

# JOIN THE READER TEAM





# WELCOME

**Thank you for your interest in working with us. We hope that in return we can offer you an exciting and varied job, a career filled with purpose, development opportunities and many additional benefits.**

The Reader is a national charity that uses the power of literature and reading aloud to transform lives. Everyone who works with us, regardless of their job title, plays a part in contributing to this. Our Shared Reading model brings people together to read great stories and poems - creating powerful moments of connection. In a world that feels increasingly divided, and with increased pressures on our mental health, Shared Reading offers us time and space to share what matters to us.

“Shared Reading gave me the confidence to believe in myself. I’d never experienced anything like it; just talking about what came up in our minds as we read the text. It was a small group, and nobody was trying to show off in a way that sometimes happens in academia.

It was gentle, and kind, and lovely. I thought it was amazing. I realised I didn’t need any literary experience. In fact, I didn’t need anything besides the openness to engage, connect and be present.”

**Mariana**  
**Storybarn Coordinator**



We are very proud that wellbeing has been and always will be a priority here, and many of our staff stay with us for a long time because of this.

We are committed to benchmarking our salaries regularly to ensure we provide good pay in a competitive sector, offering opportunities for personal development and career progression and enabling staff to experience the life-changing benefits of Shared Reading.

We are based at the beautiful Mansion House in Calderstones Park in South Liverpool, and a nationwide charity whose values and ethos span our remote team and the communities we support. The Reader is a place unlike any other, where everyone is welcome, and where anyone can come to experience literature, find and share meaning, be nourished, develop new skills and explore creativity. Our work is supported by a collective of commissioners, grant funders, corporate partners and individuals.

**Jemma Guerrier**  
Managing Director



"At The Reader you are a person, you're thought of as a complete individual and your needs are taken into account. It's allowed me to 100% be myself at work."





# WHAT SHARED READING DOES

"It's about feelings. It's about reading something and saying 'that's just made me feel this' - it's about connection. That's what happens in the room in between the story."

If you're new to literature or not, the impact of getting together and connecting through reading aloud, whether a book or poem, is at the heart of everything we do. In contrast to traditional reading groups, in our Shared Reading sessions the reading takes place within the groups themselves, rather than in advance. The liveness of the reading opens up space for new thoughts to emerge and new connections to be forged. We read with school groups, families, adults, looked after children, older people in care homes, adults with physical and/or mental health conditions, people coping with or recovering from addiction and individuals in the criminal justice system.

We know that our work is helping to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and build stronger communities. We offer the opportunity for all our staff members to experience and benefit from shared reading. It is open to all and you don't need to be academic or have previous experience with literature. You might be surprised at what shared reading can do for you too.

**Katie Clark**  
Director of Literature



85%

say Shared Reading helps them to understand other people better

95%

say Shared Reading makes me feel better

95%

look forward to their group as an important part of their week



\*Shared Reading Adult Community Group participants.



# STAFF BENEFITS

- **Generous holiday entitlement.**
- **Holiday exchange scheme.**
- **Flexible working options including home, hybrid and remote options.**
- **A chance to experience the benefits of Shared Reading.**
- **Employee Assistance Programme.**
- **Hardship Fund.**
- **Enhancements to statutory provision for maternity / paternity and sickness absence.**
- **Beautiful head office location.**
- **Free onsite parking.**
- **Regular opportunities to visit for remote staff.**



**Hear from our people in their own words about why they love working at The Reader:**

**"If you're looking for an employer who cares about you and your wellbeing then it's the right place."**

We are extremely invested in the wellbeing of our people, particularly when it comes to mental health and vulnerability.

**"There is always a very open dialogue with regards to new roles. I was encouraged to go for another role if it was out there. I was allowed to develop as I could and make my own decisions."**

We are hugely supportive of career development and proactively provide opportunities for our people to develop and grow. We offer lots of different progression paths, including into other roles and departments.

**"When I'm having a bad day I tell myself that I'm helping support the people who deliver those Shared Reading groups."**

We are mission driven and values led. We offer company wide annual 'Think Days' where we all get together to enjoy Shared Reading.

# OUR VALUES

**Our values reflect and shape our behaviour and guide our volunteers, staff, trustees and supporters as we work together to bring people together and books to life.**



## **We read to lead**

Great literature is in our DNA, developing imagination, deepening understanding and expanding experience. Reading is also about the kind of attention and understanding we give to our actions, other people and the wider world.

## **We are kind but bold**

Through kindness we inspire ourselves, and others, to do more than we might have thought possible, always aiming for encouragement and trust. But we are bold, too, in saying what we mean as clearly as we can.

