

Role description for Literacy Specialist of a Read Easy Management Team

“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

Thank you for considering the role of Literacy Specialist of your local Read Easy Management Team. Local Read Easy groups are changing the lives of individual adults across the country as they provide them with the support they need to learn to read. Many of these adults thought in the past that their situation was hopeless and that they were destined to live limited and often isolated lives because of their reading difficulties. By supporting them to learn to read, Read Easy is opening doors for them to all sorts of new opportunities in life.

The Literacy Specialist plays a crucial in ensuring that everyone who comes to Read Easy to improve their reading gets the support that they need to succeed.

Please see the role description for Management Team members to find out more about the structure and responsibilities of the Team, and visit our website at: www.readeasy.org.uk to find out more about the organisation as a whole. This role description is intended only to outline the specific responsibilities of the Literacy Specialist.

Outline of the Literacy Specialist role

Most of the ‘new Readers’ that we work with start at Pre-Entry or Entry Levels 1 or 2 on the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum, so are beginning or emerging Readers. They are generally referred to local Read Easy groups by other agencies. Some people also self-refer.

On referral, each individual has a one-to-one enrolment meeting with the local Read Easy Coordinator (including a simple assessment to ensure that the course will be suitable for them) and are then matched up with a trained volunteer Coach. Coach and Reader proceed to meet up for reading sessions twice a week, for just half an hour at a time, at an approved local ‘reading venue’. They work at their own pace through a phonics-based reading manual, which is designed to be suitable for volunteers to use, as it has instructions for the Coach on every page.

Coaches receive a minimum of two levels of training. The Initial Coach Training covers not only how to use phonics and the reading manuals, but also a background to the issues faced by those with reading difficulties; safeguarding training; and guidance on the boundaries of the coaching relationship. Consolidation Training offers Coaches some suggestions on additional activities they can use to enrich the programme and provide opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension.

As Literacy Specialist, you will provide literacy support to the Coordinator and Reading Coaches and assist in running the Reading Coach meetings. You should have a background in teaching reading/literacy (preferably, but not necessarily, with adults).



Responsibilities

- Attending at least one of each type of Coach training to ensure that you know what is expected of Read Easy Reading Coaches.
- Supporting and advising the Coordinator with any literacy related queries, especially if he/she does not have a literacy specialism.
- Visiting reading pairs to advise on specific situations and challenges that Readers and Coaches may be facing.
- Creating a 'Resources Box' containing a range of useful activities and resources that Coaches can use to support and extend their Readers' learning with the manual (in line with the Consolidation training). Read Easy UK provides a list of suggestions for this box, which should be kept in an easily accessible location, such as the local library, for Coaches to borrow from.
- Assembling 'Starter Packs' for Coaches and Readers, using guidance provided.
- If required, supporting the group through the process of starting and running the Moving Ahead scheme (with support and advice from Read Easy UK).

Personal qualities and experience

- Training and experience in teaching literacy, ideally to adults.
- An understanding of the difference between the needs of adults and children in the learning process.
- A knowledge of the range of teaching resources that are available for adults, or a willingness to research them.
- Some day-time hours available during the working week (ideally), as most coaching takes place during these hours.
- Reasonable confidence in IT and in accessing and using online resources.

What is in it for you? You will:

- use your knowledge and skills as part of a team to support Reader achievement;
- meet and work collaboratively with new people;
- be active and engaged, adding value to your local community.

Commitment to the role

The role of the Literacy Specialist is key to Reader success. You should be prepared to assist the Coordinator with any Reader/Coach enquiries regarding their programme and progress. It would also be helpful if you could assist the Coordinator on occasions with monitoring reading sessions and be prepared to deputise for the Coordinator, when he or she is unavailable because of holidays or sickness.

You will also be required to attend monthly Management Team meetings and make a general contribution to the Team. It would be helpful if you are able to commit an average of 2-3 hours a week to the role.



Commitment from Read Easy

If you are joining a new group, you will be required to attend a day's training with the other Management Team members and the Coordinator from your Read Easy group, shortly after affiliation to Read Easy UK. The training will provide you with an opportunity to get to know the rest of the team, clarify roles and responsibilities and help plan activities to set up the group and achieve success.

If you are joining an existing group, Read Easy UK provides suggestions for an induction process to ensure you are properly inducted into your role and provided with all the documentation and information you need about how the group is intended to run. Please ask about this induction process if you need to.

Ongoing support will be provided by your Regional Adviser, and by Head Office as and when required. You may also be invited to Regional Forums and you will be invited to attend the Annual Conference held in the autumn, where you will have the opportunity to meet with volunteers from other groups.

You will be provided with a Literacy Specialist Information Pack and a Management Team Handbook, which provides important information about your general responsibilities as a Management Team member and is designed to help your Team to run everything as smoothly and easily as possible. You will be given access to additional resources on the Read Easy website to assist you in your role.

Apply

If you would be interested in taking up this role, please contact: