

Children's Playlink, Winterbourne

With the voluntary sector undergoing constant change, management training is vital to ensure organisations continue to deliver much-needed services.

While Children's Playlink, based in South Gloucestershire, is a charity, it is also a company employing 22 staff and therefore faces the same challenges as any other small business. So Jane Spence, its senior manager, was delighted to find out that Train to Gain could support her management training ambitions.

Children's Playlink, which has service level agreements with South Gloucestershire District Council to provide play and childcare services in the area, has worked with Train to Gain in the past to develop the skills of its playworkers.

Jane mentioned to her Train to Gain Skills Broker, Vicky Holford, that she was planning to enrol on a management course. "She said she might be able to get some funding for it. It was great that she could help out in this way," said Jane.

Vicky, now a Train to Gain Leadership and Management Specialist Adviser, arranged £1,000 towards the £2,308 cost of the BTEC advanced level seven professional management course.

Jane started the one-year, nine-module course, which is staged jointly by City of Bristol College and the University of Plymouth, in September and is already using what she has learnt in her job.

"It's interesting that in a senior management role like mine you do things instinctively – I'm now learning the theory behind that," said Jane.

"We're taking a module on change management and there's always change in the voluntary sector. We will be restructuring soon and will need to be able to take the staff along with us."

"All learning is beneficial. For instance, there's a marketing module and I can see the potential of what I've learnt – I'm getting some good ideas."

Jane also sees understanding about time management as important: "Like a lot of people in the voluntary sector I take work home in the evenings and weekends. You do it because you believe in what you are doing. But you have to learn to manage it."

Vicky Holford added: "Jane has shown that management training is essential for all kinds of organisations and I'm so pleased that we could help with the funding towards her course."

"It's great that she is already using what she is learning in her own organisation and I know will continue to benefit from it for a long time to come."