

Candidate Pack

Becoming part of the PSS team



let's write you a new chapter...



A large, stylized illustration of a hand in shades of orange and brown, with fingers spread, is positioned on the left side of the page.

Hi! Thank you for your interest in becoming a part of the PSS team.

At PSS, we've got an important job to do and that's to help people make the most of their lives. Whether you're working directly with the people who use our services, or whether you're working behind the scenes in one of our offices, every day you'll be helping to make other people feel happier, healthier and supported. PSS is a caring, friendly organisation - and so are PSS people. Our organisation is run by a bunch of professional, creative, like-minded individuals, working together to change lives. When you come to work for us, it's obviously really important that you have the right skills and knowledge to do the people we support proud, but it's also vital that you have the right attitude, too.

We look to employ people who do the right things, in the right way which helps us make sure they're the right person for the job. We're ethical in everything we do, and our recruitment process is no different, but we'll explain more about that later. This approach to recruitment means PSS is a pretty great place to be - and we hope you can join us! This pack is designed to help you get a feel for what it's like to work with us and find out what we're looking for, explain the recruitment process and help you decide whether you can see yourself as a part of our amazing team.

Good luck - we're rooting for you!

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

Mahatma Gandhi

Who are we? PSS in a nutshell...



Our aim is simple: we want to help people change their lives for the better - no matter what life throws at them.



All the money we make goes back into finding new ways to help people.

In 2019, we celebrated our 100th birthday - and we still look this great! We want to make sure we're around for future generations, and your work will play a part in that.



We offer lots of different services to help people get the most from their lives - from health and wellbeing through to social care services.

The PSS team is made up of our wonderful employees, dedicated self-employed carers, generous supporters (volunteers) and the next generation of brilliant professionals: our placement students...



We go way back: We were founded in 1919 by Eleanor Rathbone, a lady famous for tackling social injustices.

We've got offices in *Merseyside, Wales, the Midlands, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Manchester.*



Our world revolves around the people who use our services.

Everyone's different, and our focus is on helping people choose their own type of support.

We're always cooking up new ideas for services we can offer.

We listen to what people tell us, and if we hear about a way we can help, we'll create a service to do just that.



The people who use our services are the reason we do what we do

and they play a huge part in making sure we're doing things right. They help us make decisions about how our services are run.





The PSS values and culture

We may be blowing our own trumpet, but our team really is something special.

PSS people come from all different walks of life, and it's this mix of brilliant personalities, experiences and insights that gives us that warm, open and friendly culture you can feel as soon as you meet us. But however wonderfully different we all are, there are five things we've all got in common - and they are the PSS values.

Created by our own employees to reflect some of the personal traits PSS people have, our values are the key to what makes our culture so unique; they're a reflection of who each of us are and they're embedded in everything we do.

Sometimes other organisations approach us and ask how we managed to make our culture so strong.

Our answer is really simple: we employ genuine, determined, professional, open-minded and big-hearted people.

"Be yourself - everyone else is taken." Oscar Wilde



Belonging at PSS



Feeling like you belong is so important – and we want everyone, whoever you are, to feel that you belong at PSS.

We want you to know that when you're at work, you're not just accepted, but celebrated for being you.

We've been collaborating with Social Justice Collective, and we're on a big journey to become the most equitable, inclusive, and diverse organisation we can be. We've looked closely at how systemic issues like power, privilege and oppression are impacting people at PSS, and we've used that knowledge to look at everything we do.

We've already made loads of ace changes that we're really proud of, but there's still a long, and exciting road ahead to be the best we can be – and that involves you.

There are lots of choices you can make to help make the world – and our organisation – a safe and welcoming place for everyone. We want you to be accepting and supportive of the people you work with, no matter how different they might be from you. That means being kind and compassionate and showing respect for each and every person you meet.

When you join PSS, we're going to give you lots of learning and development opportunities to help you recognise unconscious bias, understand the impact of judgemental and excluding behaviours and help you work as inclusively as possible.

