IPSEA



Policy Manager

RECRUITMENT PACK

Help us support families to get the right education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Thank you for your interest in joining the IPSEA team

Welcome to IPSEA! As you consider applying for the role of Office Administrator, picture yourself at the heart of a national charity, that champions positive change.

At IPSEA, we are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Joining our team means becoming a vital part of our mission, where your skills and passion will thrive in a supportive, inclusive environment.

If you are motivated by the opportunity to make a difference, we encourage you to consider joining IPSEA. Your expertise could be key to helping us continue our transformative impact on the lives of those we support.

This recruitment pack provides the information you need to apply for the **Office Administrator** role, including:

- Details of our vision, mission, values and strategic goals
- Information about the work we do, our impact and our future plans
- An overview of our organisational structure
- Information about the role, the job description and person specification
- An overview of our employee benefits.

If you wish to apply for the role, please visit: https://hr.breathehr.com/v/office-administrator-49680 where an application form is available to download. After completing the form, submit your application by clicking the 'apply' button at the bottom of the page. You will be asked for some personal details before being able to upload your form and CV. Should you have any issues uploading the form please email a copy to hr@ipsea.org.uk.

The closing date for applications is **9am** on **Monday, 7 December 2026.** First interviews will take place in person at our offices in **Takeley, Essex** on **17 December 2026** and second interviews will take place **online** on **Monday, 21 December.**

If you feel you have the qualities and experience needed to join our friendly team doing vital work to ensure children and young people with SEND receive the education they are legally entitled to, we would love to hear from you.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Best wishes

Madeleine Cassidy
Chief Executive, IPSEA

ABOUT IPSEA

OUR VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Our vision

Every child and young person with special educational needs and disabilities has the right education and support to thrive and achieve their potential.

Our mission

We use the law to help children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities get the education and support they are legally entitled to.

Our values

Focused
We are always focused on the child or young person in all that we do.

Inclusive
We welcome, respect, support and value our staff, our volunteers, our beneficiaries, and the communities accessing our services.

Adaptive
We actively listen and collaborate with openness and empathy and embrace continuous learning to create a positive culture.

Compassionate
We care about people; we appreciate other people's perspectives, and we are open to all. We understand our beneficiaries have different needs.

Accountable
We hold ourselves and others accountable for meeting our objectives and living our values.

Proactive
We anticipate challenges, seize opportunities and take initiatives that will drive meaningful change.

Our impact

- Children and young people with SEND receive the education and support to which they are legally entitled, to thrive and reach their potential.
- Local authorities, education settings and health bodies work together to make sure that children and young people receive the special educational provision and wider support they need and to which they are entitled.
- All aspects of the SEND legal framework are applied in full and function correctly to support children and young people with SEND, and existing legal rights are protected.
- Children and young people with SEND who have additional vulnerabilities from under-served communities receive the special educational provision to which they are entitled by law, eradicating inequalities they experience.

Our strategic goals

Our strategic goals in 2026-29

1. Empower all families of children and young people with SEND through expert legal information, advice, casework support and training.
2. Strengthen and enhance IPSEA's position as the leading charitable authority in SEND law.
3. Drive positive change within the SEND system to ensure the existing SEND legal framework is applied, protected and enforced through policy work and campaigning.
4. Train a broad range of professionals and practitioners to acquire the legal knowledge and skills to support all children and young people with SEND, with a particular focus on under-served communities.
5. Innovate and enhance IPSEA's operations, ensuring our services are family-centric and make best use of digital innovation and technologies.
6. Strengthen our organisational foundations and infrastructure to support capacity and growth ensuring sustainability and a positive focus on an inclusive culture and well-being.

WHAT WE DO

Children and young people with SEND are legally entitled to educational support that meets their individual needs, but they frequently fail to receive what the law says they should. Through our advice services, policy work and training, IPSEA is determined to change this.

Since IPSEA was formed in 1983, we have helped to improve educational support for thousands of children and young people with all kinds of SEND.

The impact of this can be life changing.

If the needs of children and young people with SEND are properly understood as a result of a thorough assessment, if the necessary provision is put in place to support them, and if that support is delivered in a suitable school, college or other setting, they are significantly less likely to experience multiple fixed term and/or permanent exclusions, end up out of education for long periods, experience mental health problems, end up “NEET” (not in Education, Employment or Training) or enter the criminal justice system.

Advice services

Supporting families to ensure that local authorities meet their legal obligations is the prime focus of IPSEA’s work. We deliver our services across England, providing free one-off telephone advice and ongoing casework support to parents, carers and young people.

