

## **Recruitment Pack: Trainee Giggle Doctor**

This pack contains the following sections:

- About Theodora Children's Charity (page 1)
- Giggle Doctor Role Description (pages 2-5)
- Giggle Doctor Training Overview and Key Dates 2026 - 2027 (pages 6-8)
- Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) (page 9)
- How to Apply (page 10)

### **About Theodora Children's Charity**

Theodora Children's Charity is a truly inspirational and pioneering charity which successfully works to improve children's experience of being in hospital.

Theodora UK is part of an international family of Theodoras; originally established in Switzerland. There are Theodora Giggle Doctors visiting children in Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Belarus and Hong Kong, as well as in the UK.

Over the past 31 years we have made a positive impact on over half a million children and their families in the UK and 3 million children internationally, improving children's experience of being in hospital through visits from professional performers, called Giggle Doctors.

Our Giggle Doctors increase opportunities for play, reduce distress and anxiety and give children back a sense of control during their medical care. They achieve this through improvised play which puts the child at the centre of the interaction and using music, magic, storytelling, comedy and mime.

## **Giggle Doctor Role Description**

Theodora Children's Charity has partnerships with hospitals across England, and Giggle Doctors are required to travel to a number of hospitals across a region. Whilst we are open to applications nationwide, we are particularly recruiting Trainee Giggle Doctors who are able to work in hospitals in the following regions:

- London and South East
- South West
- East of England

### **Purpose and aims of the role**

Giggle Doctors are the public face of Theodora Children's Charity and deliver our unique service to children in hospitals and occasionally other healthcare settings.

As a Giggle Doctor, you will adopt a playful approach to creating meaningful encounters for our beneficiaries: children and their families, healthcare teams and other staff working in our partner organisations. Drawing on play and performance techniques including magic, music, mime, storytelling, clowning, singing, improvisation, and puppetry, you will create authentic moments of connection which allow children to express themselves.

In each encounter, you will be led by the child, finding ways to give them control of their situation, improve their mood, reduce their anxiety, and increase the opportunities for them to play.

Bringing a professional attitude to your work as a Giggle Doctor, you will adapt to the specific needs expressed by the hospitals and specialist care centres. You will cultivate positive relationships with staff in partner organisations and seek to work collaboratively with them.

You will communicate professionally and proactively with the Giggle Doctor Programme Team when contributing feedback for the Giggle Doctor programmes and activities that you work on. You will also contribute to the development of new programmes and ideas in close collaboration with the Programme Department, and the Fundraising and Communication teams when required.

You will take pride in being a Theodora Children's Charity Giggle Doctor, always representing the Charity's values through your manner, behaviour, and appearance and always aspiring to bring a meaningful encounter to each child with whom you interact.

## Main Tasks

<b>Delivering Giggle Doctor Visits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting and preparing props and equipment</li> <li>• Disinfecting props and equipment in line with Health &amp; Safety Policy</li> <li>• Washing and ironing costume and coat</li> <li>• Following 'hospital visit' protocol including signing in, briefing, agreeing route, and signing out</li> <li>• Visiting children on the wards, usually for 10-15 minutes each during a 4-hour period</li> <li>• Debriefing with Giggle Doctor colleagues and hospital teams</li> <li>• Keeping record of number of children seen</li> <li>• Transmitting relevant information to the Giggle Doctor Programme Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Ongoing training and admin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artistic training and rehearsing for a range of activities (magic tricks, playing an instrument/singing, gifting origami, stickers, etc.)</li> <li>• Other training as required to enable safe working in the hospital (safeguarding, infection control)</li> <li>• Liaising with Giggle Doctor Programme Team regarding availability and schedules of work</li> <li>• Coordinating with other Giggle Doctors for the preparation of visits</li> <li>• Preparing and submitting monthly data, timesheet and expenses</li> <li>• Occasional other administrative meetings as required, including completing hospital Occupational Health checks and mandatory training etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Actively contribute to the Theodora Children's Charity's Programme and Quality Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the compliance of policies and processes (including Giggle Doctor Code of Conduct, Safeguarding, Health &amp; Safety, Risk Assessment)</li> <li>• Identifying risks in the Giggle Doctor programme and supporting with corrective measures</li> </ul>

Other tasks not listed in this document, and which remain in the spirit of the role, may be added. Minor changes may be made from time to time according to the needs of the organisation.