We won't tolerate discrimination of any kind – and we want PSS to be a place where everyone feels confident and supported to tell someone if they see something that's not right. Not only that, but we want you to know we'll take it seriously too.

If you ever find yourself feeling like something's not right, like someone's treating you or someone else differently because of who you are, or if you witness someone else doing something that you think is discrimination, please say something. You can either talk to your manager, or talk to someone in our people and culture team:

Jayne Flynn: jayne.flynn@pss.org.uk

Michelle Cooksey: michelle.cooksey@pss.org.uk

Rushell Small: rushell.small@pss.org.uk

Jessica Williams: jessica.williams@pss.org.uk

We all have a part to play in making sure everyone feels safe, happy, equal and included at PSS – and in society. Let's be part of the change we want to see in the world.





Love what you do; do what you love

We think PSS is a pretty great place to work. But don't just take our word for it - here's what some of our brilliant PSS people had to say in our 2022 Staff Survey*:

96%

OF PSS PEOPLE SAID THAT PSS WAS A FRIENDLY PLACE TO WORK.

'FEELING VALUED AND SUPPORTED, I FEEL VERY LUCKY TO WORK WITH GREAT PEOPLE WHO REALLY CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER.'

'THE PEOPLE. THE STAFF GO ABOVE AND BEYOND. I FEEL LUCKY TO HAVE MET SO MANY AMAZING PEOPLE THROUGHOUT MY WORKING LIFE HERE.'

99%

OF PSS PEOPLE SAID THAT THEIR WORK HAD SPECIAL MEANING AND WAS MORE THAN 'JUST A JOB'.

'I'M REALLY PROUD TO WORK FOR PSS, AND I KNOW MY TEAM FEEL THE SAME. WE VERY MUCH VALUE EVERYTHING ABOUT THE COMPANY AND WHAT WE DO. IT'S A FUN, LOVING PLACE THAT PROVIDES GREAT SUPPORT IN PEOPLE'S LIVES.'

96%

OF PSS PEOPLE THOUGHT THE LEADERSHIP TEAM WERE EFFECTIVE AND TRUST THEM TO LEAD.

'MANAGERS ARE VERY KIND AND COMPASSIONATE, THEY CARE ABOUT STAFF. I DON'T JUST FEEL LIKE A NUMBER HERE. THEY'VE GIVEN ME OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES THAT I WOULDN'T GET AT A DIFFERENT WORKPLACE.'

*We promise these are all real things our people told us...and nobody was paid to be nice!

What else can we offer you?



Going home at the end of the day knowing you've made a difference is a lovely feeling - and so is knowing that your employer is looking after your best interests.

We can help you look after your pennies...

Enhanced Payments

Enhanced payment entitlements aren't always guaranteed in all employments, especially in the charity sector, so we're proud to be an employer that offers this for sickness, maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

PSS Pension Scheme

On 1st April 2019, the Government increased the minimum auto-enrolment pension contribution to 8%. Employers were expected to pay 3% and employees were expected to pay 5%. But, to lessen the impact on our team's pockets, we decided to up our contribution to 4% - so our employees can pay 4% instead. All new employees are automatically enrolled into this scheme unless you decide to opt out or join our more generous contributory PSS Pension Scheme where you can make higher contributions of 7% or 8%, with us matching this, plus an additional 1% (meaning that PSS can be making up to a 9% contribution to your pension pot). This scheme is provided by The People's Pension and dependent upon your level of earning, contributions can be made as part of a salary exchange arrangement which reduces the national insurance that you and PSS pay.

Life Insurance

We provide free life cover protection of 1x basic annual salary to all our employees who are on contracted hours and are aged over 16 and under 75. We hope that gives you some peace of mind knowing your nearest and dearest are taken care of when it matters most.

