

# 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.**

# STORYBARN ASSISTANT MANAGER

**HOURS/FTE:** 35 hours per week / 1 FTE (Monday - Sunday on a rota basis)

**REPORTS TO:** Head of Events & Commercial  
**BASED:** Calderstones Park, Liverpool, L18 3JB

**CONTRACT:** Permanent  
**SALARY:** £24,380.67 per annum

**CLOSING DATE:** 9am, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026

**VACANCY REF** MA\_010726  
**CODE:**

## About the Role and Key Responsibilities

The Storybarn is The Reader's imaginative play space for children and families to share a love of books, imagination and Reading for Pleasure. This role is responsible for overseeing all aspects of Storybarn engagement working with young people from birth to 9 years through family and school programming.

## Knowledge and Skills

- An awareness of and active commitment to upholding our safeguarding policies and procedures
- Excellent communication skills with both adults and children
- Excellent delivery skills to run exciting and engaging sessions as the Storybarn
- Be a key holder with responsibility for opening up a site building, closing down and making sure the Storybarn is secured and alarmed.
- Using the templates provided by Comms team to post content on our social media platforms via Hootsuite. Respond to messages received via social media

- Awareness and understanding of role specific IT platforms and overseeing that systems relevant to the SB are well maintained e.g. Yes Plan, keeping SharePoint updated and managing bookings on Ticket Solve to ensure Storybarn operations run in a smooth and organised manner
- Overseeing the provision of an excellent customer experience through the delivery of high quality Storybarn sessions either on site, off site or virtually with the requirement to deliver sessions on a regular rota basis (across 7 days).
- Direct delivery of Storybarn sessions,
- Support the Storybarn Manager with line management of the Storybarn team of (Story hunters). This includes a responsibility to conduct occasional one to ones and lead full team meetings

### **Leadership and People Management**

- Oversee the upkeep, tidiness and overall appearance of the Storybarn, its materials and surrounding areas, including supporting the Facilities team to ensure the space remains safe, organised and aesthetically pleasing at all times
- Conducting deep cleans when required
- Line manage the Storybarn team (Story hunters). This includes a responsibility to lead regular full team meetings, provide ongoing training support/coaching/guidance alongside day-to-day operational overview.
- Support the completion of Appraisals and quarterly reviews including the setting of team and individual objectives that are relevant to the departmental plan.
- Training and development of The Storybarn Team to deliver the sessions.
- Deliver briefings to the team on shift

### **Communication**

- Lead on all elements of customer communication. Ensuring all communications are in line with Storybarn ethos & aims.
- Communicate effectively to relevant departments across the organisation.
- Support the Storybarn Manager by briefing the team on the day of delivery, including wider site teams and volunteers. Ensure all team members clearly understand their duties and timings for delivery and sessions.
- Provide monthly snapshot and narrative reporting to the Head of Events and Commercial.

### **Liaison and Networking**

- Work with teams across the organisation. Including operations, facilities & catering team to ensure delivery requirements are met.
- Contribute to shaping the Storybarn's sales strategy and performance with a focus on retaining existing customers and expanding our reach.
- Be a point of contact for any complaints to the Storybarn and respond accordingly, in line with The Reader's complaints reporting procedure.

### **Planning and Organising**

- Work closely with Storybarn Manager and Story hunters to develop creative content for The Storybarn, as well as planning and delivering an exciting annual programme of large scale family events and schools engagement with Reading for Pleasure at the heart.
- Be responsible for creating Storybarn session plans, using creativity and skills to develop innovative ways of incorporating reading and craft together around a central theme
- Create and submit seasonal programming briefs to the Storybarn Manager for approval, ensuring these are completed in line with agreed deadlines

### **Initiative and Problem Solving**

- Actively nurture and improve the quality of delivery in the Storybarn. provide ongoing feedback with the intention of improving delivery quality and refining the Shared Reading skills of the delivery team.

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

- Take ownership of and resolve any Storybarn customer service concerns or complaints, as well as troubleshooting and stepping in to manage any operational issues.

### **Teamworking and Collaboration**

- Lead the ongoing relationship with the Calderstones Programmes team to enable opportunities for volunteers to support aspects of Storybarn family engagement.
- Plan, schedule and coordinate training sessions for The Storybarn Team with an ongoing commitment to the quality of Storybarn delivery.
- Work collaboratively with the CYP project team to ensure that a multitude of project demands for Storybarn activity meet necessary project outcomes and that associated plans for delivery are understood, catered for and built into the scheduling of events and programming

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

## **Person Specification**

- Shares The Reader's ethos, mission and values and fosters a genuine willingness to work as part of a team to help The Storybarn evolve and develop in the most exciting and positive ways.
- Have a flexible and innovative approach to adapt, change and grow in a fast moving environment
- A confident and creative approach to curate and implement a range of engagement products for a mix of audiences.
- Demonstrably able to lead with prior experience in people and/or project management.
- Excellent practical and organisational skills with the ability to work unsupervised and be self-motivated, keen to learn new things
- Work in an enthusiastic and positive manner, with the flexibility to work weekends on a rota basis, including a minimum of two weekends per month, and able to work collaboratively with staff at all levels of seniority
- Excellent knowledge of children's literature or experience of working with children in the charitable sector
- Confident with finances, spreadsheet, reports, costing all events and working with budgets
- An awareness of and active commitment to upholding our Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Experience of devising, developing and scheduling creative content on social media platforms
- Experience of delivering reading and play activities to children

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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