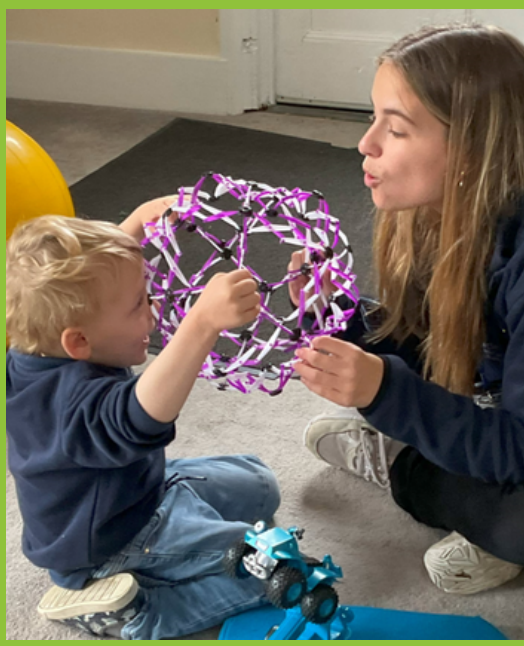




Operations, Systems and Governance Lead

Questions to: sarahsweet-rowley@autismearlysupport.org.uk
Applications to: mandysimons@autismearlysupport.org.uk

Autism Early Support®

Contents

Welcome from our CEO 3

About us 4

Who we are
What we do
Our Approach
Our Strategy and Purpose
Our Vision, Mission and Values

The role 7

What you can expect from us
The Team
Job Description

Your application 10

How to apply
Safeguarding
Equity diversity and inclusion
Summary of terms and conditions

Welcome from our CEO

Thank you for considering a role with Autism Early Support. I'm delighted you're exploring the possibility of joining our team.

At AES, we're passionate about providing early, individualised help to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the children and families we're here to support.

You will be joining us as we grow. In 2023, we launched our digital platform, The Parent's Portal, to support more families more often. Today, we're supporting more families than ever before and our aim is to continue to expand to fill some of the gaps in the SEND system and ensure no child is left behind.

This pack gives you an overview of the role, our ethos, and the support that will be available to you here. I hope it helps you see how your skills and passion could contribute to our mission and that you're excited by this opportunity.

This role is central to ensuring that our services operate legally, smoothly and effectively. With oversight on governance, IM&T, compliance, HR administration and organisational operations, you will help to maintain the business infrastructure that enables our teams to make a difference every day.

Working here is rewarding. As part of a small charity, your contribution will be visible and valued. You'll build strong relationships across the organisation, work alongside an experienced and supportive leadership team, and have the opportunity to make a genuine impact on how AES develops and grows in the years ahead.

We believe in investing in our staff. We do this through well-being initiatives, continuous professional development, training and supervision. We encourage everyone to work together with mutual respect to create a happy culture with an appetite for quality, learning and growth at its heart. You can watch a video of our work in action here.

I hope I have given you a flavour of what you can expect from us, and if you share our values and drive, we'd love to welcome you to an interview.

Very best wishes

Sarah Sweet-Rowley



About AES

Who we are

Autism Early Support Trust Ltd. ("AES") offers early support and specialist education to autistic children, children with sensory, communication and interaction differences and their families. We believe every child should have the chance to find their place in the world, be able to communicate their needs and learn alongside their peers with acceptance and support.

We aim to work alongside parents and practitioners to give every child the foundations they need for the next stage of their education. If we can enable a child to feel safe and understood, they become happier and they can flourish.

AES was established in 2001 and was formerly known as 'The Puzzle Centre'.

What we do

Our early support and specialist education encompasses specific, structured and targeted neurodiversity affirming approaches founded on established research, evidence-based practice and our extensive experience.

Through our services, we aim to equip all children with the tools and confidence they need to communicate, explore, play and enjoy the world around them. In response to the child's needs, wants and preferences, we make environmental adaptations and create the support a child needs to feel ready to learn.

Help is accessed through the **Circle Centre**, our specialist nursery near Buckingham and our **Outreach Service,** which supports families in the community and online through projects including **The Parent's Portal** and **Assessments and Support Packages**.

Our Approach

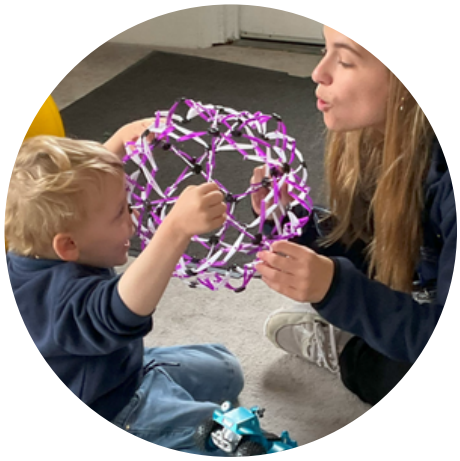
We take a child-led, needs-led and neurodiversity-affirming approach, helping autistic children and those with sensory, communication and interaction differences to thrive as their authentic selves.



