



**helps children
communicate**



Interim Public Affairs Manager

Candidate Recruitment Pack

October 2020

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Letter from the Director of Corporate Services

Dear Candidate,

INTERIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER

Thank you for your interest in this opportunity. We have secured trust funding for a Public Affairs Manager to work with us, for 3 days a week, over a 15-month period. The successful candidate will help us to develop and deliver our public affairs and influencing strategy to build our profile in Westminster and Whitehall. Our goal, by 2030, is to make speech, language and communication as well known, as well supported, and as well understood as autism.

When it comes to spoken English for children, we want to do much, much more. Our new 2020-23 strategic plan *Together we can do more* outlines five strategic objectives:

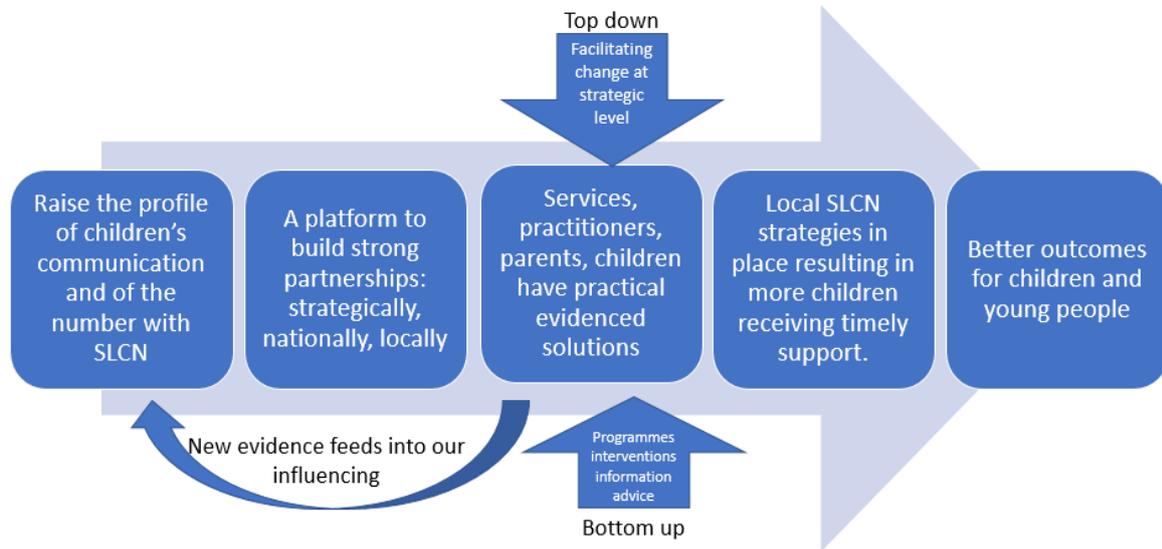
- Supporting vulnerable children.
- Developing our schools as centres of excellence.
- Championing the needs of children and young people.
- Delivering new services and programmes.
- Being the best we can be.

Read more at <https://ican.org.uk/about-us/together-we-can-do-more/>

Our influencing work and profile raising are designed to put speech, language and communication in the spotlight. We make a strong case for the importance of spoken language, and the need to support the millions of children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Through a combination of activity and partnership working, we will achieve better outcomes for more children and young people with SLCN. A recent survey conducted by mental health charity, Re-think, found that one third of children feel more anxious, sad, and stressed now than before lockdown. Imagine how the children we support are likely to be impacted here!

Our theory of change, a centrepiece in our 2020-23 strategic plan is detailed in diagrammatic form below:

Organisational theory of change



You can read more about us in this pack, including why we think this is a great place to work. In addition, you will find more detailed information about the role we are filling and where it sits in the organisation.

If you are interested in this role, please do apply with your up to date CV and a supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4 on why you would like to work for I CAN and how you meet the criteria for the role outlined in the five bullet points in the advertisement.

We look forward to hearing from you.

