



REFERRERS GUIDE



Home-Start Dover District is a local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helping families with young children through challenging times.

To make a referral to Home-Start Dover District please read the following guide and contact us should you wish to discuss the referral beforehand:

- Families must live in the Dover District and have at least one child aged 5 and under.
- Referrals are usually made through organisations such as Health Visiting, Early Help, Doctors and nurseries but parents can refer themselves to our service – if they are referred by another organisation they must agree to the referral.
- Our Service is a preventative service, supporting families before statutory intervention. Our home-visiting service is not available to families who are involved with social care under Child in Need (unless under the Children's Disability Team) or Child Protection. If a family we are supporting escalate to Child in Need or Child Protection we reserve the right to withdraw and this would be our normal process, however we would consider each case individually.
- Referrals will only be accepted if the referral form is fully completed and we do not require any further details from you. If we need to contact you this will delay the process.
- Referrers must select the service they wish to refer to (please see the services section in this guide) and identify the outcomes you wish Home-Start to achieve.

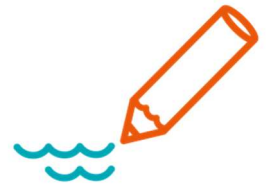


**Because
childhood
can't wait**





OUR SERVICES



Home Visiting Volunteer

- We offer 1-2-1 befriending and mentoring volunteers to families with at least one child aged 5 and under.
- Volunteers are matched with a family and offer weekly support for 2-3 hours per week for a period of up to 6 months.
- They work alongside parents, in their homes, and help them cope with the stresses and strains of life and make sure they have the skills, confidence and strength they need to nurture their children.
- Volunteers offer a listening ear, emotional support, modelling, encouragement and signposting.
- Our volunteers work best in families where there is a capacity for positive change.
- We do not accept referrals for this project for families that are subject to a CIN or CP plan.
- Support is managed by a paid Family Coordinator and a risk assessment will be carried out at an initial visit to identify the suitability for a home-visiting volunteer.

Family Support Group

- We offer two Family Support Groups, one in Deal and one in Dover.
- Family Support Groups are referral only, although families can self-refer.
- Groups run weekly, term time only however we do run through the summer holidays.
- The Family Support Groups run from 9.30am until 11.30am.
- The Family Support Groups are run by paid Family Coordinators and volunteers.
- The Family Support Groups offer emotional support, modelling play, positive parenting and encourages building networks.
- Improving children's speech and language is encouraged at the groups.
- We do not accept referrals for the Family Support Groups for families that are subject to a CIN or CP plan.
- Occasionally, appropriate speakers are sourced, such as energy saving and budgeting support.
- Trips and social events are sometimes arranged.

Family Practitioner

- This project offers more targeted support to families with at least one child aged 5 and under through a paid Family Practitioner.
- Family Practitioners are matched with a family and offer weekly support for 2-3 hours per week for a period of up to 6 months.
- Support is offered to families to help with coping strategies around children's behaviour
- Support will be offered to help children manage their feelings and emotions.
- Family Practitioners will help support parents mental health and how to manage the home on a daily basis.
- We do not accept referrals for this project for families that are subject to a CIN or CP plan.
- Support is managed by a paid Family Coordinator and a risk assessment will be carried out at an initial visit to identify the suitability for a home-visiting volunteer.

Babble Chatter Talking Matters

- This project offers support to families with at least one child aged 5 and under through a paid Family Practitioner.
- The Family Practitioner will offer Speech and Language support for 1 hour per week for up to six weeks.
- Speech and language support through play and fun activities will be delivered alongside the parent.
- The Family Practitioner will offer this bespoke programme using sounds, gestures, visual games, Makaton, Signing and more.
- A bespoke goodie bag with lots of resources will be used to encourage communication.
- We do not accept referrals for this project for families that are subject to a CIN or CP plan.
- Support is managed by a paid Family Coordinator and a risk assessment will be carried out at an initial visit to identify the suitability for a home-visiting volunteer.