PSS Annual Season Ticket Loan

This is a really handy one for those who travel to work by public transport. We can loan you the cost of an annual season ticket for most forms of public transport. This can save you hundreds of pounds a year and means you can pay the cost back through your salary, in regular monthly instalments. You can take advantage of this once you have completed your probation period.

Medicash Health Plan

Everyday healthcare costs can mount up pretty quickly. Medicash has various packages and payment options available for everyday health care costs, such as dental and optical care, assessment and treatment such as physiotherapy and chiropody, as well as plans for alternative treatment such as Indian head massage and Reiki.





Length of service recognition

As a new PSS teammate, 10 years from now might feel like a lifetime away, 20 probably feels like an eternity, and 30 is a whole other level, but we're proud to say that we've got people in our teams who have recently celebrated those monumental milestones – how amazing is that?

This isn't us just bragging (although, maybe a little bit) it's our way of telling you that if you're with us for the long haul and reach those magic milestones, you'll receive a little something from us to say thank you for your ongoing commitment to PSS.

The PSS Hardship Fund

From time to time, things may come up that leave you in an unexpected financial hardship. Being able to support our teammates in that moment is something that's really important to us. It's also the reason why we set up the PSS Hardship Fund.

The Hardship Fund is a non-repayable amount of money (with a maximum limit) that any of our teammates can apply for if they're at risk of or are suffering from significant financial difficulties.

Salary Draw Down

There are some months when payday just can't come quick enough. Whether it's to cover your MOT two days before payday, that unexpected bill that's just landed out of the blue, or a school trip the kids completely forgot to tell you about, there might be times when you need to access your salary that little bit earlier in the month.

To support our staff with this, we've partnered with Access Early Pay, which means you can get up to 25% of your salary throughout

the month before payday comes around. We're hoping this might mean people are less likely to use things like high-interest or payday loans (which can ultimately end up in debt and financial hardship).

Salary Finance

We've teamed up with Salary Finance who offer free financial education including top tips to take control of your finances and become savvier when it comes to managing your pennies. Once you've completed your probation period, there's also the opportunity to open savings accounts and apply for affordable loans with payments taken directly from your salary. This can help you to create better saving habits, borrow sensibly and much more.

PSS Savings Club

We also have our own PSS Savings Club so whether you want to save towards a holiday, home improvements, a shiny new car, a special celebration or even a rainy day fund, it's there as another hassle free option and a safe way to save and manage your money better.

O2 Open Perks

You and two of your family or friends can get 25% off any O2 airtime tariff of 3GB of data or more and 15% off any tariff under 3GB. You can also get access to advance tickets for all O2 music venues.

Wholesale Membership

You also have the opportunity to purchase wholesale memberships allowing you to access some of the best quality products at the lowest possible prices. With warehouses throughout the UK, you will find everything from groceries and electronics to clothing and cleaning supplies.



Gym Discount

You can access various discounts and offers for selected gyms including large private chains, local authority leisure centres and small private gyms.

Cycle2work Scheme

Cycling to work is a great way to save money on travel costs, get more active and look after the environment. Our scheme is provided through **Cyclescheme.co.uk** and will help you save money on a bike and / or cycling accessories at well-known chains as well as local retailers. Once you have passed your probation period you can join the scheme and pay through a salary sacrifice arrangement with savings on your tax and national insurance.

Refer a Friend

If you know someone who lives our values, you can recommend them for one of our vacancies and if they're successful, you'll receive £250 upon the completion of their probation period. That's right, we reward staff for doing what many of us do so naturally anyway...proudly talking about the work we do and what makes PSS such a great place to work.

There are also lots of other little ways that we'll try to make a difference. This could be through wellbeing sessions, PSS activities, playful staff competitions or causes we can all support together.

We are continuously reviewing our employee benefits and often a lot of these ideas and suggestions come from our own people.



What else can we offer you?



We can help you:

Look after you...

