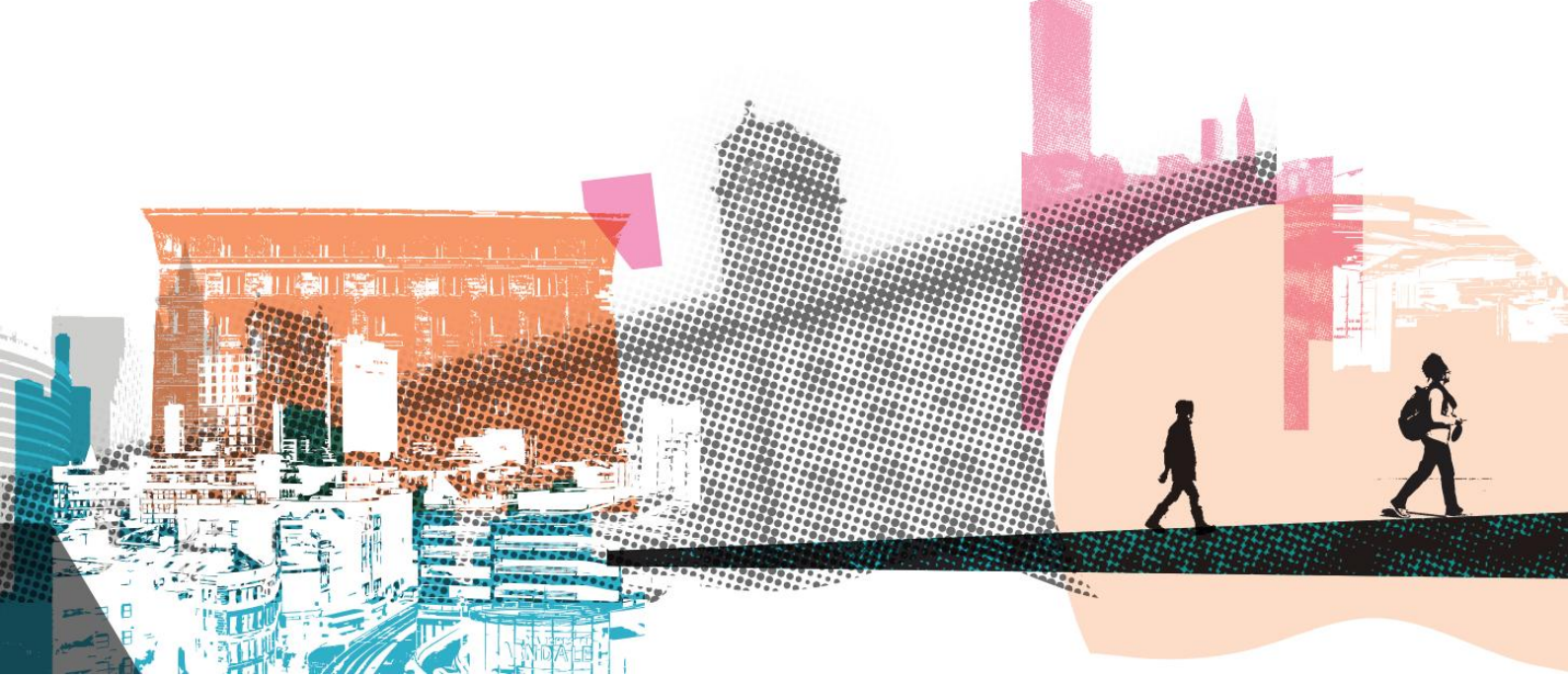
Recruitment pack



Teaching Assistant – Level 3 (Sensory Support – Visual Impairment)

This job changes lives



About The Big Life Group

The Big Life Group's mission is to fight for equity, in health, in wealth and in life. We are a social business delivering a range of services across the North of England, covering everything from mental and physical health, addiction and criminal justice, to housing, education, family support and much more. What links them together is the way we work – The Big Life Way.

We always stand shoulder-to shoulder with people, working with them on the things that matter most to them. Everything we do is designed and informed by the needs, priorities and strengths of people and communities.

Our values

- **Courage**: We stand up for ourselves, and the people and communities we work alongside, even when that makes us unpopular, or challenges accepted wisdom.
- **Creativity**: We find innovative solutions that work, never accepting the easy option or the status quo.
- **Honesty**: We act with integrity, speaking the truth to ourselves and others.
- **Inspiration**: We are inspired by the people and communities we work with and share what we learn from them to inspire others.
- **Thoughtful**: We act with care and compassion and work to understand people's experiences. We take time to listen, reflect and continually learn.
- **Valuing difference**: We recognise and celebrate the unique qualities, gifts, insights and perspectives that different people offer.