THE REFERRAL PROCESS



REFERRAL RECEIVED

Our administrator will check all the necessary details are filled in. Referrals will only be accepted if the referral form is fully completed. If additional information is required we will contact the referrer. If the referral is not appropriate we will inform the referrer immediately. If the referral is accepted, it will be passed onto the appropriate coordinator, if the coordinator feels they require more information they will contact the referrer. The coordinator will then contact the family as soon as possible to arrange an Initial visit.

The coordinator will make 3 attempts to contact / visit the family, using at least two methods (Phone, text, email). If they are unable to contact the family the coordinator will contact the referrer to check contact details. If we are still unable to contact the family the referral will be closed and the referrer will be notified.

INITIAL VISIT

The Coordinator will make an appointment with the family to undertake an initial visit. This will be as soon as possible but usually with two weeks. Where appropriate, the coordinator can carry out a joint visit with the referrer. At the initial visit the coordinator will help the family to rate their difficulties in key areas and they will be encouraged to identify how they will know when their situation has improved. At this stage, the family may decline Home-Start support. If they wish to work with us, the coordinator will support the family to complete a plan, agreeing the service they will be accessing. The referrer will be contacted advising of the support offered to the family.

FAMILY PRACTITIONER

If a suitable Family Practitioner is available immediately, the coordinator will contact the family to arrange an introduction. A confirmation of the action will be sent to the referrer. If there is not a Family Practitioner available, the coordinator will explain to the family the likely timeframe for the introduction. The coordinator will explain that we do not keep a waiting list but we will keep the file open for up to 12 weeks for a Family Practitioner to become available. The coordinator will contact the family after 8 weeks to keep them informed of progress. If after 12 weeks there is still no one available, the coordinator will inform the family that we are unable to provide support at this time and close the file. The referrer will be notified.

HOME-VISITING VOLUNTEER

Family Volunteers are 'matched' to a family based on their experiences and personality. If a suitable volunteer is available immediately, the coordinator will contact the family to arrange a date to introduce the volunteer. A confirmation of the action will be sent to the referrer. If there is not a suitable volunteer available, the coordinator will explain to the family the likely timeframe for the introduction of a volunteer. The coordinator will explain that we do not keep a waiting list but we will keep the file open for up to 12 weeks for a suitable volunteer to become available. The coordinator will contact the family after 8 weeks to keep them informed of progress. If after 12 weeks there is still no volunteer available, the coordinator will inform the family that we are unable to provide support at this time and close the file. The referrer will be notified.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP SUPPORT

If the family have been selected to receive Family Support Group support they will be invited to attend either one of the groups and the coordinator will ensure the family have transport and any accessibility requirements will be addressed. The coordinators run the Family Support Groups so the families will see a familiar face if they are feeling anxious attending the group for the first time. If a family does not attend the group for 8 consecutive weeks, without reason, the family will be closed.

MONITORING SUPPORT

The coordinator will contact the family after the matching visit to ensure the family are happy to be supported by the volunteer or continue at the group. The families will then receive a review visit to ensure the support provided is effectively contributing to their plan. The volunteers will be contacted every 6 weeks and also receive supervision every 12 weeks to ensure the family are making progress.

ENDING SUPPORT

When support is ending, the coordinator will carry out a closing visit and confirmation of ending will be sent to the referrer. Occasionally the volunteer and family may stay in touch but this is outside of our process and is a private arrangement.



VOLUNTEERING

Home-Start Dover District is always looking to recruit new volunteers to enable the continuation of support to local families. Without our dedicated team of volunteers we would not be able to accommodate your referrals for our Home-Visiting service.

Please therefore always be mindful of not only the families that you refer, but also any people who could be potential, suitable volunteers. Home-Start volunteers work alongside families to give compassionate and confidential support, tailored to each family. Our volunteers are trained and given expert support to enable them to carry out their role as a home visiting volunteer.

Please help support us by referring any potential volunteers.

To find out more about volunteering visit www.homestartdover.org.uk

Telephone: 01304 242314 Email: office@homestartdover.org.uk

