



RECRUITMENT PACK

Youth Re-engagement Practitioner

Community-based support helping young people reconnect with education

Salary	£28,000–£33,000 (full time, term time salary. Pro rata for part-time role)
Contract	Flexible part-time or full-time, to be discussed at interview. Minimum 12 hours per week.
Location	Community-based across the Tees Valley, with travel to OpenGate Education sites
Reports to	Justin Lewis, Director of Operations
Travel	Full UK driving license and access to a vehicle insured for business use required

Help a young person take the next achievable step towards learning.

Welcome to OpenGate Education

We are building an alternative provision offer around the young person, not asking the young person to fit a standard model.

OpenGate Education provides high-quality, responsive alternative provision for children and young people who need a different route to engage, progress and succeed. We work closely with schools, local authorities, families and other professionals to deliver flexible support built around individual need, strong safeguarding and measurable outcomes.

Our Youth Re-engagement Practitioner will be central to our community-based EBSA and re-engagement offer. Some young people are not yet ready to enter an education setting. This role starts where they are, builds a dependable relationship and helps them reconnect with routines, learning and a sustainable education pathway.

What matters to us

- **Young people first.** We listen carefully, respond to individual need and keep progress meaningful to the young person.
- **Relationships with purpose.** Trust is the starting point, but every relationship is used thoughtfully to help a learner move forward.
- **High expectations with flexibility.** We adapt the route without losing sight of positive destinations and ambitious outcomes.
- **Partnership.** We work openly with families, schools, commissioners and other professionals because sustainable progress is shared work.
- **Safe, reflective practice.** Safeguarding, professional boundaries, accurate recording and supervision underpin everything we do.

The opportunity

You will join OpenGate at an exciting stage of development, with the opportunity to influence how our re-engagement service grows. You will have the freedom to use creativity, practical activities and community opportunities while working within clear safeguarding, quality and outcome frameworks.

Why work for us

We want people to feel well supported, recognised and able to build a long-term career with OpenGate Education.

- **Health and wellbeing prioritised.** A culture that treats staff wellbeing, safe workloads, good supervision and open conversations as essential to high-quality work with family friendly policies to support you.
- **Wellbeing days.** Dedicated wellbeing days to support rest, reflection and sustainable practice.
- **Discounts and perks.** Access to employee discounts and practical perks as part of our developing staff offer.
- **Rewards and retention.** Reward and retention initiatives that recognise commitment and support people to build their future with us.
- **Team recognition rewards.** Regular opportunities to celebrate excellent practice, contribution and the difference colleagues make.
- **Professional development.** Role-relevant training, reflective practice and development opportunities shaped around the work you do.
- **Grow your own career.** We want to invest in people and create genuine routes for progression, including promotion from within as OpenGate grows.
- **Staff uniform.** A practical OpenGate uniform will be provided for a consistent, professional identity when working in the community.
- **Company pension.** Access to a workplace pension in line with the scheme rules and statutory eligibility.
- **High quality environments with small class sizes.** We pride ourselves on individual support for our young people.
- **A rewarding workplace where you will be responsible for positive outcomes.** Our pathways look at future career aspirations and directly feed into our local communities, changing the lives for our young people.

What you can expect from us

- A clear induction and the guidance needed to work safely and confidently in community settings.
- Regular supervision, opportunities for reflective practice and access to leadership support.
- A collaborative team where ideas from frontline practice help shape the service.
- Clear expectations, purposeful plans and a shared focus on evidence of progress.

Who should apply

We welcome applicants with different professional backgrounds. What matters most is your ability to build trust, work safely and help young people make purposeful progress.

