

Martin House, 24 Hazelwood Road, NORTHAMPTON NN1 1LN

T 01604 627692

F 01604 235235

E [admin@homestart-northampton.org.uk](mailto:admin@homestart-northampton.org.uk)

W [www.homestart-northampton.org.uk](http://www.homestart-northampton.org.uk)



---

Home-Start  
Northampton

---

Dear Volunteer

Thank you for the interest you have shown in volunteering for Home-Start Northampton.

We are pleased to enclose for your perusal and information a leaflet about Home-Start, annual report, volunteer profile and volunteer charter, which we hope will go some way towards explaining what we do and the Home-Start approach.

If you would like to attend the next course of preparation (or even one at a later stage), please complete and return the enclosed application form. One of us will contact you in due course to arrange an informal interview. This will also be an opportunity to discuss the course content and provide you with the course agenda, times etc. If you have any queries and would like to discuss these over the telephone in the first instance, please do not hesitate to contact us on the above number.

Yours sincerely

Bernadette Barnes  
Scheme Manager

## **Role of a Home-Start Volunteer**

Home-Start is a voluntary organisation in which volunteers offer regular support, friendship and practical help to young families under stress in their own homes helping to prevent family crisis or breakdown. Volunteers, who are parents or have parenting experience understand that sometimes family life can be tough and that is why their support can be so valuable in helping another family. Volunteers are central to the Home-Start service; we could not offer families the same support without them.

Home-Start volunteers give a high level of commitment and reliability and in return, receive high quality preparation and ongoing training, supervision and support from the Home-Start Co-ordinators

## **What do Home-Start volunteers do?**

Home-Start volunteers aim to build the confidence and independence of the family by:

- Offering support, friendship and practical help
- Committing to a minimum of 2-3 hours per week home-visiting according to the family's needs
- Visiting the families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each individual can be respected and protected
- Reassuring families that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual
- Emphasising the positive aspects of family life
- Developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and an understanding developed, providing a regular, reliable presence in that family
- Drawing on their own experience of parenting to encourage 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 in the community

## **What is the time commitment?**

In addition to weekly home visiting:

- Attendance at the initial course of preparation, normally lasting 40 hours over 10 weeks
- Attendance at regular volunteer meetings as requested by the scheme
- Attendance at supervision sessions with the Co-ordinator according to Home-Start guidance, every 4-6 weeks
- A commitment of 2 Years

## **What are the responsibilities of a Home-Start volunteer?**

We ask all our volunteers:

- To commit to the Home-Start ethos and to understand and implement Home-Start's policies on:
  - Confidentiality
  - Equal opportunities
  - Looking after children in the absence of their parents
  - Safeguarding / Child protection
  - Health and safety
  - Lone Working
- To undertake all sessions of the preparation course, provide two suitable references, and complete a DBS check at enhanced level
- To sign their acceptance and understanding of the Home-Start Safeguarding/Child Protection Code of Conduct
- To be introduced to and visit a family regularly (usually 2-3 hours a week) and to work towards identified aims of support as agreed with the family
- To share information with the Co-ordinator and contact the scheme immediately if there is concern about the physical or emotional well-being of any member of the family
- Ensure that the child's needs and experience are at the centre of their thinking and they act on concerns about their welfare
- To keep essential records of visits to families and submit monthly
- To attend regular 1:1 supervision sessions according to Home-Start guidance
- To attend ongoing support and training sessions as arranged by the scheme
- To submit travel and telephone expenses monthly, which will be paid at the agreed rate by the trustee board
- To inform their insurance company that the car is being used for voluntary work with Home-Start for which expenses are paid
- To provide Home-Start with sight of their relevant tax, MOT and insurance cover for the car as requested

## **What will Home-Start do for me?**

In return for your hard work and commitment, you will receive: -

- Excellent preparation for your role, through the preparation course
- Formal and informal support from the Co-ordinator, other volunteers and the trustee board
- Opportunities for self-development and ongoing training
- Social events and the opportunity to get more involved in the scheme if you would like (e.g. fundraising, promotional events, being a trustee)
- After you've volunteered for 12 months we will provide a reference
- The opportunity to be involved in a vital local service and to be part of a national and global network

This is exciting and rewarding voluntary work which requires energy, commitment, reliability, creativity and a sense of humour. We look forward to hearing from you!

