**Job description:**

Sara suffered a trauma at birth that has resulted in her having cerebral palsy affecting all four limbs with communication difficulties. She has epilepsy and is gastro-jejunal tube fed. She attends a local special needs school.

While she has no verbal communication, she can make obvious likes and dislikes known with facial expressions, noises and occasional smiles. She is beginning to use her hands and eyes to indicate ‘yes’ and increasingly using eye gaze technology for play and communication. She enjoys listening to and making music, listening to stories and enjoys the company of her peers and other adults. She enjoys spending time with her 11 year old sister and being part of family life. Being able to communicate her needs and wishes is a key priority for the family. She likes to be pampered and in particular enjoys experiencing the warmth and freedom of the hydrotherapy pool. She gets pleasure from standing (using her standing frame or standing sling) and movement of most kinds and likes going out and about and experiencing new activities and environments– which we are keen to encourage and enable access to whenever possible. We have a sensory / physiotherapy room at home in addition to a hydrotherapy pool and sensory garden.

Sara sleeps quite well at night and in fact is developing a teenager love of sleeping in at the weekends too! Overnight Sara is pump fed; requires medication; turning and seizure management. Our assistants do sleep when looking after her overnight but it is disturbed sleep; there is a bed in the same room as our daughter.

We have a wonderful team of assistants who work with Sara and we are looking for another person to complement this team and provide back up support as necessary; ideally working a mixture of days and nights as required. There may be some extra shifts available when members of the team are on holiday; which would include accompanying Sara to school. There may opportunities to work with another carer and accompany Sara on holidays in the UK and abroad. Overnight shifts tend to be from 9.30pm/10pm to 8am and day shifts between 7.15am/8am to 5pm. Minimum and maximum contracted hours per week/month can be arranged.

Supporting Sara to help her access, participate and enjoy home, educational and leisure activities will often involve a physical element. This may be physically assisting or supporting her with some activities, manoeuvring therapy or mobility equipment, using specialist equipment to move her or a combination of any of these

The assistant will be fully supported by family and team members to care for Sara and will not be required to be solely responsible for her until the assistant is ready and comfortable to do this.

Full training, support and refreshers will be provided on all aspects. We will support you in growing your knowledge and skills. We have a well-established team; two of our team have been working with us for 11 years. I’m sure we could also ask one of our current team to give you a reference on us as employers, if you would like.

**Main Responsibilities**

* To work with and to increase Sara’s opportunities for play, learning and socialising, enabling her to live as happy, healthy, pain free and fulfilled a life as possible (home, school and within the community)
* To attend to her personal care (including pad changing), bathing and tube feeding
* To administer medication
* To follow physical, massage and hydrotherapy programmes as required to maintain current levels of ability and support her wellbeing
* To help her in communication and be willing to learn how to use eye-gaze technology to support communication and happiness
* To involve Sara in activities such as keeping her living area clean and tidy and other household tasks
* On occasions to accompany Sara to school and work as part of the class team in her school activities
* On occasions to interact, involve and spend time with her 11 year old sister
* An adapted manual vehicle is available to use to provide transportation to activities outside the home in addition to her power assisted wheelchair; the assistant being able to drive is essential
* To use our electronic notes system for recording all health, activity, care, development and progress notes.

# Person Specification

* Aptitude and desire to work with complex needs children where interaction from the child is severely limited
* An understanding of and a keen interest in building deep long-term relationships with our daughter and her sister
* An interest in helping her develop, achieve her full potential and find fulfilment
* Happy and proactive in learning new things – Gastrostomy and jejunal feeding, personal care routine, Vagal Nerve Stimulation, use of technology (electronic notes and eye gaze) in supporting care and learning
* Confidence with medical conditions such as epilepsy and a tendency not to panic in an emergency
* A willingness to carry through changes of position, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, sensory stimulation and eye gaze activities as required.
* Physically fit *–* for moving and handling purposes
* Non smoker
* Driver - essential
* Cheerful, caring and positive
* Flexible
* Patient and tolerant
* Reliable, trustworthy and conscientious
* Pro-active and ability to work under own initiative
* Team worker
* Good sense of humour
* Common sense!