



VOLUNTEER READING COACH POLICY

1. Policy statement

- 1.1. This policy aims to set out the responsibilities of each Read Easy UK Affiliated Group (“Affiliated Group”) towards those who apply to volunteer as Reading Coaches (“Applicants”) and those who then take up this role within the Affiliated Group (“Reading Coaches”). It also outlines Reading Coaches’ responsibilities to the Affiliated Group, covering the procedure for the Reading Coach’s induction, training and support, which they will receive during their time with the Affiliated Group.

2. Recruitment of Reading Coaches

- 2.1. There will be an on-going process of Reading Coach recruitment through local organisations, businesses, Volunteer Centres and in the local media, etc. Potential Applicants should first speak to the Coordinator of the Affiliated Group to ensure that they understand the role and the commitment required.
- 2.2. If the Coordinator and the Applicant are agreed and willing to continue, then the Applicant will be asked to complete an application form. Applicants will be asked to provide two referees, whom they consent to being contacted by the Affiliated Group in relation to their recruitment. Applicants should be aware that if they fail to provide adequate references then the Affiliated Group reserves the right to reject their application.
- 2.3. Successful Applicants will be invited for an interview to discuss the opportunities within the Affiliated Group and the skills and abilities they can offer as a Reading Coach.
- 2.4. After the interview, assuming that the Applicant is considered to be suitable as a Reading Coach, the Coordinator will inform him/her of the time, date and location of the training session. The recruitment process will not be considered complete until after the Applicant has:
 - 2.4.1. attended the training day;
 - 2.4.2. undertaken the first few weeks of coaching; and
 - 2.4.3. been observed during a Coach Monitoring Session.
- 2.5. The Affiliated Group may, at any stage, whether during or after the recruitment process, ask the Applicant to undergo an Enhanced DBS check, in accordance with the DBS Check Policy. (DBS checks were formerly known as Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks.) Applicants should be reminded that having a criminal record will not necessarily bar them from volunteering within the Affiliated Group. Please see the DBS Check Policy for more information.

- 2.6. All recruitment of Reading Coaches is carried out in line with the Affiliated Group's Equal Opportunities Policy.

3. Training

- 3.1. Training days for new Reading Coaches will take place at intervals, as necessary. These will cover the issues surrounding illiteracy, an overview of the *Yes we can read* book, how to establish an appropriate and professional relationship with a new reader ("Reader"), and guidance on working in a one-to-one situation with Readers. For further guidance on working one-to-one please see the Venue & Lone Worker Policy.
- 3.2. The Coordinator will keep the name and details of the Reading Coach on file until an appropriate coaching opportunity arises, taking into account the geographical area in which the Reading Coach is willing and able to work, as well as any other preferences expressed.
- 3.3. Once a suitable new Reader has been identified, the Coordinator will arrange for him/her to meet with the Reading Coach. A list of approved reading venues will be provided so that they can choose one together that will suit them both. It will then be the responsibility of the Reading Coach to book one of the approved venues for the times agreed and inform the Coordinator of these arrangements.
- 3.4. At this stage the Coordinator will also ask the Reading Coach to sign a Reading Coach Commitment, which signals the Reading Coach's willingness to abide by the Affiliated Group's policies and procedures. Once this agreement has been signed, the Reading Coach will be covered by the Affiliated Group's Public Liability and Employers' Liability insurance. The Coordinator will also provide the Reading Coach with a copy of *Yes we can read*, a copy of the Read Easy Coach Handbook and contact details for the new Reader.

4. Support and supervision

- 4.1. After the first few weeks of meeting together, the Coordinator will observe a reading session between the Reading Coach and Reader and offer any necessary advice and support. Thereafter, the Coordinator will be available to provide further support and guidance as and when is necessary. Reading Coaches should ask the Coordinator for support if, at any point, they require it.
- 4.2. At least once a term there will be a Coach Meeting, where Reading Coaches can feed back and discuss their experiences, and receive further guidance and on-going training, where the Affiliated Group finds it appropriate to do so.