## Person Specification

We are looking for candidates who demonstrate the values of Theodora Children's Charity and pursue the aims of the Charity (as seen in The Theodora Children's Charity Essentials and the Vision).

<b>Artistic Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Semi-professional or professional performing artist</li><li>• Artistic techniques: comedian, actor, mime, magician, musician, singer, dancer, puppeteer, juggler, storyteller, or other art forms from the living arts</li><li>• Improvisational skills</li><li>• Practicing different kinds of humour, sustaining a character, art of clowning or potential for this</li><li>• Sense of imagination</li><li>• Ability to play solo and with partners</li><li>• Adapting your technique to a context</li><li>• Know-how to manage and control your time and energy</li></ul>
<b>Emotional and Human Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To show commitment to Theodora's values and mission</li><li>• Team player</li><li>• Capacity to learn, commitment to improve</li><li>• Listening, empathy, resilience, and ability to connect at once</li><li>• Methodical and organised</li><li>• Emotional balance and self-awareness</li></ul>
<b>Practical and Technical Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professionalism: effective and respectful communication, discretion (sense of confidentiality), punctuality, proactivity, flexibility, availability</li><li>• Ability to work in compliance with rules and regulations (healthcare regulations)</li><li>• Good time management</li><li>• Use of standard MS office software and administrative skills</li><li>• Knowledge of child development and pathologies, care environments, hospital hygiene is a plus</li><li>• Flexibility for travel</li><li>• Language skills would be a plus</li></ul>

## Fees

<b>Trainee Giggle Doctors</b>	£12.21 per hour for all in-costume and out-of-costume work including attending training
<b>Junior Giggle Doctors</b>	In Costume Rate : £32.50 per hour
<b>Senior Giggle Doctors</b>	In Costume Rate : £40.00 per hour

Theodora Children's Charity covers the cost of all travel to and from hospitals, Giggle Doctor costumes and Giggle Doctor props in line with the Giggle Doctor Expense Policy.

On top of earnings, Trainee, Junior and Senior Giggle Doctors accrue holiday pay and are invited to join the charity's pension scheme.



## Giggle Doctor Training Overview and Key Dates 2026 - 2027

The Trainee Giggle Doctor Contract is a 1-year workers contract in place from February 2026 - February 2027. During this period, you will be required to complete a Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Giggle Doctoring with the Accademia Teatro Dimitri. The training includes:

- Compulsory attendance at 4 modules; 2 local modules and 2 international modules (page 7)
- Completing a *minimum* of 12 Hospital Visits as a Trainee Giggle Doctor between March 2026 and February 2027 (page 8)
- Personal study and tutoring time for your CAS thesis (page 9)

On completion of the Trainee Giggle Doctor Contract, the Charity may offer you a Giggle Doctor contract. This contract is in two parts: Junior Giggle Doctor and Senior Giggle Doctor. A further 24 (minimum) hospital visits are required during the 'Junior' Giggle Doctor phase. After a minimum of 24 visits and a minimum of 3 successful observed visits, Junior Giggle Doctors graduate to become 'Senior' Giggle Doctors, at which point their initial training is considered complete.

**Want a visual overview of the training process? [Click here!](#)**

(Opens in a new tab)



### Training Modules and Dates

It is compulsory for all Trainee Giggle Doctors to attend all dates of the 4 training modules below. Failure to attend may result in termination of the Trainee Giggle Doctor contract as these modules are not repeated regularly, and all modules must be completed for you to graduate. The Charity will:

- Cover travel expenses and provide meals for the UK modules.
- Book and pay for flights and accommodation, and provide meals, for all international modules.
- Cover all tuition fees for the CAS.

