



**2022/2023**

## End of Year Report



### About Home-Start Nottingham

Home-Start Nottingham offers confidential support: friendship and practical help to families with at least one child under eight, who are going through a difficult time. The area covered by the scheme includes: Nottingham city and the County Boroughs of: Ashfield, Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe.

We recruit and train volunteers who have experience to visit families at home, who choose to use the service. We will help families to grow in confidence, enjoy to the full their relationship with their children and encourage them to widen their links within the local community.

We are committed to ensuring that resources and management are sustainable and of the highest quality in order to provide our services to families and support to our volunteers.

### Our vision

Our vision is a society where every parent has the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life. We provide support, friendship and practical help to vulnerable parents with one or more children under eight. Most of the parents we work with have poor mental health or wellbeing and are socially isolated with no-one to turn to for support.

### Our aims

- To improve the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable young children
- To support parents to build strong, happy families
- To help families connect with their local community
- To enable parents and children to access, and benefit from, care and support from local services

### Chair's Welcome

Welcome to our 2023 Annual Report!

As ever, I want to begin by thanking all of you for your commitment to Home-Start Nottingham in the past year. We are nothing if not a team and we couldn't function without the time, energy or money put in by our family support volunteers, our staff in Arnold and Aspley, our donors, the organisations that have given grant aid and last (but certainly not least!), our trustees.

The date for the end of the Small Steps Big Changes Aspley project – March 2025 – is rapidly approaching, but we are still not clear what is going to follow on from it. We hope that efforts to obtain funding on behalf of all three Nottingham projects to continue the good work done over the length of the contract will be successful, but will consider "going it alone" if necessary. The contribution of SSBC to our core costs will certainly be missed and will need to be replaced one way or another.

Another big issue is where our base will be in the future. Since moving to the Business Centre in Arnold, we've been looking at long-term alternatives and thought we'd found one, close to our Aspley project but, much as our preferred option when we moved out of First Avenue hit intractable problems at a late stage, the same has happened now. This has forced us back to square one, so the process begins again! Very frustrating for all concerned, but we'll get there in the end.

We were pleased to welcome Peter Grigg, Chief Executive of Home-Start UK, our umbrella organisation, to our Annual Meeting last autumn. He was able to explain the plans for developing the HS network and we were able to tell him what we'd been doing - I think everyone was happy with what they heard!

We also had successful meetings with Lilian Greenwood, MP and Tom Randall, MP who offered their full support for our services to families and said they would back us in any way they could.

Since last year, we've gained a number of new faces: volunteers, staff and trustees and are grateful to all of you at this time of economic crisis and political turmoil. We know many charities are having serious difficulties with both finance and recruitment, which makes you all the more welcome. A few years ago, we were down to just two trustees following several retirements and very much in crisis mode, but I'm glad to be able to report that we're now close to our maximum number and have been able to extend both our range of backgrounds and experience at that level.

There will be many bumps in the road (or should I say potholes?) in the next twelve months, but we're looking ahead with confidence!

**Mike Scott**  
Chair of Trustees



### Scheme Managers welcome

Our core service supported an amazing 111 families: 159 parents with 253 children. Our network of 75 volunteers have given emotional support and practical help, that is bespoke to the family's needs. Many provided listening support, encouraging parents to talk through what they wanted help with and encouraging parents to recognise their strengths and focus on positive aspects of family life.

Many families we supported in 2022/2023 faced multiple challenges, with 61% having four or more identified needs. We have adapted our service this year so that some families with higher levels of need have received support from our family support worker who worked intensively with them, focusing on their most challenging issues.

Our volunteer led support to families provided practical help like going to appointments with parents which they might not attend alone. This helped to improve parents' confidence by walking alongside them, which in turn strengthened the relationships and reduced stress. 66% of parents said they felt more confident at the end of support, and 58% of parents stated they were more confident in their parenting and consistent when managing their children's behaviour.

Isolation remained one of the most frequently identified needs; 70% of parents said they feel lonely and isolated. Leaving the house with young children can be a real struggle for many parents. 28% of our referrals stated help to access community services as a focus of support. By accompanying the family on short trips to the park or supermarket, or to a local family group, our volunteers helped families take the first steps towards becoming less isolated. 88% of parents said they felt less isolated and more confident to go out with their children alone at the end of support.