View our recruitment video at <https://youtu.be/jPvTxyLBrQ>

You can! We can! I can!

Warm Regards,

Steve Williams
Director of Corporate Services

Our Mission, Vision and Values

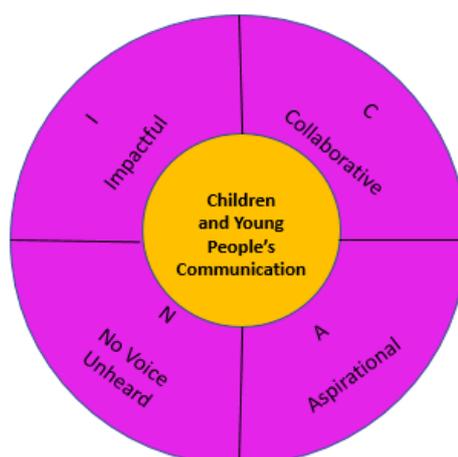
I CAN is the leading children’s communication charity in the United Kingdom founded in 1888.

Our Vision is a world where all children have the communication skills they need to fulfil their potential.

Our Mission is that no child should be left out or left behind because of a difficulty speaking or understanding.

Our Values Children and young people’s communication needs are at the centre of everything we do. Our values are designed to enable all parts of our organisation to work together to support these needs, and to become the most effective and influential charity supporting children’s speech, language and communication. Our four core values are:

<p>Impactful <i>Delivering real change for those affected by SLCN</i></p>	<p>We change lives and unlock potential. We act on current research and create new evidence for the sector through innovative programmes and solutions.</p>
<p>Collaborative <i>Increasing our reach, effectiveness and profile by working together with others</i></p>	<p>We work in partnership with other organisations, networks and individuals to achieve systemic change that is sustainable and replicable. We are stronger together.</p>
<p>Aspirational <i>Enabling children, young people, their families and ourselves to thrive</i></p>	<p>We enable as many children and young people as possible to thrive socially and academically. We are the UK’s leading charity in children’s communication, and we won’t compromise on quality or excellence.</p>
<p>No Voice Unheard <i>Recognising that everyone has a valuable contribution to make</i></p>	<p>We empower everyone to have their voice heard: whether children and young people with SLCN, their families or I CAN staff. We are committed to addressing any unlawful or unfair discrimination and value the difference diversity and inclusion can bring to ensuring that no-one left out or left behind.</p>



Why we exist

It's important to look at the statistics around speech and language to understand what we do:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language disorder is seven times more prevalent than Autism¹.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 1.4 million children and young people in the UK have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SLCN is the most common type of need reported in schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As many as 50% of children in some areas of deprivation start school without the language they need for learning^{2 3}.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good language, particularly vocabulary at 13, is a strong predictor of better outcomes at GCSE. ⁴
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only 18% of children with a language difficulty achieved expected level in reading, writing and Maths at the end of primary school compared with 64% of their classmates.⁵
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45% of young people referred for mental health services have communication difficulties.⁶
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40% of children with language difficulties struggle to make friends.⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 60% of young offenders have delayed language issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language disorder alone is one of the most common disorders of childhood; affecting nearly 10% of all children and young people, rising to 50% in areas of social disadvantage.

Sadly, there are now untold millions of people who are navigating their way through life with unidentified and unsupported SLCN. Many of these people struggle to find work, experience debilitating mental health issues and disproportionate numbers end up in the justice system. With severely limited life chances, people with SLCN are being marginalised and neglected by society. This is why I CAN exists as a charitable organisation.

