

An introduction to Read Easy for potential volunteers

Read Easy is a rapidly growing volunteer organisation, which provides free, confidential, one-to-one reading coaching for adults who struggle with reading, through a network of volunteer groups. Each volunteer group is run by a local volunteer Management Team and is legally and financially independent, but affiliated to Read Easy UK, a registered national charity.

By helping people to tackle their reading difficulties, Read Easy also enables them to become more independent, move on to other forms of education if they wish, improve their employment opportunities, support their children's or grandchildren's reading and begin to explore many other opportunities in life as well. Above all, our Readers experience remarkable improvements in their confidence and self-esteem.

Read Easy's local groups provide rewarding volunteering opportunities for people who want to make a difference in their communities, while working alongside an interesting group of like-minded people. Finding the right people to form the Management Team is vital to the success of each group, as Team members need to be actively involved in the running of the project.



What's the role of the local Management Team as a whole?

The Management Team shares responsibility for ensuring that their group provides the best possible experience for those who come to them to improve their reading.

Many adults who have failed to learn to read as children will have suffered all their lives, not only from a sense of humiliation and a crippling sense of inadequacy, but also from an overwhelming fear that they will fail if they try again. This is why our confidential, one-to-one approach is so important. It is often the key to encouraging people to take the first step of asking for support, because they can 'have another go' without anyone knowing, working at their own pace, with the personal support and encouragement of their own dedicated Coach.

Our awareness of these fears and challenges is also the reason behind the very defined structure, roles and processes that Read Easy UK has developed for the running of its affiliated groups. They reflect the shared learning of our volunteers over the years about what is required to ensure that those who bravely come forward for reading support are not let down by an approach that doesn't work properly. Our structure, roles and processes have taken time to develop, and have been thoroughly endorsed by Read Easy's groups.

Typical comments from our volunteer Team Leaders include:

"The beauty about Read Easy UK is that it's a very well organised and structured charity to work for, with clear policies and information. We all know what we're doing – which is huge – and not the same in all volunteer organisations." And "I have been very impressed by the professionalism of both Read Easy's management and procedures - and so have many of the organisations I have had contact with. That is why they are so keen for us to support their clients."



Outline of the Coordinator role

The Coordinator is the first point of contact for those who want to learn to read. Using a simple assessment, the Coordinator will explain to a potential new 'Reader' how Read Easy may be able to help them.

The Coordinator pairs up new Coaches with those who want to learn to read and provides ongoing support to these reading pairs. They visit their reading sessions occasionally and maintain support through regular calls with both Reader and Coach to check all is going well, calling on the group's Literacy Specialist to respond to any literacy related difficulties a pair may be having.



Management Team roles

- **Team Leader:** to lead and manage the Management Team and its meetings, setting the agendas (with the administrator), taking overall responsibility for the running of the project, and being its spokesperson and the main point of contact with the Regional Adviser and Read Easy UK. The Team Leader also meets monthly with the Coordinator to develop an insight into the day-to-day issues associated with running the group and ensure that Coordinators are well supported, so that they in turn can support Readers and Coaches.
- **Coordinator Supporter:** to assist the Team Leader by acting as the main point of contact when the group has multiple Coordinators.
- **Deputy Team Leader** (*optional*): to lead in the absence of the Team Leader and support them in other ways when helpful.
- **Administrator (Secretary):** to be responsible for record keeping, and internal and external communications, by agreement with the Team Leader.
- **Treasurer:** to ensure that the money and property of the group are properly managed, to keep accurate and up-to-date financial records and end of year accounts.
- **Data Protection Champion:** to ensure that the group looks after personal data appropriately.
- **Fundraiser:** to take responsibility for ensuring the group raises the funds it needs, through applications to local grant givers, and through other activities, if necessary.
- **IT Supporter:** someone with strong IT skills who can advise and support local volunteers on all IT related issues, including setting up Microsoft accounts, accessing their email on their various devices, and supporting Coaches using IT to deliver remote coaching.
- **Literacy Specialist:** to provide literacy advice to the Coordinator; visit reading pairs to provide advice and guidance; stock and look after the group's Resources Box and be involved in running Coach Meetings.