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Life is full of ups and downs and things can get tough for all of us sometimes. We offer a free, confidential service for you and members of your household to get professional support and advice on a range of issues; such as stress, relationship difficulties, bereavement, family difficulties, anxiety, debt, medical matters, legal advice and more. It's there if you need it.

Look after your weekend plans...

CSSC Sport & Leisure Club

Are you always on the hunt for something to entertain you/the kids at the weekend? We may have just the thing. CSSC is a membership scheme that you can pay into, which offers fantastic savings on a whole load of local, regional and national sporting and leisure activities, family days out, reduced price theme park/cinema/theatre tickets and thousands of discounts at high street shops.

Like getting discounts and deals? Of course, you do!

When you join PSS, you'll get access to Vivup, which is part of our employee assistance programme, where you'll find lots of amazing discounts and deals on high-street brands, days out and holidays.

Join our networks

We're all about supporting our teams to grow and flourish in their roles, but we're also really supportive of our teammates creating their own networks within PSS. When you join PSS, you can be a part of our LGBTQIA+ network, our equality, diversity and inclusion group, our menopause group and our neurodiversity network.

Look after your career...

Stay curious

We may be (totally, utterly and completely) brilliant, but we're certainly not complacent about it. We've been around for over 100 years, and to do that, we've had to keep on learning, adapting and moving with the times to make sure the service we provide is top notch and does what it says on the tin. When you come and work with us, we'll encourage you to do the same things; learn, adapt, be brilliant. That's why we have our own in-house learning and development team who provide, manage, support and source training across the organisation. They'll find ways to help you be even better at what you do and be there to cheer you on along the way.

Got a great idea? Bob it over to Sarah

We believe that there's no such thing as a bad idea. We value all of our teammates and know that some of the best ideas about how we do things can come from the people who know PSS best - our PSS people! That's why we've got Sarah, our dedicated head of great ideas, who'll work with you to help bring your ideas to life.



Your application form

Well, you've read a little bit about us - now it's over to you!

If you like what you've read so far, you think you've got the skills for the job and can see yourself as a PSS person, it's time to apply.

Now, at PSS, we're all about making sure things are fair and square. We believe that everyone, no matter who they are, should be treated equally at all times. So - when we recruit new staff, we don't use application forms or CVs that contain personal info about you.

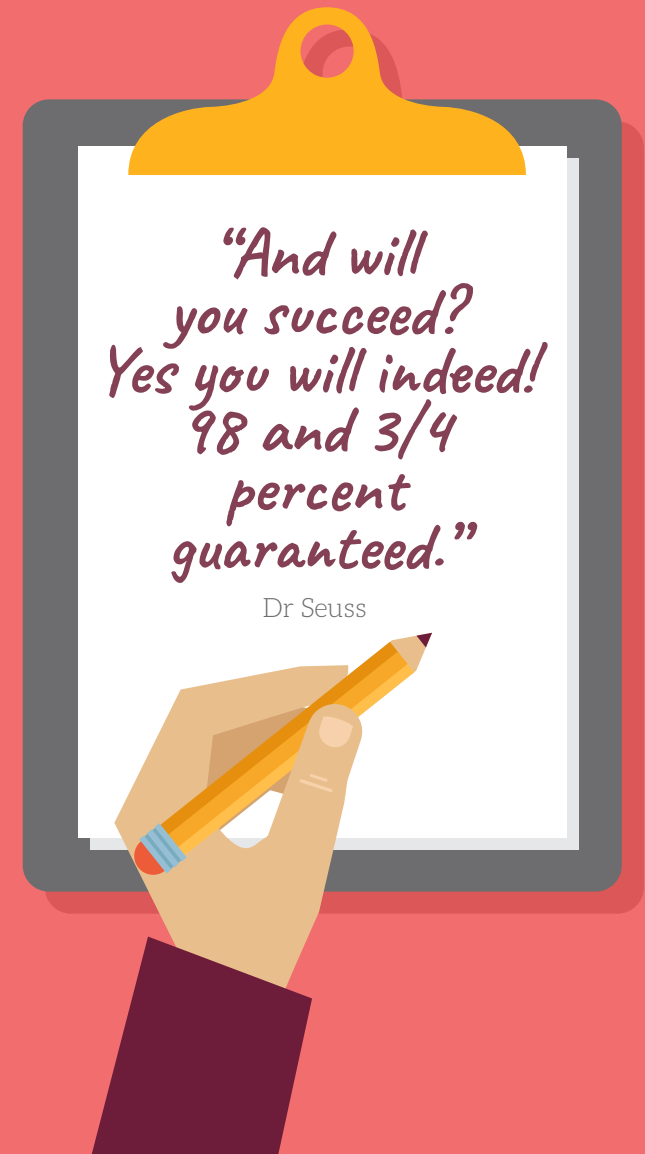
Why's that?