¹ Norbury et al (2016) The impact of nonverbal ability on prevalence and clinical presentation of language disorder: evidence from a population study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*

² Locke, A., Ginsborg, J. & Peers, I. (2002) *Development and Disadvantage: implications for early years IJLCD Vol 37:1*

³ The Communication Trust (2012) *Evaluation of Talk of the Town*

⁴ Spencer, S., Clegg, J., Stackhouse, J., & Rush, R. (2017). Contribution of spoken language and socio-economic background to adolescents' educational achievement at age 16 years. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 52, 2, 184-196

⁵ DfE KS2 SATS results 2018

⁶ Cohen, N. Farnia, F. And Im-Bolter, N. *Higher order language competence and adolescent mental health* *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 54:7 (2013), pp 733–744

⁷ Durkin K. And Conti-Ramsden G (2007) *Language, Social Behavior, and the Quality of Friendships in Adolescents With and Without a History of Specific Language Impairment* *Child Development* 78 (5)

Our Reach and Impact

The voluntary and charitable sector is increasingly being judged on what evidence it provides to demonstrate the difference it makes to its beneficiary population. We support this approach wholeheartedly and have invested in our ability to rigorously demonstrate the difference we make to children's language development. We are not aware of any other children's communication charity that has developed an Outcomes Framework that provides the evidence we are able to present, year after year. This includes not only our reach – the number of children, young people, families and professionals we contact each year – but, importantly, the progress that children make in their language development. In this section we share some of the many highlights of the impact we have made last year.

Across all our projects and programmes during 2019/20, we reached an estimated 135,133 children and young people through our direct support and resources. This includes those we supported directly at our schools and through our programmes, and those who we reached indirectly through our local trainers or campaigns. Of this:

- 139 children attended our two specialist schools, Dawn House School and Meath School.
- 82,661 children with delayed language took part in Talk Boost.
- 83,953 were reached directly through an I CAN programme or school.
- Our *No Pens Day Wednesday* campaign reached an estimated 860,215 children and young people.
- We reached 967 children through our regional projects.
- We supported 482 children and their families through our enquiry line.
- Our local licensed trainers, who are all qualified speech and language therapists or teachers, reached 48,180 children through training local nurseries, schools and families in programmes such as *Early Talk*.
- Approximately 860,215 children took part in *No Pens Day Wednesday* in educational settings across the country.

For the first time this year, we measured the combined impact that I CAN's interventions had on these children and young people against key performance indicators. We found that:

- 74% of children and young people with language difficulties became more engaged with learning after taking part in one of our programmes.
- 84% of children and young people made good progress in language after taking part in *Talk Boost* or attending an I CAN school.
- 77% of children with delayed language reached expected levels after taking part in *Talk Boost*.
- 93% of families changed the way they support their two-year-old's communication due to I CAN's intervention.

Much of our mission is achieved by not only supporting children with SLCN but reaching those who work with children to change perceptions and professional practice around speech, language and communication. Last year we reached **255,559** professionals. This included:

- Directly supporting 2,818 practitioners through our training programmes and professional visits to our schools, and those who contact our enquiry line.
- Reaching 3,498 people indirectly via our network of licensed tutors, and equipping practitioners on our funded programmes to train their colleagues and communities.

- An additional 249,243 users who accessed information on speech, language and communication for professionals on our *Talking Point* website.

We also measured the impact that our interventions had on these professionals, finding that 83% felt that their practice had improved as a result.

We are immensely proud of the evidence we are able to demonstrate about the difference we are making.

What we do

Run two Ofsted 'Outstanding' residential special schools to support children and young people with the most severe and complex language needs.

Click on below links for more information:

[Meath School](#)

[Dawn House school](#)

Develop and distribute interventions to support children with delayed language – currently implemented in over 5,000 nurseries, children's centres and schools.

Click below to visit our online shop:

[I CAN shop](#)

Support over 1,300 parents of children with SLCN each year through a dedicated telephone and skype enquiry service where they receive advice from a qualified speech and language therapist and access to our online portal.

Click below to know more:

[I CAN Talking Point](#)

Manage and lead The Communication Consortium; a consortium of 36 charities and social enterprises with a responsibility for supporting children with SLCN.

Click below to know more:

[The Communications Trust](#)

Provide clear and robust evidence from our work to government and policy makers to influence practice and policy across the UK, in support of all children who have language difficulties.

