

## **Description of the Work of a Home- Start Volunteer**

Home-start is a voluntary organisation in which volunteers offer regular support friendship and practical help to young families, who are going through difficult times, in their own homes.

### **The role of the volunteer**

Home-Start volunteers are supported by and are responsible to a paid member of staff called a Co-ordinator who is responsible for matching families with volunteers and then supporting that volunteer throughout the time they are visiting that family. The Co-ordinator is responsible to the Scheme Manager, who in turn is responsible to the Board of Trustees.

Volunteers work with families towards increased confidence and independence by

- Offering support friendship and practical help
- Visiting families in their own home where the dignity and identity of each individual can be protected and respected
- Reassuring families that difficulties 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
- Encouraging parents' strengths, hope and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their own children
- Encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and use effectively the support and services available in the community

### **Commitment**

Initial course of preparation normally lasting 40 hours over 10 weeks followed by

- ideally a commitment of one year or more
- A minimum of 3 hours a week
- Attending regular support / supervision with a Co-ordinator and a minimum two ongoing training/group events a year
- To be introduced to and support a family or families by visiting regularly (usually at least once per week) for as long as necessary

On completion of the preparation course to be familiar with and committed to the Home-Start ethos as specified in 'The constitution and standards and methods of practice'

To understand and implement Home-Start's policies on

- Confidentiality
- Equal Opportunities
- Looking after children in the absence of their parents
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety

To share information with the Co-ordinator and contact the Co-ordinator immediately if there is concern about the physical or emotional well-being of any member of the family.

- To take part in reviews with the family and Co-ordinator as requested
- To keep records of visits to families as requested by the Co-ordinator
- To submit travel and telephone expenses on a regular basis, which will be paid at a rate agreed by the management board
- To inform their insurance company that the car is being used for voluntary work with Home-Start for which expenses are paid.

This is exciting and rewarding voluntary work which requires energy, commitment, reliability, creativity and a sense of humour.

All volunteers can expect the support of the Co-ordinator, other volunteers, management board and through the Co-ordinator and other professionals involved with the family. There are also opportunities for self development and social contact with others in Home-Start. The management board membership includes two representative volunteers.

## **Person Specification for a Home- Start Volunteer**

### **Essential Qualities Needed to be a Home- Start Volunteer**

- Be a parent or have parenting experience
- Have positive 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 caring and sensitive attitude towards others
- Have a non judgemental attitude
- Be clear about confidentiality and when a confidence remains so but be able to decide when disclosure of a confidence is essential to the well-being of a child
- Be reliable and understand the importance of reliability to the family
- Have good communication skills, including the ability to listen
- Understand the need for support
- Have a warm and open personality and a sense of humour
- Have time and enthusiasm for Home-Start
- Be able to work as a member of a team
- Be prepared to keep records as requested by the Scheme

# Application Form for Volunteers

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**Home- Start Maidstone**

*If you have difficulty completing this form, please ask the Home-Start Co-ordinator for assistance.*

Name			
Address including postcode			
If you have been at this address less than two years, please give previous address			
Home telephone no.:		Mobile telephone no.:	
Date of birth:		Place of birth:	
Asian or Asian British Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background Please specify _____	Black or Black British Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background Please specify _____	White British <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Any other white background Please specify _____	Mixed Any mixed background Please specify _____
Chinese or other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>			
REFERENCES: Please give the name and address of two referees (not a relative) who may be contacted by Home-Start			
Referee 1		Referee 2	
Name:		Name:	
Address:		Address:	

Languages spoken			
What is the minimum time you could offer to Home-Start as a volunteer on a regular weekly basis?			
What type of transport would you use?		If car - do you have a current clean driving licence?	Yes/No
Please give details of any voluntary/paid work you have done, particularly with children and families:			
Names of children:	Ages of children:	Please give information about your parenting experience:	
Have you any commitments which could affect your work with Home-Start e.g. part-time work?			

What are your hobbies and leisure interests?

Have you any skills or personal experiences which may be relevant to your work as a volunteer for Home-Start?

How did you hear of Home-Start?

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

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.

Name:	
Have you had any personal contact with Social Services/Social Work Department or NSPCC/Children 1 <sup>st</sup> in connection with children in your care?	Yes/No
Do you have any medical condition (physical or mental) that could affect your work as a volunteer?	Yes/No
Have you ever been dismissed from any paid or voluntary work?	Yes/No
Have you ever been arrested or dealt with by 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.	

I give permission for Home-Start to carry out criminal record checks at enhanced level with the criminal records bureau. I understand that my National Insurance number may be required for identification purposes.

I know of no reason why I would be unsuitable to be a Home-Start volunteer.

I understand that Home-Start may hold personal information about me in 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: \_\_\_\_\_