Stepping Stones NI

JOB
DESCRIPTION

COOK

SS26\09

COURTYARD CAFE

FOREWORD
FROM DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE & OPERATIONS

Dear Applicant

Thank you for expressing your interest in the role of Cook in The Courtyard Cafe.

It is an exciting time for Stepping Stones NI as we continue to build on our success across our services. We are pleased to offer an opportunity to join our team at The Courtyard Cafe, where you will play an integral role in supporting our participants to develop their skills in a busy, real-world workplace.

If you are someone who wants to make a real difference to our participants' lives and bring valuable experience to the role, this is the opportunity for you!

Stepping Stones NI offers a diverse working environment and the chance to positively impact the lives of people with learning disabilities, difficulties, and barriers to employment.

If you share a commitment to our values and believe in the work we do, we want to hear from you.

Please find enclosed relevant information about our organisation and the role, including details of the selection process.

Emmett Mullally

Emmett Mullally
Director of Social Enterprise & Operations

BACKGROUND
TO STEPPING STONES NI

Stepping Stones NI is a multi award winning charitable organisation supporting people with learning disabilities and barriers to learning and employment to gain new skills, qualifications and employment.

Our organisation comprises of four core services: employment, training, youth and social enterprises.

We operate five social enterprises which include two cafes, a wedding stationery business, a picture framing business and a horticultural wellbeing hub. Each social business serves as a realistic training platform for our trainees where they can learn core skills which ideally enable them to progress into work placements or employment .

Over the last 28 years we have supported people who face all kinds of barriers to employment and learning including Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia and mental health barriers.

We believe that with the right support people who experience barriers to learning and employment can get a job that they enjoy and stay in that job.

Our Values:

- **Respect: We respect everyone's right to a life more fulfilled and respect each other in the process**
- **Inspire: We inspire employers and the wider community to see disability differently**
- **Empowering: We empower each other to make a positive impact on the world and in the organisation we work**

Our Values drive our behaviours and govern our actions. They are at the heart of our Culture and define who we are, and how we present ourselves every day.

Our Behaviours:

Driven: We are driven, seizing every opportunity to create better lives

Honest: We are honest and always do the right thing

Positively Charged: We are positively charged and passionate to make things possible

Nurturing: We nurture all our people to be their best

Quality Focused: We are quality focused, to always ensure the highest standard

KEY PURPOSE OF THE POST

Stepping Stones NI is looking for a **Cook** to join our team at The Courtyard Cafe in Lisburn.

This role is about more than cooking and preparing great food and delivering excellent customer service - it's also an opportunity to work alongside adults with a learning disability, supporting them in a safe, positive, and inclusive workplace.

If you enjoy helping others, take pride in cooking and preparing fresh, high-quality food, and bring a warm, friendly attitude to your work, we'd love to hear from you.

The successful candidate will also be required to occasionally deputise for the Cafe Manager in their absence.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Cook

Reporting to: Courtyard Cafe Manager

Responsible for: Preparing and cooking high quality food whilst maintaining excellent standards of food safety and hygiene. You will also play a key role in supporting and mentoring team members with learning disabilities, helping them build skills, confidence and independence in a catering environment.

Location: Courtyard Cafe, 39 Seymour Street, Lisburn but may on occasion be required to work at other locations as per the needs of the business

Salary: £14.17 per hour

Pension: 7% employer contribution

Holiday entitlement: 25 Days and 11 statutory days

Hours of work: 37 hours per week; Monday - Wednesday 8:00am - 3:30pm, Thursday 8:00am-3:00pm & Friday 8:00am-3:30pm

Other Benefits:

- Private Healthcare and access to health and wellbeing platforms
- Holiday Purchase “Buy Back Scheme”
- 25% Discount in our Social Enterprises
- Volunteer Scheme - Up to 2 days annual leave to volunteer with other charities/ community groups
- Employee Assistance Scheme
- Birthday Day Off
- Half Day Christmas Shopping
- Death in Service Benefit

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Food Preparation & Kitchen Operations

- Prepare, cook, and present meals and baked goods to a consistent, high standard.
- Assist with menu planning and contribute creative ideas for daily specials, seasonal dishes, and events.
- Monitor portion control, stock rotation, and food waste to ensure efficient kitchen operations.
- Maintain kitchen records including temperature logs and allergen information.
- Ensure compliance with food hygiene, safety and environmental health regulations at all times.
- Manage deliveries and ensure all ingredients are stored correctly.

