



Home-Start Nottingham

Annual Report – 2019/2020

Supporting families in the Ashfield, Broxtowe, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe areas



Scheme Managers Report

This year has been a year of change and adjustment, but also a positive and exciting year for Home-Start Nottingham.

In May of last year, the Home-Start office building was sold to release much needed funds to enable the scheme to continue to deliver our volunteer-led home-visiting core service. Of course, it was an extremely sad day for all to sell the building that we have owned for 18 years. However, the new owner of the building agreed to lease our offices to us, therefore allowing us to remain at the office which is so familiar to our staff and volunteers alike.

Our Co-ordinators and volunteers have worked incredibly hard this year and have continued to offer the highest quality of support to families across the County. Nottinghamshire County Council continue to provide funding through their Local Improvement Scheme for us to provide volunteer led support to families in Ashfield, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling. Our long-standing relationship with the local authority remains as strong as ever and we are, as always, very thankful for their support to all the Home-Start schemes in the county.

This year we were only able to offer home visiting support to a small number of families in the City. However, in January, we made the difficult decision not to continue offering home visiting to city families as many of them had been waiting for the service for months, and in a few cases, over a year. Without any dedicated and sustainable funding to support families in the City, the situation became impossible and we were raising expectations amongst families and referrers that we simply could not meet.

In February I met with a member of a family wanted to offer financial support to a local charity. I am delighted to say that, shortly after this meeting, we received the wonderful news that they wanted to support us to reintroduce our home visiting service in the City. We are overwhelmed by their generosity and support, and we look forward to building a close and lasting relationship with our new supporters.



Our 'Let's Play Together' group in Clifton, funded by Children in Need, continues to go from strength to strength, with 11 families and 25 children attending this year. We are extremely grateful to Children in Need, not only for their financial support, but also their guidance and expertise throughout the year.

In March, the COVID-19 pandemic affected everyone in the country, as we entered a prolonged period of lockdown. At this time of uncertainty, and when the world suddenly became a scary place to be, our staff team and volunteers really stepped up their efforts to support our existing families. For so many families the lockdown was particularly challenging as they were confined in door with young children to entertain. Some had older children at home to educate, and for many they had relatives who were shielding or vulnerable, which added to their worries. The constant support from Home-Start was a lifeline for many parents who felt even more isolated in lockdown.

Our amazing team of Volunteers continues to grow, not only in size, but also in their abundance of enthusiasm, commitment, and determination to support local parents and their children. Never has this been so apparent than during the COVID lockdown, when many of our wonderful volunteers helped to call existing and new families. They also helped to deliver food and activity packs to our families during lockdown. Our volunteers really are the glue that keeps us all together and we simply could not do without them. A huge thank you goes to each one of them.

Our core staff team and the Aspley SSBC team worked tirelessly at home, adapting, and adjusting to the new way of working very quickly and with the utmost professionalism. Their prime focus was to ensure families felt supported and not alone or abandoned. They provided regular wellbeing calls to all families, and both teams coordinated the delivery of activity packs to all children and some food parcels for those families in need or those that could not get out. In relation to the activity packs we delivered, one family said *'My daughter has already started her puzzle and my youngest is chewing his Elma toy. They both haven't smiled like this in a long time.'*



I cannot praise our staff teams highly enough. Every single member of staff worked harder than ever before, many of them with additional pressures at home such as children off school and partners at home. I only recently re-joined the scheme, but I am so thankful to have such wonderful colleagues to work alongside. It is such a privilege to have such a talented, skilled, and inspiring workforce to work with and learn from. They really are all amazing. Thank you seems so inadequate, for everything they have achieved during the year but especially through the pandemic. I offer my genuine thanks and admiration for everything they have done to support the families we serve.

Jo Hallam, Scheme Manager



Chair of Trustees Report

As I write, we are still in coronavirus lockdown and our services are being delivered from home, which was not what I was expecting when I was elected Chair of Trustees last year! During the last twelve incredibly eventful months we have, among other things:

- Elected a new Chair and Vice-Chair of Trustees
- Appointed a new Scheme Manger
- Recruited five excellent new Trustees to the Board
- Appointed a new Hub Manager at our SSBC project
- Reorganised our fundraising strategy
- Begun planning for a new City-based service

Sometimes, it has seemed like a fulltime job but, so far, I've enjoyed (nearly) every minute of it.

Lockdown has forced many changes in the way we work, but the staff have all been brilliant in their commitment to our volunteers and families. Everyone has successfully adapted to online supervision and Team Meetings and to working with families via phone, text and Zoom, replacing our normal face to face visits by volunteers, or Family Mentors at SSBC. I also want to pay tribute to our new Trustees, who have been more than happy to get stuck in from the word go and to Caroline Stephens, who has done the same as Vice-Chair.