We run two helplines which operate on a call-back basis and a call-in helpline service. Our Advice Line provides one-off next step advice on any educational issue that relates to a child or young person’s SEND, including exclusion from school, home to school transport, disability discrimination and the process for obtaining additional support for a child or young person.

On our Tribunal Helpline we give next step advice on appeals and disability discrimination claims to the SEND Tribunal. The Tribunal’s role is to resolve disputes between parents/young people and local authorities where they are unable to agree on the support that a child or young person

with SEND requires. Parents and carers can be referred to our Tribunal Support Service for ongoing support.

Our call-in service is designed for people to access on the spot advice if they haven't been able to book an appointment on our Advice Line or Tribunal Helpline.

Through our Tribunal Support Service we can provide families with in-depth casework support, access to tailored workshops and guided telephone support. Casework support includes assistance with drafting appeal grounds, compiling evidence, assisting with the case management process, negotiating with local authority representatives, helping with paperwork and providing representation at the hearing. Workshops help parents and carers understand the tribunal process and extended telephone calls with experienced volunteers and advisers help parents and carers move through the tribunal process. We prioritise cases that are complex or where the parent's ability to advocate is limited – e.g. those who have literacy difficulties, for whom English is a second language, who have significant caring responsibilities or are themselves disabled.

Our advice services are enhanced by our easy to navigate website which is constantly reviewed and updated to ensure it reflects current law and policy and includes a series of template letters for parents and carers to use in securing the education their child is legally entitled to.

Policy work

In addition to the support we provide to families, we use the evidence gathered from our helplines and casework to influence SEND policy and practice, and to achieve systemic change at a local and national level. We are regarded as thought leaders in the field, and we have been instrumental in shaping SEND law and policy over the past four decades through strategic litigation, influencing government and collaborating with other organisations in the SEND sector.

Training

As well as training and supervising our volunteers, IPSEA's legal team devises and delivers a range of SEND law training to parents/carers, SENCOs, local authorities and other professionals working within the SEND system. Over the past year, we have trained over 1,400 parents and carers, ensuring they understand their children's legal rights and entitlements and that they feel empowered to enforce them.

FUTURE AMBITIONS

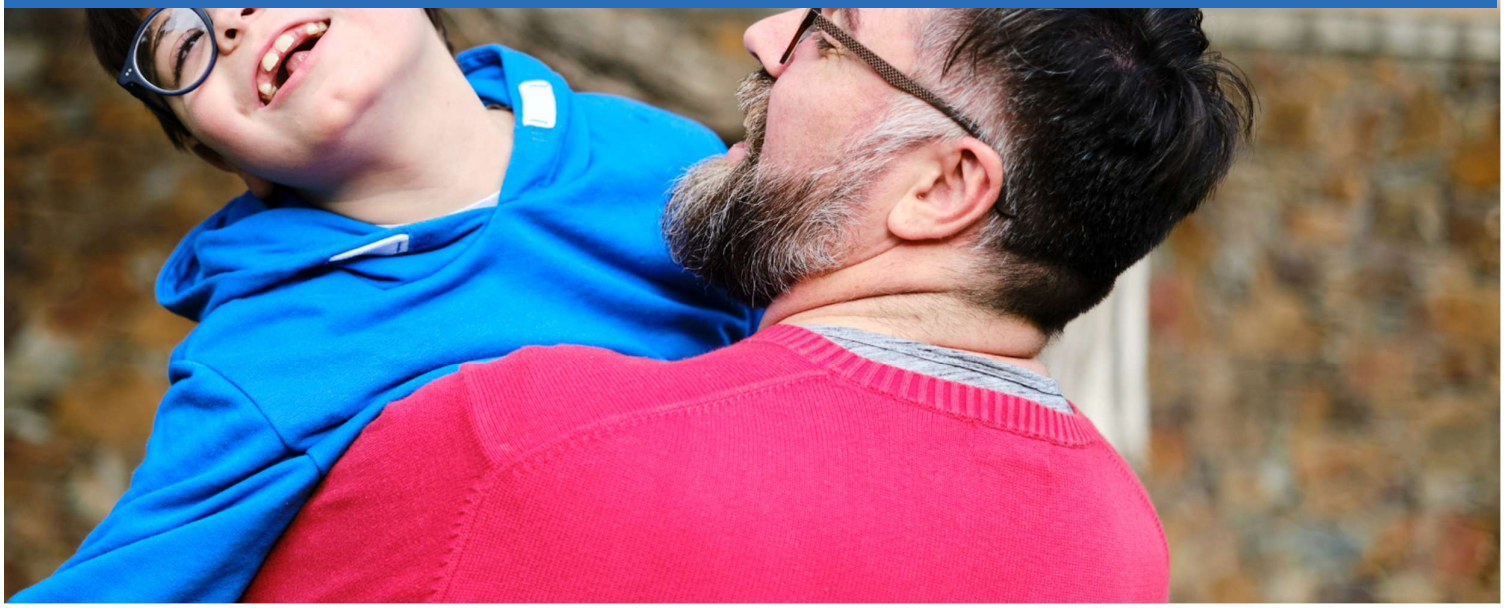
We have ambitious plans for the future. The next few years will pose significant challenges for children and young people with SEND. The Government has stated that it intends to reform the system for supporting children and young people with SEND, which may involve legislative change.