- **Publicity Organiser:** to publicise your group using social media; act as a 'reporter' for your group, taking photos and writing stories about your Readers and Coaches when appropriate; place articles in local papers; and display posters and leaflets.
- **Referrals Networker:** to make and maintain contact with all the key agencies in the area that may be able to refer new readers.
- **Safeguarding Champion:** to be responsible for implementing the Safeguarding and DBS Checks Policies, supporting Volunteers and Readers, as necessary, within the scope of this role; and ensure that training for all volunteers is kept up to date.
- **Venue Organiser:** to find reading venues; visiting them annually and checking their suitability in line with the Venue and Lone Worker Policy.
- **Volunteer Recruiter:** to manage the recruitment process for all volunteers for the group, and interview volunteers with the Coordinator or Team Leader.
- **Local Connector** (required where groups provide coaching over a wider geographical area): to provide a vital local link for the Coordinator to ensure Readers working remotely make good progress; and to work on behalf of your Management Team distributing publicity, building links with referral agencies and sourcing venues in your local area where Readers can access IT equipment.

For detailed information about each of these roles, or to request an application form, please contact the volunteer who provided you with this document or email info@readeasy.org.uk

To find out more about Read Easy, please visit our website at: www.readeasy.org.uk



Role description for Volunteer Recruiter (Voluntary role)

“It’s been a life-changing experience. Last week I read a book to my grandson. I never read to my children because I couldn’t.” Peter, from Read Easy Poole

Read Easy provides free, confidential, one to-one reading coaching for adults who struggle with reading, through a network of volunteer groups. Read Easy groups are changing the lives of individual adults across the country by providing them with the support they need to learn to read, and in turn opening doors for them to all sorts of new opportunities in life. You can read about the difference Read Easy makes [here](#) on our website

Outline of the Volunteer Recruiter role

If you’re a ‘people person’ and enjoy meeting a wide range of people, the Volunteer Recruiter role will give you the opportunity to be the first point of contact for all potential volunteers and to have overall responsibility for managing the recruitment and interviews for your local group. You will need to be enthusiastic, a good listener and be able to spot a strong volunteer. By helping to recruit the right volunteers, you will play a vital role in ensuring the longevity of the group.



How we will support you

You will be provided with the Management Team Handbook, policies, training/induction, and guidance specifically needed for this role, including access to support from a Read Easy UK Regional Adviser, via your Team Leader. You will also be invited to Read Easy UK’s regional forums and annual conference which give volunteers an opportunity for networking with those from other groups.

What you will be doing

- Managing the recruitment process of all volunteers for your group, leading interviews with the Coordinator or Team Leader.
- Making sure all volunteers feel properly supported, informed, heard and valued.
- Working with the rest of your group’s Publicity Organiser to identify the best means of advertising to attract the volunteers you need.
- Managing the recruitment process for all potential volunteers and ensuring that an appropriate induction is provided, and keep everyone informed on progress.
- Ensuring that volunteers’ expectations are managed appropriately and that your group does not recruit significantly more volunteers than it can reasonably allocate roles to.



- Providing all Coaches with an annual Feedback Questionnaire and raise any issues identified that need addressing with the Management Team.
- Ensuring compliance with Volunteer Policy and Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Policy
- Attending Management Team meetings typically every six to eight week.

The skills you will need

- Ideally, experience of interviewing.
- The confidence to promote the work of Read Easy and a strong commitment to improving the lives of people who struggle with reading.
- Good communication and people skills, with a commitment to maintaining confidentiality.
- Reasonable confidence in using IT.
- The ability to use initiative and work independently.
- A willingness to abide by Read Easy policies and procedures.
- An open attitude that encourages two-way communication and willingness to ask for and offer support to the Team.
- A non-judgemental attitude and respect for others, with a commitment to equality and diversity, so that you can make everyone feel valued and included.
- Energy and enthusiasm with an average of two - three hours a week to commit to the role.

What is in it for you?

- Apply and develop your interviewing and communication skills
- Meet and work collaboratively with new people
- Be active and engaged, adding value to your local community.

Interested?

If you think you can offer the time, skills and experience that we are looking for and would be interested in taking up this role, please contact the person who sent you this role description.

Please note: All Read Easy volunteer roles are subject to Safer Recruitment procedures which include verification of identity and two references, and eligibility for Management Team roles in line with [Charity Commission regulations for trustees](#).

Please see the 'Introduction to Read Easy for potential Management Team volunteers' to find out more about the structure and responsibilities of the Management Team.

To find out more about Read Easy as a whole, visit our website at: www.readeasy.org.uk

Role description for Team Leader (Voluntary role)

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Outline of the Team Leader role

As the Team Leader you are responsible for the proper and effective direction of your local group. This role will appeal to someone with enthusiasm and energy who will enjoy managing a team of diverse volunteers. Ideally, the Team Leader will remain in this role for at least two years.