Looking forward, we know the next few years are going to be difficult, but we're optimistic we can overcome whatever problems arise. Our new City project is really exciting and we're hoping we can work with a range of partners to expand the scope from the initial pilot area to other parts of the City and to offer a truly inclusive service to all of Nottingham's communities.

Mike Scott, Chair of Trustees



Why did our Trustees decided to get involved with Home-Start Nottingham?

“As a former Social Worker and current campaigner against austerity and for the NHS, Home-Start seemed like a good fit for me! I’m all too aware how difficult it is to be a parent and it’s great to work in an organisation committed to supporting people who really need a helping hand.” **Mike, Chair of Trustees**

“As I began to wind down from full time employment in March 2020, I was put in contact with Home-Start regarding a vacant Trustee Treasurer position by a friend who was in both my work and social network. The objectives of the charity hit my personal sweet spot. All the people I met at various interviews and subsequently since appointment have been welcoming, helpful, understanding and extremely positive. It has so far proved highly rewarding emotionally to see everyone working in the same direction in order to achieve positive outcomes for both parents and their young children” **Bob, Treasurer**

“I wanted to be involved in Home Start as it provides an invaluable and unique service in supporting families which can have a life-long impact. I had recently left Citizens Advice after 15 years in a managerial role and I thought this and previous experience would be helpful to the trustee board” **Clare, Trustee**



A year in pictures

Since our last AGM we have seen families from across the County enjoying the event the Home-Start Nottingham team of volunteers and staff have put together. Here are just a few memories.

Funding from Sutton in Ashfield Inner Wheel, gave families from across the County time to enjoy the Nottingham Riverside Festival. Some families attending joined in with the family picnic, before going on to explore the event, especially the free children's activities.



The Autumn Halloween event at the Clifton group saw children enjoying messy play and finding scary spiders.

Several families enjoyed the cooking group we hosted in Arnold, supported by, The Everyone Health team. Children and parents worked together in these fun family cooking sessions. They made Pitta pizza, and a lovely fruit pudding to name a few recipes.





Our family Christmas party was enjoyed by all who attended, despite the extra rain indoors! Each child received a gift from Santa and friends, when he stopped off on his busy trip north. The staff team were happy to welcome all.

Lockdown saw children enjoyed creating rainbows with parents help and Play with their activity pack



Scheme update

This year Home Start Nottingham has supported 109 families through home visiting and telephone support. The three Co-ordinators have been assigned to a specific geographical area of the county to make links within the area. The Co-ordinators are continually working with other agencies to promote Home-Start and to raise our profile and to increase referrals. This will continue throughout the year.

We have delivered three preparation courses and recruited 23 new volunteers. Attracting new volunteers is becoming increasingly difficult and we are always reviewing our recruitment methods and working more with social media.

We have delivered additional training to enable our volunteers to enhance their learning, development, and practice so that they can support families in the best possible way.

Six training sessions were delivered to volunteers throughout the year - Supporting families in the armed forces, Safeguarding update, Drug awareness training, Emotional wellbeing, Domestic Abuse training, Eating Well.

This year we held various volunteer social gatherings, including coffee and cake, the Christmas social gathering at Sherwood Manor and Christmas prezzie wrap where volunteers came to help wrap up presents to give out to the children and families that we support. The volunteer's social gatherings are important as it makes the volunteers feel part of Home-Start and gives them the opportunity to get to know other volunteers.

Finally, we would like to say a big Thank You to all the volunteers for all their commitment and great work they do with supporting families, because without these wonderful volunteers there wouldn't be Home-Start Nottingham.



Clifton Group

In September 2019 we had a few children that left us to start full time nursery. We still miss them but know they will be learning lots, making new friends and having a great time!

As part of our evaluation parents have asked us to start a scrap book idea where each child has their own book for parents to write down observations, stick photographs in as well as children's own artwork. This has been used every week by all families and is something nice for them to keep, showing their time with us.



We have started baby massage classes as an added session to the group. This has been popular (there is always a waiting list!) and supported by the local Healthy Family's team. It has also been lovely to see parents from this, attend our family group session.

We regularly review the group and ask parents/carers for their feedback and ideas. Families are very much involved in the planning of weekly activities as well as the running of the session. Parents have ran the singing times by themselves as well as actively involved with their children at tidy up times.