We want to ensure that whichever political party is in government, we are appropriately positioned to make sure that children and young people with SEND do not get forgotten as education policies are developed, and that their legal rights and entitlements are protected, promoted and upheld.

We also want to make greater use of technology and reach more of the families and young people who do not traditionally reach out to us, but who perhaps need us the most, including those in the care system, in penal detention and with an unsettled immigration status.

"The County Council were unhelpful through the latter stages of the process, but Sarah's [IPSEA volunteer] voice had a weight at this time that mine simply no longer had. She was able to get responses from the local authority when I continued to be ignored. She was able to lend much-needed authority to our responses, and again for that, I am also very grateful."

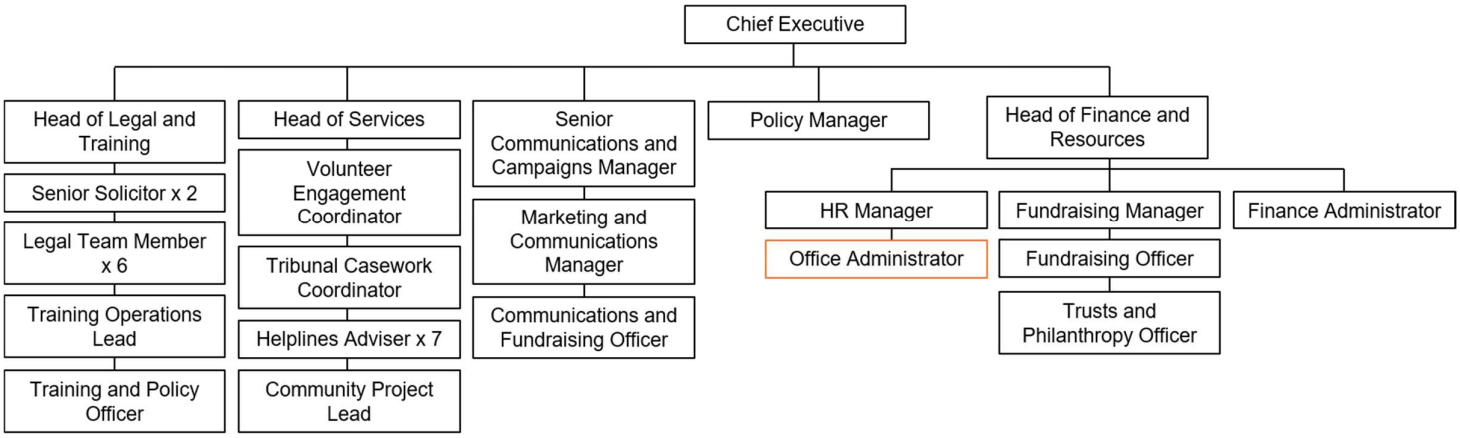
~ Parent helped through our Tribunal Support Service



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

We are a small charity with a turnover of circa £1,250,000, but we punch above our weight and hold a prominent position in the SEND sector. We have 33 members of staff working across five teams (Legal, Advice Services, Communications and Marketing, Fundraising and Finance) and around 80 volunteers. A significant proportion of our staff and volunteers have lived experience of parenting a child with SEND and the challenges associated with navigating the system in order to secure appropriate provision and support.

We are currently amending our organisational structure and a draft of our organogram is below:



ABOUT THE ROLE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Office Administrator

Location: Hybrid (with at least two fixed days worked in the IPSEA office in Takeley, Essex)

Contract type: Permanent

Hours: Full-time (35 hours per week) or part-time (minimum 25 hours per week considered)

Salary: £26,500 per annum (pro-rata if part-time)

Benefits: Flexible working arrangements
25 days annual leave per annum plus bank holidays (pro-rata if part-time) plus an additional day off for your birthday
Paid sick and leave for unplanned life events

We will provide a laptop, phone and other necessary IT equipment to facilitate hybrid and home working, if required.

JOB PURPOSE

This role is an integral part of IPSEA as our charity continues to expand. We are seeking an administrator to provide essential administrative support to teams across the organisation.