Your experience could come from

- Youth work or detached and community-based youth support
- Pastoral mentoring, learning mentoring or attendance support
- Sports, outdoor learning, creative or vocational coaching
- Teaching assistant, learning support assistant or SEND support roles
- Alternative provision, inclusion, behaviour support or education reintegration
- Family support, early help, social care or other community services
- Ex-services or uniformed-service experience combined with youth work, mentoring, coaching or community experience
- Therapeutic, wellbeing or trauma-informed support roles

You may be a strong fit if you

- Can connect with a young person who is reluctant to engage or has stopped trusting education.
- Stay calm, dependable with professional boundaries when progress is slow or plans change.
- Can turn a young person's interests into purposeful activities and achievable next steps.
- Are confident working independently, while knowing when to seek guidance or escalate a concern.
- Communicate well with families and professionals and keep clear, accurate records.
- Believe inclusion should be ambitious, practical and centred on better long-term outcomes.

Qualifications and transferable experience

A relevant qualification in youth work, education, therapeutic support, coaching, mentoring, social care or a related field is desirable. We also recognise strong transferable experience. If your background is not a traditional education route but you can demonstrate safe practice, effective work with young people and the qualities described in this pack, we encourage you to apply.

What the role involves

This is a relationship-led role with a clear purpose: moving a young person from initial connection towards sustained participation in education.

Stage	What this means
1 Connect	Meet the young person in a setting where they feel able to begin; listen, understand barriers and establish consistency.
2 Engage	Use interests, practical activity, sport, outdoor learning and community opportunities to build trust and participation.
3 Build	Develop routines, communication, confidence, emotional regulation, and readiness for learning.
4 Learn	Introduce learning and educational expectations gradually through an individual re-engagement plan.
5 Transition	Support a carefully planned move into OpenGate provision, school, college or another agreed pathway, and help sustain it.

How success will be seen

- Young people form trusted relationships and engage consistently with planned sessions.
- Re-engagement plans are personalised, clear and reviewed against meaningful goals.
- Learners show evidenced progress in confidence, routine, participation and readiness for learning.
- Transitions into an appropriate education pathway are carefully planned and increasingly sustained.
- Families, commissioners and partner professionals receive reliable communication and clear evidence of impact.

Job description

The following section sets out the full responsibilities, experience, and requirements for the role.

Role purpose

Some young people are not yet ready to walk through the doors of an education setting. The Youth Re-engagement Practitioner will meet them where they are, working in homes, communities and other agreed locations to build trust, confidence and routines before gradually reconnecting them with learning.

This is not a traditional classroom-based role. Through consistent, relationship-led support, the postholder will help each young person move from connection and engagement towards participation, learning and a sustainable education pathway. This may include transition into OpenGate provision, reintegration into school, college or another suitable placement.

Key responsibilities

Engagement and direct work with young people

- Build trusted, consistent relationships with young people experiencing emotionally based school avoidance, persistent absence or disengagement from education.
- Meet young people in environments where they initially feel comfortable, including their home, community and other agreed locations.
- Use individual interests, practical activities, sport, outdoor learning and community opportunities to create meaningful routes into engagement.
- Support young people to develop confidence, independence, communication, routines and emotional regulation.
- Introduce learning and educational expectations gradually, at a pace that is ambitious, realistic and responsive to the young person's needs.

Planning progress and transition

- Understand the individual barriers affecting each young person's access to education and contribute to referral assessment and planning.
- Develop an individual re-engagement plan with the young person, family and relevant professionals, setting clear and measurable goals.
- Plan and deliver personalised sessions that move the learner through connection, engagement, participation, learning and transition.
- Support gradual transitions into OpenGate provision, mainstream education, college or another agreed pathway.
- Continue transition support where required to help the learner sustain attendance, relationships and engagement.
- Recognise that progress may not be linear and adapt support while maintaining focus on agreed outcomes.

Partnership working and recording

- Work closely with parents and carers, schools, SEND teams, local authorities and other professionals supporting the young person.
- Contribute to referral discussions, reviews, planning meetings and multi-agency communication.
- Maintain accurate and timely records of sessions, attendance, engagement, safeguarding information and progress.
- Provide clear evidence of progress against agreed outcomes and contribute to reports for commissioners and other stakeholders.