78% of parents who were referred for support were experiencing poor mental health, post-natal illness, anxiety, disability, or long-term health issues, and some faced major life crisis, such as bereavement or family breakdown and many were socially isolated with no-one to turn to for support. Our volunteers were simply outstanding, as they always are. Many go above and beyond for their families and some supporting more than one family. We cannot thank them enough. This year they have provided 10,725 hours of emotional support and practical help to local families in this reporting period.

We recruited 10 new volunteers but 17 volunteers left us during the year. We have seen some of our most experienced volunteers leave us to enable them to look after their grandchildren so that their children can return to work. Some of our volunteers who may have previously worked part-time hours have increased, and therefore have no available time for volunteering. Similarly, some volunteers that were not previously working have had to take up employment as financial pressures affect their own families.

Recruiting volunteers remained a challenge this year leading us to review our recruitment and training processes and procedures. We looked at different methods of advertising our volunteer opportunities, including having an advert on the back of a local bus! We hope that over the next year this will increase the number of volunteers enquiring to support families in their community. We have introduced the option for volunteers to complete some of our preparation training online by developing a Hybrid Preparation Course, which combines face to face sessions with digital learning. This enables volunteers to begin their training sooner.

In both our core service and family mentor service, we have seen many more families experiencing financial difficulties due to the cost-of-living crisis, increase in energy and fuel costs, redundancy and/or unemployment, and we are helping more families access the local foodbank and debt advice support. We have been able to help some families by providing essential food parcels and budgeting advice.

In June 2022 Colleen Smith started a Family support role in the scheme, nineteen additional families received support in the first year including families who have children or adults with disabilities, learning needs, life limiting illness or multiple social care complexities.

Colleen draws on her experience and uses child directed play, intensive interaction, Makaton, Incredible Years, reducing parental conflict resolution and 123 Magic behaviour program, whichever method to support the families situation while focusing on communication, social and emotional development with children, parents who have very little if any respite, have time for themselves, time to focus on their own needs or one child's needs at a time.

**"Support has helped massively, being able to focus one to one, my son is now showing anticipation, will make a sound at the appropriate times. He watches when I uses Makaton and holds my fingers when counting down characters in his favourite nursery rhyme".**

This year we offered a combination of volunteer led support in the home, group support, baby massage courses, one to one input from our family support worker and our SSBC Family Mentor Service in Aspley and this year, we have worked extensively alongside our SSBC partners and other providers of the Family Mentor Service, to explore avenues and opportunities to sustain investment in this vital support to families beyond the current contract. This work will continue next year, as we build on the success of 8 years of the service.



Finally, a huge thank you to our wonderful staff teams who have been, as always, quite simply phenomenal. Their care, compassion and commitment to local families shines through in everything they do and is evident every single day. We are so very proud of every one of them, and so thankful we have the best colleagues who support each other as brilliantly as they do their volunteers and families.

**Susan's visits made a huge difference to Jessica. She was able to "off-load" some of her problems which made a real difference to her mood, patience and tolerance levels in the days following Susan's visit. Susan would also help with the children which gave Jessica a chance to catch up with household chores. Susan became a friend who was a very good listener. She helped Jessica to process and consider the issues that she was facing so that she could take steps to address these.**

**Volunteer visits ended after 10 months by which time Jessica was coping much better.**

**Jessica would definitely recommend Home-Start Nottingham – and has done. The most important thing that the volunteer did was to listen to her needs and respond to these.**



### Group at Clifton

Since April 2022 we continued to fund our family group ourselves.

We had our regular families attend and the children continued to 'blossom' especially in their independence and confidence. Our regular volunteer Kulwinder was not able to support us as often as she had in the past due to an important trip visiting her new grandchild in America. Huge congratulations to her and her family and enjoy your grandparent duties!



In May 2022 we arranged for the Nottingham Lifesaving Society to attend and offer information and guidance on 'save a babies life skills' workshop. Parents and children both got involved. A huge thank you to the charity to what is such an important skill and awareness to have.