Customer & Cafe Focus

- Ensure the kitchen works efficiently with the front-of-house team to deliver an excellent customer experience.
- Contribute to menu development, promotions, and events that reflect the cafe's inclusive ethos.
- Promote the cafe's values and act as a positive ambassador for inclusion and community engagement.

Supportive Mentoring & Inclusion

- Support and mentor our participants with learning disabilities by:
    - Demonstrating kitchen tasks safely and clearly.
    - Encouraging independence and celebrating achievements.
    - Providing patient, constructive feedback in a positive manner.
- Work collaboratively with other staff to create an inclusive and nurturing environment.
- Lead by example, promoting respect, teamwork, and equality in every aspect of work.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Health & Safety

Ensure that all duties are carried out to comply with:

• The Health and Safety at Work (N.I.) Order 1978.

• Acts of Parliament, Statutory Instruments and Regulations and other legal requirements.

• Agreed Codes of Practice; including the COSHH Regulations and Safe Working Practices manuals.

• Any other statutory regulations which may apply.

• Ensure that all equipment is maintained in an appropriate and safe manner, with any defects being reported immediately.

• Co-operate with staff and management to maintain our Health and Safety policy i.e. reporting and recording accidents using accident books, relevant paperwork.

• Undertake Health and Safety and Environmental training as identified by Stepping Stones NI.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

General

• All staff must ensure that customer focus is always maintained in order to achieve customer satisfaction.

• Comply with organisational code of practice and attend all mandatory training to ensure compliance.

• All staff are to contribute to the continual improvement of the Quality management system – ISO, Investors in People and ETI by adhering to the documented procedures and processes, and identifying improvements.

• Comply fully with Stepping Stones NI Safeguarding Procedures.

• Proactively identity risks in relation to participant safety and carry out general and individual risk assessments as appropriate, ensuring that risk management procedures are adhered to.

• Ensure accurate record keeping in line with organisational data protection and confidentiality policy.

• To attend any meetings as and when required, for example team meetings and monthly balanced scorecard meetings.

• Ensure compliance in all activities in accordance with the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy.

• Conduct all activities with confidentiality and in accordance with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation and the Company's Policies and Procedures.

• To communicate effectively with parents, carers, social workers, customers and all stakeholders of Stepping Stones NI in a professional manner understanding Stepping Stones NI values.

This list is not exhaustive, and the role of the Cook may change to meet the nature and demands of the business.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

1.) City and Guilds 706 / 1&2 (or equivalent) or above

2.) Essential Food Hygiene Certificate level 2.

3.) At least 3 years experience as a cook in a busy catering environment.

4.) Sound knowledge of Health and safety Procedures including COSHH and HACCP.

5.) Excellent IT Skills.

6.) Display an understanding of the barriers facing people with a learning disability.

7.) A can-do attitude and positive approach to work and ability to work in a team.

8.) Ability to work on own initiative.

Desirable

1.) Intermediate food Hygiene Certificate or willing to work towards same.

2.) Experience of working with adults with a Learning Disability.

SELECTION PROCESS

Application is by submission of a cv and covering letter.

CV's will be shortlisted against the criteria detailed in the job description.

If we receive a high number of applications, we reserve the right to increase the number of competencies that the candidates will have to demonstrate.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to attend a first stage interview to assess the candidates suitability for the role.

Where the quality of applications is particularly high applicants may be invited to a second stage interview.

If you would like to have an informal discussion about the role please contact:

Emmett Mullally
Director of Social Enterprise & Operations
E: emmett.mullally@stepping-stones.org.uk
T: 028 9279 4465

Stepping Stones NI is an equal opportunities employer.

Closing date: Thursday 4 November 2026 at 4pm.