

## How to refer?

- . Talk to the family about Home-Start Babergh and how they could help
- . Ask family's permission to make referral
- . Contact office to gauge capacity within service and discuss particular needs of family and to advise of any additional reporting required from the scheme for statutory agencies for 'At Risk' families

## After the referral is received

- . Within two weeks of receiving referral an initial visit will be completed by a Co-ordinator and a letter will be sent to both family and referrer to confirm if referral has been accepted for support
- . Where a referral does not meet criteria the referral will be declined
- . Home-Start Babergh does not hold a waiting list. Co-ordinators will endeavour to match a volunteer within 8 weeks of receiving referral, however there may be circumstances in which the scheme is not able to match within in this timeframe, reasons for delay will be agreed with family and the referrer informed

## Offering support

- . Following the initial visit where the needs of the family will be considered and appropriate support agreed and a subsequent risk assessment carried out, the Co-ordinator will carefully select a volunteer for the family. Please note a family may need to wait for a suitable volunteer to become available
- . Both the referrer and family will be written to confirming type of support, volunteer name (where appropriate) and support start date

## Monitoring and review of support

- . Co-ordinators regularly monitor and review the support of each family. Referrers will be informed where any substantial change to support is made. Referrers are requested to inform Home-Start Babergh of any changes within the family which may impact upon the support provided by Co-ordinator and Volunteer
- . Co-ordinators review family support six weeks following volunteer introduction and then meet with family every three months for further reviews
- . Co-ordinator and volunteer meet every three months to discuss difficulties and successes supporting the family

## Ending support

- . When support ceases the Co-ordinator will carry out a visit to the family and complete the final review form
- . Closing letters will be sent to the family and referrer to advise support has ended and reason for this
- . Evaluation form will be sent to the family and encouraged to be returned

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# Home Start

Support and friendship  
for families

Home-Start Babergh

Patron Sheila Ravenscroft  
(Mrs John Peel)

## Information for Referrers

“My volunteer was great because she didn't judge me.”

Updated January 2011



### What is Home-Start Babergh?

Home-Start Babergh is a voluntary organisation, committed to promoting the welfare of families. Volunteers offer regular support, friendship and practical help to families under stress in their own home, helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown.

### Who is Home-Start support available to?

Home-Start support is available to any family with at least one child under five years' of age.

### The Home-Start Approach

Home-Start Babergh works towards the increased confidence and independence of the family by:

- 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
- Reassuring parents that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and encouraging enjoyment in family life
- Developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and understanding can be developed. The approach is flexible to take account of different needs
- Encouraging the parents' strengths and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their own children
- Encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available within their local community

### How long does support last?

Families are offered support for as long as is appropriate and may choose to accept or opt out of the relationship at any time. Home-Start Babergh is not a crisis intervention service, however, the volunteer may be able to respond to a crisis within the family, once the relationship is established.

### Who are Home-Start Babergh Volunteers?

Volunteers are normally parents themselves, who offer their time freely. Each volunteer attends a course of preparation and with support and on-going training, they bring personal experience, skills and knowledge of the resources within their local area.

### What can Home-Start Babergh Volunteers offer?

Volunteers are there to support parents and children in ways that the family finds most useful, which may be different from, but complimentary to, professional approaches or priorities, which could be a few months, or even a year. Volunteers usually visit for 2-3 hours, once a week.

Home-Start Babergh volunteers may offer:

- A listening ear
- Help with children
- Reassurance
- Practical help
- An opportunity to meet other parents
- Encouragement

Home-Start Babergh volunteers are not 'home helps', nor do they provide a free baby-sitting service, although practical help may often be part of a visit.

### What else does Home-Start Babergh Offer?

- Hadleigh Family Group
- Sudbury Family Group
- Great Cornard Family Group
- Summer trip and Christmas Party (subject to funding)

### Referrals

Families can be referred to Home-Start Babergh with their consent. Referrals tend to be received from Health Visitors and Social Workers, but self-referrals and referrals from any other source are welcomed and are dealt with in strictest confidence. Families choose to accept or decline Home-Start Babergh's support. Any family with at least one child under five years' of age may be referred to Home-Start Babergh for support if they are suffering stress or experiencing difficulties.

Please see over for the referral process.

### Confidentiality

All information about parents and families is treated as confidential, to be discussed only as necessary with the Co-ordinator in support of the volunteer and to assist the family. Any disclosure of the confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the expressed permission of the parents for the purpose of assisting the family, except where it is considered necessary for the protection of a member of the family where information shall be shared with the appropriate authority.

### Home-Start Babergh

If you would like further information about the scheme and the support we provide, please contact Sarah Mann at Home-Start Babergh on 01473 822822