Parents have asked for the group to be extended by 30minutes which we have arranged to put in place. In the sessions we have celebrated Valentines day, the poppy appeal and world book day . The children loved coming in their fancy dress outfits, some great costumes!



It was very sad that we had to close the group due to the coronavirus but obviously everyone's safety is most important. During this time we set up a weekly WhatsApp group so we could communicate with each other, support and share activity ideas we could do at home. We have also delivered activity packs to the families with toys and activities for the children and a small treat for the parents. We had some lovely feedback about these and how much they were appreciated.



supportive of.

We have had contact with Children In Need who fund the group to inform them of our changes which they have been

One family told me that their child has been singing songs at home that we sing in the group and when they walked by the centre recently her child appeared very happy. This was lovely to hear. Thank you to our group volunteers, Kulwinder and Jennifer for your continued support. We hope to be back running the group as soon as we can, looking forward to seeing you all. Stay safe.



Our Home-Start Family Mentors (FMs) in the Aspley Ward are commissioned by the Big Lottery funded Small Steps Big Changes scheme to deliver the free Small Steps at Home programme to families within the local community. This programme focusses on helping children to: learn to talk and communicate; be confident, friendly and understand their emotions and behaviour; and enjoy eating well and staying healthy

Our FMs mainly visit families in their own homes. They have experience of supporting families and can offer support on a range of topics, including feeding, teething, sleeping, toilet training, bonding.



They are all parents themselves and able to share their experiences along with the latest child development advice.

Our FMs support both mothers and fathers. During the last 12 months we've supported over 350 families. We are delighted to report that this figure includes 28 fathers who have completed the Father Reading Every Day (FRED) programme. FRED is relatively new to the Aspley ward, but it is an important initiative which helps address the challenge of dads properly engaging with their babies.

Based on feedback and retention rates, we know that families really value the support they receive from our FMs. We receive lots of regular positive comments and feedback from families. And, most tellingly, over 80% of families with babies have remained with the same Family Mentor through the course of this year.

In addition to home visiting, we offer a variety of free interactive community groups for parents and children to enjoy together. 438 different families have attended our groups this year. We revamped the programme a few months ago to attract even more families and we are now seeing larger numbers of families attending – in particular, at our Story & Rhyme Time (SRT) and Stay and Play sessions. We've also run special "one-off" events to help promote our services, including a Halloween themed Pumpkin Café event where we had a full house and attracted a number of new families.

As a team we have been focussing on our reach to families within the ward, signing up new families, reducing appointments that families have not attended and retaining the families we work with over the 0-4 year's period. All of our priorities focus upon improving productivity, increasing our contact levels and engaging with local families. To aid this process we have worked on staff morale and made changes to increase confidence in leadership, and create a culture of trust, ownership and responsibility. We have taken a new ward based approach to marketing material, built relationships with our Parent Champions and other partners such as local Health Visitors to spread the word of who we are and what we do.



In common with everyone else, Covid-19 had a huge effect on our work. In mid-March, we had to stop home visiting and suspend our groups programme. However, all of our team adapted immediately to meet the needs of our local families in a way we had never done before; using technology to support the families we work with. FMs shifted to working from home, making weekly wellbeing calls to families and providing scheduled visits via video call. We are proud to report that our FMs have together made over a 1,000 support calls to date during lock-down, offering critical support to families when they have needed it the most. Our FMs have also successfully used social media platforms to share activities for families to

engage in, including virtual cook and play sessions with Liz and active sessions with Jazzy Jaz, some of which received more than 6000 views. We have also started to run virtual SRT and Baby Massage sessions via live video link on zoom which have again received some really positive feedback from families! *'We enjoyed the session and like how our child was able to see other children and join in the singing too'.*

As the programme is now approaching its 5th birthday our first cohort of families who accessed the service as antenatal parents have children turning 4 years old and graduating with us! These families have received information, ideas, activities and support to give their children the best start in life. Here is just one comment we've received which we think sums up our service "My FM is just fantastic. The help received from her was amazing. We will miss our FM and my children will too."



A simple cartoon illustration of a family of four. From left to right: a boy in a red shirt and cap, a girl in a green dress, a man in a purple suit, and a girl in a pink dress. They are all holding hands and smiling.

An analog clock face with numbers 1 through 12. The hour hand is between 12 and 1, and the minute hand is pointing at 5. This represents the time 12:25.