5. Data Protection

- 5.1. The Affiliated Group respects your right to confidentiality and we keep all written records about you securely stored in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and data protection laws. If you require more information on the type of data we collect and how it is used, please ask the Coordinator for a copy of the Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection Appendices. In addition, you can make a written request to the Management Committee to request details of the data we currently hold about you.
- 5.2. In accordance with the Data Protection Policy, we also ask you to be careful to store securely any personal data you are provided with about your Reader (or anyone else

in the Affiliated Group), whether on paper or computer, so that it cannot be accessed by anyone outside the Affiliated Group. We also ask you to destroy any such data you hold when you finish coaching a Reader.

6. Expenses

- 6.1. The Affiliated Group has limited funding and is not able to cover Reading Coaches' travel expenses. However, we always try to place Reading Coaches within an area that is convenient for both them and their Readers, in order to minimise the need for travelling. Reading Coaches are, of course, free to turn down the opportunities offered.
- 6.2. In exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement from the Management Committee, the Affiliated Group may cover specific expenses incurred during coaching. If you require more information on expenses, please speak to the Coordinator. Please note that payment will be for one-off expenses only and will not give rise to an implied obligation for the Affiliated Group to cover future expenses that a Reading Coach may incur.

7. Grievances

- 7.1. If you have any problems or concerns whilst acting as a Reading Coaching for us, you should normally raise these in the first instance with the Coordinator. If, after your discussions, the issue remains unresolved, or if you feel you cannot raise this with the Coordinator (perhaps because he or she is involved), you should put your concerns in writing to the Chair of the Committee, who will then arrange to meet with you to discuss these.

8. Insurance

- 8.1. All Reading Coaches will be covered by our Public and Employers' Liability Insurance. In order to maintain your cover, we ask that you pay close attention to the Venue & Lone Worker Policy, especially with regard to the venue in which you meet your Reader. Failure to abide by our policies and procedures may result in you not being covered by our insurance.

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1. The Affiliated Group recognises the sensitive nature of the services that it provides. We therefore ask that you respect the Reader's right to confidentiality and refrain from disclosing any information relating, without limitation, to the reader's name; reading ability; or anything else that they or the Affiliated Group communicate to you in confidence ("Personal Information") to:
 - 9.1.1. anyone within the Affiliated Group who is not directly concerned or involved with the Reader; their case or their development. This includes disclosure to other Reading Coaches at Coach meetings; and
 - 9.1.2. anyone outside of the Affiliated Group, other than in an emergency situation.
- 9.2. Disclosure of Personal Information includes verbal discussions as well as disclosure of personal or confidential information over email or social media sites, such as Facebook or Twitter.

- 9.3. Other than in an emergency, if you have any concerns about your Reader that you feel you should disclose to someone else, please speak to the Coordinator or Safeguarding Champion before taking any action.
- 9.4. Failure to maintain and respect confidentiality may result in the Affiliated Group giving you notice to cease working as a Reading Coach.

10. Notice

- 10.1. Reading Coaches are asked, whenever possible, to give a month's notice if they anticipate needing to leave the scheme before their Reader has completed the book, so that another Reading Coach can be found to replace them.
- 10.2. The Affiliated Group may wish to terminate a Reading Coach's involvement with the Reader or with the Affiliated Group completely. In this event the Reading Coach will be informed of the termination in writing.
- 10.3. The Affiliated Group will endeavour to give you as much notice as possible, so as not to inconvenience yourself or the Reader. However, there may be circumstances where the Affiliated Group decides that it is no longer suitable for you to have contact with your Reader and/or participate in the scheme. In this case, the Affiliated Group may give you notice to terminate with immediate effect. All terminations carried out by the Affiliated Group are to be conducted in a fair manner, having due regard for the Equal Opportunities Policy.