

Strategic Plan

Home-Start Bracknell Forest Strategic Plan 2015-2018



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1. Executive Summary

- a) Home-Start Bracknell Forest was established in 1993 to provide a service to parents with young children in the Bracknell area. The aim is through early intervention to prevent family crisis and breakdown and to promote well-being and healthy lifestyle.
- b) Home-Start Bracknell Forest is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It has adopted the Standards and Methods of Practice laid down by Home-start UK and is subject to a robust Quality Assurance system.
- c) The Scheme works closely with the Local Authority and currently receives the majority of its funding from Bracknell Forest Council through a Service Level Agreement.
- d) In 2014/15 the Scheme supported 87 families and offered more than 1200 hours of volunteer support.
- e) Home-Start Bracknell Forest employs 6 part-time staff (less than 2.5 FTE) and aims to have 30 active family visiting volunteers in January of each year following the completion of the annual Volunteer Preparation Course. We also run a very successful Family Group.
- f) The Scheme has a small but very experienced and highly committed trustee board which manages the scheme. The board reports each year in the Annual Report which is presented at the AGM.
- g) Monitoring of performance is carried out through the annual statistics return, ongoing Quality Assurance, the Service Level Agreement Reports and the annual Action Plan.
- h) Home-Start Bracknell Forest seeks to enhance its performance and service delivery through its developmental objectives.

2. Introduction

Home-Start Bracknell Forest was established in 1993 to provide a service to parents with young children in the Bracknell area and continues to offer regular support, friendship and practical help to local families. It is very much rooted in the community and works closely with local services, both statutory and voluntary.

Home-Start offers a unique service, recruiting and training volunteers, who are usually parents themselves, to visit families at home who have at least one child under 5. The service works with families who are experiencing difficulties or suffering stress and those with identified needs.

Our Vision

We want to see a society in which every parent has the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life.

Our Core Belief

Home-Start Bracknell Forest believes that children need a happy and secure childhood and that parents play the key role in giving their children a good start in life and helping them to achieve their full potential.

Aims

Home-Start Bracknell Forest works to strengthen and enable families more fully to reach their potential. The aim is through early intervention to prevent family crisis and breakdown and to promote well-being and healthy lifestyle.

In order to accomplish this, we help to

- strengthen parenting skills
- develop the social and life skills of parents and children

- raise the self-esteem and self-confidence of parents and children.

This is achieved through

- offering support, friendship and practical assistance
- visiting families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each individual can be respected and protected
- offering, where appropriate, additional support through the delivery of the weekly Family Group
- reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and encouraging enjoyment in family life
- developing relationships with families and adopting a flexible approach that takes account of different needs
- encouraging parents' strengths and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their own children
- encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to make effective use of the support and services available within the community

Principles for Service Delivery

Home-Start Bracknell Forest has adopted five guiding principles which underpin the delivery of the service.

These are

- Effective Governance
- A High Quality Service
- Embedded within the Community
- Safe and accountable
- Free to families

Strategic planning is based on ensuring these are achieved as an essential foundation from which to plan the development of the scheme and the setting of new objectives.

Legal Status

Home-Start Bracknell Forest is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It has a board of trustees drawn from the local community who are responsible for the effective management of the scheme.

Home-Start Bracknell Forest has adopted the Standards and Methods of Practice laid down by Home-Start UK. This is a mandatory requirement for the Home-Start Agreement signed between the local scheme and the national organisation. Home-Start UK provides training, guidance and support to local schemes to ensure consistent and quality support to parents and children across the UK. Home-Start UK support is underpinned by a robust Quality Assurance system which covers all aspects of the scheme.

3. The Local Context

Bracknell Forest is a small unitary authority with a population of about 115,000. It lies 28 miles from London within the county of Berkshire. It is made up of the two towns of Bracknell and Sandhurst and the parishes of Warfield, Binfield, Winkfield, Crowthorne and North Ascot. Bracknell Forest is one of the least deprived areas of the country but poverty has risen and there are pockets of deprivation with six wards having child poverty figures about the average for the South East and one above the national average.

In terms of ethnicity the 2011 Census showed that 84.9% of the population was White British with an increase in BME from 9.4% in 2001 to 15.1% in 2011. The age profile of Bracknell Forest is younger than the national one with 25% of the population aged between 0-18 years. There has been an increase in the 0-4 age group from 7,699 to 8,027.

