

A Year of Searching, Then Ten Weeks to Find the Right Person

By the time the Senior Case Manager at JSP reached out to us, the role had already been open for more than a year. He is a nine-year-old boy with cerebral palsy, non-verbal and wheelchair-dependent, needing daily support with personal care, feeding, and moving and handling. His mum is deeply involved in every part of his life, protective, hands-on, and understandably cautious after previous experiences had left her wary of letting anyone new through the door.

The Case Manager's previous attempts to find someone hadn't gone wrong through any fault of her own. The reality is that without the time to work through hundreds of unsuitable applications, you're often left with a handful of 'suitable' candidates who simply don't show up for interview.

The Challenge

- Re-establishing trust with a mum who had been let down before, she was cautious
- Recruiting locally for a role that required a driver, with term-time and holiday adjustments
- Finding someone with the right blend of physical capability and calm, warm emotional intelligence to fit into a family that had built its own rhythm

What We Did

We approached this case with one guiding principle: mum's caution wasn't a problem to overcome, it was information. Before we presented a single candidate, we took the time to understand the family dynamic, what had gone wrong before, what she was looking for, and what kind of person would genuinely fit into that home.

Mum wasn't just consulted, she was involved in shaping the support plan and had a genuine say in who was put forward. When a family has a hand in that process, trust comes a lot more naturally.

We used our tried and tested advertising approach, processing applications out of hours to get ahead of the competition. But more importantly, we kept values alignment at the centre of everything. The right skills matter, but the right fit matters more.

After a strong interview process, we put forward the Support Worker. On paper she ticked every box experienced support worker, calm under pressure, local, and a driver. But what really set her apart was something you can't advertise for: the Support Worker has a younger brother with cerebral palsy. She understood this world not just professionally, but personally.

"It looked fantastic. I was impressed with the questions asked."

The child's mum, on receiving the Support Worker's profile

The Outcome

The Support Worker has now been with the family for over a year. She has settled in well and become a consistent, trusted presence in the child's life. He clearly loves her. The Case Manager reflects on what that has meant in practice:

"Because we've got the right person in first time, it's really helped with breaking down those worries. What's happened in the past is that the wrong person got in, and it made families go 'told you it wouldn't work' going back to that place. But with this case, it was perfect."

— Case Manager, JSP

What made the Support Worker's impact especially meaningful was what she brought beyond the job description. Her personal experience of growing up alongside a sibling with cerebral palsy gave her a credibility with mum that no amount of professional training could replicate, the ability to sit with her and say this is normal, my brother went through this too.

That kind of reassurance, from someone living the same reality, changed the dynamic entirely.

"The family are very happy. The Support Worker has settled in well and is providing consistent, reliable care throughout term time and holidays."

The Numbers

A one-off recruitment fee versus an ongoing agency cost that never stops. The difference compounds every month the right person stays.

	Focused Recruitment	Temporary Agency
Recruitment Cost	£3,887.33 one-off	£5040 / month*
Time to Fill	10 weeks	12+ months and counting
Agency Backfill	None required	Repeated turnover risk
Family Confidence	Restored	Eroding

Example agency rate of £35/hour over the Support Worker's contracted 36 hours / week

Interested in direct recruitment for a complex case? Get in touch with Social Care Recruiting.