

HOME START



Because Childhood Can't Wait

HOME-START LAKELAND

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

Charity Number: NIC105854

How Home-Start Lakeland helps families in our community

For the past 23 years Home-Start Lakeland has been offering one-to-one personalised home-visiting support for parents with children under five. Our volunteers provide non-judgmental, practical and emotional support to help build the family's confidence and its ability to cope at a time when they are dealing with issues such as isolation, bereavement, depression, post-natal depression, illness, disability, multiple births or just finding parenting overwhelming. In many cases we manage to reach families that won't engage with other services.

Home-Start Lakeland believes that children need a happy and secure childhood and that parents play a key role in giving their children a good start and in helping them achieve their full potential. Home-Start wants to see a society in which every parent has the support needed to give their children the best start in life and focuses its support on the early years – the most crucial time in a child's development.

Home-Start Lakeland places trained volunteers alongside parents. Support is provided on a weekly basis for as long as a family needs it. Volunteers are managed and supervised by the local scheme which in turn is given support and guidance by Home-Start UK. Home-Start is a local community resource with all the benefits that come from being part of a strong national organisation.

What Home-Start brings to the Fermanagh Community

- Outreach to families through home-visiting support.
- Partnership working and local expertise to enhance family support.
- Trustees: local people selected, trained and guided to run a local service.
- Volunteers: local parents selected, trained and supervised to provide support to other local parents.
- Added value: local and other funding and resources brought into the Fermanagh community



Home-Start Lakeland Trustees 2022 – 2023

Our Trustees are also volunteers, giving time, knowledge and experience to direct and oversee the work of the scheme.

Position	Name
Chairperson	Marian Swift (retired Nov 22)/Gerry Hegarty
Vice-Chairperson	Maeve Murphy
Treasurer	Christine Carty
Members	Jenny Thompson Mabel Greaves Harold Hunter (retired June 23) Doreen McIntyre (retired Nov 22) Anne Harte John Cathcart
Staff	Co-ordinator: Diane Noble Administrator: Claire Steele



Chairperson's report

This year has happily seen the end of the Covid restrictions and a return to the working practices of previous years. While we are aware that the virus is still with us and will remain with us, family visits have resumed, allowing our volunteers to bring their support into the family home where it is most effective. We can look back at the last few years with pride and satisfaction thinking of how staff and volunteers responded to the needs of families in different ways during the times when face to face contact was not permitted.

It is appropriate to acknowledge the help we received from our funders during those times, not alone the essential financial support but also their understanding of the changing conditions under which we worked. Special thanks are due to the Western Health and Social Care Trust. By part funding our work and closely monitoring the help we provided to families, the Trust confirmed the value of the early intervention work done by the volunteers. The provision of group programmes for parents has grown recently with the encouragement from the Trust.

We have exceeded our targets for family support and have continued to work closely with other local agencies, such as the Food Bank, St Vincent's and the Salvation Army to provide food, clothing and fuel for those requiring it. This year again, at Christmas, our families received gifts from the staff at BT. These were most generous and welcome.

We are grateful to the Henry Smith Fund for support during the last three years and to those local organisations who have provided help to us, some anonymously, and others whose names appear elsewhere in this report. We can assure them that we will continue to provide an effective service. The need for the work of Home-Start continues to grow in Fermanagh as does the need for volunteers to bring support into family homes. We depend on the generosity and selflessness of volunteers and are most grateful for all that they have done.

During this year three trustees have retired from the Board. In the autumn, Doreen McIntyre and Marian Swift retired and more recently, the longest serving trustee, Harold Hunter, has stepped down. Harold has been involved in almost all aspects of trustee work, including a long period as Treasurer. His extensive local knowledge was well used in fund raising activities and he could always be relied on to help when needed. We wish all the retiring trustees well and thank them for what they did for Home-Start.

Two new trustees have joined the Board in recent months, Anne Harte and John Cathcart. We welcome them and hope they will find the work rewarding.

In conclusion, I repeat my thanks to staff, volunteers and trustees for their work. Without their work, nothing can be achieved. With their cooperation, everything is possible.

Gerry Hegarty

Co-ordinator's Report

It has been another busy year in Home-Start Lakeland and it is hard to believe that I am here again, reporting on the close of our 2022/23 year. We saw a 25% increase in referrals this year with 41 referrals received compared to 30 in the same time frame in the previous year. This may be in part, due to things returning to normal but it also marks the current need and demand for support for families with young children.

This year we supported 45 families with a home visiting family which included 110 children. We continued with some online programmes in the form of infant massage, slow cooker programme and energy efficiency, delivering to 33 families. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council kindly donated a Slow cooker, equipment and groceries to families in Neighbourhood Renewal areas and an energy efficiency monitor to participants of the training.

