

Volunteer Role:

Prison Pop Up Bookshop Coordinator

Approx. one day per month



About us

The Children's Book Project is a national charity seeking to tackle book poverty by gifting new and pre-loved books to children with very few books of their own. This year we aim to give 450,000 books to targeted children nationwide via children's centres, community groups, schools, food banks and prisons. The families we support often face multiple challenges, whether financial, social or emotional and our books are intended to bring joy and to support children's aspirations, as well as support their long-term educational outcomes.

Our Share a Story programme

Our Share a Story programme stems from recognition of the trauma, social stigma and loss of a parent role model faced by children with a parent in prison. The programme has multiple delivery mechanics but one over-riding goal: to permit prisoner parents to select books with and for their children, to build a shared enjoyment around reading for pleasure and to forge family ties.



The importance of our volunteers

We're looking for a small team of volunteers to help us run our book-gifting initiatives in prisons in and around the London area. Volunteers help to set up a Pop Up Bookshop within each prison where prisoner parents can choose free books for the children in their family. These books are then sent home to each child on the parent's behalf.



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The role

We operate at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, HMP Brixton, HMP Thameside and HMP Belmarsh within the London area and run regular Pop Up Bookshops at these sites. We offer prisons in other parts of the country the opportunity to host a volunteer-run Pop Up Bookshop as part of their induction programme with us.

In this role you'll work as part of a team of 3+ volunteers, helping to set up a Pop Up Bookshop in a dedicated area in each prison, displaying books on tables and welcoming prisoners as they attend. Prisoners often need your support in choosing appropriate books for their children and occasionally help with writing letters home.

Some light physical work is involved such as carrying and unpacking boxes of books and moving light furniture to help set up the space. All volunteers will be subject to security checks on entering which might involve airport-style scanning and digital fingerprinting. We remain accompanied by prison officers at all times.

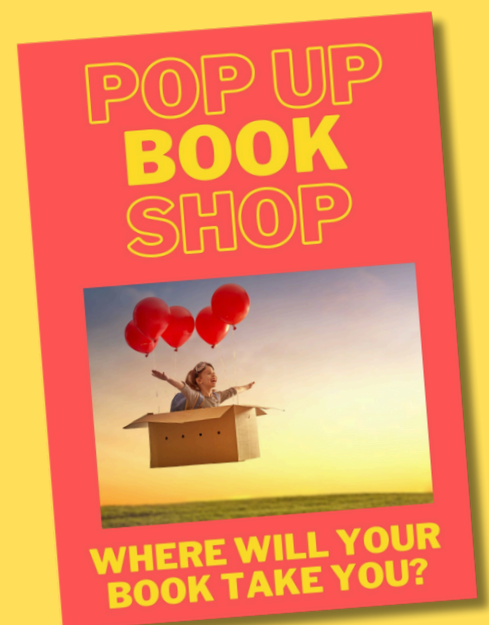
Typical sessions start at 8.30am at the prison gate and finish by 1pm. Afternoon sessions start at 12.30 to 4.30pm generally. There will be opportunities to also attend some sessions outside London and these will involve an earlier start time.

What you can expect from us

We are committed to our prison programme and our volunteers are integral to its success.

We support all volunteers with:

- ✓ Full training and support.
- ✓ Choice of dates and location.
- ✓ Volunteer uniform (t-shirt / sweatshirt).
- ✓ A sense of team.
- ✓ Opportunities to visit our HQ.



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How To Apply

If this role sounds interesting, you have the skills below and can commit to supporting us in this role, we would love to hear from you. Please email nella@childrensbookproject.co.uk with your CV, your reasons for applying and details of any relevant volunteering experience.

Are you?

- ✓ Interested in children's literature and reading for pleasure.
- ✓ Aged 25 or above.
- ✓ Able to provide formal ID, such as passport and NI details for security checks
- ✓ Passionate about making a positive impact on the lives of young people with a parent in prison.
- ✓ Able to communicate with empathy to prisoners, to listen and to support them with their book choices.
- ✓ Able to manage some light physical work such as setting up tables.
- ✓ Able to commit on average one day per month and travel independently to a prison. (Travel expenses are reimbursed).

