

Word from the Managing Director – Julian Lee

I'm often asked what skills and qualities we look for in our workforce. Standard, politically correct answers come to mind around excellent communication skills and relevant qualifications, and of course these are important, but I have distilled the desirable qualities down to one fundamental character trait that is essential: **the ability to hope**. Working with, and for, vulnerable children and their families is certainly not a career choice for the faint-hearted. It's not about having cups of tea and chats with tired mums and advising single parents about the naughty step. Enter into the parallel universe of hard core, front line family support and it's like stepping through the wardrobe into a Narnia; full of beauty but also full of drama and unknowns.

The truth about family support

It takes courage and sensitivity to tell a very depressed mother that you are going to refer her 5 year old to the safeguarding team because he burnt his arm sorting out his own dinner when she didn't get out of bed for 3 days. It takes a level of compassion and resilience, comparable to that which Mother Theresa demonstrated, to support a parent through long term substance abuse. It takes the strength of a lion not to cry with a child who discloses a story of abuse to you because you are not a teacher or authority figure and you have spent 3 months building a trusting and secure relationship with them. As a Family Support Worker at Malachi you will be sent out into these situations every day of the week and will work tirelessly, believing that better can be achieved for some of the most disadvantaged families in our communities. And what you will offer is hope, in the belief that once you choose hope, anything is possible. You will need the stamina of a marathon runner and the resilience to remain optimistic and solution-focused when faced with the crises and chaos that follow the broken families you will work with. You will hope on behalf of the hopeless.

The pain that comes with caring

I am filled with admiration for our workforce at Malachi; not patronising, obliging admiration but truly heartfelt, genuine admiration. Because I have seen them cry behind a closed door after a child disclosed abuse to them, I have seen them get angry and frustrated after a phone call with a mum who is struggling to change and I have seen them work long hours, go the extra mile constantly and break their hearts at some of the stories they hear, all the while remaining composed to the outside world of families and other professionals. I have seen the pain that comes with caring.

A journey of self-discovery

Working at Malachi is not like working anywhere else. We often find that our emphasis on growing reflective practitioners, means that you too will go on a journey of self-discovery. We have a set of values that we look to strongly adhere too and by the very fact you were drawn to apply to Malachi there is every chance you naturally embrace those values too. We are not perfect, far from it, but we ALL commit to the pursuit of excellence and embark on this journey as one whole body. Our model is a relationship based model, it's about firstly knowing

yourself well and secondly understanding how to do relationships well. This is the journey of discovery we take our families on and the journey you will go on too.

A journey of hope

We don't offer quick fixes at Malachi, we look for the entrenched, underlying issues that are driving the behaviours that result in a referral. It's not all rosy outcomes and life changing moments in our work, it's about the small things and the manageable and sustainable changes families can make with our help and guidance. It's sometimes about having to make really tough calls that don't have a happy ending for everyone but do ensure that a child is safe. It's often a long journey we embark upon, when we pick up a family and start supporting them, and it is a road littered with pot holes and bumps that we have to carefully navigate. It's hard and it's tiring and it involves giving so much of yourself, your time and your energy.

If this sounds like a journey you are ready for then **we welcome your application.**