In July 2022 we were very honoured to be visited by staff on behalf of the Children's Commissioner to talk to the parents to gather their views on the local children's support services offered to them and what they felt could be improved. We felt this was so important to meet parents face to face and a chance for them to be open and honest.

In February 2023 we were contacted by the Rock Stead Foundation, and they kindly offered to run a free workshop for our families. We didn't have a huge number attend but from the music provided by the children it sounded like we had our very own Home-Start rock band! Some of the children were a little unsure at first but they all had a go and played an instrument, many for the first time. A fun time had by all!

By the new year some of our families finished attending the group due to children moving onto nursery. At this point due to numbers unfortunately we came to the difficult decision to close the group. From the group we observed friendships had been made and some families also accessed other activities within the community. We think you and your children are amazing and wish you all well for the future! A big thank you to Tracey – Parkgate Community Centre Manager for her support.

I can't thank enough the help and support I received to run the group from all of the volunteers. We value and appreciate all your hard work. Thank you to Jennifer and everyone that helped run the sessions.

To end our family group, we treated all the families to a fun time at the Eden soft play centre. It was so lovely to all be together and see the children have a great time. Children loved the group, and we have all benefitted so much.

**Marion's help was mainly of a practical nature. She became a friend who established a good relationship with the twins. She would play with them so that Rhianna could get on with other chores and duties. Of great importance to Rhianna was the support that Marion gave in enabling her to leave the house with the twins. Marion is very experienced in childcare and she is a mother and grandmother so that she was also able to give Rhianna advice on how to cope.**



**We supported  
111 families**

**159 parents were  
supported**

**We supported 253  
children  
136 male/117 female**

**Over the year we had  
97 volunteers and 10  
trustees**

**66% of parents felt more confident at end of support**

**58% more confident in managing children's behaviour**

**74% parents said their mental health had improved**

**88% of parents said they felt less lonely and isolated**



**We recruited 8 new  
volunteers**

**Our volunteers gave  
10,725 hours of  
support**



Family and volunteer events

We have treated our well deserving volunteers to coffee & cake on a few occasions throughout the year, visiting Floralands and more recently we paid a visit to the Pudding Pantry. This meet-up was really well attended and we had the opportunity to introduce a couple of our trustees to the volunteers. There was lots of mingling & conversations taking place, unfortunately Catherine got everyone's hopes up when menus were distributed! (3 course dinner coming up!!!!). They were quickly collected back in when we discovered cake wasn't on the menu! Sorry everyone.



We were able to offer our families and volunteers the chance to go to the Circus, here is some feedback we received! " It was amazing! We really enjoyed it, it was our first time going to anything like that and we will definitely go again. It was really good that we could do this together as a family"



John Lewis offered a truly amazing opportunity for a magical Christmas to some of our lucky families who were randomly selected. The experience included gifts, Christmas tree, decorations and also food for Christmas dinner supplied by Waitrose. Here is a picture of one of the trees lit up, but before the ornaments were added.



"I would just like to say a massive thank you to John Lewis for the amazing Christmas that me and my family had. My two little boys loved their presents and couldn't wait to get them out of their packaging and play with them. My partner loved his aftershave and is very pleased that he got an aftershave he's always wanted but could never afford. I am absolutely in love with my perfume and onesies—I haven't stopped wearing them since I got them. The food was amazing, was not expecting all of the food we received and was very happy as we were panicking that we were not going to survive over Christmas. Thank you so so so much from a very happy family. I would also like to say a massive thank you to Jess at John Lewis in Nottingham for helping us pick everything from the store x"

"I am extremely ecstatic with the giveaway I had, I had some lovely things and happy with them also the food was amazing. I was grateful that this was granted to me after a very difficult time and I highly appreciated it very much. It made my Christmas so special and the best one yet xx"



We were also so lucky to be able to provide a large food hamper for every family at Christmas.

During the Christmas period we also hosted a Christmas Party for all families which was hosted at the Clifton group venue. Santa was there in his own beautiful Grotto giving presents, free play crafts were also available and a snack box to take home. We also had the pleasure of meeting Olaf and Elsa from Frozen who got us all dancing and playing games, he also brought his own snow machine !!



In July 2022 we had a summer trip to Wheelgate Park, all the families that attended had a fabulous day and the children had the opportunity to pet the animals, go on rides and play in the splash park which created lasting memories for them all.