I handed over the reigns of the Amazing Multiples group to Claire. The group had 22 families registered and met monthly with various activities, play and outings.

The past year has been a difficult one for the charity sector and families. The cost-of-living increases have been an unwelcome and continuing trend and families are under more financial pressure than ever before. We have witnessed parents taking on extra part-time jobs to meet basic living costs and increases in demand for financial support continues. Thankfully we have been able to meet some of this need through referral to foodbank, the Save the Children Early Years Grant, referral to SVP and Action for Children for oil, Christmas hampers from Foodbank and Christmas parcels for children and parents through generous donations from BT staff in Enniskillen.

The ability to recruit volunteers has also become more difficult, due in part to people having to work more to meet rising costs. We trained 9 new volunteers this year to meet the demand of referrals. I cannot thank enough, the 23 volunteers who supported families this year. They are the ones who do the hard work and without them our charity would not exist. Time is our most precious commodity, and they give it away week after week to support families with young children in Fermanagh.

Our Trustees are also volunteers and show great commitment and dedication to the scheme. They fulfill their roles entirely and never complain about me getting in touch with endless questions and decisions. We said Goodbye to Marian, Doreen and Harold this year and thank them for all their work and dedication to Home-Start over the years.

I could not do any of this without my trusty sidekick Claire Steele, the scheme Administer and master problem solver. No task is ever too great or complicated for Claire and she does it all with good grace and a smile on her face.

I look forward to the incoming year and will continue in Home-Start Lakeland's endeavors to support and meet the needs of parents and children in Co Fermanagh.