[illegible]

BUDGET

An illustration of a stack of three green banknotes, with three gold coins placed on top of them. The coins are positioned at the top left, top center, and bottom left of the stack.[illegible]

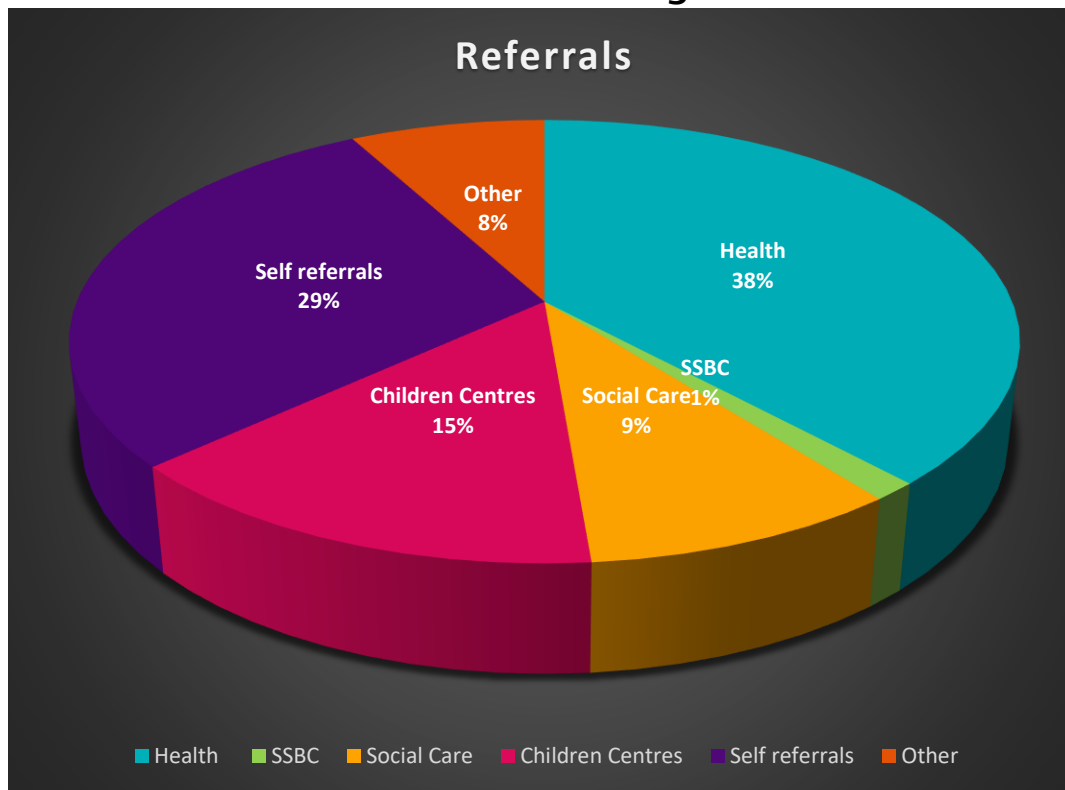
Impact and statistics

Title	Total Families	Need Achieved	Need Partially Achieved	Need Not Achieved	% of needs achieved or partly achieved
1.Managing children's behaviour, listening to children and respecting their rights	35	26	9	0	100
2.Being involved in the children's development/early learning and socialisation	36	29	5	2	94
3.Coping with physical health	37	24	10	3	92
4.Coping with mental health	40	23	15	2	95
5.Coping with feeling isolated	37	25	10	2	95
6.Parent's self-esteem	39	26	10	3	92
7. Coping with child's physical health	34	29	5	0	100
8. Coping with child's mental health	23	20	3	0	100
9. Managing the household budget	31	21	8	2	94
10. The day-to-day running of the home	34	25	8	1	97
11. Stress caused by conflict in the family	21	14	6	1	95
12. Coping with extra work of multiple children under 5	29	20	8	1	97
13. Use of services	20	16	3	1	95

No of families used

53

Referrals received into Home-Start Nottingham



Comments from referrers, volunteers and families

"Support offered is excellent and invaluable to families"referrer

"I would absolutely recommend Home-Start – I have far more confidence to cope with my children" ...family

"When I was really struggling with the circumstances I found myself in, my volunteer made me feel that I was not alone" ...family

"Mum has found support invaluable, increased her confidence and improved mental well-being"referrer

"Absolutely fantastic"volunteer

"Excellent and valuable service"referrer

"Brilliant"volunteer

"Valuable – bridges gap in services"volunteer



Thank you to ...

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Deborah Bestwick MBE

Councillor Henry

Waitrose

A big thank you to the individual donors who donate and those volunteers who donate their expenses back to Home-Start Nottingham



Home-Start Nottingham offers confidential support, friendship and practical help to families with at least one child under five, who are going through a difficult time.

The areas covered by the scheme include: Nottingham City and the County Boroughs of Ashfield, Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe.

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