

Progressive Recruitment – School and Term-Time roles in Fife Council

Fife Gingerbread and Fife Council began conversations about progressive recruitment initiatives in July 2022. With a number of vacancies to fill, and, recognising the need for diversification and creativity in their recruitment processes, Fife Council were keen to explore different avenues and open to discussing options that could benefit them along with one of the key priority groups – lone parents. Keen to be involved, Andrew Stokes, Service Manager, Facilities Management Services, agreed to further discussions.

Working together, Fife Gingerbread and the Facilities Management Team at Fife Council, one of Fife's largest employers, agreed that for a number of their vacancies, it wasn't always necessary to request a detailed supporting statement and that these positions; and more specifically - the hours, were ideal for parents seeking employment within the school day. It was agreed that any parents being supported by Fife Gingerbread could apply for positions within their remit e.g. Catering Assistant or Cleaner etc, by providing a simplified supporting statement and/or CV along with the standard application form, and in turn, these applicants would be offered a guaranteed interview.

To date, eleven parents receiving support from Fife Gingerbread have applied and have been invited to interview for positions with Fife Council. Six parents have successfully received conditional offers of employment and two have already started their jobs.

Lone parents are often undervalued so it was great to hear from an employer who wanted and was able to do something a little differently and recruit out of the norm. Lone parents develop a number of skills as the sole care providers for their children with many also holding down jobs - skills which are extremely transferrable and to employers can be invaluable. For those seeking work, having someone take a chance on them can make a world of difference. By supporting less advantaged individuals into employment, employers can empower lone parents to further develop and hone skills they already have, help them to develop a whole new skillset, mindset, and lifestyle not just for themselves but for their families with the recognition that their home life can adapt and fit in with a new life at work.

Following initial discussions with the Facilities Management Team, further conversations have taken place and other departments within Fife Council e.g. Environmental Services and Education and Child Services are keen to support progressive recruitment where possible and encourage lone parents into well-paid, sustainable employment.

*Can you offer flexible, term-time roles to parents during the school day?
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