

Home-Start is committed to safer recruitment practice as an important part of safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults

Job Description –Family Support Coordinator

Job Title: Home-Start Thriving Babies, Confident Parents Coordinator

Employer: Home-Start Manchester, Woodville Children’s Centre, Shirley Rd, Cheetham, M8 0NE

Hours of work: 37 hours per week

Salary: Points 12-20 (new NJC scaling) - £21,589 to £25,295, depending on experience

Contract: Fixed term until end of March 2023, extension subject to funding

Responsible to: Home-Start Service Manager

Base: Home-Start Manchester’s offices with some home working as appropriate

Purpose of the Job

The main objective of this post is to coordinate a volunteer-led home visiting support service for families during pregnancy and a child’s early years as part of a multi-disciplinary team across Early Help and Social Work, CAPS and Big Manchester. The post will also provide direct support to families as appropriate.

In 2021 we secured funding from What Works for Social Care, a National funder with a keen interest in evaluating new models of social work intervention and partnership. The project was for an initial 12 months, during which intensive evaluation was conducted and the outcome of which has resulted in investment from the Local Authority for a further 12 months. It is hoped that longer-term investment in the project is made by the Local Authority.

Based on a small pilot conducted via the Central Early Help hub, the project consists of a multi-disciplinary team of Early Help Practitioners, therapeutic intervention from a Big Manchester worker, CAPS interventions and a Think Family practitioner to join up adult and child social care and mental health services. The project identifies, assesses and supports expectant and new mothers where there have been previous significant concerns about the welfare of children, which has led to care proceedings or extensive social work intervention. The aim of the project is to intervene at the earliest point, ideally during early pregnancy, to support and establish a parent’s propensity and capacity for positive change, informing the social worker’s pre-birth assessment; resulting in earlier permanence for the child – either remaining in the family home or alternative.

The population served by the project is families with moderate to complex needs where there has been care proceedings or significant social care involvement for previous children. Needs around mental illness, learning difficulties, domestic abuse and substance mis-use are likely to be present. Further risk factors may include families where uptake of ante-natal care is poor, poor home and sleeping arrangements, families that are not engaged with services, lack of child supervision.

The Coordinator will work as an integral member of the Home-Start team but also work with the Thriving Babies team, consisting of Early Help practitioners, a Big Manchester therapeutic worker, CAPS interventions and a Think Family Coordinator, and social work. The Coordinator will also work with wider teams of professionals from universal and specialist services to provide a coordinated response to families’ needs. This will include attending case planning meetings and submitting reports to social care, often for legal proceedings.

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The Coordinator will be experienced in working with families in their own home, with complex needs and safeguarding risks. They will be skilled in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns, be apt in completing strengths-based assessments and have a deep understanding of early trauma and the impact on later life. They will be experienced in assessing and managing risk alongside social workers and have a sound understanding of the social work and legal system.

The Coordinator will also have an in-depth understanding of the expectations and needs of volunteers, particularly when working with complex families. They will need an appreciation and commitment to supporting volunteers to offer consistent and safe support.

Working Environment

To work in a variety of environments including families' homes, children's centres, nurseries, health clinics, etc. The post holder is expected to drive between visits. Liaison with other agencies will require the post holder to attend meetings in Children's Social Care, health, voluntary settings and educational settings across Manchester, but primarily in the north and central districts.

Home working is also expected.

Main Responsibilities

Support to Families

- Accept allocations of cases from the Thriving Babies panel or within the Core team and assess the needs of families through self assessment and existing professional assessments.
- In collaboration with the family and project team, agree Home-Start's role in the support plan and create a plan for Home-Start support.
- Work directly with families, if required, before they 'step down' to volunteer support or where deemed not appropriate for a volunteer.
- Introduce families to appropriate support, including Home-Start volunteers and support from other agencies.
- Ensure support to families is reviewed at regular intervals and at the end of Home-Start support, in line with current Home-Start guidance.
- Undertake designated responsibilities to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- Maintain high standards in supporting families within the Home-Start model, embracing reflective practice through clinical Supervision.
- Ensure equality of opportunity, fairness and diversity in all aspects of work.
- Adhere to data protection and information sharing policy and procedure.
- Be responsible for working at all times within the appropriate Safeguarding guidelines.
- Carry out thorough risk assessments to protect the safety of yourself and volunteers when visiting families in their own homes.
- To plan and organise own workload. This includes receiving referrals, liaising and co-working with colleagues, and prioritising and planning support.

Managing Volunteers

- Create and implement regular volunteer recruitment drives to attract sufficient numbers of volunteers, ensuring that the expectations of volunteers is clear.
- Carry out robust selection of volunteers in line with Home-Start's procedures to ensure quality and safety, given particular consideration to the project's cohort.

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- Contribute as directed to the delivery of the Home-Start preparation course in full and to a high standard to prospective volunteers
- Deliver an additional training session on motivational interviewing, assessing risk and parenting capacity to volunteers.
- Give careful consideration to and appropriately match volunteers to families.
- Support volunteers to engage families in a range of activities designed to build their resilience and support networks, and improve whole family well-being.
- Provide support and supervision for volunteers, alongside informal support contact.
- Ensure volunteers submit regular, high quality records of the support to families.

Working in Partnership

- Work closely with the Thriving Babies team to accept appropriate cases for direct and volunteer support.
- Ensure appropriate liaison with other professionals.
- Develop a strong relationship with social work and early help.
- Work with the Think Family Coordinator to address barriers and issues of adult and children's services not working together.
- Share and learn from others best practice in complex families
- Provide timely and detailed factual reports to social workers and attend case planning meetings.
- Network appropriately to promote the project and attract volunteers.

Supporting the work of Home-Start

- Contribute to the effective day to day operation of Home-Start in accordance with the Home-Start Memorandum & Articles of Association, Home-Start, Standards & Methods of Practice, Home-Start Agreement and Quality Assurance Standards.
- Undertake work as delegated by the CEO to support the strategic management, development and future funding of Home-Start.
- Support the implementation and review of all Home-Start policies and procedures.
- Comply with Home-Start's administration, monitoring and financial systems.
- Promote the work of Home-Start and the project.

Financial & Physical Responsibilities

- The post holder has a personal duty of care in relation to the use of and storage of equipment and resources, including DVD recorders, DVD camera, TV and computer.
- To ensure that the environment for family work is clean, safe and appropriate.
- To use audio-visual aids in teaching and learning environments. This includes the use of filming and computer playback equipment.
- To use computers for data collection, report writing and audit purposes.

Information Resources

- To maintain high standards of record keeping including electronic data entry recording, and letter writing.
- To contribute to the development of records to accurately monitor relevant information to evaluate the project. This will include pre and post evaluations for each family.
- Undertake audits and evaluations of the service.

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The post holder may be required to undertake any other duties that fall within the nature of the role and responsibilities of the post as detailed above.

This job description is current as at May 2022.