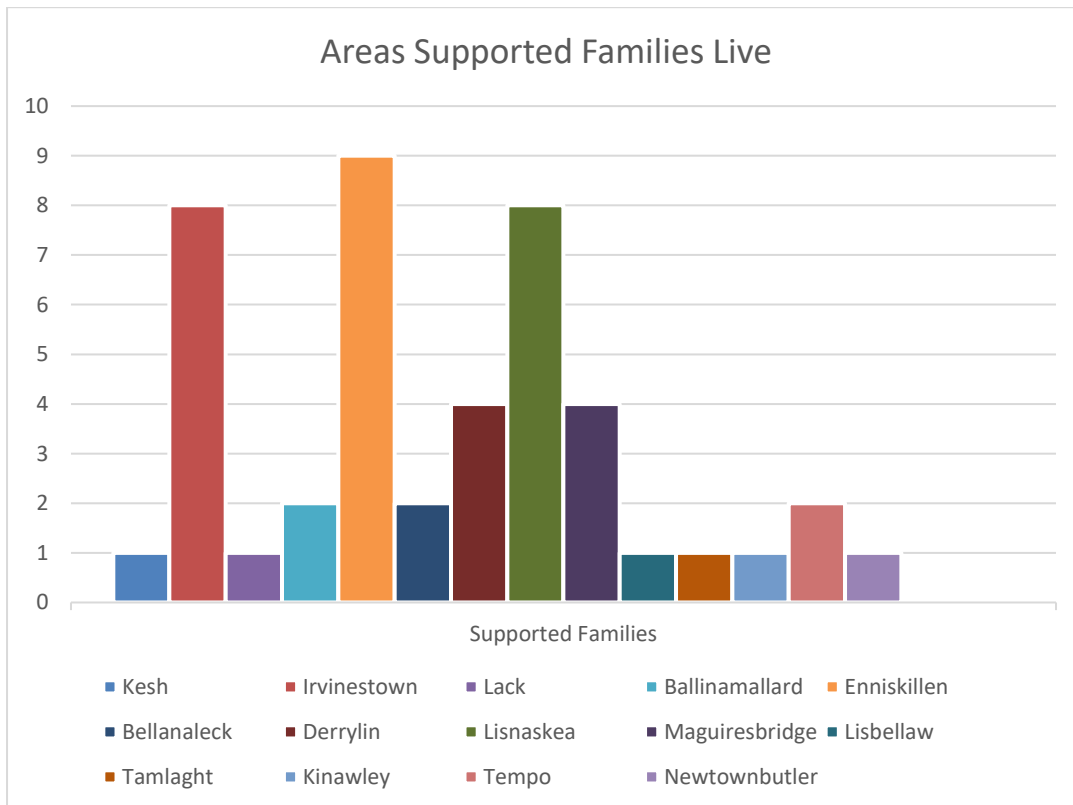
BECAUSE CHILDHOOD CAN'T WAIT

Diane Noble

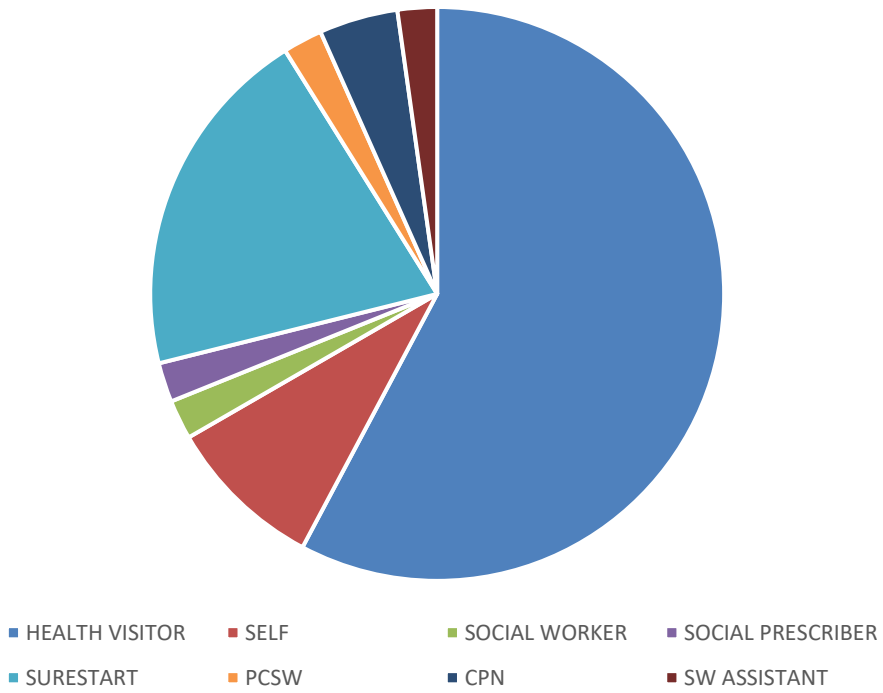
2022/23 Statistics

Families Supported

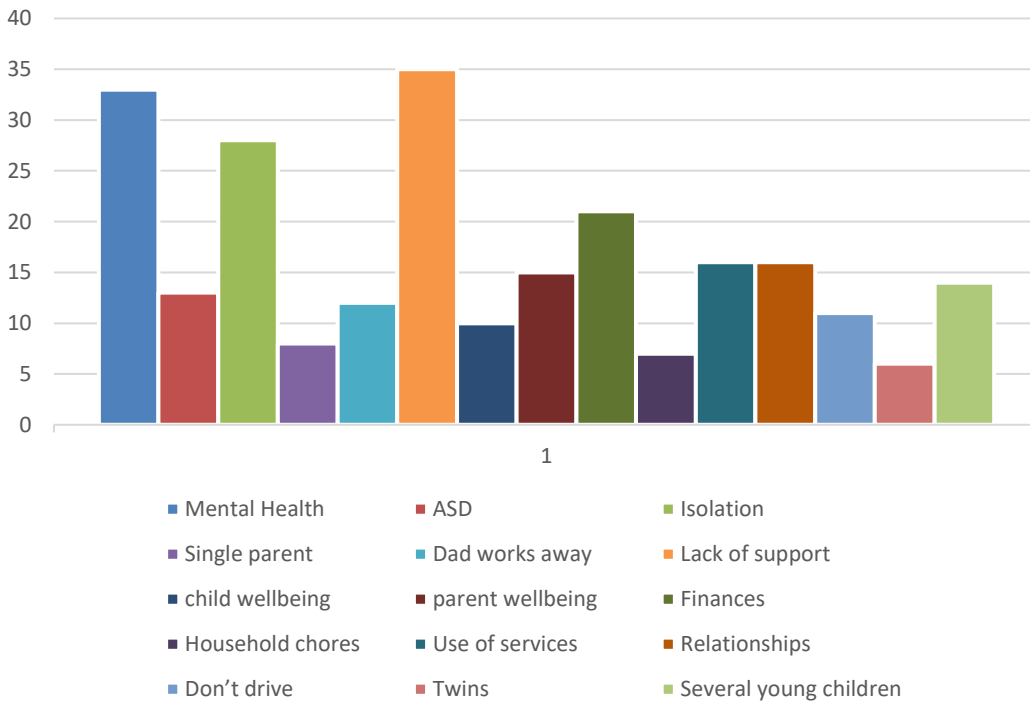
Home visited families	45
Children in home visited families	110
Twins families	22
Online programmes	33



