

Home
START

Support and friendship
for families

in
North West Kent

Annual Review



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Registered Charity No. 1148298

Company No. 8112993



BOARD OF TRUSTEES / COMPANY DIRECTORS

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Jayne Gillam
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Safeguarding Lead

Retired Head Teacher & home visiting volunteer
Home visiting volunteer
Health Visitor
Family Liaison Officer
Retired Teacher
Service User
Health Visitor
Virtual Schools Kent
Accountant

REGISTERED AUDITOR:

Portlock & Co. Chartered Accountants
12 Upper Street North New Ash Green DA3 8JR

BANKERS: CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue
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STAFF TEAM



Debbie Bowler 37hrs
Scheme Manager



Rosie Neale 24hrs
Dartford Co-ordinator



Sharon Thomas 24hrs
Gravesham Co-ordinator



Paula Foley 20hrs
Administrator

Home-Start is a charity that offers support, friendship and practical help to parents with young children, in local communities throughout the UK and with British Forces in Germany & Cyprus

Home-Start offers a unique service, recruiting and training volunteers who are parents themselves – to visit families with at least one child under five at home to offer informal, friendly and confidential support

To help give children the best possible start in life, we support parents as they grow in confidence, strengthen and enjoy relationships with their children plus widen links with the local community



AIMS

Home-Start aims to increase the confidence and independence of the family by

- offering support, friendship and practical assistance
- visiting families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each adult and child can be respected and protected
- reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and encouraging them to enjoy family life
- developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and understanding can be developed, using a flexible approach to take account of different needs
- encouraging parents' strengths and emotional well-being, for the ultimate benefit of the children
- encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available within the community

WHO CAN BE REFERRED?

Any family with at least one child 0-5 years, experiencing stress for a variety of reasons such as:

- Loneliness
- New to the Area
- Isolation
- Child with Special Need
- Depression
- Post Natal Depression
- Self-esteem Issues
- Relationship Difficulties
- Multiple Birth/Children under 5
- Bereavement within the Family
- Lack of Extended Family
- Language Barrier
- Domestic Abuse
- Ill Health - emotional or physical
- Very Young Parents
- Lone Parent
- Child's Behavioural Problems
- A Need for Parenting Guidance
- Role Change Adjustment



HOW ARE REFERRALS MADE?

Referrals are accepted from any agency, with parents' permission, via telephone, email or post (form downloadable from website or can be emailed from office)

---- We also accept self-referrals ----

Information required includes all family names/dates of birth/gender/ethnicity/G.P./H.V./C.A.F./C.I.N./C.P./Immigration Status/Disability and H&S issues
Plus tick boxes re LONE PARENT, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, DOMESTIC ABUSE, MENTAL HEALTH, LEARNING DISABILITY, POST NATAL DEPRESSION, TEENAGE PREGNANCY and INTERPRETER REQUIRED
Each new referral is followed up by an assessment home visit by a Co-ordinator

PLEASE NOTE : Referrals where child/ren are subject to a Child Protection Plan will be considered on an individual basis

Examples of Families in need of Home-Start Support

Amanda was a first time mum whose husband worked long hours. She often felt lonely and anxious

Jane's family lived far away and as she struggled with post natal depression she missed having someone to talk to on a regular basis

Tony had been left on his own with three under fives

Ritu had 3 children – her husband worked long hours and with one child with a learning difficulty and another with health problems she appreciated extra help, especially as English wasn't her first language

Mother to three pre-school children Jo was experiencing problems in her relationship with her partner and felt low and tearful

Sarah had two older children and following the premature birth of her third baby she found it difficult to get into a routine

Linda was new to the area and with one child and another baby on the way felt isolated

Sue felt overwhelmed with a three year old and the arrival of twins

We are delighted when parents who received our support apply to become HOME-START volunteers themselves later on which happens more and more frequently