## **A Home-Start volunteer should:**

- Be a parent or have parenting experience
- Be prepared to undertake the Home-Start preparation training course
- Understand why families may need support from Home-Start
- Have a knowledge of child development or willingness to undertake training
- Have a positive, non-judgemental attitude to working with people of any gender, family status or sexual identity, or who are from any ethnic origin, culture or religion, or who may have a disability
- Demonstrate a sensitive and caring attitude towards others
- Have a clear understanding of the confidential nature of the Home-Start service, and not to break confidences shared by the family, other than when disclosure is essential in order to protect the wellbeing or safety of a child
- Have time and enthusiasm for Home-Start, be reliable and understand the importance of reliability to the family
- Have good communication skills including an ability to listen
- Have a warm and open personality and a sense of humour
- Be able to work as a member of a team
- Be prepared to keep records as required by the scheme
- Be prepared to attend group support meetings and ongoing or refresher training required by the scheme
- Be prepared to attend supervision with the Co-ordinator every six weeks

## **Volunteer Charter**

This Volunteer Charter contains our mutual hopes and expectations to make sure you are able to help in the voluntary work of Home-Start and that you feel that Home-Start recognises and values your contribution. As a volunteer you are one of a key group of people playing a crucial role in providing Home-Start support for families. Our responsibilities to you and your responsibilities to Home-Start are summarised below. More detailed information can be found in the *Home-Start Policy and Practice Guide* which is referred to in the course of preparation and can be obtained from the co-ordinator.

### **Our responsibilities to you**

We aim to treat all volunteers with respect and undertake our responsibilities to them fairly and recognise that each offers their own unique qualities and has their own needs for support.

We will ensure volunteers have:

- comprehensive and up-to-date information about Home-Start
- an individual interview with the co-ordinator before commencing the course of preparation
- a course of preparation to prepare for visiting families and opportunities for on-going training to support the volunteering role
- clarity about the role and task and who each is responsible to and who will provide support if there are any problems
- sufficient information about the family to prepare them for visiting
- information about any safety issues
- effective supervision of voluntary activities within the scheme and support for individual volunteers with the co-ordinator, and regular volunteer support group meetings
- reimbursement for agreed out-of-pocket expenses
- an annual review of their work with Home-Start
- opportunities to evaluate, comment on and contribute to the work of Home-Start, on-going training and the course of preparation
- an understanding of how to raise problems or make a complaint
- information about and access to the Board of Trustees
- opportunities to join with other volunteers for outings, parties and other social events.

### **Your responsibilities to us**

- to perform your volunteer role to the best of your ability and within the *Standards and Methods of Practice of Home-Start* and the *Home-Start Policy and Practice Guide*
- to offer positive, caring support to young families under stress
- to visit the families as agreed and let the co-ordinator know if you cannot keep an appointment.
- to attend the course of preparation, on-going training and individual and group support meetings
- to inform the co-ordinator of any problems, difficulties or changes within the families being visited, or within your own circumstances which may affect home-visiting
- to maintain the Home-Start guidelines on confidentiality

- to be aware of and work within Home-Start's guidelines on child protection
- to ensure your car is adequately insured if transporting families
- to understand and follow Home-Start's policies on child protection, equal opportunities and health and safety
- to keep Home-Start records as requested and to return them promptly to the co-ordinator as requested.

## Application Form for Volunteers

Home-Start Northampton is committed to safe recruitment practice as an important part of safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults

Confidential

If you have difficulty completing this form, please ask the Home-Start Scheme Manager/co-ordinator for assistance.

Name			
Address including postcode			
If you have been at this address less than five years, please give previous address			
Home telephone no: Email address:			Mobile telephone no.:
Date of birth:			Place of birth:
Emergency Contact name and phone no			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REFERENCES: Please give the name and address of two referees that you have known for a minimum of two years (not a partner, relative or partner of a relative) include at least one professional reference, (previous employer wherever possible; alternatively, school, college or other professional such as a religious leader or a volunteer supervisor) who may be contacted by Home-Start. If you have ever been a volunteer or employee of any Home-Start Scheme, one of your referees should be a member of staff or Trustee of that Scheme.</li> </ul> <p><b>Please ask permission prior to submitting referees details and confirm full address.</b></p>			
Referee 1 - time known this person  In what capacity?			Referee 2 - time known this person  In what capacity?
Name: Address:  Postcode: Email: Telephone:			Name: Address:  Postcode: Email: Telephone:

Have you ever been a volunteer or employee of any Home-Start Scheme?

Yes       No

If yes, please give name of Scheme and details of your involvement below.

We would like to get a picture of your experience to date, in the first box please give us details of any paid employment, in the second box details of any voluntary or unpaid work and in the third box details of gaps in employment with reasons e.g. career break to look after children or other dependants, travelling, training or education.

**Please tell us about any paid employment, starting with most recent**

Employer	Job title	From	To	Brief description of duties	Reason for leaving

**Please tell us about any voluntary or unpaid work, starting with most recent**

Employer	Job title	From	To	Brief description of duties	Reason for leaving



**Please tell us about gaps in your employment history, starting with the most recent**

From	To	Reason

Do you speak any additional languages (including sign language)			
What is the maximum time you could offer to Home-Start as a volunteer on a regular weekly basis? (suggested 2 to 3 hours per week)			
Have you any commitments which could affect your work with Home-Start e.g. part-time work, college, university?			
Are you available to volunteer during school holidays?	Yes/No		
What type of transport would you use?		If car - do you have a current clean driving licence?	Yes/No

1) Please give information about your own parenting experience: e.g. are you a Parent/step-parent/foster carer. Please give ages of children

2) What did/do you find enjoyable about parenting?