Working at Big Life

At Big Life, work is more than a job – it's about standing shoulder-to-shoulder with people and communities, making a difference every day. We fight for equity in health, in wealth and in life, and that commitment starts with how our staff.

Be yourself

We want you to feel safe, respected and able to bring your whole self to work. Difference is celebrated here, and our staff networks - from menopause to neurodiversity, LGBTQI+ and more - create space to connect and support each other.

Benefits that matter

We offer more than a payslip - you'll find wellbeing support through LifeWorks, Simply Health and mindfulness sessions, 25-30 days' annual leave plus your birthday off, flexible working, and regular learning opportunities. Everyday perks include Blue Light Card discounts, savings schemes, cycle-to-work, free eye tests and more - little extras to make life easier inside and outside of work.

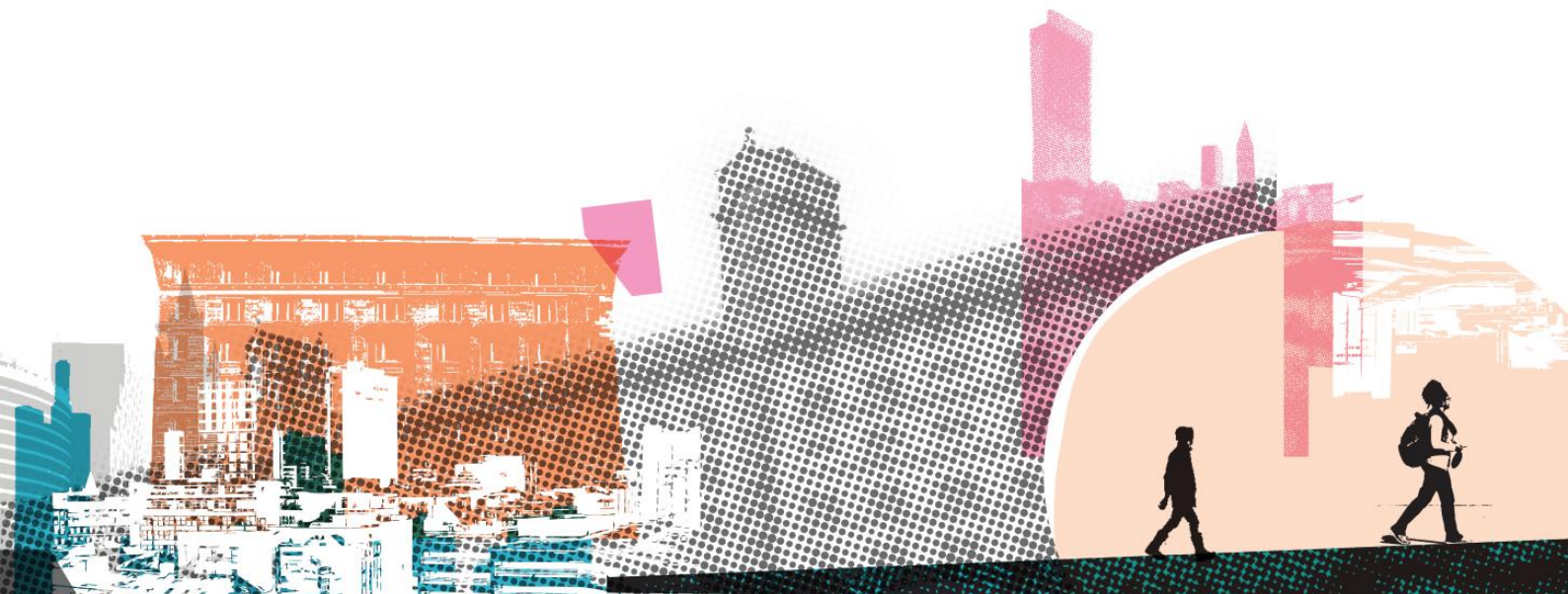
Recognised as outstanding

We're proud to be ranked by Best Companies as one of the UK's outstanding places to work, with a two-star accreditation in 2024.

A culture of trust and flexibility

Our people describe our culture as relaxed and supportive. You'll be trusted to plan your own day, take breaks when you need, and work in a way that fits with your life as well as your role.

If you're looking for more than a job - if you want to be part of a team that's bold, creative and relentlessly committed to equity – then Big Life could be the place for you.



Job Description: Teaching Assistant – Level 3

The basics

Salary
£29,542 - £33,119 per annum (NJC Scale 12–19) pro rata to term-time only

Hours
35 Hours per Week (term time only – 39 weeks per year).
Agile working, with part-time and job share applications considered

Contract
Permanent

Base
Peripatetic role working across Manchester

Line manager
Visual Impairment Service Lead

Closing date: Tuesday, 1 December
Interviews: Tuesday, 15 December

What you'll be doing

As our Teaching Assistant – Level 3, you'll help children and young people with visual impairments access learning, build confidence and develop the skills they need to thrive.