Click below to know more about our work:

[Bercow Ten Years On](#)

Work in partnership with other organisations, campaigning for better information, advice and improved services to many children and their families not receiving the speech, language and communication support they need.

Deliver speech and language programmes aimed at the nation's workforce responsible for the education and care of children with SLCN.

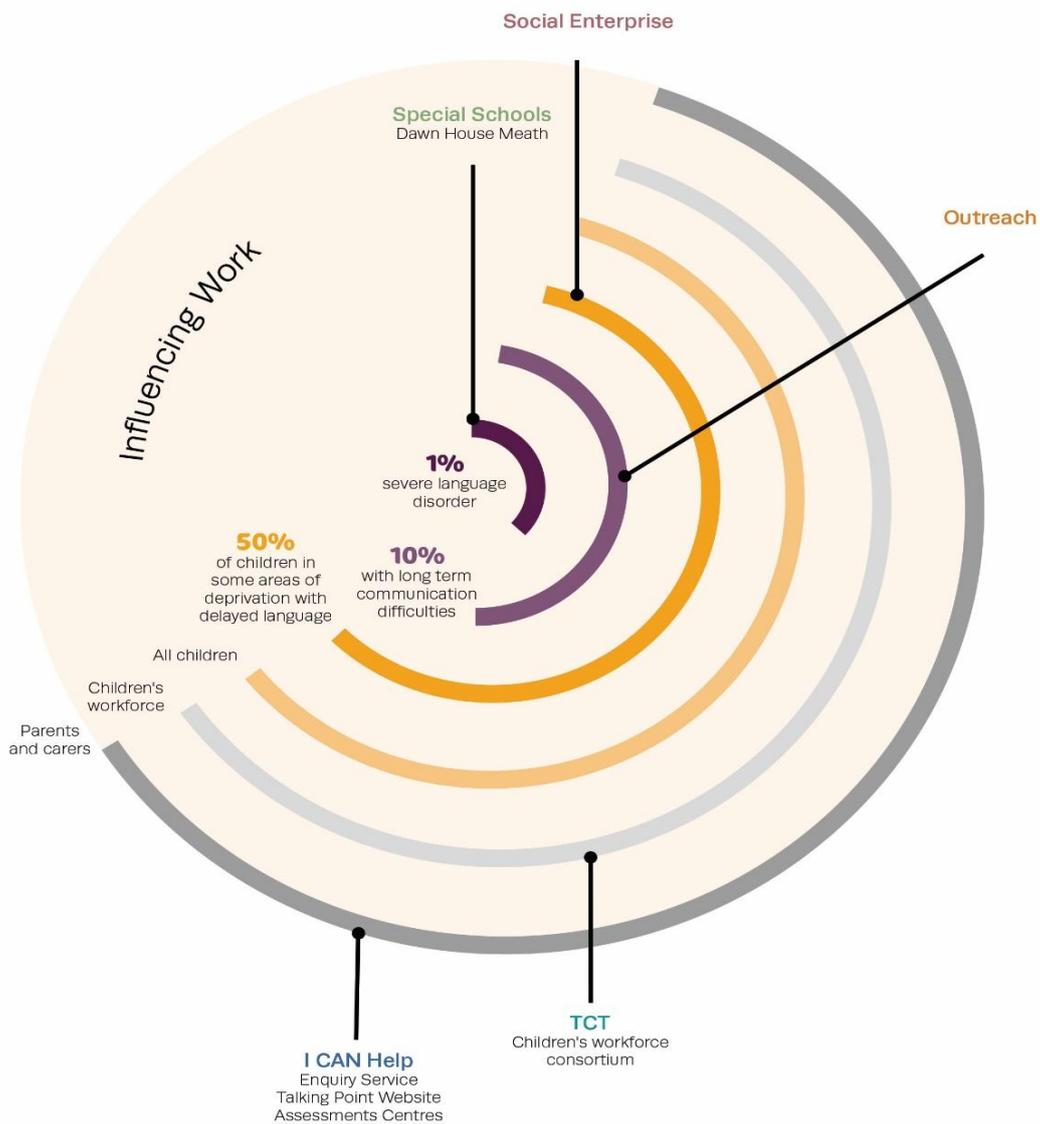
Click below to visit our website:

[I CAN](#)

Our 180-200 strong workforce across three locations, plus our home-based employees, work together to achieve our strategic objectives.