## **We make our own pattern in the world**

We don't simply do as others do, we try to work out what is good and right, and do that. We value innovation, foresight and bold ideas in every part of our organisation.

## **We learn from experience and we learn through our mistakes**

We're not afraid of owning our mistakes: understanding them helps us grow. We try to be creative in difficult situations, lively-minded and willing to learn.

## **We love The Reader and take responsibility for it**

Everyone at The Reader is The Reader. We each take responsibility for making The Reader as good as it can be: we pick up the rubbish, speak up when we've made a mistake, notice and try to fix the glitches.





# BELONGING AT THE READER

## Our diversity, equality and inclusion statement



In a nearly twenty-year history of developing Shared Reading groups, The Reader has created thousands of warm and welcoming spaces where all comers are seen and, when they choose to speak, heard.

We consciously work to build the same warm and welcoming feeling, the feeling of belonging, in our workplace. Kindness is one of our values and it helps us care about how we treat each other, always aiming for encouragement, openness and trust.

We use our values to try to ensure The Reader is a thoughtful environment, and we ask all colleagues to be bold, building an environment where all needs and concerns can be raised, listened to, and when possible acted upon. So we'll ask you to tell us if you have any specific needs or if there are things we can do to make you feel more at ease.

One of our values is 'we make our own pattern in the world' and we do that by appointing the best candidate to the role. Current employees and applicants for jobs will always be considered on their abilities and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of age, caring responsibilities, colour, disability, employment status, sex, gender, gender identity, marital status, nationality, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

In our commitment to build diversity into our teams and programmes, we are particularly keen to receive applications from people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds; LGBTQ+; those with disabilities, those with unconventional life experience or educational background.

**If you require any reasonable adjustments during our recruitment processes, including assistance with reading this page or documents linked to below, please contact [jobs@thereader.org.uk](mailto:jobs@thereader.org.uk)**

# APPLICATION PROCESS

"The Reader staff are a warm, generous and supportive team. A real cliché but it really does feel like one big family where everyone has your back."



**All employment offers are conditional upon receipt of two satisfactory professional references. Referees will be sought from an applicant once an offer of employment is made and referees will not be approached without the applicant's permission. Where necessary and appropriate for the role, a relevant DBS check will be undertaken as part of the onboarding process.**

## How to apply

Visit [thereader.org.uk/jobs](http://thereader.org.uk/jobs) to download an application form. Once completed, please send to [laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk](mailto:laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk). Unfortunately, if we receive a high volume of applications, we may not be able to reply to everyone individually.

## Equal opportunities

We are committed to attracting diverse candidates. Applicants who meet our minimum (essential) criteria and identify as one of the following will be guaranteed an interview: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, LGBTQ+, those with disabilities, those with unconventional life experience or educational background.

## Selection process

If successful at shortlisting, you will be invited to interview. There may be an informal stage for some roles, for other roles we may also ask you to complete a task ahead of or at the interview, and for some roles we will hold a second stage interview. We will keep you informed of our expectations during the process. We will provide all interview questions in advance.

## Attending the interview

We will cover travel expenses for anyone who is not currently in a position to do so. If you need any more information on the format of the interview, who will be interviewing, and what to expect on the day, please contact [laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk](mailto:laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk).

**If you have any special requirements, please let us know in advance and we will be happy to make any adjustments needed.**



# CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSON LEAD

**HOURS/FTE:** 0.7 FTE / 24.5 hours per week Monday - Friday (happy to discuss flexible working)

**REPORTS TO:**

**BASED:** Associate Director of Programme Delivery  
Calderstones Park, Liverpool, L18 3JB

**CONTRACT:** Permanent

**SALARY:** £27,861.91 per annum (pro rata)

**CLOSING DATE:** 9am, Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> August

**VACANCY REF CODE:** CO\_060825

## About the Role:

The CYP Lead is responsible for successfully delivering and closely monitoring the outcomes of our CYP focussed community projects. At present, this includes our Early Years focussed First Page Project, but the nature and breadth of these projects is ever changing, so the landscape of this work may change. You will have held a similar role, or roles which have equipped you with skills and experience that will enable you to build lasting relationships with a broad spectrum of people.