- Contribute ideas and practical learning to the continued development of OpenGate's EBSA and re-engagement offer.

Safeguarding quality and compliance

- Maintain professional boundaries and follow OpenGate Education's safeguarding, lone-working, data protection and health and safety procedures.
- Identify, record and report safeguarding concerns immediately in line with organisational procedures.
- Complete and regularly review individual, location and activity risk assessments.
- Work safely and confidently when delivering sessions independently in community settings.
- Take part in supervision, training, quality assurance and reflective practice.

Key relationships

- Young people, parents and carers
- OpenGate Education leaders, teachers, tutors and support colleagues
- Schools, local authorities, commissioners, SEND teams and virtual schools
- Social care, early help, health and other professionals
- Community, sport, outdoor learning and activity partners

Person specification

Essential experience and knowledge

- Experience of working directly with children or young people.
- Experience of supporting young people with SEND, SEMH needs, emotionally based school avoidance, persistent absence or other barriers to education.
- A sound understanding of safeguarding, professional boundaries and information sharing.
- Experience of working collaboratively with families and other professionals.
- Good written communication, digital confidence and accurate record-keeping skills.

Desirable experience and knowledge

- Experience of alternative provision, education reintegration or community-based outreach.
- Knowledge of EBSA or EBSNA approaches and experience supporting neurodivergent young people.
- Understanding of trauma-informed, relational and restorative practice.
- Experience of working with EHCPs, SEND support plans or multi-agency plans.
- Training in safeguarding, de-escalation or positive behaviour support.
- A relevant qualification in youth work, education, therapeutic support, coaching, mentoring, social care or a related field.
- Experience of delivering practical, outdoor, vocational, enrichment or wellbeing activities.

Skills and personal qualities

- Able to connect with young people who may be reluctant to engage or who have stopped trusting education.
- Calm, patient, dependable and able to maintain consistency when progress is gradual.
- Creative and flexible in using a young person's interests as a starting point for engagement.
- Confident working independently while seeking guidance and escalating concerns appropriately.
- Able to balance warmth and empathy with clear boundaries and purposeful goals.
- Committed to inclusion and to improving outcomes for young people.
- Comfortable helping to shape a new service within a growing organisation.

Additional requirements

- A full UK driving licence and access to a vehicle insured for business use are required because the role involves regular community travel.
- The role may require flexibility around working locations and times to meet the needs of young people and families.
- Appointment will be subject to appropriate safer recruitment and pre-employment checks, including an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references, identity and right-to-work checks.
- The duties listed are not exhaustive. The postholder may be expected to undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the level and purpose of the role.

How to apply

We want the application process to help you show both your relevant experience and the approach you would bring to this work.

Please submit your application in line with the instructions and deadline in the accompanying vacancy advert. Your application should explain:

- Why you are interested in OpenGate Education and this role.
- How your experience prepares you to engage young people who may be reluctant to work with services or education.
- How you would work safely, maintain professional boundaries and contribute to accurate recording.
- Your preferred working pattern and availability, including whether you are seeking part-time or full-time hours.

Our recruitment process

- Applications will be assessed against the essential criteria in the person specification.
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview and may be asked to complete a role-related task or scenario.
- We will discuss working pattern, availability and the practical travel requirements of the role during the process.
- Any offer will be conditional on satisfactory safer recruitment and pre-employment checks.

Safeguarding

OpenGate Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff are expected to share this commitment and to report concerns immediately in accordance with OpenGate Education's safeguarding procedures. Appointment is subject to safer recruitment checks, including an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references, identity and right-to-work checks.

Equality and inclusion

OpenGate Education is committed to creating an inclusive workplace. We welcome applications from people with different backgrounds and experiences and will consider reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process and employment.

Ready to help a young person reconnect with education?