

What happens after referral?

- Each referral and the resources available will be considered by the Organiser.
- An Organiser will visit the family to clarify their needs and the support that Home-Start could offer. This visit will normally be made within two weeks of the referral being received.
- The family will be offered support either by being matched with a volunteer or from our Family Support Worker. If we are working at capacity or there is no suitable time slots or volunteers available a family may need to wait for a suitable volunteer to become available.
- The scheme will write to the referrer to indicate what support the scheme can offer. If support is not available, the scheme will inform the referrer. If the family is placed on a waiting list, we will let the referrer know and inform them once a match takes place. If a family has been waiting for a match for more than two months, we will look at each family's situation to assess the current situation, in consultation with the referrer. Families will not normally be kept on the waiting list for more than three months.
- Referrers will be informed in writing when the scheme ceases to support a family.

Confidentiality

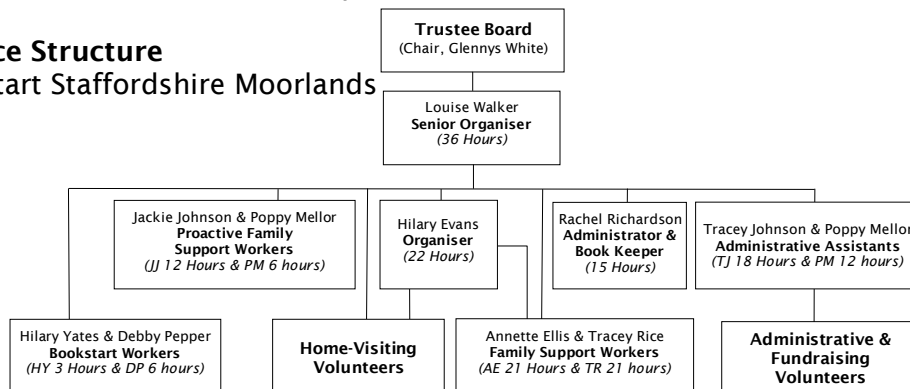
All information about parents and families is treated as confidential, to be discussed only as necessary with the Organiser in support of the volunteer and to assist the family. Any disclosure of the confidential information to another person for the purpose of assisting the family is only undertaken with the expressed permission of the parent(s), except to protect the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, or in very limited and extremely rare circumstances where a person is suspected of a disclosable offence or terrorism, where information shall be shared with the appropriate authority.

Home-Start Staffordshire Moorlands

If you would like further information about the scheme, please get in touch with Louise Walker or Hilary Evans on 01538 387231 ...

Resource Structure

Home-Start Staffordshire Moorlands



Home-Start Staffordshire Moorlands,
School Yard, Earl Street, Leek, Staffs, ST13 6JT
T 01538 387231
F 01538 387231
E Info@homestartsm.org.uk
W www.homestartsm.org.uk

Office hours:
Monday to Thursdays 9.30 am to 2.30 pm
Fridays CLOSED

Home START

Support and friendship
for families

Home-Start
Staffordshire Moorlands

Information for Referrers

“Home-Start has made me feel worthwhile and given me a lot more confidence ... they are an extension of my family, especially for my children.”
(a mum from Leek)

What is Home-Start?

Home-Start Staffordshire Moorlands is a charity that offers support, friendship and practical help to parents with young children in the Staffordshire Moorlands' District.

Home-Start offers a unique service. We recruit and train volunteers - who are usually parents themselves - to visit families at home who have at least one child under 5 and offer them informal, friendly and confidential support.

Home-Start is part of a network of schemes across the country and the Moorlands scheme has been operational since 1998.

Updated October 2017



Home-Start Approach

Home-Start schemes work towards the increased 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 individual can be respected and protected;
- reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and encouraging enjoyment in family life;
- developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and understanding can be developed; the approach is flexible to take account of different needs;
- encouraging the parents' strengths and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their own children;
- encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available within the community.

Home visiting is essential to the Home-Start approach, which relies on a realistic, flexible response and a caring attitude. Volunteers build on the strengths of the family, sharing time and friendship. They offer families an opportunity to develop new relationships, ideas and skills. On referral, families will be offered support either by our Family Support Worker (Annette Ellis) or will be matched with a volunteer. Sometimes we will offer short term support from our FSW before matching with a volunteer. Families are offered support for as long as is appropriate and may choose to accept or opt out of the relationship at any time. Home-Start is not normally a crisis intervention service, although we may be able to respond to a crisis in the family, once the relationship is established.

Home-Start welcomes and values difference. A commitment to equal opportunities is at the heart of our work. Home-Start is committed to offering a service to families, regardless of religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or ethnic background. We will take action on any reports of practice which we believe to be unfair or discriminatory.

Who are Home-Start Volunteers?

Volunteers are normally parents themselves, who offer their time freely. After an initial course of preparation and with support and on-going training, they bring personal experience, skills and knowledge of the resources within their local area. Volunteers are there to support parents and their child(ren) in ways that the family finds most useful, which may be different from, but complimentary to, professional approaches or priorities. Visiting will continue for as long as the family feels it appropriate, which could be a few months, or even a year or more. Volunteers usually visit for 2-3 hours, once a week, though occasionally a volunteer may visit twice a week for a

shorter period of time. References are sought for all volunteers and they are all DBS cleared. All volunteer work is supervised by paid Organisers.

What can Home-Start offer?

Home-Start may offer: ~

- precious time for listening and talking;
- help with the children;
- a break for parents;
- practical help and reassurance;
- an opportunity to meet other parents;
- support to use local services and resources.

Home-Start volunteers and staff are not 'home helps', nor do they provide a free baby-sitting service, although practical help may often be part of a visit.

What else does Home-Start offer?

- A Clothes Store of clothes for children under 5. See our website to download a referral form for the Clothes Store.
- BookStart Corner— Home-Start can offer a series of 4 home visits to share free BookStart resources for families in need (targeted primarily in areas of deprivation) for children aged between 12-24 months.

Referrals

Families may only be referred to Home-Start with their consent. The main referrers tend to be Health Visitors and Social Workers, but self-referrals and referrals from any other source are welcomed and are dealt with in strictest confidence. Families choose to accept Home-Start support.

Any family with at least one child under five years' of age may be referred to Home-Start for support if they are suffering stress or experiencing difficulties who live within the Staffordshire Moorlands District.

How to refer?

- Talk to the family about Home-Start and how they could help.
- Ask the family's permission to contact Home-Start / make a referral.
- Check whether the family live in the Staffordshire Moorlands' District.
- Complete a Home-Start 'Referral Form' (forms are available from the office or via our website at www.homestartsm.org.uk if your agency does not keep a stock). Signed consent is required.
- Please ensure all parts of the form are completed. Collection of information about religion and sexuality are a requirement of our Big Lottery funding, so please explain this to the family.