How we will support you

You will be provided with the Management Team Handbook, training/induction, policies, and guidance specifically needed for this role, including access to support from a Read Easy UK Regional Adviser, via your Team Leader. You will also be invited to Read Easy UK’s regional forums and annual conference which gives volunteers an opportunity for networking with those from other groups.

What you will be doing

- Leading the Management Team in setting goals and planning activities so that it functions effectively in delivering reading coaching to as many local people as possible.
- Encouraging and supporting Team members to fulfil and enjoy their roles, and managing succession planning for the group.
- Leading meetings and setting agendas.
- Ensuring that tasks are delegated and effectively completed so that all on the Management Team are able to contribute to the success of Read Easy locally.
- Ensuring that the requirements of your Constitution and Affiliation Agreement are met, and that the guidance in the handbooks provided by Read Easy UK is followed.
- Acting as an ambassador for your Read Easy group and building positive and beneficial relationships with key stakeholders.
- Building strong relationships with your Read Easy UK Regional Adviser.
- Maintaining and promoting the reputation of your group and of Read Easy UK as a whole and ensuring that members of the group uphold Read Easy UK’s values



The skills you need

- Strong leadership and team management skills and experience, with ability to motivate and inspire trust and confidence in others.
- An ability to think and act strategically, set goals, plan work and delegate.
- A willingness and ability to challenge others, deal with underperformance and manage conflict when necessary.
- Reasonable confidence in using IT.
- The ability to use initiative and work independently.
- A willingness to abide by Read Easy policies and procedures.
- An open attitude that encourages two-way communication and willingness to ask for and offer support to the Team.
- A non-judgemental attitude and respect for others, with a commitment to equality and diversity, so that you can make everyone feel valued and included.
- Energy and enthusiasm with an average of four to five hours a week to commit to the role.

What is in it for you?

- Use your knowledge and skills to lead a team to support Reader achievement
- Meet and work collaboratively with new people
- Be active and engaged, adding value to your local community.

Interested?

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This role also requires an Enhanced DBS Check (in line with [DBS Code of Practice](#)).

Please see the 'Introduction to Read Easy for potential Management Team volunteers' to find out more about the structure and responsibilities of the Management Team.

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Role description for Coordinator Supporter (Voluntary role)

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Outline of the Coordinator Supporter role

The Coordinator Supporter is the main point of contact on the Management Team for Coordinators. They play a crucial role in ensuring that the Coordinators feel well supported, so that they in turn can support Readers and Coaches. Your Coordinators help interview Reading Coaches, assess and enrol Readers before pairing them with trained coaches; then offer ongoing support to these Reading Pairs, visiting their reading sessions occasionally and maintaining support through regular calls with both Reader and Coach to check all is going well. They call on the group's Literacy Specialist to respond to any literacy related difficulties a pair may be having. They also help run Coach meetings.



How we will support you

You will be provided with the Management Team Handbook, Coach Training to ensure that you know what is expected of Read Easy Reading Coaches and in turn their Coordinators, induction, policies and guidance specifically needed for this role, including access to support from a Read Easy UK Regional Adviser, via your Team Leader. You will also be invited to Read Easy UK's regional forums and annual conference which give volunteers an opportunity for networking with those from other groups.

What you will be doing

- Holding regular Coordinator meetings where current issues are discussed together
- Supporting your Coordinators with all matters that are non-literacy related, providing any ad-hoc administrative support they may need
- Collating Reader enrolment and graduation numbers, sharing these with your team
- Receiving your Coordinators' written reports and sharing these with the Management Team



- Attending and inviting Coordinators to attend Management Team meetings (typically every 6-8 weeks)
- Supporting the Volunteer Recruiter with the recruitment of further Coordinators

The skills you will need

- An understanding of what motivates others and how to run meetings for a small team
- Good communication and people skills, with a commitment to maintaining confidentiality.
- Reasonable confidence in using IT.
- The ability to use initiative and work independently.
- A willingness to abide by Read Easy policies and procedures.
- An open attitude that encourages two-way communication and willingness to ask for and offer support to the Team.
- A non-judgemental attitude and respect for others, with a commitment to equality and diversity, so that you can make everyone feel valued and included.
- Energy and enthusiasm with an average of two hours a week to commit to the role.

What's in it for you?

- Receive outstanding Reading Coach Training;
- Meet and work collaboratively with new people, and
- be active and engaged, adding value to your local community.

Interested?

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