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

DATE	TIME	SUBJECT
5 th October	10.00-11.30	INTRODUCTIONS & HOME-START DVD
	12.30 -2.00	LISTENING SKILLS & CONFIDENTIALITY
12 th October	10.00-11.30	THE HEALTH VISITOR ROLE
	12.30-2.00	CHILDRENS CENTRES
19 th October	10.00-11.30	PARENT/CHILD ATTACHMENT (theory)
	12.30-2.00	PARENT/CHILD ATTACHMENT (practical)
HALF TERM BREAK		
2 nd November	10.00-11.30	VALUES & ATTITUDES
	12.30-2.00	ADDICTION
9 th November	10.00-11.30	DOMESTIC ABUSE (Choices)
	12.30-2.00	DOMESTIC ABUSE (National Centre)
16 th November	10.00-11.30	MEDIATION
	12.30-2.00	CULTURE SHARING
23 rd November	10.00-12.00	MENTAL HEALTH (Mind)
	1.00-2.00	DEPRESSION (a personal perspective)
30 th November	10.00-11.30	SPECIAL NEEDS (professional perspective)
	12.30-2.00	SPECIAL NEEDS (personal perspective)
7 th December	10.00-12.00	CHILD PROTECTION
	1.00-2.00	POLICIES OVERVIEW/SIGNING
14 th December – in Monroes Carvery	10.00-12.00	ENDINGS / PAPERWORK / EVALUATION
	12.00-2.00	CHRISTMAS LUNCH with established volunteers

All Home-Start volunteers are interviewed individually by staff, provide references, are CRB checked and attend above 40-hour preparation course

Following this, they are carefully matched with a local family, to home visit weekly for a couple of hours, with regular supervision, support meetings and training sessions provided throughout the year

**THE ABOVE COURSE BEGINS EACH YEAR
MAY & OCTOBER**

VOLUNTEER VIEWS

*"Being a volunteer for Home-Start has been fantastic.
I joined the training course and learnt a lot and also made some new friends.
I have been with my second family for nearly a year now, because of the level of support they need. I just love to see the children's faces light up when I walk through the door and when mum says it's about time I had a friend like you.
We have laughed together - and cried together
but most of all they feel supported and know there is somebody who cares.
As a volunteer that somebody is you and that's what makes it worth it.
With the continued support you receive from staff - plus the training,
nothing is hard to overcome or get through -
and I personally have learnt a lot being part of these families lives. "*

"I feel appreciated by Home-Start"

"Such a privilege to be involved"

*"The relationship with other volunteers is excellent.
There is such a multicultural mix - all learning from each other.
I have made some good friends."*

"I am enjoying visiting young families and feel that I have learnt a lot about a wide range of difficulties they sometimes face. I continue to be grateful for the support of my family in the years when I was bringing up my own children."

"As a family, I felt it gave me hope - for a future where I could be happy and confident and a good enough mum. As a volunteer, it gives me a chance to help others - to give back what I received - to grow as a person, train, realise my potential, relate to others. Also, a sense of belonging."

*"It is a nice feeling when the door opens and the family are so pleased to see me.
Knowing that just a few hours a week makes such a difference to someone makes being a befriender so worthwhile."*

*"Home-Start involvement has given me the opportunity to meet people with different knowledge and backgrounds, both while training and at social events.
I look forward to visiting my family, talking to mum and playing with the children.
I feel a sense of satisfaction knowing my visit is appreciated."*

"It helps me to put my personal skills and study experience to practice"

*"It's very rewarding to know that in a small way I have helped families through some difficult periods in coping with their children's upbringing.
I have made some very good friends amongst the parents I have visited and feel I have gained a deeper understanding of the complications of modern family life"*

"I feel rewarded as I witness parents' confidence grow. I receive back as much as I give."

"I feel like an 'honorary Grandma' to the twins in the family I currently visit"

"I've encouraged, praised, hugged, listened, passed on recipes given to me by my own mother, played with numerous children and cuddled all those beautiful babies!"

"We would like to thank the Home-Start team for their flexibility and partnership work. We at Riverside Children's Centre have found that any referrals made to them have been dealt with promptly and professionally, resulting in great faith in the service. We have seen positive outcomes for families supported."

"I have always found that Home-Start staff respond quickly to referrals and parents who take up their service have been pleased with input received."

Health Visitor

REFERRER REPORTS

"I feel confident suggesting Home-Start to clients, knowing volunteers are trained and matched carefully. Many find the service to be a lifeline"

KCC Early Help Worker

"The feedback we get from parents about Home-Start is consistently excellent. Well managed and delivered. A very valuable service!"

