

HOME-START BRISTOL

Volunteer Newsletter May/June 2023



Welcome to our volunteer newsletter - a resource for supporting and keeping in touch with our volunteers

Home-Start UK Volunteers' Festival 2023

The Home-Start Volunteer Festival runs from 29th May - 9th June 2023 and will celebrate all things volunteer related because volunteers are the heart of Home-Start.

Here at Home-Start Bristol we want to say a massive Thank You to all of you for your support and dedication, you make a huge difference to families and to children and we really couldn't do it without you.

Read on to find out more about our new groups and how you might be able to get involved, staff updates and one of you answers Home-Start's questions...



Join us for coffee



Whether you are currently supporting a family or not, whether you are freshly trained or an old hand, we'd love to invite you to meet up with other volunteers around a coffee.

Drop in at the **Tobacco Factory Café** on **June 22nd** any time between 10am and 12pm!

Parking can be tricky in this area so please consider bikes or buses. Feel free to use the Aldi car park, but in that case make sure you stay within the 1h30 limit. On street parking is also available (paid for on the north side of North Street, free but usually hard to find on the south side).



Groups for Families - could you help?

Mums in Mind Groups

You may be aware that we are now offering group-work as well as home visiting to our families. The aim is to help us manage the number of referrals that we receive more effectively and also to offer a peer support opportunity to our families, most of whom are isolated in their communities. Some of you are already offering support to groups, but we are still looking for more volunteers. If there is a group running near you and you have some extra capacity, do let us know. Families can also be referred when home visiting is coming to an end but they need a bit of extra support.

The Mums in Mind groups are for women with children under the age of two who are isolated, feeling anxious and who may be struggling in baby's first year. The groups are based on an informal peer support model, with the main focus on talking and meeting up with other mums in a similar situation.

During the Summer term groups will be running at the following Children's Centres:

St Anne's on Monday afternoons from 1.00 until 2.30 from June 5th - 17th July

Hartcliffe on Thursday afternoons 1.00 - 2.30 from June 8th—20th July

Stoke Park on Thursday mornings 10.00—11.30 from June 8th—20th July



Multiples Groups

For families of twins and triplets groups are running at: **Oldbury Court Children's Centre** on the last Friday of the month 10.00—11.30 and at **Inns Court community centre** on the last Monday of the month between 1.00—2.00

Best Start Groups

The Best Start groups are for families with children under the age of 3 who would benefit from building positive relationships with their children and with other families. The groups run for 8 weeks, with a focus on parents and children having fun together and finding out about issues like budgeting, healthy eating, play and parenting tips in a supportive environment.

This term groups are running at the following Children's Centres:

Patchway Tuesday mornings 10.00—11.30

Kingswood: Wednesday afternoons 1.00—2.30

What do women think about the groups?

S referred herself and her 10 month old son to our first Mums in Mind group. Her reason for wanting to attend was to have, "support with my anxiety and depression that I've suffered for four years now". She had been informed about the group via her Health Visitor who had observed that her mental health was deteriorating, partly due to having a small baby, partly due to historical domestic violence, a chaotic home, and very little to no support network around her.

The first session of the group it was obvious how nervous S was, but she also contributed the most!

She spoke at length about her true feelings about being a parent, negative as well as some positives, and was happy to offer her advice/ support/ ideas to other mums, especially if the subject matter was to do with parenting she had experienced with her older children. She would regularly comment "this group gets me through the week", highlighting how lonely and isolated new mums/ parents can be. S would often state weekly, "I didn't think I could come this week but I forced myself out of the house and I'm so glad I did".

Would you like to help with the groups?

Volunteering in groups involves supporting mums and their babies with activities, snacks and discussion as well as helping with setting up and tidying away. Please contact the office or let your Coordinator know if you are interested.

Who's who at Home-Start Bristol

We are happy to let you know that we have some new staff joining our team and in case you don't know everyone here at Home-Start Bristol here is a full list of who's who:

Terri Fletcher - Manager

Alex Wyatt - Senior Coordinator (Services)

Helen Greer - Senior Coordinator (Business Development) new post

Ina Hume - Family Support Coordinator

Marie Wathen - Family Support Coordinator

Beth Milne - Family Support Coordinator

Judith Case - Family Support Coordinator

Sarah West - Family Support Coordinator

Anna Pope - Groupworker

Tania Chiddy - Groupworker

Katherine Stephens - Marketing and Volunteers administrator

Becky Lockyer - Data and Finance Administrator

You can also visit our website 'Meet the Team' page to see what we look like!