It's an exciting time to join us as we have just started embarking on our ambitious three-year plan taking us through to March 2023.

How the three-year plan is supporting children and young people



Why work here

I CAN is changing day by day so there has never been a more exciting time to join us. We need talented individuals to help shape our future and truly make a difference in the lives of children and young people with communication difficulties. Here are some of the benefits in place.

<p>Good benefits</p> <p>We have a range of benefits in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries regularly benchmarked against market rates • 25 days annual leave plus 3 days at Christmas • Travel expenses paid on claiming • Employee assistance programme providing a confidential helpline • Supportive and paid sick leave, if needed • Free flu jab in the Winter • Contributory pension scheme • Life assurance cover • Enhanced maternity and paternity leave • Free eye test • Interest-free annual season ticket loan 	<p>Access to over 270 exclusive discounts</p> <p>We also provide our employees with access to our Perkbox employee benefits programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free mobile phone insurance • Free coffee once a month • Discounted gym membership • Discounted cinema tickets • Discounted holiday deals • Opportunities to reduce grocery bills
<p>Working together</p> <p>We value collaboration so that the whole can be better than the sum in parts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible working hours and access to flexible ways of working • Clear objectives and organisational plans – we know where we’re going! • Regular performance development reviews providing clarity and support • A structured induction programme, including visits to each of our schools • Employees trained in first aid • Structured cascade briefings once a month • Respect for privacy in our dealings with you • Business partnering and collaborative working philosophy 	<p>Room for personal growth</p> <p>Things are developing rapidly, so we need our people to do the same. We adopt the 70/20/10 model of learning and development. Namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% through on the job experience, challenging assignments and applying learning in real situations. • 20% from developmental assignments such as mentoring, coaching and professional networks. • 10% from structured programmes, courses, e-learning, seminars and masterclasses. <p>We see development as owned by our employees and supported by their line managers.</p>

For our candidate privacy notice, please go to <https://ican.org.uk/media/2787/i-can-privacy-notice-for-candidates-200920.pdf>

Job Description

Job Title: Public Affairs Manager

Reports to: Head of Communications

Location: I CAN, 31 Angel Gate, Goswell Road, London, EC1V 2PT

Contract Type: Fixed-Term Contract

Job Purpose

As Public Affairs Manager, you will build the public affairs profile of I CAN. Working with colleagues including the Head of Communications, the Head of Evidence & Impact and the Senior Management Team, you will raise awareness and understanding of the impact that poor speech, language and communications skills can have on a child and young person's life and utilise these insights in Westminster and Whitehall whilst influencing policy and coordinating the development of I CAN's Public Affairs and influencing strategy to drive this.

The post-holder will play a leading role in developing I CAN's interaction primarily with senior civil servants but also with politicians and other stakeholders to support the charity to foster stronger relationships with them to bring the plight of children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) to the fore amongst a number of competing social needs.