**BEAMS
Special Needs Provision**

"From a Health Visitor perspective, I have found the service offered by Home-Start to be an invaluable source of help & support. Whatever the issue, they usually have a volunteer to match the need. I have referred clients who are lonely, isolated, depressed, new to the area or country or just in general need of support. The feedback I have has been very positive, with parents have appreciated the support offered"

CREENTIALS

- CREDIBLE** = trustworthy
- CONVENIENT** = suitable, easy to use
- CREATIVE** = able to adapt to circumstance
- CONSTRUCTIVE** = serving to improve, positive
- CEMENTING** = uniting
- COMMUNITY BASED** = accessible, where help is needed
- CHARITY** = the giving of help to those in need

providing

- COST EFFECTIVE** = via trained **VOLUNTEERS**
*(who, if paid £7 per hour,
would each cost £1,400 per year)* and

- CONTINUITY** = building relationships & exploring

- CULTURAL CARE** during volunteer training – inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which constitutes shared bases of social action

plus

- COOKING** skills shared by for various events – to the benefit of everyone!





VOLUNTEERS

CORE to our scheme

COME FORWARD

(to offer one's service) providing :

- CONSTANT** (unchanging, resolute, loyal)
- COMMITMENT** (the act of committing or pledging)
- COMPREHENSION** (the act or capacity of understanding)
- COMMUNION** (an exchange of thoughts, emotions etc.)
- CONSIDERATION** (thought towards other people)
- CHOICES** (alternative action or possibility)
- COACHING** (in parenting and life skills)
- CONFIDING** (trusting)
- CONFIDENTIALITY** and
- COMPASSION**

and in return, we offer them...

- COURSES** of preparation
- COMPREHENSIVE** ongoing training
- CULTURAL AWARENESS** (in groups)
- CAREFUL** matching to **COMPATIBLE** families
- CAMARADERIE** through trust
- COFFEE MORNINGS** & social gatherings
- COUNSELLING** (consultation,
to think or talk over with)
- CULTIVATION** (to improve and develop)
- CAREER** options
- CERTIFICATES & CONGRATULATIONS!**



COACHES transport families for a special day out each summer



and

CHRISTMAS is made special for families by providing parties and pantomime trips



NOTE : www.facebook.com/homestartuk includes much information regarding national activities

GROUP WORK

Our scheme offers families group support
Thursdays 12.30-2.30pm 50 weeks of the year

*[a small group where parents and children build confidence
and social networks, strengthen emotional bonds,
learn through play and prepare for early education -
sometimes while awaiting volunteer support]*

plus various 'Focus Groups' :

'LITTLE BUDDIES' SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT GROUP
first Tuesday each month 12.30am-2.30pm

MULTIPLE BIRTH 'TWICE THE FUN'
third Tuesday each month 12.30am-2.30pm

POST NATAL DEPRESSION SUPPORT 'Grow With Confidence'
the second and fourth Thursday each month 10.30am - 12.00pm

EACH HELD IN
TEMPLE HILL CHILDREN'S CENTRE
ST EDMUNDS ROAD DA1 5JX



FEEDBACK FROM FAMILIES

[each family is asked for comment following a period of Home-Start support]

"I felt in control, for the first time in a long while"

"I was made very welcome at the group – and fitted in – even as the only man"

*"How nice it is to look forward to Monday morning and seeing a warm friendly face.
I have cried, moaned, laughed, worried and been through all manner of emotions
with my volunteer - yet every week she is there again with a comforting smile"*

*"It worked out just right for me and my family.
Home-Start is run by people who have the time of day to be there for you,
through good and bad times"*

*"I found it much easier to talk to a volunteer,
rather than a healthcare professional or family member"*

"If it wasn't for Home-Start, I don't think I would have coped"

"Thank you for getting me motivated!"

