

# 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





# 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](https://thereader.org.uk/jobs) to download an application form. Once completed, please send to [jobs@thereader.org.uk](mailto:jobs@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 [jobs@thereader.org.uk](mailto:jobs@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.**



# SHARED READING PRACTICE AND SUPPORT MANAGER

**HOURS/FTE:** 0.7 FTE / 24.5 hours per week

**REPORTS TO:** Head of Shared Reading Practice  
**BASED:** Hybrid

**CONTRACT:** Permanent  
**SALARY:** £34,364 per annum (pro rata)

**CLOSING DATE:** 9am, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August

**VACANCY REF** MA\_290825  
**CODE:**

## About the Role:

This role sits within the Shared Reading Practice Department, which forms a key team within our Literature Directorate. You are responsible for ensuring high quality training and support to our diverse community of Reader Leaders delivering Shared Reading activities with both adults and children. You will manage two interconnected teams within the Shared Reading Practice Department – the Volunteer Support Team (VST) and the Shared Reading Practice Leads Team (SRPL). Together these teams work to deliver an excellent training and support programme for Reader Leaders, to ensure maximum engagement from our Reader Leader community with ongoing learning and reporting of their groups, to ensure that we remain responsive to feedback and that we are delivering Shared Reading with impact.

For the VST, this includes the provision of a central support offer to Reader Leaders from induction to ongoing delivery of Shared Reading covering an online community hub, a support hotline, a programme of online and in person workshops, and quality focus on the Reader Leader Pathway. For the SRPL, this includes the design and delivery of a portfolio of training and support, most notably including our key courses Read to Lead, A Little Aloud and First Page. You will also manage our Teaching Associates who further support the delivery of our training and support offer, and you will ensure that we have a resilient and high quality Teaching Associate talent bank that can meet all of our training and support needs and ensure that the organisation's literary roots remain healthy and strong.

You will work collaboratively with other members of the SRP Department, including our Volunteer Experience Manager, Practice Development Lead, and Literary Engagement Lead. You will also be expected to work collaboratively across other teams (including Partnerships, Children and Young People, Communications, Development, Monitoring and Evaluation) to ensure successful operationalisation of our Shared Reading activities across the UK as well as supporting our International work.

## **Key Responsibilities**

- Manage two teams, Volunteer Support and Shared Reading Practice Leads, providing regular 1:1's, team meetings, and appraisals
- Manage the operationalisation, quality assurance and evaluation of our training and support programmes for Shared Reading activities including oversight of our online training platform, Reading Room
- Manage the budget for our Teaching Associates and ensure that this resource remains fit for purpose
- Manage the budget for our in-person events for Shared Reading
- Manage the quality of our CRM data for all Shared Reading activities
- Provide quarterly reports on key KPI's, most notably include Reader Leader Engagement statistics
- Design new training and support products as required and keep existing ones under quality review at all times
- Deliver training and support workshops and activities as required, both online and in person across the UK
- Find creative solutions to Reader Leader needs and feedback queries within the parameters of the role and available policies and resources
- Co-design operational management of processes and structures via inter-departmental working and our KPI group and VEG group (Volunteer Experience Group) to ensure ongoing growth of Shared Reading nationally
- Communication internally, cross organizationally and externally, formally and informally, with a range of collaborators, to good effect, impact and in order to improve our offer, including attendance of conferences and events to present the work of The Reader
- Work closely with the Partnerships Team on shaping Adult Shared Reading in the community.
- Manage our legacy Reader Leaders in areas where activity outlasts funding
- Manage our volunteer Reader Champions – the people who volunteer to support our Reader Leaders
- Write regular pieces for newsletter, internal staff updates, and other necessary communication report such as to our Board of Trustees
- Liaise with relevant stakeholders effectively across all of our UK based work and support the wider promotion of Shared Reading and recruitment of Reader Leaders to serve our Shared Reading communities



- Be the first port of the call for the team with immediate and longer-term challenges, assisting with immediate problem solving, developing processes to meet longer term challenges, and working with Head of Shared Reading Practice on issues with longer-term strategic implications
- Oversee the management of the library on site at Calderstones to ensure that our literary resources can be effectively used by Reader Leaders and provision supervision for the volunteers looking after this resource
- Support the literary programme at Calderstones and be able to deliver a range of literary activity that runs as part of our Calderstones on site offer, including occasional evening and weekend work
- Any other duties commensurate with the grade, including taking part in or leading a Shared Reading group.

### **Person Specification:**

- Able to demonstrate an excellent understanding of Shared Reading and work of The Reader more widely, including being able to model our organisational values
- Able to demonstrate a rich reading life
- Evidence of managing people and teams effectively and to agreed targets
- Good I.T skills, including experience of cross-organisational databases - you will be required to train others in our IT systems
- Experience of working with large volunteer teams
- Experience of working across national projects
- Self-motivated and able to motivate others
- Able to prioritise and manage a demanding workload and delegate wisely
- Can work flexibly and unsupervised to set outcomes, including out of hours and weekends as required to support both our training and support offer for Reading Leaders as well as our literary programme at Calderstones
- Able to undertake nationwide travel as required
- Commitment to ensuring that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded into our approach to volunteer support
- Experience as a trainer and developing training packages
- Availability and flexibility to work over a 7-day week site, including outside of normal working hours, weekends and bank holidays

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.



Find us @thereaderorg



### The Reader is supported by:



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