Home-Start Bracknell Forest works closely with the Local Authority and receives the majority of its funding from Bracknell Forest Council through a Service Level Agreement. The Town Council and most of the local parishes make a small contribution to funding and the Local Authority also brokers some funds from the Clinical Commissioning Group.

We continue to maintain our very strong links with Children’s Centres both through their Advisory Boards and through our contact with referrers based there. Links with the Health Visiting Team remain particularly strong, not only through referrals but also through Health Visitor attendance at our Family Group sessions, which take place up to three times each term. We also work closely with Children’s Social Care as the need arises and for the small number of families we support with Child Protection or Child In Need plans.

There are five Home-Start schemes in Berkshire covering the majority of the county. We meet together with Home-Starts in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire on a regular basis to share practice.

4. Current Overview

Our core service has continued to deliver regular and timely support to families in need within Bracknell Forest. Our system of initial assessment and regular reviews ensures that our support remains firmly focused on the family’s identified needs.

Performance Statistics (2014/15)

Total Number of Families Supported	87
Families supported by Home-Visiting	55

Number of Active Volunteers (Current)	20
Number of Hours of Support given in 2014	1,288.5
Number of Referrals in 2014	68
Additional Project to Core Work	Family Group
Average Cost of Running per annum	£88,000
Sources of Funding	Local Authority £61,000 Bracknell and Ascot CCG £13,334 Town and Parish Councils c £4,000 Additional funds from grants, individual and corporate donations and fundraising

Staff and Volunteers

Home-Start Bracknell Forest currently employs a Scheme Organiser (30 hours), a Family Co-ordinator (30 hours) and an Office Administrator (15 hours). In addition, to provide our very successful Family Group, we employ a Family Group Organiser (10 hours term-time only) and two Family Group Play Workers (4 hours per week each).

We aim to have 30 active volunteers in January of each year following the completion of our annual Volunteer Preparation Course.

All staff and volunteers receive regular one-to-one support and supervision in line with Home-Start UK guidelines. There is a well-honed appraisal system for staff.

Governance

The Scheme currently has a very small but highly committed trustee board with only five full trustees and a sixth co-opted trustee who has successfully been through the recruitment and selection process and

who will be put forward to the next AGM for formal voting on to the Board. The trustees carry out the roles of Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, a newly appointed Company Secretary since incorporation and an ICT specialist. It is a very experienced group of trustees.

The Audit of Knowledge Skills & Experience carried out in April 2015 showed a huge range of strength in all aspects of management, human resources, presentation, monitoring and evaluation and areas specific to Home-Start in relation to children and families. Gaps were identified in communications and fundraising. Further recruitment of trustees is clearly identified in the strategic action plan.

Quality Assurance

All aspects of the scheme are underpinned by the Home-Start Agreement and the Standards & Methods of Practice, together with a raft of policies and guidance. There is a robust QA system based on annual self-assessment and four yearly reviews carried out by Home-Start UK.

The last review was carried out in 2011 with a very positive result and our next review will take place in the autumn of 2015. This will look at eight areas: governance & strategic planning, learning & improving, managing resources, managing staff, managing volunteers, managing information, welfare of children & supporting families and working in partnership.

5. Forward Planning

In addition to the action plan we have a number of developmental objectives which we want to achieve over the next three years:-

1. Smooth Transition into new premises
2. Accreditation of the Prep course
3. Closer partnership with other local Home-Starts
4. Development of work in partnership with other agencies to enhance our core offer

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5. Diversification of our funding sources
 6. Development of a fresh communication strategy
 7. Improved reporting of impact measures
 8. Development of a joint training plan for trustees, staff and volunteers
 9. More highly developed social media

APPENDICES

Principles underpinning Service Delivery for Home-Start Bracknell Forest

Effective Governance

- Committed board of trustees
- Clear roles & responsibilities
- Regular trustee meetings
- Election/Re-election of trustees by AGM
- Signed up to Home-Start UK Agreement
- Supported by Management Group
- Incorporated with Constitution & Articles of Governance