**"Home-Start matched me up to a volunteer perfectly.
We have been through very similar experiences and have a lot in common.
Having someone who understands makes a huge difference"**

*"My volunteer is a breath of fresh air once a week.
She has stopped me feeling alone in the world"*

*"My Health Visitor highly recommended Home-Start – but I was reluctant to
accept help from strangers. I have a very close network of family and friends,
so could see no benefit from having a volunteer. I was proved totally wrong.
My volunteer is my confidante, willing to listen with an unbiased view"*

"I am no longer a prisoner in my home, or feel tied down by my children.

I am finally the energised, motivated, fun loving, confident person I used to be –

thanks to the regular commitment of my volunteer.

Together we lifted the black cloud above me and my boys –and for this I am truly thankful"

***"It's hard enough having children,
but when you have no support it's even harder – and you get very lonely.
I would recommend Home-Start to anyone"***

*"Being in the throws of a long process of diagnosis was very stressful, causing sleepless nights.
Finding someone able to build a bond with my son is extremely difficult as,
like most autistic children, he can be unpredictable.
Thank you for supporting us whilst we learnt a whole new parenting technique"*

'Every Child Matters' Partnership Working

Home-Start service delivery is very much in line with Government thinking regarding the importance of families, volunteering and the community. The following outcomes are those seen as key to wellbeing in childhood and later life :

BEING HEALTHY

We encourage families to live healthily, take exercise and eat well - through volunteer support and role modelling.

Volunteers can encourage families to buy fresh fruit and vegetables and plan/demonstrate simple home cooked recipes.

Also to exercise, by accompanying to the park or swimming trips.

They also encourage and enable families to attend GP, dentist, hospital and clinic appointments

STAYING SAFE

We endeavour to enable families to bring their children up in a safe environment - free from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING

We emphasise the importance of play and its role in early years development - plus the importance of positive parenting

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION We encourage and help develop self confidence, which helps families deal successfully with significant life changes and challenges.

Some parents, having received support, move on to support others by becoming a Home-Start volunteer themselves

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING

Families are encouraged to improve their circumstance and overcome any disadvantage.

Parents often return to education or employment, having increased confidence

“Home-Start North West Kent is an excellent organisation that sets itself high standards. It sees itself as being an integral part of the local community rather than separate from it, which is undoubtedly one of its’ key strengths”

MP Gareth Johnson

“As a mother and grandmother I know only too well that parents need support. Someone who knows what being a parent is like. Home-Start North West Kent is well respected for helping families struggling to cope with a range of issues including isolation, mental health difficulties and housing issues”

Portfolio Holder for Children Councillor Ann Allen MBE

“Home-Start North West Kent demonstrates high levels of competence in supporting families from all backgrounds, delivering that support with compassion, empathy and, most importantly, heart”

Independent Evaluator Steve Allman

Helping parents to

Overcome issues and

Maintain relationships, ensuring they

Enjoy family life



Sharing problems with volunteers

Talking and exploring options

Achieving effective outcomes, resulting in

Rebuilt confidence, in order

To have a positive parenting experience

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

HOME-START HAS A SYSTEM TO TRACK THE
'HOME-START JOURNEY'
OF EACH FAMILY AND PROVE
OUTCOMES

“ It has always been important to demonstrate the outcomes and impact of our service and highlight to families and volunteers the progress they make during a period of Home-Start support. This system helps us demonstrate our efficiency and impact to external agencies more effectively “

A single, consistent, electronic way of measuring our work with families

A flexible system – designed to develop over time

Tying in with ‘Hardiker Scales’ and mirroring local authority results based accountability and tiers for analysing services

Enabling Home-Start UK to access instant data regionally and nationally identifying trends and providing evidence

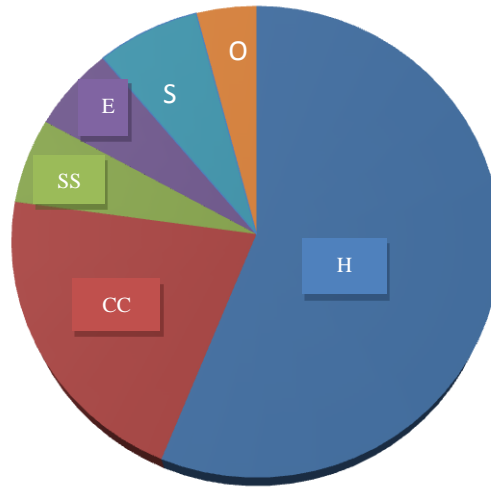
**To measure how well families are coping (scoring 0-5) with needs identified (by them) at referral stage:
parental mental or physical health, isolation, parenting skills or *child/ren’s physical or mental health, behaviour/development*
and *use of community resources*
at initial, review and final visits**

