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Home-Start Reading Charity Trustee Role Profile and Person Specification

About the role

Home-Start Reading is an independent charity that has supported vulnerable families with children under five in Reading since 1984. We offer early intervention through our unique volunteer home-visiting service, reaching families facing a range of challenges including poor mental health, social isolation, domestic abuse and financial hardship.

In addition to home-visiting, we run targeted projects to support families who would benefit from extra peer connection and encouragement, focusing on parent-child relationships, children's socialisation, and school readiness. Our Mums in Mind programme provides gentle, accessible peer support for women experiencing postnatal depression or anxiety, in a safe, supportive environment.

Despite strong relationships with local statutory services, we receive no statutory funding and rely on grants and donations to pay our small staff team to deliver vital services and recruit, train and supervise our brilliant team of volunteers.

We are seeking a new Trustee to join our Board. As a Trustee you will share responsibility for the effective, safe, and legally compliant operation of Home-Start Reading. Alongside fellow Trustees, you will provide strategic leadership to help shape the charity's future and ensure its sustainability.

It is important to note that this role does not involve the day-to-day management of the organisation. However, as a small charity with limited staff resources, trustees may take a more active role in certain tasks than may be the case with other charities. Regular communication and collaboration with the Manager and fellow trustees will therefore be essential.

This is a voluntary position with pre-agreed expenses eligible for reimbursement.

The ideal candidate.

You will be passionate about making a real difference to local families during their toughest times. You'll bring a range of experience, specialist skills and knowledge from a professional background or your own lived experience to support the charity to grow and develop.

You might be looking for your first step up into a strategic or governance related role or looking to give back to your local community. You'll have energy and enthusiasm and a different perspective that will compliment and challenge our way of working.

We're particularly interested in hearing from individuals with experience around marketing and fundraising, and / or with a strong Reading network.

Key accountabilities

- Ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- Ensure that the charity provides its services safely and in a way that promotes the safeguarding of all children and adults at risk
- Ensure the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects: the organisation must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of the organisation
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organisation
- Protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds

In addition, each trustee should use their specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, addressing critical issues, or offering guidance and advice on new projects or other areas where their expertise is particularly valuable.

Person specification

- Commitment to Home-Start Reading
- Willingness and capacity to devote the necessary time and effort (see below)
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement, and willingness to speak their mind
- Ability to think creatively
- An acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Successful achievement of an Enhanced DBS check

Location and time commitment

- The board meets every 2 months for about 2 hours (19:00 to 21:00)
- You will be expected to be able to dedicate a minimum of 6 hours per month to the role, preferably more, including preparation for and attendance at Board meetings.
- Your duties may be carried out online and by phone / video, as well as face to face.

Travel required:

Some travel across Reading to attend meetings and events. All reasonable expenses will be reimbursed subject to charity policy.