Thank you so much to Nottingham Playhouse for the tickets for our families to see the pantomime in January 2023. Everyone who attended had a great time and the children especially, loved it.

New members of staff

I joined the team as a Family Support Co-ordinator in November 2022 and I feel lucky to be part of such a great team. It's a pleasure to work alongside the skills and great humour of the whole team in Nottingham and to be part of a service making a real difference to the lives of families in Nottinghamshire.



As co-ordinators we work with an amazing team of volunteers who offer way more than their time and energy. I've been blown away by the empathy and generosity of the volunteer team here. Seeing volunteers build such meaningful relationships with families who are working through challenges and the real difference this makes for children and parents is one of the best parts of the job.

I've enjoyed facilitating the preparation course for a recent cohort of new volunteers who are now beginning their links with families and working with the team to attend community events. Through promoting the service and making links with partner organisations we're expanding our network for potential volunteer recruitment and raising awareness of support available.

Before coming to Home-Start Nottingham, I worked in Women's services in a person centred and trauma informed way and I've been able to build on these approaches for supporting volunteers in their work. I am interested in the relationships families build and the family's role within the services and networks they are a part of, I hope to put this to good use for the benefit Home-Start families! Thank you Team Nottingham—Cesca Diamond

My name is Catherine (you've probably seen me around!) I had the privilege of being offered the co-ordinator post back in June 2022. I have two children (who are grown up now) but way back in 1996 when they were small I wasn't enjoying being a parent, even though me and my husband wanted children so desperately, I wasn't aware that I wouldn't love my babies from first sight and had no clue as to what to do with them or what they wanted from me. I was diagnosed with post-natal depression and this slowly developed to include anxiety and a fear of leaving the house. I was fortunate to have a lovely health visitor that referred me to Home-Start Ashfield.



Initially I was really concerned that my children would be taken off me (I didn't know who Home-Start were), I eventually let a volunteer in after pretending not to be in on two occasions. She was absolutely lovely and supported me for a few months and this led to me putting my big girl brave pants on and I visited a local Home-Start group. This was the best thing in the world for me, I made friends, my children made friends, gradually my confidence grew, my children got their mummy back and my husband got his wife back. Don't get me wrong I still had up and down days and it was a slow process but to be able to go to a group with people who felt exactly like me, made me feel that I wasn't alone.

I eventually felt well enough to enquire about a basic childcare course, this completed I went on to lead in the creche & surrounding creches that were linked with Home-Start Ashfield. Following this my whole career has been based around Early Years Care & Education. I also volunteered myself for approximately 10 years, supporting numerous families around the Ashfield area, some of which I am still in touch and& firm friends with.

The past year has been so wonderful working with Home Start Nottingham, it almost feels like I've come 'home' and my colleagues are not only understanding and supportive but also 'like family' - Catherine Allsopp

Reserves Policy

The strong financial performance detailed resulted in year-end total reserves increasing to £628,109.

The trustees confirm and review annually the policy in respect of reserves held by Home-Start Nottingham, considering the risk, activity and commitments of the charity. Trustees have agreed to retain a level of free (unrestricted) reserves amounting to three months running costs, excluding costs incurred and consequently covered by the commissioned services contract with SSBC. This amounts to approximately £42,000 as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

The Charity's cashflow in the year was also strong, generating an inflow of £103,907 (2022: £139,713) which increased the balance at the bank at the year-end to £746,830.

The strong year end cash and reserve balances provide the trustees with confidence that despite the following uncertainties

- The uncertain future funding landscape including the ending of the Small Steps Big Changes project in March 2025 eluded to above.
- The continuing cuts imposed by Government on local services
- The impact of continuing high inflation in the UK and resultant cost of living difficulties being experienced by local families,

Home-Start Nottingham will be able to continue its activities and provide ongoing support to families for the foreseeable future.

Bob Paton  
Trustee Treasurer

Thank you to our funders ....

And also to all those other organisations and individuals who have made donations to us this year and helped us make a huge difference to families lives.