Working as part of the Visual Impairment team within Manchester Sensory Support Service, you'll support children and young people across nurseries, schools, colleges and family homes. You'll work under the guidance of a Qualified Teacher of Visual Impairment (QTVI), with a particular focus on Early Years learners and those with multi-sensory impairments or complex needs.

You'll provide practical support to help learners access education, develop communication skills and become more independent. This could include adapting learning materials, using specialist technology and equipment, delivering individual learning programmes and helping staff and families understand how best to support each child.

You'll work closely with teachers, teaching assistants, families and other professionals to create inclusive learning environments where children and young people can achieve their potential.

Main duties

- To work alongside teachers, families and other professionals to support children and young people with visual impairments across educational and home settings.
- To support the QTVI in assessing learners' needs and delivering specialist programmes, particularly for Early Years learners and those with multi-sensory impairments or complex needs.
- To help staff adapt teaching approaches, learning materials and environments to meet individual needs and support agreed learning plans.
- To use specialist sensory knowledge and skills to support learners and demonstrate effective approaches to teaching assistants and other staff.
- To build positive relationships with children and young people, responding to their individual needs and acting as a positive role model.
- To promote inclusion, independence, communication, decision-making and participation in learning and wider activities.
- To encourage learners to recognise their progress and contribute to setting future learning goals.
- To provide accurate feedback to learners, teachers, teaching assistants and the QTVI on progress, achievements and next steps.
- To deliver individual and group learning activities, including in-class support, pre-teaching and reinforcement of learning.
- To create and adapt accessible learning and assessment materials, including Braille, tactile diagrams and specialist software.
- To work with learners and families in home environments where required, demonstrating approaches that support learning, communication and independence.
- To support learners and staff to use assistive technology, specialist equipment and software effectively.
- To maintain accurate records and contribute to reports and assessments of learners' progress.
- To develop positive working relationships with parents, carers, schools and partner organisations to support children's learning and wellbeing.

Work-related expectations

- Work within Big Life Group’s mission, values and ethos.
- Contribute to the development of Big Life Group and the Sensory Support Service.
- Work in accordance with all Big Life Group policies, particularly safeguarding, health and safety and information governance.
- Commit to personal development and attend required training.

- Work in line with all relevant legislation and professional standards.
- Take part in regular supervision and appraisal.
- Undertake any other duties appropriate to the role.

Person Specification: Teaching Assistant – Level 3

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate that they meet the following points, either in their application, at an interview or through taking part in a test.

Experience

- Working with children or young people in an educational setting, preferably those with visual impairments or other special educational needs.
- Working effectively as part of a team.

Desirable:

- Supporting children or young people with visual impairments or other special educational needs within a family home.
- Supporting educational outcomes within a home environment.
- Working collaboratively with professionals and services across different agencies.

Education and training

- Willingness to undertake relevant training and continuous professional development.

Desirable:

- GCSE Grade 4 or equivalent in English Language and Mathematics.

Knowledge

- Understanding of the Teaching Assistant role and the responsibilities of other professionals working in educational settings.
- Awareness of health and safety requirements.
- Knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures and how to apply these in practice.
- Understanding of the barriers faced by learners with visual impairments and approaches that support their learning and development, or willingness to develop this knowledge.
- Knowledge of Braille, or willingness to learn.
- Understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and the importance of making learning accessible to everyone.

Skills

- Supporting individual learners and groups to achieve positive educational outcomes.
- Using ICT effectively to support learning.
- Willingness to learn and use relevant assistive technology, specialist software and equipment.
- Thinking creatively, using initiative and adapting approaches to solve problems.
- Building positive relationships with children, young people and adults.
- Communicating with tact, diplomacy and professionalism when working with families, colleagues and other professionals.
- Managing tasks independently and completing work within agreed timescales and quality standards.
- Adapting to changing priorities, workloads and service needs.

Personal

- Positive outlook and a can-do attitude.
- Commitment to supporting children and young people to develop confidence, independence and achieve their potential.
- Flexible, self-motivated and able to respond positively to changing circumstances.
- Commitment to Big Life Group's mission and values, including having a non-judgemental and inclusive approach.
- Commitment to ensuring support is accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of learners.
- Commitment to personal development and willingness to regularly update skills and experience.
- Full, valid driving licence and access to transport.
- Willingness to undertake and maintain an Enhanced DBS check.
- Willingness to undertake first aid training as required.



THE BIG LIFE GROUP

We fight for equity –
in health, in wealth and in life.