

Role Description Home-Start Group Volunteer

Home-Start is a voluntary organisation in which volunteers offer support, friendship and practical help to young families under stress.

As part of our services, we run weekly, term-time groups for parents of twins, triplets, or more, known as 'Twiglets'.

Details for our current Twiglets groups are:

- The Needles Children and Family Centre, Horsham on Tuesdays from 9.15 am to 11.00 am.
- Holy Trinity Church Hall, Tilgate, Crawley on Thursdays from 10.00 am to 11.45 am.

Our groups are there to offer a safe and fun environment for families to play, meet other parents and receive any help and support they may need. We offer a range of activities for the children and parents to experience for example; water play, shaving foam play and painting using different tools.

Volunteers are central to the Home-Start service; we could not offer families the same support without them. Home-Start volunteers give a high level of commitment and reliability and in return, receive high quality training for the role and ongoing training, supervision and support from the Home-Start Group Worker.

The main role of the Group Volunteer is to help the Twiglets groups run smoothly so everyone can enjoy their time and gets the most out of the sessions.

This involves:

- welcoming parents and children and where needed helping the families to and from their cars
- helping parents/carers to join in with activities together with their children
- And, very importantly, offering a listening ear and to show care in an understanding, friendly, non-judgmental and supportive manner.

Tasks required vary, but you may be asked to help out with:

- Setting out toys and games for the children to play with
- Welcoming parents/carers and their families
- Playing with the children
- Clearing up any mess and spills as they occur
- Offering parents hot and cold drinks and preparing the children's snack
- Clearing up and tidying away

Home-Start volunteers aim to build the confidence and independence of the family by:

- Supporting the families in the groups, where the dignity and identity of each individual is respected and protected
- Reassuring families that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual
- Emphasising the positive aspects of family life
- Developing a relationship with the families that attend Twiglets
- Drawing on their own experience of parenting to encourage parents' strengths and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their children
- Encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to effectively use the support and services available in the community.

What is the time commitment?

- Regular attendance at the weekly group
- Attendance at initial training covering essential elements of Safeguarding, Confidentiality and Information sharing
- Attendance at supervision sessions with the Group worker
- Attendance at regular on-going training sessions
- A commitment of at least 12 months supporting families at the group.

What are the responsibilities of a Home-Start volunteer?

We ask all our volunteers:

- To commit to the Home-Start ethos and to understand and implement Home-Start's policies on: Confidentiality, Equal opportunities, Safeguarding / Child protection and Health and Safety
- To provide two suitable references, and complete a DBS check at enhanced level
- To share information with the Group Worker immediately if there is concern about the physical or emotional well-being of any member of the family
- To submit travel expenses monthly
- To inform their insurance company that the car is being used for voluntary work with Home-Start for which expenses are paid
- To provide Home-Start with sight of their relevant tax, MOT and insurance cover for the car as requested

What will Home-Start do for me?

In return for your hard work and commitment, you will receive:-

- Excellent preparation for your role
- Formal and informal support from the Group worker
- Opportunities for self development and ongoing training
- Social events and the opportunity to get more involved in the scheme if you would like (e.g. fundraising, promotional events, being a trustee)
- The opportunity to be involved in a vital local service that makes a real difference to local families and children.

This is exciting and rewarding voluntary work which requires energy, commitment, reliability, creativity and a sense of humour.

We look forward to hearing from you!