Job Responsibilities

Accountable to the Head of Communications, the post-holder is responsible for:

- Horizon scanning for upcoming policy developments and activities and maintain a public affairs schedule.
- Working with the Head of Communications, the Head of Evidence & Impact and the Senior Management Team to develop a Public Affairs and Influencing strategy to further the aims and objectives of I CAN and ensuring this strategy remains up-to-date and relevant.
- Designing, developing and delivering comprehensive public affairs plans for influencing key decision makers and influencers, in line with I CAN's Public Affairs and Influencing strategy.
- Monitoring the political environment and providing timely feedback and intelligence to all relevant employees.
- Managing the relationship with the I CAN's parliamentary monitoring services and ensuring this is value for money.
- Communicating our public affairs work internally and to our supporters via appropriate employees managing supporter relationships.
- Preparing high-quality briefing materials for political audiences and senior internal stakeholders to support the delivery of I CAN's influencing priorities.
- Developing our parliamentary updates and other specific materials and briefing documents.
- Designing and delivering a Westminster and Whitehall contact programme to develop the I CAN

relationship with key decision-makers.

- Representing I CAN at relevant stakeholder meetings, deputising for more senior managers, if required.
- Identifying opportunities and working with the Chief Executive, the Head of Impact & Evidence, I CAN's Speech and Language Advisors and the Director of Education, where necessary, to draft responses to parliamentary, government and other consultations.
- Tracking the progress of bills, APPGs and other parliamentary activity which is relevant to our mission, vision and strategy.
- Maintaining a contact programme of parliamentarians, civil servants and third parties, ensuring I CAN's senior management, including board representatives, have good relationships with key decision-makers across these audiences.
- Helping to develop and maintain public affairs contacts in the civil service, parliament, government and with other stakeholders.
- Developing and managing a parliamentary contact management database, ensuring that I CAN's customer relationship management database is used appropriately assessing information and acting on it, where necessary.
- Contributing to social media and press relations activities to support I CAN's public affairs activities.
- Working across the organisation to create relevant and compelling thought leadership, involving experts in SLCN, education and marketing and communications.
- Providing regular reports, including progress against plans and key performance indicators.

Organisational Responsibilities

- Covering for your colleagues, as and when required, where needed.
- Promoting collaborative working relationships and effective communication.
- Promoting I CAN's mission, vision and values in all aspects of your work.
- Abiding by all I CAN policies and procedures and in particular ensuring the protection of children in I CAN's services are followed at all times.
- Safeguarding at all times confidentiality of information relating to children, staff and I CAN's work.

This list of duties and responsibilities is not exhaustive, and the post holder may be required to undertake other relevant and appropriate duties as reasonably required.

This job description is subject to regular review and appropriate modification.

Person Specification

Public Affairs Manager

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Graduate (any undergraduate degree) or equivalent experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialist and relevant professional qualification
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of writing clear, concise and persuasive copy for a range of audiences and in a variety of formats ▪ Track record of influencing stakeholders, and understanding of opportunities and risks of working collaboratively with other stakeholders ▪ Experience of developing and implementing effective public affairs strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of working in a charity, social enterprise or education setting ▪ Experience of working with Boards
Skills and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sound knowledge of the workings of government and parliamentary procedure and good political nous ▪ Understanding of the external political environment and political developments as they affect I CAN ▪ Sound analytical and fact-finding skills, coupled with the ability to identify and understand key issues ▪ Ability to present complex information in a way that is straightforward to understand, whether in writing or orally ▪ A commitment to stakeholder focus and relationship management to achieve the best outcomes for I CAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of key issues impacting children with speech, language and communication needs
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Able to prioritise and work under pressure, meeting deadlines with tight schedules ▪ Collaborative working style, able to work with others to achieve agreed influencing objectives ▪ Good IT skills and familiarity with Microsoft Office and the ability to self-service ▪ Persuasive and diplomatic manner to build clear, evidence-based arguments about complex issues to promote particular viewpoints ▪ Pro-active, self-starting and passionate about quality ▪ Resilient and calm under pressure ▪ A good eye for detail ▪ Flexibility – can respond well to deadlines, priorities and changing briefs 	

Other factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Committed to the overall aims of I CAN and to developing and delivering I CAN’s Vision and Strategy.▪ Evidence of continual professional development.▪ Understanding and commitment to equal opportunities and empowerment.▪ The ability and willingness to travel to I CAN sites.	
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Our organisation