Reporting to the HR Manager, you will collaborate with both office-based and remote staff members, supporting the smooth and efficient operation of the charity.

Main duties and responsibilities

CEO Support

- Assist the CEO and management team with scheduling meetings, booking external meeting rooms and coordinating catering requirements
- Assist the CEO with administration, including preparing minutes, making arrangements for AGM and Board meetings and travel bookings, on request
- Ensure all members of the Board have completed their registration at Companies House
- Support the CEO with the preparation of the Board reports and monthly updates.
- Working with the CEO and management team to maintain and update IPSEA's policies.
- Provide administrative support to the CEO, including coordinating arrangements, managing bookings, maintaining records and organising deliveries
- Coordinate the Charity's governance and internal policies including formatting and ensuring the schedule is up to date

HR administration

- Provide administrative support for recruitment of employees and Trustees
- Manage the on-boarding and off-boarding of all employees and Trustees
- Support the HR Manager with administration of the HR management system and the People intranet site and resolve and respond to system queries

- General HR Administration including production of offers, contracts, confirmation letters, references
- Work with the Training Operations Lead to ensure all employees have completed their mandatory training
- Support with the administration of cyclical activities such as year-end holiday allowances, performance reviews and salary increases
- Support with flexible working requests including calculating pro-rata salaries and holiday entitlements
- Manage the HR inbox, responding where possible and assigning to the HR Manager where appropriate
- Support HR projects, completing assigned tasks in a timely manner and ensure planners are kept up to date

Office management

- Act as a point of contact for office-related activities such as site management, office cleaning, photocopier maintenance, fire alarm testing and PAT testing
- Order and take stock of office and kitchen supplies
- Responsible for IPSEA's electronic asset management (laptops, mobile phones, MS accounts, etc)
- Ensure all workers complete the DSE self-assessment
- Complete H&S risk assessments for the office and ensure the relevant senior manager has completed H&S risk assessments for external events and activities

Administration

- Maintain computerised records in accordance with relevant internal and external policies
- Arrange bookings for staff at conferences, courses and training events
- Organise travel and/or accommodation arrangements for colleagues and volunteers
- Undertake general administrative tasks including printing, photocopying, scanning, shredding, processing of incoming and outgoing post
- Respond to general enquiries by phone and email from IPSEA beneficiaries
- Assist with administrative tasks associated with IPSEA events
- Assist other departments with ad hoc administrative requests
- Provide ad hoc absence cover for the facilitation of live online training sessions

Any other duties

- Promote IPSEA as an exceptional and specialist charity
- Observe and promote good equality practice and ensure equality of opportunity in the workplace in line with current law
- Encourage a working atmosphere where everyone is treated with dignity and respect
- Work collaboratively with IPSEA trustees, staff and volunteers to provide a seamless service
- Any other duties commensurate with the post

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Criteria
Knowledge, training and qualifications	Knowledge of the SEND sector and understanding of the issues facing parents/carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) **(Desirable)** Understanding of charitable organisations **(Desirable)**
Experience	Recent experience of working in an administrative role within an office environment **(Essential)** Experience of managing a diverse workload and prioritising tasks to meet deadlines **(Essential)** Experience of maintaining and operating efficient and effective record keeping and filing systems, ensuring they are kept up-to-date and that information is stored appropriately **(Essential)** Experience of inputting and collating data **(Essential)** Experience of organising and supporting meetings and events **(Desirable)** Lived experience of parenting or caring for a child with SEND **(Desirable)**
Skills	Ability to take ownership for completing tasks accurately and efficiently, and to be flexible to respond to multiple and changing commitments and deadlines **(Essential)** Ability to deal with sensitive information with discretion and to always maintain confidentiality in line with data protection principles **(Essential)** Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to initiate, develop and sustain collaborative working relationships with a wide range of people **(Essential)** Ability to communicate effectively over the telephone and in writing, including with people who may be experiencing distress **(Essential)** Excellent working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications (in particular Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint and SharePoint) **(Essential)**
Personal attributes	Ability to work well within a team and willingness to take on a range of tasks as necessary **(Essential)** Ability to deal with sensitive information with discretion and to always maintain confidentiality **(Essential)** An interest in and understanding of IPSEA's mission and strategy **(Essential)** A commitment to treating colleagues and beneficiaries fairly, consistently and with respect **(Essential)**

NEXT STEPS

If you would like to apply for the role, please visit https://hr.breathehr.com/v/office-administrator-49680 where an application form is available to download.

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Note: A basic DBS check is required for the successful candidate.



IPSEA
Independent Provider of Special Education Advice

www.ipsea.org.uk

Registered charity number 327691
Limited company 2198066

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