



Job description

Job title:	Project Manager, First Words Together
Salary:	£32,000 per year pro rata (0.8 FTE)
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	28 hours per week
Reports to:	Programme Manager, Early Years
Direct/indirect reports:	None

Introduction

One person in six has poor literacy skills that impact on every area of their life. A child without good reading, writing and communication skills will struggle to succeed at school, and as an adult they could be locked out of the job market. Poverty doubles the likelihood that, by the age of five, a child's literacy skills will be below average.

The National Literacy Trust gives children and young people from disadvantaged communities the literacy skills to succeed in life. We work with schools and other education settings, with communities and partners, and directly with children and families. Our research and analysis make us the leading authority on literacy and drive our interventions.

We are a rapidly growing organisation, with ambitious plans and amazing staff. We have more than 25 years' experience of delivering programmes and campaigns to improve literacy, and work closely with both national and local government. Our funders and partners include well-known brands such as McDonald's, WHSmith and The Premier League, and large multinationals such as Lancôme, KPMG and Amazon. We have an office in Vauxhall, London, as well as people working to support our community activity around the country.

First Words Together is a new early years programme based on our flagship parental engagement programme, Early Words Together. The programme aims to enrich the home learning environment and improve the emerging speech and communication of children aged under two in disadvantaged areas. It builds knowledge and confidence in early years practitioners and other professionals whilst also developing the skills and confidence of

parents/carers, enabling them to consistently support their child's speech, language and communication development.

First Words Together will run in specific targeted areas in the West Midlands and North East, bringing together education, public health and community support to drive improved outcomes for babies and infants. An associated behaviour change campaign co-produced with local communities will reach families with under-twos who are not yet engaged with local services, raising families' awareness and access to support, and encouraging action to build a language-rich home learning environment.

This role will oversee the management and delivery of First Words Together, under the guidance of the Early Years Programme Manager, and build new relationships with partners in the two geographical areas with the support of our local communities team.

Working with us

Our people are our most important asset and we value and respect diversity in all its forms (seen and unseen). We particularly welcome applications from those from Black and Asian candidates, people with disabilities and candidates from the communities in which we work. We would like to increase representation of these groups among our staff as we know greater diversity will lead to an even greater impact for our work. We are also committed to providing training, mentoring and support to help us bring new perspectives and experiences into the organisation, and ensure that our staff have the skills and understanding they need to talk confidently about the challenges communities face and our role in addressing them.

We encourage a flexible working approach that allows each person in our team to work in a way that suits their circumstances and enables them to contribute to our success, whoever they are.

Part 1: Job profile

1.1 Main purpose of job

This role is responsible for managing the First Words Together project across the West Midlands and the North East.

1.2 Position in organisation

This role is part of the early years team, which has a total of five members of staff, and reports to the Early Years Programme Manager.

1.3 Working contacts

Internal

Close working with the early years team, communities team and communications team.

External

Managing relationships with local authority partners in education and health, community organisations, early years professionals, programme participants, funders and external evaluators.

Part 2: Key duties and responsibilities

2.1 Project management

- Reporting to the Early Years Programme Manager, manage and deliver the First Words Together project across different geographical areas, including logistics, safeguarding, risk management and quality assurance, all to a high standard.
- Programme development (creation of training and resources) in collaboration with the Early Years Programme Manager and Speech and Language Therapy Services in local areas.
- Deliver project to meet required outcomes and reach, in partnership with local services.
- Manage internal and external reporting to a high standard, including working with an external evaluator, project partners, participants, funders and key stakeholders
- Support recruitment of early years settings on to the project, in partnership with the communities team
- Ensure evaluation activity is completed effectively, liaising with project partners to gather and monitor impact data, and communicating with both internal and external evaluators to enable timely submission of data
- Co-facilitation of training, network sessions, focus groups, in partnership with appropriate colleagues
- Ordering and delivery of books and resources to align with programme delivery and campaign activity

2.2 Financial systems

- Track project spend, reconcile budgets and financial records to invoices and nominals
- Process invoices in liaison with the finance team
- Monitor quarterly financial claims from project partners

2.3 Marketing and communications

- Work with the communications team to develop and implement a behaviour change campaign for parents of under-twos in target communities
- Provide a high standard of internal and external stakeholder management
- Present the work of the programme and the wider work of the charity to a variety of audiences
- Represent the National Literacy Trust at meetings, training days and dissemination events

The postholder may be required to undertake other activities as deemed appropriate, and to support activities that contribute to the growth and sustainability of the charity, and to the sharing and development of our organisational knowledge.

Part 3: Person specification

3.1 Essential experience

- Project management and design
- Supporting or leading work with early years practitioners and external stakeholders
- Event management and coordination
- Working with nurseries/ schools /children

3.1.1 Desirable experience

- Training early years professionals in education or health settings
- Working with families

3.2 Knowledge

- Evidence and current trends in the early years
- Current evidence around early years speech, language and communication, and the home learning environment
- Evaluation strategies and approaches
- A good working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook
- Knowledge of Salesforce (desirable)

3.3 Skills

- Good external stakeholder relationship management
- Strong organisational skills, with attention to detail
- Able to use initiative and solve problems independently
- Able to manage multiple deadlines
- Budget management
- Good verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to work collaboratively
- Able to use data and undertake research

3.4 Other

- Commitment to equality and diversity
- Clear interest in and understanding of literacy and social justice issues

Part 4: Summary of terms and conditions of service

Location: The postholder will be an employee of the National Literacy Trust, which is based at 68 South Lambeth Road, London SW8 1RL. This post can be based at that office, or in the West Midlands or North East, as a home working role. There will be regular travel in and around these areas to support programme delivery and partnerships.

Probation period: This post is subject to a 12-week probationary period.

Notice period: This post is subject to an eight-week notice period.

- Safeguarding:** The postholder will adhere to the National Literacy Trust’s safeguarding policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
This post is also subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Expenses:** The role will require travel within the UK. Out-of-pocket expenses will be paid when incurred in accordance with our expenses policy.
- Annual leave:** You will receive a total of 39 days per year (pro rata for part time staff), made up of 28 days’ annual leave plus the closure of the office on all bank holidays and from Christmas Day to New Year’s Day inclusive.
- Pension:** The National Literacy Trust will contribute 8% of annual salary for those who qualify for our group pension plan.
- Other benefits:** We provide a Cycle to Work scheme and access to other health and wellbeing benefits including an employee assistance programme, discounted gym membership, dental plans and health assessments.