

Read Easy FAQs for Referral Agencies

Q. What is Read Easy?

A. Read Easy is a charity that provides free, confidential, one- to-one reading coaching for adults (18+) who are unable to read or who struggle with reading. We call these learners 'Readers'. We are affiliated to Read Easy UK which provides a range of services and support to local groups across England. Read Easy Basingstoke is an independent local group that aims to provide reading coaching to residents of Basingstoke and the surrounding areas.

Q. Why is reading important? Some people manage OK with poor reading skills.

A. People who struggle to read may experience a range of problems. It is often harder for them to find work that is secure or pays well. They are less likely to be able to support their children or grandchildren with reading and schoolwork. Everyday activities like shopping and searching for information online may be tricky and/or slow. They may find it hard to lead independent lives, particularly when interacting with banks, the NHS, power suppliers, job centres or solicitors, for example. And of course, it is much harder to read for pleasure if your reading skills are limited.

Q. How would I know if someone has a problem with reading?

A. People who have struggled to read are often highly skilled at concealing the problem. They may develop strategies to deal with situations where they need to read. You may become aware that someone is reluctant to read or always seems to have a plausible excuse for not reading in front of others. Sometimes people may confide in a person they trust - at home or at work - that they have a problem with reading. You may find this resource helpful [Using positive language to engage potential Readers-A guide for Referral Agency role holders](#)

Q. Why would people have problems with reading? Surely everyone learns to read at school?

A. A 2011 Skills for Life survey estimated that 2.4 million people in England can barely read or cannot read at all. There are many reasons why people might have limited reading skills. They may have had a disrupted education for family or health reasons or their family may have found it difficult to support their education. They may have dyslexia or another kind of reading disability that was not identified or addressed when they were younger. They may have a learning disability. Their first language may not be English and although they may have developed their spoken English, their reading skills might lag behind.

Q. What materials do you use to teach people to read?

A. Read Easy coaches use the Shannon Trust's Turning Pages manuals which provide a phonics-based approach. Readers develop a solid understanding of the relationship between written letters & words and the way in which they are pronounced, then gradually build their ability to 'decode' words and sentences. The Turning Pages manuals use words and sentences that are relevant to adults. A wide range of short reading books accompanies the Turning Pages materials, featuring issues and themes that will interest adult learners.



Q. How would I refer someone to Read Easy?

A. Referrals are received via a designated email address or Read Easy telephone number; these contact details are printed on our publicity materials or can be found [here](#) on the Read Easy website. In most situations a phone call or email is all that is needed. A trained volunteer will arrange to meet your client and take it from there.

People making referrals from organisations such as the probation service, mental health services and drug and alcohol rehabilitation, may be asked to complete a referral form where they can provide extra information about potentially vulnerable clients.

Q. If I refer someone to Read Easy, will I get a report on their progress?

A. The relationship between the Reader and their Coach is confidential. We do not provide feedback on a Reader's progress to the person who referred them, but we do encourage the Reader to tell people they trust what they are doing and how they are getting on with the programme. Readers benefit enormously from support and encouragement.

Q. Can Read Easy coaching be provided to a group of Readers?

A. The Turning Pages materials are specifically designed for a one-to-one setting. That way the coaching can remain confidential and progresses at the pace the Reader needs to succeed. Many Readers tell us that they found group lessons, either at school or in college settings, didn't work for them and so seek out a one-to-one arrangement.

Q. What kinds of people provide the coaching?

A. Anyone who is a fluent reader can apply to become a Read Easy Coach. No teaching or coaching experience is needed, as full training is given. Coaches and Readers meet for two 30-minute sessions each week in a safe, approved venue.

Coaches need to be patient, supportive, discreet and prepared to attend Read Easy UKs Reading Coach Training and follow the programme provided.

Q. What training and support do Read Easy Coaches get?

A. Initial training is two half-days, online. Once a Coach and Reader have been meeting for a few weeks there is a second round of online 'consolidation' training. Coaches have the support of their area Coordinator throughout the time they are coaching a Reader and opportunities to meet up with other coaches for support and encouragement.

Q. Other than referring people or becoming a Coach, how else can I support Read Easy?

A. By spreading the word, so that people in your work or personal networks are aware of how we can help people with reading difficulties; by offering a free, safe venue where coaching could take place; by making a donation, or by fundraising for us. Follow us:

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ReadEasyBasingstoke>

Donations: Sort Code – **30-90-09** Account no.: **5168 8868** Reference: **organisation/ name/ email**