Our multidisciplinary team works closely with each child and their family to create the right support, focusing on strengths, interests and individual needs so children feel safe, regulated and able to enjoy learning. We also empower parents and carers with the confidence and knowledge to support and advocate for their child every step of the way.

Our Strategy & Purpose

To fulfil the purpose and aims of our organisation, we follow a strategic plan as a framework for our roadmap. Our current strategy focuses on three key objectives:



- Deliver exemplary children's services
- Develop and grow our outreach services
- Build a sustainable income and resource base.

And within our core objectives we have five aims:

- Children's services are an exemplar of best practice
- Maintain 'Outstanding' (Ofsted) in our flagship nursery
- Support more families and practitioners through outreach
- Develop and empower an active parent support network
- Cultivate, retain and develop our key stakeholders
- Drive growth through voluntary and trading income.

Our longer-term plans include our drive to:

- Improve outcomes for more autistic children and their families
- Become recognised as UK leaders in autism education
- Achieve financial stability & independence
- Develop strategic partnerships to raise our profile and influence change

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision
Every autistic child and child with sensory or communication differences receives timely, appropriate and high quality education, therapy and support.

Our Mission
Using specialist education and therapies we support autistic children to find their ways to communicate and interact with others and we empower parents to understand and advocate for their children's needs.

Our Values

- **Integrity**. We're being trusted to impact the course of a child's future.
- **Compassion**. We proactively support and empower parents to help to improve whole family well-being.
- **Empathy**. Understanding and listening is at the heart of our service. We never judge, because 'we get it'.
- **Expertise**. Our beneficiaries need specialist knowledge, support and guidance.
- **Excellence**. The children & families we support deserve the highest quality education, therapy and support.

The Role

What you can expect from us

We offer hybrid working, a company pension, 33 days annual leave (inclusive of statutory bank holidays) pro-rated for 3.5 days (23.1), learning and development opportunities, including involvement in 3 organisation-wide inset training days, charity discounts, and an employee assistance programme. At AES, we pride ourselves on our commitment to Employee Wellbeing. Our Wellbeing charter is available to read here.

The Team

This role supports the everyday function of the charity you will be part of a small team that includes our CEO, Finance Manager and Head of Income and Marketing.
The charity employs 30 staff, based across our 2 sites. We also have the support of several volunteers, a Board of Trustees and our Charity Ambassadors.

Role Description

Reporting to our Chief Executive, you will be responsible for helping to ensure we have the operational infrastructure needed to effectively deliver the highest-quality services today and for the future.

The role provides oversight of governance, compliance, IM&T, operational and HR administration, business systems, and organisational effectiveness. You will ensure the charity operates efficiently, meets its legal and regulatory obligations, and is well positioned to achieve its strategic objectives.

Working closely with the Senior Executive Team, trustees, staff and external providers, this is a hands-on role requiring excellent organisational and inter-personal skills, strong attention to detail, and the ability to manage multiple priorities within a dynamic and evolving environment.

Your experience will demonstrate:

- Charity or statutory administration, governance and regulatory compliance.
- Administrative, operations, business support or office management.
- Using and supporting organisational systems and digital tools, with an understanding of how information management and technology (IM&T) enable effective service delivery, reporting, compliance and decision-making.
- Using and helping to administer business systems, we use: Salesforce CRM, Microsoft 365, and WordPress.
- Supporting governance, compliance, HR administration and wider business operations.
- Coordinating meetings, producing accurate minutes, and maintaining records and documentation.
- A charity, education, health, social care or public sector background would be advantageous.

Essential skills:

Personal Effectiveness

- Highly organised, with excellent attention to detail.
- Able to prioritise competing demands and manage multiple activities effectively.
- Proactive, dependable and solutions-focused.
- Able to communicate clearly and professionally, both verbally and in writing.
- Able to work independently while contributing positively as part of a team.
- Flexible and adaptable in response to changing organisational priorities.
- Able to handle confidential information with discretion, integrity and professionalism.