Source of Referral



Issues faced by Supported Families



What Our Volunteers Do

Our volunteers support families in many different ways. They visit the family weekly for 2-3 hours. The type of support they offer is dependent on the skills of the volunteer and the needs of the family but could include:

- reassurance and someone to talk to
- confidential and friendly support through difficult times
- practical help with feeding babies, household chores, shopping, cooking
- looking after children so parents can attend appointments
- opportunities for children to play, read, have fun or get out to a park
- transport to medical appointments or to shops and services
- signposting and links to other services

Our volunteers this year have been: Anita C, Anita McG, Catherine, Cathy, Chrissie, Christine, Francis, Heather, Hilary P, Hilary G, Jennifer, Kathleen, Kelly, Lisa L, Mabel, Mary McB, Mary M, Patricia D, Patricia H, Patricia M, Ruth, Sinead, Ursula



Volunteer Training

As well as our Home-Start Preparation course, we offer our volunteers training on an ongoing basis. Some of this training was offered online this year, and some face to face, on subjects such as:

- Safeguarding Refresher
- Play Training
- Sleep Training
- ACE's
- Mindset – Mental & Emotional & Wellbeing Awareness Programme
- Energy Efficiency

We also celebrated and thanked our Volunteers with a picnic on Devenish Island during Volunteer Week, Christmas Crafts Christmas Lunch and a yoga session.



Volunteer Story

I have volunteered in the past but was unable to fully commit due to my workload and pressures of work but now I am retired I have the time to volunteer.

When I retired, I felt I wanted to give a little back to my community and numerous organisations were advertising for help. I saw an advertisement in the local paper for Home-Start Lakeland recruitment for volunteers and I applied.

After my initial training during which I met other volunteers, I was placed with my first family and I am still with them. They are a family of 4 [Mum, Dad and 2 boys under 2 years]. Mum is a busy young lady with 2 boys and all the attention and care they require as they are so young. Lunch time is difficult with 2 boys to feed and we both agreed that this was a good time for me to call to offer a little support. I spend two hours weekly with them. During this time I help with meals and also play with the boys, this frees their Mum to do housework upstairs. They are adorable boys and every week there is new developments in their skills and it is amazing to watch. We have planted sunflowers and have all went on an outing to feed the ducks together. It is so little of my time but is very appreciated by Mum and she is grateful for these two hours and we include a chat and she states she looks forward to my visit every week.

It's a wonderful feeling to help others especially this young family. As an older woman it is great to feel that others appreciate your help and life experiences but I am also learning so much from this young lady and her boys. It puts a smile on my face and I feel worthwhile.

Home-Start Lakeland offers initial and ongoing training. They are always on the other end of the phone or I can call to the office if I need support or guidance. I receive regular supervision. They are a little family and encourage ongoing activities for their volunteers to offer their thanks and I have met some really nice people.



Family Story

My daughter was born at 24 weeks gestation and I really struggled with anxiety when she was finally discharged from hospital after 5 months in neonatal intensive care. My Health Visitor referred me to Home-Start for some additional support as my husband works away several days a week. I had no time to myself and I couldn't manage to stay on top of cooking or housework while looking after my daughter as I worried about her constantly and couldn't bear for her to be out of my sight. Having a Home-Start volunteer really helped me get over this separation anxiety, making the transition to leaving her with relatives and eventually starting nursery less stressful for me.

My Home-Start volunteer visited on Thursdays for 2 hours and I looked forward to seeing her every week. She was always interested in how I was and remembered details about my family. She played with my daughter and helped me build up to leaving her gradually, by taking the dog for a short walk or going to pick up some shopping. She became a friend during the months that she visited us and I hope we keep in touch.



What Families say:

- (The volunteer) was fantastic – I looked forward to her visit every week. It really helped me get over my fear of leaving my daughter with other people. I really appreciate the support I've had and would recommend the service to other new Mums.
- Loved having the support and girls to talk to. Great support service.
- My volunteer was amazing, a fantastic support to me
- I really enjoyed having the support of Home-Start, (volunteer) is a lovely person and we all loved her company. I felt like it was very nice to have someone to talk to and that listens
- The boys love (volunteer). They were very happy to know she would come to play with them and read them stories
- Amazing and so helpful
- (volunteer) was easy to talk to and relaxed
- This is an excellent service that can help parents and children. The service was approachable and not too intrusive. They worked with my family on a subtle basis and had I needed extra support I could of called on one of the girls for advice.
- Wonderful support