We are looking for an experienced, creative person who:

- shares our ethos and values
- Completely believes in shared reading and the work of The Reader

## Key Responsibilities:

### Knowledge and skills:

- Build and strengthen relationships with third sector partners and a variety of stakeholders across the region to co-ordinate the delivery of bespoke training for partner staff and volunteers
- Co-ordinate and deliver an extensive programme of Family days out at the Storybarn for children and young people most in need

- You will have an understanding of the how the power of Shared Reading can impact the lives of young people and have the ability to communicate that internally and externally
- Experience of working with and effectively engaging Children and Young People
- A knowledge and understanding safeguarding policies and procedures
- Deliver courses, support programme activities and other learning experiences (online or in-person as required) across the UK and the wider world, to staff, volunteers and the public, including but not limited to Sharing Stories in the Early Years, Stories for You & Yours, Books & Babies, A little Aloud for Children and refreshers
- Build a comprehensive working knowledge of The Reader's e-learning platform (The Reading Rooms) alongside video conferencing tools Zoom and Teams, sharing this knowledge with others

### **Leadership and People Management:**

- Manage and support staff within your project portfolio. This includes arranging a regular 121, allocation of responsibilities, objective setting, scheduling, completion and monitoring of development reviews and all aspects of staff support

### **Communication:**

- Strong listening skills, in order to stay attuned to the needs and challenges of our community and ensure any feedback is listened to and acted on where appropriate
- Responds to a range of queries relating to CYP projects, providing solution where possible or giving support where needed, and escalating for more complex queries
- Be a diligent user of the CRM and, working with the team to make sure full details of all training, learning and support events and their attendees are recorded

### **Liaison and Networking:**

- Establish external contacts and networks who can provide advice and reassurance around our processes related to CYP projects and work
- Manage key relationships with commissioners and funders in your portfolio ensuring: regular communication and relationship building.



## **Planning and Organising**

- You will be responsible for completion and writing of all necessary project reporting in an accurate and timely manner
- Take ownership of all project outcomes, carefully monitoring outputs, KPIs and delivery planning to ensure that targets are met and ensuring that successes and challenges are shared
- Ensure that operational processes run well, and in a timely manner. This includes but is not limited to data capture (including Microsoft Dynamics) ordering books and resources to support delivery, arranging transport for First Page families and dealing with all day to day issues and concerns

## **Initiative and Problem Solving**

- Take responsibility for ensuring evaluation takes place in a timely manner according to the needs of the project and monitoring progress against targets, taking action to prioritise and respond to information where appropriate

## **Decision Making and Freedom to Act**

- Identify suitable partners and locations for our project workshops, reading groups and story times to be embedded within partner services and delivered across the region and support those partners in rolling out delivery of their sessions, as well as the recording of their activity data on The Hub

## **Teamworking and Collaboration**

- Work across teams at The Reader adding value to the organisation e.g. working with colleagues in the Marketing and Communications team to guide development of materials, social media and all promotional activities and working closely with the Shared Reading Practice Team to effectively schedule, coordinate, deliver and evaluate training for partners
- Play an active role in the wider Children & Young People's team and maintain a commitment to diversity, equity and equality through all strands of the project engagement

Any other duties commensurate with the grade, including taking part in, or leading a Shared Reading group.

**Person Specification:**

- Has a proven track record in outreach work, partnership development and engaging hard to reach groups, individuals and children
- Experience of effective monitoring and evaluation of projects, achieving successful performance in a target driven culture.
- Comfortable dealing with a large number of partners at any one time – prioritising and quickly moving between partners who may have different needs. You will have developed techniques and ways of working through your experience that enable you to effectively prioritise, manage and execute a large volume of varied tasks successfully
- Ability to work collaboratively with staff at all levels of seniority
- Self-motivated and able to work under minimal supervision
- Ability to plan and prioritise work when resources are limited and timescales are difficult
- Able to bring a positive, flexible approach to work, finding creative solutions to problems
- Excellent IT skills, including Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook. Must be willing to learn new IT skills – in particular, our organizational CRM

If you're inspired by our mission, are looking for a new challenge, and want to work for a forward-thinking organisation at a really interesting time, we'd love to hear from you. Please send your completed application forms to [laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk](mailto:laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk)

# Find Out More

## Visit our website

For the latest opportunities and news, along with ways you can get support the Reading Revolution and details of where to find a Shared Reading group, visit [thereader.org.uk](http://thereader.org.uk)

## Follow us on social media

Follow @thereaderorg on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for all the latest updates.

## Drop into a group

Experience the joy of reading aloud together in a Shared Reading group - for free and for everyone. Visit the website or call 0151 729 2200 to find a group near you.

## Tune into The Reader podcast

Discover what our Reading Revolution is all about and help spread the word. Listen on Spotify or Apple.



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The Reader is supported by:



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