Technical Skills

- Highly competent in the effective use of organisational systems, digital platforms, online systems and information management tools.
- Strong working knowledge of Microsoft 365
- Strong experience of using business systems, databases and CRM platforms, ideally Salesforce.
- Strong administrative, organisational and reporting skills.
- Experience maintaining accurate records, documentation and management information.
- Able to produce accurate reports and support effective organisational decision-making

Knowledge and Commitment to our Cause

- Strong alignment with the charity's mission, values and purpose.
- Good understanding of the charity sector and governance requirements.
- Genuine commitment to improving outcomes for autistic children and their families.
- Understanding of the importance of inclusive, family-centred services.
- Commitment to delivering services that are responsive, compassionate and evidence-informed.

Key Responsibilities

Operations and Organisational Administration

- Provide operational oversight to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the charity.
- Develop and improve organisational systems, processes and administrative procedures.
- Maintain accurate records, reporting processes and document management systems.
- Monitor operational performance and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Oversee key supplier relationships and service level agreements.

Information Management & Technology (IM&T)

- Using and supporting business-critical systems such as CRM, finance, HR, communications and Microsoft 365 platforms.
- Helping colleagues make effective use of technology and digital tools.
- Liaising with external IT and systems providers to resolve issues, implement improvements and manage service delivery.
- Maintaining accurate, secure and compliant organisational data in line with GDPR and information governance requirements.
- Supporting system implementation, integration, user training and continuous improvement activities.
- Understanding how effective information management and technology support organisational performance, reporting, compliance, service delivery and decision-making.

HR Administration

- Coordinate recruitment, onboarding and induction processes.
- Maintain employee records, workforce compliance and training records.
- Support managers with HR administration across the employee lifecycle.
- Monitor key HR processes, including probation reviews, DBS renewals and absence recording.

Governance, Risk and Compliance

- Lead the charity's governance and compliance activity, ensuring adherence to legal, regulatory and charitable obligations.
- Maintain organisational policies, compliance records and the risk register.
- Act as Data Protection Lead, ensuring compliance with GDPR and information governance requirements.

Supplier and Contract Management

- Oversee supplier relationships, contracts and service agreements.
- Monitor contract performance, renewals and compliance requirements.
- Support procurement activities and ensure value for money.

General

- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level of the role as reasonably required by the Chief Executive Officer.

Your Application



How to apply

We welcome informal conversations with prospective candidates about the role and the charity in advance of the deadline. We pride ourselves on being open and transparent.

Please contact Sarah Sweet-Rowley, CEO
sarahsweet-rowley@autismearlysupport.org.uk
0300 102 4462

- Email your completed AES application form (you can download the form here) to mandysimons@autismearlysupport.org.uk along with your CV.
- Provide enclose a covering letter, clearly stating how you would meet the key requirements of the role to which you are applying, and why this role is attractive to you
- Provide the name, address and telephone numbers of two referees on the application form. Neither of these referees should be a relative and one should be your current or your last employer. References will only be taken up after interview but before offer of employment is sent. All offers of employment are conditional upon suitable references being obtained.

In line with our safer recruitment procedures and the statutory guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), we are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all individuals. As part of this commitment, we request references that adhere to these procedures to help us make informed and responsible recruitment decisions.

In-person interviews are scheduled to take place w/c 7th December for shortlisted candidates. This will be a two-stage interview process.

We aim to create a supportive and inclusive interview experience. If there is anything we should do to help you feel comfortable or accommodate your communication preferences, please let us know on application.
If you are invited to interview, we'll share our interview themes in advance to help you prepare.

Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding and protecting the vulnerable adults, children and young people that we work with. As such, all posts are subject to a safer recruitment process including the disclosure of criminal records and vetting checks. We ensure that we have a range of policies and procedures in place which promote safeguarding and safer working practices across our services.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to fostering a workplace where everyone feels respected, valued, and empowered to thrive. We believe that diversity of thought, background, and experience makes us stronger, and we actively work to create an environment where all individuals can contribute meaningfully and be their authentic selves.

We welcome applications from all qualified candidates.



Summary of terms and conditions

Role Title	Operations, Systems and Governance Lead
Salary	£36,000-£38,000 (FTE), dependent on experience. Pro-rated salary for 3.5 days: £25,200 - £26,600
Location	Hybrid – Buckingham-based office (MK18 1TF), with the option of home-working.
Hours of work	26.25 hrs per week (3.5 days) Flexibility as to how these are split.
Holidays	33 days per year (inclusive of statutory bank holidays) FTE Pro-rated for 3.5 days = 23.1
Probation	Three months
Inclusion	We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to our workplace or working arrangements.

Closing Date	**30/11/2026**	**Interviews**	**w/c 07/12/2026**

Autism Early Support®

Autism Early Support
Office A 15 Little Balmer (within Pace House)
Buckingham
MK18 1TF

mandysimons@autismearlysupport.org.uk l 0300 102 4462
Registered charity no. 1141868