- Very helpful and volunteer provided very fast. Much appreciated
- Very friendly. Lovely woman. Great to chat to. Thanks so much
- It was a fantastic service, very helpful, I couldn't have asked for better
- (volunteer) was a brilliant help and company to me and my boys
- She was just what I needed at the right time
- (volunteer) gave me a chance to spend time with (older boy).
- She was great for my own mental health and wellbeing
- A great experience that I am extremely grateful for
- I am very thankful to HS. I owe you a lot. You make a huge difference in my life. Thank you so much
- Fantastic service and would recommend it to anyone who would be I need of help
- It felt like we have known each other for a very long time
- Very valuable service and thoroughly enjoyed our time with Home-Start
- It has made a huge difference to our family
- They loved (volunteer). She was good fun!
- If we didn't have it we would be worse off & just couldn't cope
- (Child) is now more manageable
- My volunteer was amazing, a fantastic support to me
- I really enjoyed having the support of Home-Start, (volunteer) is a lovely person and we all loved her company. I felt like it was very nice to have someone to talk to and that listens
- The boys love (volunteer). They were very happy to know she would come to play with them and read them stories
- Amazing and so helpful
- (volunteer) was easy to talk to and relaxed
- This is an excellent service that can help parents and children. The service was approachable and not too intrusive. They worked with my family on a subtle basis and had I needed extra support I could of called on one of the girls for advice.
- Wonderful support
- Very helpful and volunteer provided very fast. Much appreciated
- Very friendly. Lovely woman. Great to chat to. Thanks so much
- It was a fantastic service, very helpful, I couldn't have asked for better
- (volunteer) was a brilliant help and company to me and my boys
- She was just what I needed at the right time
- (volunteer) gave me a chance to spend time with (older boy).
- She was great for my own mental health and wellbeing
- A great experience that I am extremely grateful for
- I am very thankful to HS. I owe you a lot. You make a huge difference in my life. Thank you so much
- Fantastic service and would recommend it to anyone who would be I need of help
- It felt like we have known each other for a very long time
- Very valuable service and thoroughly enjoyed our time with Home-Start
- It has made a huge difference to our family
- They loved (volunteer). She was good fun!
- If we didn't have it we would be worse off & just couldn't cope
- (Child) is now more manageable
- It really helped my son to get the 1:1 time with (the volunteer), he looked forward to it every week.

➤ AMAZING MULTIPLES

Amazing Multiples is a group for Fermanagh parents of twins and more. It was established in 2013 to offer peer support and practical guidance for parents. The group meets once a month and new families are always welcome, including antenatal parents and their supporters. 22 families were registered for Amazing Multiples this year.



Amazing Multiples offers:

- A time for play
- Support & a chance to link with other parents of multiples, to share ideas and experiences
- Signposting to other services
- Information and practical advice
- Refreshments and a chance to chat
- A chance to meet up with others before the big event

Our Funders

A big thank you must go to our funders, supporters and community fundraisers who have contributed so much to Home-Start Lakeland this year.

Funders:

- Western Health and Social Care Trust continue to fund core costs & we thank them for their recognition of the early intervention support we provide.
- Henry Smith fund our Staff salaries as part of a 3-year grant.
- Fermanagh & Omagh District Council part funded Office Rent and online programmes.

Fundraising and Donations

The Four Acre Trust gave us the opportunity to seek out donations from individuals, businesses and organisations we had never had before and they match funded it. Thank you to Jackie & Shane McGirr, KitaKards, the Soroptomists, Enniskillen Credit Union and Stanley Moffitt who made generous donations.

Osborne & Co chose us as their nominated charity for the recipients of the sales of their 2022 Christmas bauble and Enniskillen Rotary made a contribution to our volunteer expenses.

Thank you to the customers of shops across Fermanagh who regularly fill our collection boxes. We also have a small number of regular donors who donate to us on a monthly basis.





Project St Patrick chose us as the nominated charity to be the recipients of the St Patrick's Day collection back in 2020. The parade was cancelled due to Covid 19 and we waited 3 long years to get our opportunity for this fantastic fundraiser. We were finally able to fulfill that this year and are very grateful to Project St Patrick for the opportunity and delighted to raise £2250.

Thanks also to Reilly's of Enniskillen, Asda, Tesco and Sweet Memories who donated prizes for the raffle



Christmas Donations

Thank you to the staff of BT who donated gifts to the children and parents of Home-Start families at Christmas.

Enniskillen Foodbank donated Food Hampers which we delivered to Home-Start families in time for Christmas.





Do you have parenting experience? Would you share this experience? Could you spare 2-3 hours per week?

If so, we really need your help.

Training, support & expenses provided

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact:

Home-Start Lakeland

Belmore Mews,

Enniskillen BT74 6AH

028 6634 6818

info@homestartlakeland.com

**For parents when
they need us most**

