

Volunteer role description

Do you enjoy reading and chatting about books, magazines, or sharing stories and memories? Could you help connect people by starting conversations inspired by reading?

Reading Friends brings people together to read, share stories, meet new friends and have fun. We use reading – whether books, magazines, newspapers, or anything else – to start everyone chatting.

You don't have to be an expert in literature to take part. All that's needed is a love of reading and a desire to help people feel more connected in their community.

Interested in joining our volunteer team or would like some more information?

Please contact:



Reading Friends volunteers

Purpose of role

Reading Friends volunteers meet with Reading Friends participants, either one-to-one or in a group, to use reading (in any format) as a way of sparking conversations.

There are various role options available:

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Main activities and tasks

As a Reading Friends volunteer you will:

For reading in a group setting:

- Lead group reading activities and facilitate conversation using reading materials as a basis for discussion.
- Make practical arrangements to identify and select suitable materials (books, newspapers, handling objects etc.) which focus on the groups' interests.
- Prepare other resources as necessary (chairs, tea, coffee etc.) in advance of each session.
- Be aware of and sensitive to the needs of those in the group.
- Ensure everyone is able to contribute to the session and feels welcomed and involved.
- Lead on various themed activities (e.g. memory boxes, etc.).
- Help to clean and tidy up following sessions.
- Take part in regular supervision meetings.
- Contribute to the evaluation of the project as required.
- Feedback any issues or concerns to the Project Coordinator.



For one-to-one home visiting:

- Make practical arrangements to identify and select suitable materials which focus on the Reading Friend's interests (books, newspapers etc.).
- Visit the Reading Friend in their own home, on a regular basis.
- Provide companionship and conversation using the reading materials as a basis for discussion.
- Feedback any issues or concerns to the Project Coordinator.
- Contribute to the evaluation of the project as required.
- Take part in regular supervision meetings.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.

Skills, qualities and experience required

- ✓ A friendly and approachable manner
- ✓ Good communication and listening skills with the ability to build rapport through conversation.
- ✓ A patient and sensitive approach and the ability to empathise with people.
- ✓ Reliable and trustworthy.
- ✓ A love of reading and the desire to share this with others.
- ✓ The confidence to read to others.
- ✓ The ability to maintain a meaningful conversation for a prolonged period in the Reading Friend's first language.
- ✓ An understanding of the need for confidentiality.
- ✓ Have the ability to cope with the duties and responsibilities of the role and the associated environment, including an understanding of health and safety and safeguarding (training will be provided) and the ability to deal calmly with an emergency.
- ✓ Able to follow guidelines/instructions.
- ✓ Initiative and the ability to work without supervision.
- ✓ Willing to learn new knowledge and skills.

Training and support

All volunteers will receive an induction as well as safeguarding training. Regular supervision sessions will be provided for ongoing support and development.

Location

Expenses

Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed to agreed limits on the production of receipts.

Time commitment

Responsible to

How to apply

Additional information

- A DBS check will be required

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