

## Let's Talk Babies Volunteer Role Description

### Background:

Let's Talk Reading (LTR) are working in collaboration with Happy Babies to run Let's Talk Babies groups offering fun activities - such as songs, rhymes, stories and play - to help little ones develop. There is also plenty of relaxed, social time for parents/carers to chat to help support their own well-being and pick-up items from the baby bank. The team at Happy Babies lead the sessions and our volunteers play a key supporting role - joining in the fun, welcoming parents/carers to the session, offering refreshments and helping set-up and pack-away toys and baby bank clothes and everyday items.

We currently run three Let's Talk Babies session at three locations across Ipswich on differing days and times. At each location, the session lasts for 2 hours and is held once a week at the same time and venue. Our volunteers usually work in pairs and always work with at least one Happy Babies facilitator. Average attendance at our current session is 15 families per week, so 15 mums or dads, 15 babies and 3 or 4 toddlers.

LTR is a small, local, volunteer-led charity helping people in Ipswich with reading. LTR is funded through grants, with a part time paid co-ordinator and ten existing volunteers. We are based in the Eastern Angles Centre on Gatacre Road.

LTR encourages parents and children to enjoy reading and build communications skills together. We offer free books and Storytimes at local early years settings and community events. We are working with Happy Babies to run the grant-funded Let's Talk Babies sessions. We believe that helping parents to bond with their babies from birth by reading, rhyming, singing and talking daily with their child is an essential starting point to developing good reading and communication skills in all children. Volunteering with us helps make a positive difference to our community by taking action to change the persistent problem of low literacy across Ipswich which seriously reduces life chances for many children and young people in the town. Parents and carers who read with their children are more likely to help them become confident and enthusiastic readers. If a child lacks good reading, writing and communication skills, they are less likely to succeed at school, and as an adult they could lose out in the job market. Poverty doubles the likelihood of children not being able to enjoy and benefit from reading by the age of five.

### Commitment:

You will be asked to attend the session each week (or every other week) or let us know with enough time if you are unable to attend, so that we can cover your absence. The classes run most weeks of the year (with some breaks) and each session will last for 2 hours.

We have termly volunteer meetings where volunteers enjoy being part of a team and can discuss the sessions they have taken part in, explore books and other resources, and develop their skills.

### Main Purpose and Responsibilities:

To assist the Happy Babies facilitator in the smooth running of the Let's Talk Babies sessions including:

- Welcoming families.
- Assisting with refreshments (hot drinks).
- Assisting our group facilitator with setting up and clearing away sessions with mats, cushions and soft-play equipment
- Helping engage participants through activities such as play, story and song times

- Supporting our group leaders with any administrative tasks relating to the group, including attendance records and registration of new families.
- Setting-up and packing away free books and baby bank clothes and everyday items.
- Supervising any toddlers in the soft-play area and reading to them.
- To report to the LTR Coordinator any incidents/accidents that occur and any observations that may require addressing.
- To adhere to the Safeguarding, Lone Working, and Equal Opportunities Policies.

### **Person Specification:**

- This is an opportunity for people who believe reading and early development is important for children and parents and are enthusiastic about encouraging people to read.
- You will also enjoy working with babies and can encourage socialising by their parents.
- Our volunteers may have early years' experience, have worked in teaching or family support, or may have a background and skills that will enhance and extend Let's Talk Reading's work.
- Our volunteers need to be reliable, attend all booked sessions, notifying the Co-ordinator in good time if unable to attend.
- Able to work as part of a team.
- Organised, friendly, and approachable.
- It helps to have access to a car. (Travel expenses can be paid)

### **Application:**

We ask our potential volunteers to:

- complete a short application form
- complete a short declaration form
- provide details of 2 referees who know them professionally or personally
- attend an interview with the Co-ordinator and either the Lead Volunteer or Board Chair
- sign up to the principles of Let's Talk Reading
- successfully complete a DBS check (LTR has an employment of ex-offenders policy)

### **Personal Development:**

- To work with the paid Co-ordinator and existing volunteers as an induction
- To attend any training as required, including Safeguarding training.
- To contribute ideas and suggestions to the development of the project.

The [Let's Talk Reading](#) website gives more information about Let's Talk Reading.