunities in their community through signposting and working in partnership with like-minded organisations.

Structural inequalities in society mean that people with learning disabilities are not always recognised for their skills and talents and given the opportunity to live independent lives. We want to change that. And with your skills and talents, we can make sure that every PiP student has a voice and can make their own choices about their own lives.

We are keen for our students to always have a voice, including at PiP, and so every week our students have a students meeting with their own agenda where they can express their views on PiP and ask about elements like new staff, our leisure programmes, or fundraising. Every year our students elect student representatives to elevate their views to senior management and our board. Our current representatives are Shardonnay & Rashedul.



Our structure

After staff feedback on career progression and student development, PiP has recently adapted a new staff structure. This structure added a number of new roles to reflect our recent expansion in student numbers as part of our new centre. This new structure equates to nearly an extra £200K per annum investment to operate the best service possible for our students. While allowing our staff to greater specialise and offer career progression for our student-focused colleagues into management positions.

Our Senior Management Team is formed of our CEO, Service Manager, and Head of Fundraising & Communications - this body serves to set the strategic direction for PiP alongside our trustee board. Our day-to-day Management team comprises these roles and our two deputy service managers for students services & curriculum co-ordination.

We then have new curriculum coordinators for each of our four curriculum areas who set the direction for each learning theme and work alongside our development workers and learning support assistants to deliver sessions for students.

What we're looking for



In this diverse and challenging role, you will be responsible for:

- Supporting PiP students to participate and engage in a flexible programme of learning and development and achieve their ambitions.
- Supporting Development Workers to deliver a flexible and empowering programme of learning and development sessions across areas of our four key pathways: Independent Living Skills; Creative and Performing Arts; Health and Wellbeing; & Employment and Vocational Training.
- 1:1 key working responsibility to support students and their families to reach their independence goals.

Our ideal candidate will have experience of working with people with learning disabilities, or a similar vulnerable service user group, along with a strong commitment to taking a person-centred approach to the role.





Key accountabilities

Supporting students

- Working closely with students in small groups and 1:1.
- Monitoring student progress and recording the information.
- Engaging students in health and wellbeing activities.
- Escorting students to external opportunities as part of their programmes
- Supporting students to learn to travel independently.
- Supporting students to better participate in the local community.
- Supporting students to participate and engage in activities during holiday programmes.
- Providing personal care support when necessary
- Ensuring best practice with safeguarding and health and safety taken into account in all work

Supporting learning

- Shadowing PiP staff and learning the approach to session delivery
- Acting under the guidance and instruction of Development Workers to deliver learning sessions in a person-centred way
- Act on instructions of Development Workers to set up classrooms in a way that is safe, accessible and best facilitates learning.
- Taking the lead in planning and delivering accessible learning and development sessions once sufficiently experienced..

Key working

- Working creatively with key students to help them to identify life goals, develop action plans, and to overcome any barriers they may be facing.
- Planning and facilitating person centred reviews and regular 1:1 keyworker session
- Working closely with students to develop their circles of support including families, carers, social workers and health practitioners, and advocate for them within this network
- Supporting students to engage with their local communities
- Coordinating students' personal support packages creating: timetables, individual action plans, risk assessments, communication tools, and positive-behaviour support plans
- Acting as a point of contact for all internal and external communication regarding that person

Working in our team

- Actively participating in fundraising and communication events and activities
- Supporting volunteers



- Representing PiP externally and internally
- Establishing and maintaining strong positive working relationships with families, social workers, case managers and stakeholders and partners.
- Work with PiP's Service Manager during the referral, risk assessment and induction of students
- Maintain excellent communication with staff, students and other partners
- Promoting best practice by working within (and contributing to) the framework of PiP's policies and procedures
- Undertaking such other duties and tasks that fit with the wider work of the organisation.

Person specification

Experience and knowledge - (E) = essential and (D) = desirable

- (E) Working with people with learning disabilities, or a similar client group
- (E) Understanding of and commitment to a person-centred approach
- (D) Experience of supporting education or group activities
- (D) Understand of the risk assessment process, and development of strategies to tackle identified risks
- (D) Knowledge of Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults (SOVA) processes
- (D) Supporting people with a learning disability in a variety of settings internal and external e.g., the classroom, at home, in the community, at work, and on public transport

Skills and abilities - (E) = essential and (D) = desirable

- (E) Able to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, maintain accurate records and produce reports
- (E) Can support high quality learning sessions for adults with learning disabilities
- (E) Able to work independently and manage a large and varied workload
- (E) Able to establish and maintain professional relationships, both internal and external, with a wide variety of professional and carers
- (E) Effective communication with people who have complex communication needs
- (D) Can communicate in Arabic or French



What's in it for you?

- The salary for this role is between £25,642 - £27,642 dependent on experience with incremental pay progression.
- You'll get 25 days holidays + bank holidays ever year. We're closed for Christmas but the rest of the year you may take leave whenever you wish.
- An extra day of annual leave for each year you've worked with us up to another 5 (30 in total)
- We offer a travel subsidy to help with the cost of commuting.
- We provide a 4% pension contribution
- It's an early finish on Fridays - we close once all students leave around 4pm.
- Free Employee Assistance programme 24/7 with access to counselling
- We offer regular team meals and socials - generally during work hours and they are optional.
- We offer a cycle-to-work scheme and as we're a charity you'll get access to savings like [charityworkerdiscounts.com](https://www.charityworkerdiscounts.com)

Working patterns

- This role is based at our 306 Kensal Road centre.
- The contractual hours are 37.5 hours per week. Our core hours are 9-4:30pm
- As an in-person service our staff are generally required to be on-site but we can support occasional homeworking
- With our focus on supporting adults with disabilities we believe it is vital to support our staff with neurodiverse thinking or mobility issues. Many members of our team have reasonable adjustments, including members of our senior management team, and we are happy to discuss these.



Next steps

We ask you to apply by sending us your CV to: jobs@piponline.org.uk

We recognise that your experience may be from unpaid roles as well as paid employment. Please include any voluntary work if it helps to show why you are the right candidate for the job.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential. Please contact me on the e-mail below if you require any assistance or adjustment so that we can help with making the application process work for you.

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please email adamp@piponline.org.uk

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 3rd September 2024. We encourage you to apply early, as applications will be reviewed as soon as they are received and we reserve the right to close the advert sooner subject to finding suitable candidates

This post will require an enhanced DBS check to be undertaken. Having a criminal record will not necessarily disqualify you from acquiring the post.