Aspley Family Mentor Team Volunteers

The year of 2022 saw the restrictions being lifted from the pandemic and the Family Mentor Service and groups back up and running. The volunteers were back to supporting the groups with a sigh of relief and continuing what they love doing, supporting the Family groups and working with families and children. We had to say goodbye to a couple of volunteers as they moved onto pastures new.



It never ceases to amaze me the passion and commitment the volunteers bring to the role.

Volunteers often mention that they feel part of a great team and working with the Family Mentors. Positive feedback from the Family mentors continues and how much they appreciate the support from volunteers.

It's great to see volunteers enjoying what they do and seeing volunteers grow in confidence. It's always a great pleasure to work with volunteers and be part of their journey.

I'm truly Thankful for their kindness and appreciate all that they do.

"Its great getting to know parents and feel really privileged that some parents put their trust in me to confide in me" I feel part of one big team" Jennifer Volunteer



"I enjoy it so much playing with the children and watching them grow "- Katie Volunteer

"Just want to thank you Haley for all your hard work. It is lovely working with you and you are definitely one of us."- F/M

"Active Play would not be the same without Jennifer" -F/M



Volunteers have contributed 322 hours

Volunteers have supported Family Groups and Events

Our volunteers enjoyed some much deserved pampering to celebrate Volunteers Week 2022. Huge thank you to Nicola and Natalie for giving up your time and providing your services free of charge for our wonderful volunteers.



Fundraising

We have so much to be grateful for over the past year, companies, organisations and individuals have been so generous and here are just a few:

Thank you so much to VF Northern Europe Limited for the amazing donation of Easter eggs for our families.

A huge thank you to Arnold Dental Care for the books and chocolates for families at Christmas, it really is appreciated.

Thank you for the fantastic donations and gifts we have received throughout the year which will help us this Christmas from BT Openreach, White Stuff, B & M Stores, John Lewis & Partners, Waitrose & Partners, The Great Nottingham Christmas Toy Appeal and those individuals who have also donated - your generosity has been completely overwhelming and we cannot thank you enough.



We have also received funds from GEM Cash for Kids Midlands, this has been used to purchase shop vouchers, we also had an additional donation of tinned food/ dry ingredients from Waitrose, this was used to create our own Emergency Foodbank. "Home-Start Mini-Mart".

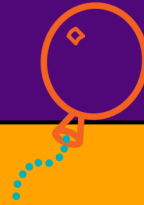


Stuart cycled from Thailand to Singapore, approximately 2000 km. His journey finished in mid March. He would like to make a difference to children's lives in Nottingham so has chose Home-Start Nottingham as his preferred charity and we would like to say a massive thank you to Stuart and his mum, Doreen for their support of our charity. It was an amazing thing did for us.

Sara and Jo from the office together with Ravelle (one of our Trustees) and 9 others including volunteers, friends and family did the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge (24.5 miles) in one long, long day!! They raised over £3,200 in sponsors and Gift Aid, which we are absolutely blown away with. It was a hard day but everyone did amazingly, also a massive thank you to everyone who sponsored and made it all worthwhile.



We would like to say a huge thank you to Gail and Catherine for giving up their time and running a stall at Calverton car boot sale. Also a big thank you also to everyone who donated items for us to sell. All proceeds go towards helping us to continue supporting more families.



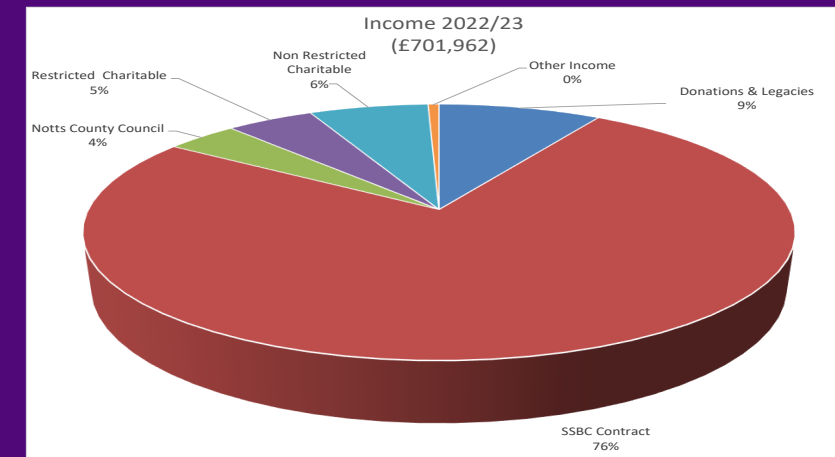
"Julie's visit each week have been a lifesaver. I can vent how I feel and be listened to and it has really helped with my mental health."

