

## A support worker for a young boy with complex needs in rural Scotland

*Placed in 10 weeks · Case Manager, JSP*

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Finding support workers that clients and their families can trust is the whole of what we do. We carry the search so the case manager can stay focused on the case, and we screen hard on fit before anyone reaches the client. Here is a recent example.

### The client

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A young boy with complex physical needs, living in rural Scotland. He is non-verbal and wheelchair-dependent, and needs specialist support across home, school and other settings. Since birth his care had been managed entirely by his parents, his grandparents and his teachers at specialist school. No one outside that circle had ever supported him.

That made this different from the outset. His mum, dad and grandparents had never had to trust someone new with their child, and the school team felt the same. Everyone around him had learned to read what he needed through his movements, his sounds and his body language, and handing any part of that to a stranger was a daunting thought for all of them.

### Why it was a hard brief

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- A paediatric case needing real experience with complex physical needs and non-verbal communication, which is a hard combination to find.
- A rural Scottish location with a small local pool, and a role that needed a driver.
- A post split across several settings and professional teams, each with its own expectations.
- A family who had never let anyone outside their inner circle care for their child, and needed to be certain before they did.

It is not a brief a job advert solves on its own. It needs someone working a narrow pool by hand, and screening hard on the things that actually matter to a family in that position.

### What we did

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We took time upfront to understand what the family needed. The Case Manager was clear that they wanted genuine passion for caring, not just qualifications on paper. The role called for warmth, adaptability, and someone who could sit comfortably alongside parents, grandparents and a school team without missing a beat.

We ran a targeted campaign and worked applications out of hours. The pool was narrow from the start. Finding someone with the right experience, real confidence with non-verbal communication, and a willingness to work across home and school in a small Scottish town was always going to be hard.

After thorough screening and interviews, we put one Support Worker forward. She brought years of complex care experience, and, more to the point, she understood what it means to work with a child who communicates through movement and sound rather than words.

“*She came across as calm, thoughtful, and well-suited.*”

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

The family chose to meet her first, without their son present, wanting to give her their full attention before any introduction. That said a lot about how seriously they took it.

“*I found the whole process really straightforward and easy to follow. Everything was explained clearly, and I always knew what was happening next.*”

The Support Worker, on the recruitment process

## The outcome

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She was offered the role 10 weeks after we began. Pre-employment paperwork started straight away, and within weeks she was already in training at the school while the Case Manager finalised her induction plan.

What confirmed it for the family was the moment she met their son at school. The interaction was natural and unforced. He smiled. He used his voice. For a child who communicates entirely through body language, those were the clearest signs the family could have hoped for.

“*It went really well and was exactly what I had hoped for. The interaction felt very natural, with an easy flow between them.*”

The child’s mum, after the Support Worker met her son

“*I didn’t feel like just another candidate. I felt like they actually cared and took the time to check in and make sure I was okay at each stage.*”

The Support Worker, on our support through the process

For a family who had never trusted anyone outside their own circle with their child, that moment changed things. It was not a leap of faith. It was evidence.

“*Thank you all for your help throughout this process.*”

The child’s parents

## Why fit comes first

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That is how the screening is meant to work, before anyone reaches the child rather than after. Across our placements, around 80% of the people we take to a meet-and-greet are offered the role.

Having a stranger come into a child’s life is a big deal, and we get that. Whether that person fits is the foundation everything else is built on, because trust is built on human connection, not qualifications.

What made this placement work was how naturally she met him, on his terms. That is what let the family lower their guard.

It matters because the support worker spends more hours with him than almost anyone outside the family. Get that person right and it can change a child's life and give a family room to breathe. Get it wrong and the placement breaks, and their trust with it. That is the part we take on, so the case manager does not have to.

## Fair and proportionate costs

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Here is how our fee compares with a standard percentage-based perm placement fee.

|                  | Williamson                                                            | Perm agency                                                                  |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Recruitment cost | £3,284.25 one-off                                                     | ~£4,680 one-off                                                              |
| How it's charged | For the hours of expert work we actually put in                       | A flat 15% of salary, whatever the search took                               |
| Time to fill     | 10 weeks                                                              | Similar                                                                      |
| The outcome      | A carefully selected candidate well aligned with the child and family | Any candidate who will pass an interview and stay past the fee refund period |

*The perm agency figure is an illustrative 15% placement fee on a full-time support worker salary (£16/hour, about £31,200 a year). We bill instead for the specialist hours the search actually takes, so the fee stays proportionate to the work involved.*

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If you have a complex case and want to talk through direct recruitment, get in touch at [info@williamson-care.co.uk](mailto:info@williamson-care.co.uk)