



York



Home-Start York is a family support charity based in the City of York. We have been providing, in home weekly visits for families with pre-school children for 33 years and have a proven track record that our encouraging, motivating, confidential support changes lives.

Home-Start York have worked in partnership with City of York Council children services and Vale of York CCG and are commissioned to provide our early intervention, early years support is offered to families with at least one child under 5 years old, who live in York and surrounding villages. We provide a vital service to practitioners working with families and are well respected charitable organisation to receive referrals as part of FEHA and Child in Need plan.

We have a team of remarkable and committed volunteer parents, who give their time and expertise to support parents, who might be experiencing a challenge through their parenting journey. Our services are provided without judgment and with the parent's involvement to make their parenting experiencing more enjoyable and to help build their relationship with their child in a positive and meaningful way. Our services include;

Home Visiting- A parent can be referred to us if they are experiencing difficulties due to post-natal depression, anxiety, new to the area, new parent or just finding being a parent more difficult than expected and particularly welcome early intervention needs. A volunteer provides a listening ear and someone to support them emotionally each week for a couple of hours to help build confidence, self-esteem and practical knowledge.



Group- By referral only - Co-ordinated by our experienced Family Case Workers with involvement from our volunteers and community partners, this small group will provide 10 weekly support sessions. Each week, on Thursday mornings focusing on the areas parents feel they need to feel encouraged, supported, and less isolated. It is aimed at parents with 0-2's who feel unable to access larger groups and who will benefit from information on their babies first 2 years and meeting new mums. It will be welcoming, informative, and fun.

Telephone -We are also continuing to provide weekly telephone support to any parents that feel this would work best for them.



School Readiness- By referral only, parents with children 3-6 years will receive a weekly home visit to engage in our 10 week school readiness programme. In a confidential, encouraging way parents and children will be supported together to prepare for their school experience. The programme covers the areas below and is delivered in a fun, informative and thoughtful manner. We are also hoping to provide some elements of the school preparation programme to parents with 2-year-olds at our group in Clifton.



General Guidelines: Families must

- Have at least one child under 5, permanently living with them at home.
- Live within the City of York boundaries.
- Are pregnant at 30 weeks or over.
- Not currently subject to Child Protection Plan intervention.
- Given their consent to the referral. Self-referrals are accepted.
- Home-Start is not a crisis organisation and does not offer immediate crisis support.

Guidelines to note before making a referral

- Our aim is to help families where there may be temporary difficulties, where a period of support by a Home-Start volunteer or service may make a long-term difference.
- Family situations where there are chronic ongoing, long-standing problems, where there is likely to be little change over a long period may **not** be appropriate for referral.
- Family situations where there is active alcohol or drug dependency, or severe mental illness may not be suitable for referral.
- Complex family situations where statutory intervention and a Child Protection Plan is active, are not appropriate for referral to Home-Start, but may be referred later as part of the support to the exit strategy.
- Families where there is active domestic abuse are not suitable for referral, however, it may be entirely appropriate to refer once IDAS are involved or at a later stage when the threat of abuse is diminished.

Our volunteers

- Volunteers have parenting experience and skills to understand the pressures of bringing up a young family. They have all taken part in a 28-hour course of preparation for visiting. They are screened by the Disclosure & Barring Service & reference checks, before linking with families and receive regular ongoing supervision and training.
- Matching a family with a volunteer is done as carefully and sensitively as possible and Home-Start endeavors to meet the individual needs of each family. There will be occasions when families may have to wait for a suitable volunteer. In this case, we inform families and referrers at the outset and try to be realistic about waiting times.

Volunteers offer a weekly visit to families on a regular basis but should not be seen as home-helps, cleaners or child minders.

How Home-Start volunteers are able to help

- Reduce family isolation, increase social support networks and connect with socially excluded families.
- Strengthen parent/child relationships.
- Improve parents' emotional wellbeing.
- Help parents to appreciate the joys of parenting, improve parenting skills and build their resilience and ability to cope.
- Support parents with children starting school to become school ready.
- Support to improve routine.
- Support to access health and community services
- Help families connect with other services they have difficulty reaching or engaging with.
- Encourage the benefits of 2 & 3 year funded early years setting.
- Our Groups offer support for new parents 0-2years.

- Working with pregnant women on parenting preparation and expectations

Confidentiality

All information about parents and families is treated as confidential, to be discussed only as necessary with the relevant staff in support of the volunteer and to assist the family. Any disclosure of confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the expressed permission of the parents for the purpose of assisting the family, or where it is considered necessary for the protection of a child when information shall be shared with appropriate authority.

How to refer

- Our Referral forms are available on our website www.homestartyork.org to download.
- On receipt of a completed referral form, a Family Support Coordinator is assigned to complete a home visit assessment with the family, a volunteer is then identified and arrangements to introduce both parties is arranged.
- Referrers will be informed when Home-Start support begins and when it ends.
- Referrals not meeting our criteria will be informed by email.