3) What did/do you find challenging?

What are your hobbies and leisure interests?

How did you hear of Home-Start?

Why would you like to become a Home-Start volunteer?

Have you any skills or personal experiences which may be relevant to your work as a volunteer for Home-Start? (e.g. budgeting, cooking, DIY etc)

Is there any other information you would like to add?

As volunteers are in a privileged position visiting families in their own homes and have contact with young children, Home-Start has a responsibility to ensure that no one becomes a volunteer who would misuse this trust. Therefore, it is essential that you complete and sign this form.

The Disclosure and Barring Service has a guide which provides a simple and clear explanation of the disclosure application process. The guide can be viewed online at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/dbs-checking-service-guidance/app-guide-dbs-form](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/dbs-checking-service-guidance/app-guide-dbs-form)

Name:	
Have you had any personal contact with Social Services/Social Work Department or NSPCC in connection with children in your care? Have any of your children been subject to a child protection, child in need plan or common assessment framework (CAF)?	Yes/No
Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition and if so what adjustments could Home-Start provide to enable you to volunteer? Please provide detail, continue on separate sheet if required.	Yes/No
Have you ever been dismissed from any paid or voluntary work?	Yes/No

Have you ever been arrested or had contact with the police for any type of criminal offence?	Yes/No
Are there any matters outstanding which may lead to a criminal prosecution?	Yes/No
If you answer yes to any question please give details:	
If you do not declare existing or spent cautions or convictions you may not be selected. However, if you declare any of the above it may still be possible to become a volunteer	
<b>Declaration:</b> I know of no reason why I would be unsuitable to be a Home-Start volunteer. I will report any changes in my circumstances which may affect my role*	

I give permission for Home-Start to carry out criminal record checks at enhanced level with the appropriate agency.

I understand that my National Insurance number, passport and drivers licence may be required for identification purposes.

I understand that Home-Start may hold personal information about me in paper records and on their computer, including sensitive information such as age, race, sex and disabilities that they will use for their monitoring purposes.

I agree to them holding this information and understand that it may be shared with Home-Start UK for Quality Assurance purposes.

I understand that I may ask to see my records at any time.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As you will be completing an Enhanced Disclosure form detail of any criminal convictions or cautions found will be passed onto to Home-Start Northampton. Therefore it is important that you highlight any issue we need to be aware of on your application form.

If something is highlighted on your disclosure this will be discussed with you in confidence. Following the meeting a decision will be made whether we can proceed with your application.

If you have any concerns please discuss this further with Home-Start Northampton Scheme Manager/co-ordinator.

---

\* child/ren in care/criminal proceedings brought against me etc

***For Office use only***

Interview date		
Reference requested	1 (date)	2 (date)
Reference received	1 (date)	2 (date)
DBS requested	Date received	No.
Prep course completed (date):		
Safeguarding & promoting welfare of children code of conduct signed (date):		
End of course Policy checklist signed (date):		

**Availability for Volunteers' Course of Preparation**

To help the scheme plan its courses of preparation for new volunteers effectively, please indicate below your availability to attend and return this sheet with the completed application form. If you are available on several days, evenings etc please indicate in order of preference i.e., 1st, 2nd, 3rd and so on.

Monday	10 am – 2:30 pm x 9 weeks	6.30/7 pm – 10 pm x 9 weeks
Tuesday	10 am – 2:30 pm x 9 weeks	6.30/7 pm – 10 pm x 9 weeks
Wednesday	10 am – 2:30 pm x 9 weeks	6.30/7 pm – 10 pm x 9 weeks
Thursday	10 am – 2:30 pm x 9 weeks	6.30/7 pm – 10 pm x 9 weeks
Friday	10 am – 2:30 pm x 9 weeks	6.30/7 pm – 10 pm x 9 weeks
Saturday	10 am – 2:30 pm x 9 weeks	
Saturday	10 am – 4:00 pm x 6/7 weeks	

## Monitoring Information

Asian or Asian British		Black or Black British		White	
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Black background Please specify _____		Any other white background Please specify _____	
Any other Asian background Please specify _____					
Chinese or other ethnic group		Mixed			
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any mixed background Please specify _____			
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____			
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Registered Office: Martin House, 24 Hazelwood Road, NORTHAMPTON NN1 1LN  
A Company Limited by Guarantee no. 5836827 registered in England & Wales  
Registered Charity no. 1116665.  
Patron: HRH Princess Alexandra, the Hon. Lady Ogilvy, KG, GCVO. Local Patron: Lady Lowther