High Quality Service

- High quality staff
- Trained volunteers
- Clear home visiting targets
- Ongoing training, support & supervision
- High quality Family Group
- Clear policies & procedures
- Volunteer handbook
- Efficient office use with effective IT systems
- Ongoing service evaluation

Embedded within the Community

- Clear communications plan
- Close relationship with Local Authority & Councils
- Working partnership with Health
- Working relationship with other agencies
- Website & Social Media

Safe and Accountable

- Accountable to national organisation (QA)
- Trustees accountable to membership
- Regular reporting to AGM, funders etc
- Regular supervision & appraisal of staff
- Regular supervision of volunteers
- Clear safeguarding policy & procedures
- Safer Recruitment
- Business continuity plan

Free to Families

- Sustainable funding
- Financial strategy
- Fundraising strategy

Home-Start Bracknell Forest Business Plan 2016-2017

AIM	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	ACTION REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON/S	TIMESCALE	STATUS
Effective Governance					
Committed Board of Trustees	All trustees attend meetings and play an active part in the scheme. New trustees are recruited as required	Further trustee recruitment Identify a Vice Chair	Chair	Ongoing asap	Trustees recruited
Clear Roles & Responsibilities	All areas of responsibility are covered. Gaps identified. Training needs met.	Training needs identified	Chair	Sept 2016	
Regular Trustees Meetings	Trustees meet at least 6 times a year	Calendar of Meetings for each four month period 2015/6	Chair		
Election/Re-election of Trustees by AGM	Each trustee is elected at the AGM and trustees are re-elected every 3 years	Trustees for re-election identified	Trustee Board	July 2016	
Safeguarding	All trustees have current DBS Review of Safeguarding responsibilities	Review at Trustee Meeting	Chair (designated Safeguarding Trustee)		
Supported by Advisory Group	Meetings are held with the wider group twice a year	Review need, purpose and membership	Chair		
Clear policies & procedures	All policies reviewed, up-to-date and signed	Cycle of regular reviews - policy calendar	Trustees & Scheme Manager	Ongoing	Calendar in use

AIM	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	ACTION REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON/S	TIMESCALE	STATUS
High Quality Service					
High Quality Staff	Safer recruitment, good level of retention, targets met	Regular supervision, support and appraisal. CPD undertaken	Trustees	Ongoing	In place
Trained Volunteers	Sufficient number of vols to meet target	Recruit & train new volunteers as necessary	Scheme Manager	Prep Course in Autumn 2016	
Clear home visiting targets	Support 60 families per year through home visiting	Retain & recruit sufficient home visiting volunteers	Scheme Manager	Prep Course in Autumn 2016	
Ongoing training, support and supervision	Regular support meetings and training. Regular supervision	Calendar of meetings and supervision	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	
High quality family group	Family Group sessions are meeting the identified needs of families attending All staff trained	Identify training needs through supervision and appraisal	Scheme Manager and FG Organiser	Ongoing	
Staff handbook	A comprehensive guide for all staff	Virtual staff handbook to be collated	Designated trustee (FG)	?	
Efficient office use with effective IT systems	Backup/recovery systems have been put in place..	Annual audit of office efficiency	Designated trustee (TL)	Annual	
Ongoing service evaluation	Meeting QA standards and SLA targets	Regular review of QA self-assessments New SLA to be agreed	Chair & Scheme Manager	Ongoing	

AIM	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	ACTION REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON/S	TIMESCALE	STATUS
Embedded within the Community					
Clear communications plan	Communications Plan actioned. Raised awareness of the scheme in the community.	Communications Plan implemented and success measures regularly reviewed	Chair	Ongoing	
Close relationship with Local Authority and councils	Integral to LA strategy and continued core funding	SLA and regular meetings	Chair & Scheme Manager	Ongoing	
Working partnership with Health	Working Partnership with Bracknell and Ascot CCG	Relationship needs strengthening.		Ongoing	
Working relationship with other agencies	Partnership work with the Children's Centres	Continued presence on new advisory board	Scheme Manager/Family Co-ordinator	Ongoing	
Website	Accessible and informative website	Website regularly updated	Scheme Manager/Administrator	Ongoing	