Structured volunteer diaries are used as safeguarding tools and, together with staff reviews, help track each family’s progress

DURING A 12 MONTH PERIOD

Sources of 170 Families Referred

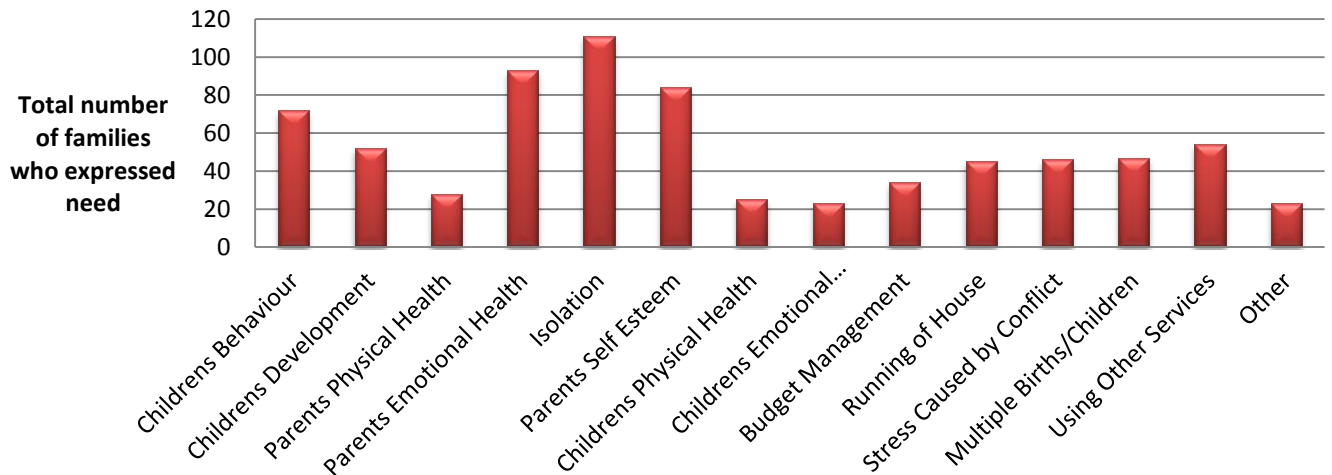
H = Health (56%)
CC = Early Help (21%)
SS = Social Services (6%)
E = Education (6%)
S = Self (7%)
O = Other (4%)



'Health'
 includes
 Health Visitors
 Mental Health
 Teams
 & Midwives

'Other'
 includes
 Choices
 Connexions
 Waterside
 & Portage

Reason for Referral



30 new volunteers are recruited & trained

33% of all families and volunteers are from minority ethnic communities, with up to 20 languages spoken in addition to English:
 Cantonese ; Dutch ; French ; German ; Greek ; Gujarati ; Hindi ; Japanese ; Latvian ; Mandarin ; Mauritian ; Makaton ; Marathi ; Polish ; Punjabi ; Romanian Russian ; Spanish ; Urlobo ; Yoruba & Signing

Partners & Supporters included

Big Lottery Kent County Council Gingerbread
 Dartford & Gravesham Childrens Centres Baby Blessings
 Gravesham City Praise Waterside Family Centre



Support and friendship
for families

IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

Do you possess the following?

- ✓ Parenting experience
- ✓ Spare time
- ✓ A listening ear
- ✓ Enthusiasm
- ✓ A desire to make a difference

Could you offer regular support,
friendship and encouragement for 2-3 hours per week
to a family with pre-school children
in their own home?

YES?

then you could be just the person we are looking for

We offer **FREE 40 HOUR TRAINING**
beginning May and October each year

Make contact now to find out more
and/or register interest:

Telephone 01322 225 100

Email homestartnwkent@btconnect.com