When situations were difficult, Gracie says she finds herself thinking "What would Julie suggest I do?" and this helped her to cope. Gracie would, and has, recommended Home-Start to others. She describes the support that she received from Home-Start Nottingham as an absolute salvation.

Treasurers report

Financial Review

In the financial year ended March 31, 2023, Home-Start Nottingham experienced yet another strong financial performance. Total income received for the year 2022-23 was a record high at £701,962 (2022: £672,802), an increase on the previous year of 4%. The total revenue comprised £591,371 of restricted income (2022: £615,611) and £110,591 of unrestricted income (2022: £57,191). Expenditure totaled £617,220 (2022: £534,043).



It should be noted that the commissioned services SSBC contract in its present form is due to cease at the end of March 2025. In addition, it is likely that the last year of the contract from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2025 will be acutely impacted as services begin to rundown towards the contract end date of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2025. Currently it is uncertain as to what services, if any, will remain post March 2025. It can be seen above that the SSBC contract makes up approximately 75% of Home-Start Nottingham's revenue and as such the loss of revenue on this scale will have a significant impact on the operations of Home-Start Nottingham. Despite this significant impact, the Trustees believe that the financial resources of the Home-Start Nottingham will allow the charity to manage the anticipated impact of any future reduction and potential cessation of the commission services contract with SSBC on its operations for the foreseeable future.

Throughout the financial year the Charity continued to take decisive action wherever it could to control its cost base without jeopardising the essential services that families depend on us to provide. The resultant net income of £84,742 (2022: £138,759) although reduced on last year is nevertheless seen as a very positive result.

Aspley Family Mentor Team

2022/2023 was a good year for our Aspley Family Mentor Team as we continued to make a difference to the children and families we saw. In excess of 2300 face to face Small Steps at Home visits have been delivered across the 254 families on our caseload. We received a higher level of referrals for families wanting to access our service with 63% of these going on to be paired with a Family Mentor.

94% of the Ages and Stages questionnaires that were due were completed by Family Mentors with parents, helping parents to be aware of their children's development and enable us to offer additional activities and support as required.

We have delivered nearly 200 community groups and themed events; seeing a total of 956 children! This includes a variety of groups such as our regularly attended Story and Rhyme Time, Cook and Play, Bump to Baby Play and Baby Massage. In addition our Outdoor Adventures, Halloween Party, Winter Wonderland and Watch Me Grow events which have been very popular!

One of our families said... 'I love coming to Bump to Baby playgroup on Thursday mornings. As we are new to the area I think this is the perfect way to meet local mums and share your struggles of bad days and happy good days. Being a mum, this is the best way of making friends.'

Outdoor Adventures was great fun. We've built up the resources we have for children there, including a mud kitchen that was kindly made by a local business which the children loved playing with!

There was a queue outside the Hope Centre at the start time for our Pumpkin Party. Families, many new to attending groups, enjoyed accessing the soft play and joining in the Halloween themed activities.

Our Watch Me Grow event was for local families who did not have a Family Mentor. It gave us the opportunity to share what we do and gain more Family mentor sign-ups. We had Family Mentors present to talk to families about what we do and give demonstrations of Baby Massage and Cook and Play recipes. We also had the added treat of a professional photographer taking pregnancy and baby photos!

We look forward to continuing our great work in 2023-2024!



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A HOME-START VOLUNTEER OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS OUR WORK PLEASE CONTACT US BY EMAILING [INFO@HSN.ORG.UK](mailto:info@hsn.org.uk)

Home-Start Nottingham,  
Suite 9, Arnold Business Centre,  
Brookfield Gardens, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 7ER

Telephone: 0115 962 4262  
Email: [info@hsn.org.uk](mailto:info@hsn.org.uk)

Registered charity number 1097005  
Company limited by guarantee number 04698694

SCAN ME