Well, it's a fact that when we see something about a job applicant on a CV or application form that appeals to us and feels familiar (maybe they went to the same school as you, or share a niche love of wild swimming), or if there's something on their application that maybe we don't like or feel comfy with (maybe they support your arch rival football team or think that the milk goes in before the teabag), it could potentially influence us without us even knowing it. Even if we feel it never could. The official term for it is 'unconscious bias'.

All our staff are trained in unconscious bias and are watching out for it in their work and home lives - but to make sure we're recruiting fairly and leaving space for the most diverse workforce we can possibly get (diversity = always better in every way) we wanted to do something that gives us the best chance of removing it completely from our recruitment process.

To keep things fair, instead of asking you loads of details about your experiences, your likes and dislikes and your background, we use something called Applied. It's a snazzy online recruitment site that has been designed by Applied psychologists to bring out the best in you - and keep recruitment completely fair.

There's more info about how we do it on the next page.





Back to basics

When you apply for a job with us, there'll be no need for you to fill out a long-winded application form. We're not going to ask you to tell us about yourself, and we're not even going to ask for your CV – we'll only ask you to complete our online form made by Applied with questions that are relevant to the role.

It's not because we don't care or don't want to get to know you, it's the opposite of that. We're doing this because we care a lot. We want to focus on the information that tells us about your ability, and not your background. Our online form is mainly made up of skill-based questions that you'll need to do the role. Applied will then take your answers, make them anonymous, and put them in the mix with the answers the other candidates have given to us. If we don't know which candidate has given which answer, it removes any potential bias from the selection process.

If your application is successful, you'll be invited to meet our fab and friendly interview panel who'll only ask you questions relevant to the role. We'll keep you in the loop whether or not your application is successful and give you feedback at all stages of the process. We understand how much thought and effort goes into applying for a new job, so we appreciate you taking the time to apply with us.





What we're looking for

The person specification

The person spec highlights the key things we're looking for, as well as how we're going to measure if you have them.

The essential criteria

The essential criteria are the things you need to have to be able to do the job, so you must be able to say 'yes, I've got those' before you invest your time and effort in completing the online form.

The desirable criteria

The desirable criteria are the qualities we think would be great for you to have, but they're not essential – so don't be put off if you don't have them. This might be something we could train you up in. If we have a lot of interest in a role, then our scoring system may use desirable criteria to help us narrow things down a little.

Our values are really important to us, so we'll definitely be looking to see if your answers reflect them and whether you'll be a good fit at PSS. Although we don't ask traditional questions such as 'tell us a bit about yourself', it doesn't mean that we aren't looking to get a sense of who you are, so be honest and be yourself- let your personality shine through.

If you'd like more information about the role or our selection process, please call our people and culture Team on **0151 702 5555**, or head to **psspeople.com**

If you'd like to know more about why we're asking you to use Applied or have any queries about your information and how it's being held to head to **<https://appliedhelp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360002717398-What-is-Applied-and-why-am-I-being-asked-to-use-it>** for more information.





*“The time is always right
to do what is right.”*

Martin Luther King