AIM	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	ACTION REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON/S	TIMESCALE	STATUS
Safe & Accountable					
Linked to national organisation	Meet requirements of HS-UK		Chair & Scheme Manager		
Trustees accountable to membership	Trustees report to membership at AGM	Annual AGM held, reports made	Trustees	Annually in July	In place
Regular reporting to AGM, funders, H-S UK etc.	Annual report to AGM, ? report to LA, Mesh reporting	Reports presented	Trustees & Scheme Manager	Throughout the year	In place
Regular supervision and appraisal of staff	Staff appraised twice yearly and supervised regularly	Calendar in place	Chair & Scheme Manager	According to calendar	In place
Regular supervision of volunteers	Volunteers supervised regularly	Regular meetings held, record of supervision	Scheme Manager	Ongoing	In place
Clear safeguarding policy & procedures	Safeguarding policy and procedures and Code of Conduct reviewed annually All volunteers complete Universal LSCB training and all staff working directly with families undertake targeted (level 3) training	Policy and procedures updated as required. Everyone signed up. Training completed by new volunteers prior to placement with a family and updated every 3 years by all volunteers	Trustees & Scheme Manager Scheme Manager	Annual Ongoing	
Business continuity plan	Business Risk assessment carried out Agreed actions implemented	Risk assessment regularly reviewed	Chair, designated trustee, Scheme Manager		

AIM	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	ACTION REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON/S	TIMESCALE	STATUS
Free to Families					
Sustainable funding	Grant renewed for 2016-17 Continued support from town and parish councils Reliable sources of funding identified and funding secured	Meet all SLA targets Annual application Identify a range of funding sources. Apply for funding	All Scheme Manager All	Annual According to timetable Ongoing	
Financial strategy	Clear financial strategy in place	Annual budget forecast Costs and expenditure scrutinised	Treasurer	Ongoing	
Fundraising strategy	Robust funding strategy in place	Create and implement funding strategy	Trustees	Ongoing	

Three Year Development Plan 2015-18

Area of Development	Actions
1. Smooth Transition into new premises	
Year One	Agreement to new location by Trustees. Movement plan put in place. Move effected, staff settled in to new offices. Family Group settled into new hall. Storage requirements identified and appropriate storage acquired. All paperwork updated with new location, IT and telecommunications transferred, move publicised.
2. Accreditation of the Prep course	
Year One	Training from H-S UK. Run current course.
Year Two	Revise current course to meet new requirements. Deliver new course. Review. Identify qualification criteria and select assessors .
Year Three	Achieve accreditation
3. Closer partnership with other local Home-Starts	
Each of the three years	Attendance at BOBs Meetings for Chairs, Scheme Managers and Administrators, Bracknell Forest to host Chairs meeting (May 2016). Attend Link Events

4. Development of work in partnership with other agencies to enhance our core offer	
Year One	Develop relationships with other services in the same building. Meet with new Head of Health Visiting Service and Head of FSAs. Maintain place on the management committees of the two Children's Centres. Review the role of the advisory group.
Year Two	Develop the role of the advisory group. Develop a partnership plan.
5. Diversification of our funding sources	
Year One	Identify trustee to lead on this. Set up Funding subgroup. Set parameters for new funding strategy
Year Two	Funding Strategy in place with action plan. New funding sources identified, contacts made.
Year Three	Action plan reviewed
6. Development of a fresh communication strategy	
Year One	Identify trustee to lead on this. Set up Communications subgroup. Set parameters for new strategy
Year Two	Strategy document in place with action plan

Year Three	Action plan reviewed
7. Improved reporting of impact measures	
Year One	Improve use of MESH. Mesh statistics to be presented regularly to Trustees. Impact to be subject of Trustee/Staff Annual Away Day
Year Two	Identify key reporting measures to share with LA and funders
8. Development of a joint training plan for trustees, staff and volunteers	
Year One	Carry out skills audit of Trustees, analyse gaps and training needs. Identify training needs of staff through supervision and appraisal. Identify training needs of volunteers through supervision and group meetings. Identify unmet needs at end of Prep Course. Rank training in terms of essential , desirable and personal interest. Identify training providers. Prepare initial plan and potential costs.
Year Two	Implement plan and review after six months
Year Three	Develop a cycle of planning, costing and review
9. More highly developed social media	
Year One	Identified staff member and trustee to develop social media. Meetings organised between staff member and trustee to plan development and look at requirements and costing. Trustees to approve.