## Module 1

**Dates:**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026 (4 days)

**Location:**

London, UK

**Draft Topics:**

- Introducing the Giggle Doctor UK Programme, expectations for Giggle Doctor Training and CAS
- Practical artist workshops
- Introducing the hospital environment

## Module 2

**Dates:**

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2026 (12 days + travel)

**Location:**

Accademia Teatro Dimitri, Verscio, Switzerland

**Draft Topics:**

Artistic immersion: adapting techniques from the art of clowning for the healthcare environment, developing improvisation skills to create authentic, spontaneous interactions with children in hospital and with a partner

## Module 3

**Dates:**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September to Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2026 (5 days)

**Location:**

London, UK

**Draft Topics:**

- Improvised play and clowning in character
- Playing within NHS hospitals
- The hospital environment in collaboration with healthcare staff

## Module 4

**Dates:**

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February to Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2027 (3 days + travel)

**Location:**

Switzerland, TBC

**Draft Topics:**

- Creative presentation of personal report
- Graduation ceremony

## Hospital Visits - Overview

The Hospital Visits will give the Trainee Giggle Doctors the opportunity to put their training into practice. Trainee Giggle Doctors will work alongside a Senior Giggle Doctor, visiting children in all paediatric wards including Oncology, HDU, Surgery and A&E.

Trainee Giggle Doctors will complete a minimum of 12 Hospital Visits and will be observed at least 3 times by an Artistic Coordinator\* during this time, to monitor progress and areas for development. After 3 observations, the Artistic Coordinator will determine whether more Hospital Visits are needed before the Trainee Giggle Doctor can be offered a Giggle Doctor contract and start working as a Junior Giggle Doctor.

*\*Artistic Coordinators are experienced Giggle Doctors that lead on the artistry, training, and development of Giggle Doctors in the UK. They work closely with the Theodora Academy in Switzerland and the Giggle Doctor Programme Manager in the UK to manage the quality of our Giggle Doctor visits and to support the Giggle Doctors.*



## Hospital Visits - Structure

Hospital Visits can take place on all weekdays and will be planned to fit into the Trainee Giggle Doctors availability and in line with our agreements with hospital partners. Hospital Visits are 5 hours long on the day, plus 30 minutes after the visit to wash and iron the Giggle Doctor coat and costume:

- 30 minutes to change into costume
- 4 hours visiting children in costume
- 30 minutes to change out of costume
- 30 minutes to wash and iron your coat at home after the visit

Most hospital visits start at 12:00 or 12:30.

## Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS): what's involved?

This is an exciting time to train to become a Giggle Doctor with Theodora. All Trainee Giggle Doctors will study for a CAS in Giggle Doctoring during their training. The CAS will be delivered by Accademia Teatro Dimitri in a hybrid model of in-person teaching in Verscio, Switzerland, UK-based training, virtual tutoring and studying in the UK.

The CAS is an accredited 'advanced studies programme,' and is part of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Credits are internationally recognised and can be transferred between academic institutions. You will be offered up to 16 hours of individual tutoring time. Some of this will take place during Module 2 in Verscio and some will be scheduled virtually on dates agreed by you and the tutor. Your final virtual tutoring time will be scheduled for October 2026.



Your personal report will build and reflect on your experiences of training modules and hospital visits, and we expect all parts of studying, researching, and writing your personal report to take up to 80 hours (or 10 days.) There is no pay for the personal study and tutoring time, and writing of your personal report. Completing and passing the CAS is an essential part of Giggle Doctor Training. If the CAS isn't completed, the Charity may discontinue your training and may be unable to offer you a Giggle Doctor contract.

## How to Apply

You can apply by downloading and completing the following forms and returning them by email or post:

- Application Form
- Essential Information Form
- Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Please ensure that your letter of motivation demonstrates how your experience, skills, and abilities (both artistic and non-artistic) meet the criteria in the role description.

Completed applications should be sent by email to [giggleadmin@theodora.org](mailto:giggleadmin@theodora.org) by 12.00pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025, or posted to:

Isabel Squires  
Theodora Children's Charity  
Office 872, Salisbury House, 29 Finsbury Circus, London  
EC2M 5SQ

Applicants shortlisted for the first phase of recruitment will be invited to an audition workshop on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November or Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December. Following the workshop, some candidates will be invited to interview on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> or Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December. You must be available for these dates.

Applicants invited to the second phase of recruitment will accompany a Senior Giggle Doctor on 2 trial hospital visits in January/February 2026. Following these 2 trial visits, candidates will be notified on whether they will be offered a Trainee Giggle Doctor contract.