[Meet The Team | Home-Start Bristol \(homestartbristol.org.uk\)](https://homestartbristol.org.uk)

Diary sheets are going electronic!

Your Coordinator will discuss this with you at your next supervision but if you're keen to get started please email heleng@homestartbristol.org and we can arrange some one to one training.

If you need a toy bag let your coordinator know and we can arrange to bring one to a match visit or you can pop into the office. If you're in South Bristol but don't want to travel to the office please let us know and we can arrange a pick up point in South Bristol.

Volunteer exit interviews

We're now offering exit interviews for any volunteers leaving and working to make changes and adaptations to our service based on your feedback. With that in mind...

Would you like to update your match preference form?

We rely on the information you provide to ensure that we make good matches between volunteers and families, do you want to change how far you can travel following a change in bus routes or buying an electric bike, do you work different days to when you trained or have you had a traumatic experience being chased by a penguin or a chicken and don't want to be matched with families with birds as pets (chicken and penguin chasing are both real experiences by staff members!)

Website

The current volunteer area of our website is no longer password protected. You can find it here:

[Current Volunteers | Home-Start Bristol \(homestartbristol.org.uk\)](https://homestartbristol.org.uk)

Here you can find downloadable copies of all the policies, the expenses form and diary sheets.

Trustees

Home-Start Bristol is currently recruiting new trustees, if you or anyone you know may be interested in joining our Board please get in touch and someone will get back to you. <https://homestartbristol.org.uk/home-start-bristol-is-recruiting/>



In other news...

We're always keen to hear from you about your experiences supporting families and about the joyful moments you experience.

Madeline completed the prep course in 2021 and has been volunteering since, thanks for answering our questions Madeline.

Tell us one standout moment that you've experienced while volunteering.

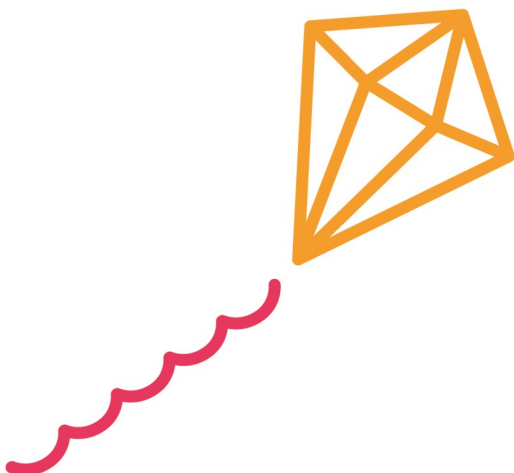
Watching my family do something they couldn't do before I started working with them and knowing how much it benefited the children, not just on that day but as they develop. Mum was really struggling to get out and about with her little one, but watching him go to her to play a game we'd made up in the park was gorgeous and so rewarding. They ran down the hill together holding hands shouting 'run run run run run!!!'

What's the best thing about being a Home-Start volunteer?

At Homestart, my experience as a parent is valued and useful, in the past it's felt like a 'given'. Parenting is a skill and volunteering let's me pass this on, while still learning from the Homestart team.

The training was excellent as well - I felt really ready when I was matched with my first family.

Sorry - that was two ☺



What would you say to someone who is thinking about volunteering for Home-Start?

I was in two minds for longer than I'd admit to my coordinator, but now I'm doing it, I'm so pleased I completed the training and got matched. If you have the time and have thought about it - go for it, knowledge and confidence come quickly and it's so rewarding.

Are you available during the summer?

If you're able to help out at one off group sessions throughout the school summer holidays please let us know.

Please email heleng@homestartbristol.org.uk

Welcome to our newest volunteer recruits!

Our new cohort of volunteers from the April group have completed their prep course, welcome to the family! We still have places for our September prep course so if you know anyone who might like to join us and make a difference to families do let us know or direct them to the website www.homestartbristol.org.uk

