

**HOME
START**

**Sittingbourne
& Sheppey**

VOLUNTEER MENTOR INFORMATION PACK



Company Number: 7952821

Registered Charity Number: 1146356

About us.



Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey are a charity based in Sittingbourne. We recruit and train local volunteer mentors. Once trained, our volunteers are matched with a suitable local family in need. Volunteers help families with at least one child under the age of five by providing them with emotional, practical, confidential and informal support within their own homes. To help ensure children have the best start in life. Volunteer mentors provide invaluable support to families by making weekly visits to the family in their own homes where their confidentiality and individuality can be respected.

Our vision.

Ensure every parent in our society has the support they need to give their child the best possible start in life.

Our ambition.

- Support parents as they grow in confidence.
- Help parents strengthen their relationship with their children.
- Help parents widen their links within the local community by encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available within the community.

What we want to achieve.

- Ensure parents have the confidence and ability to give their children the best start in life.
- Raise awareness of Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey to increase our reach and impact.

Safeguarding.

Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey follow safeguarding guidelines, policies and procedures set down by Home-Start UK. Home Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey are committed to safeguarding all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

We have trained staff and trustees who use NSPCC guidelines for safer recruitment of staff, volunteers and board members to ensure that all individuals in the team are competent and safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.



Services we offer.



Home visiting.

We recruit and train local volunteer mentors. Once trained, our volunteers are matched with a local family. Volunteers help families with at least one child under the age of five by providing them with emotional, practical, confidential and informal support within their own homes. Volunteer mentors provide invaluable support to families by making weekly visits to the family in their own homes to ensure their confidentiality and individuality can be respected. Therefore our core service is home visiting as our volunteer mentors & family support worker carry out weekly home visits to ensure local families get the emotional and practical support they need to help their children have the best start in life.

We support families with

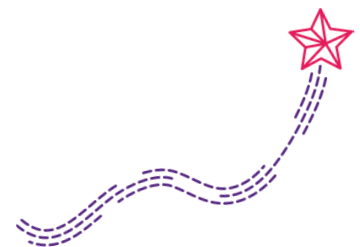
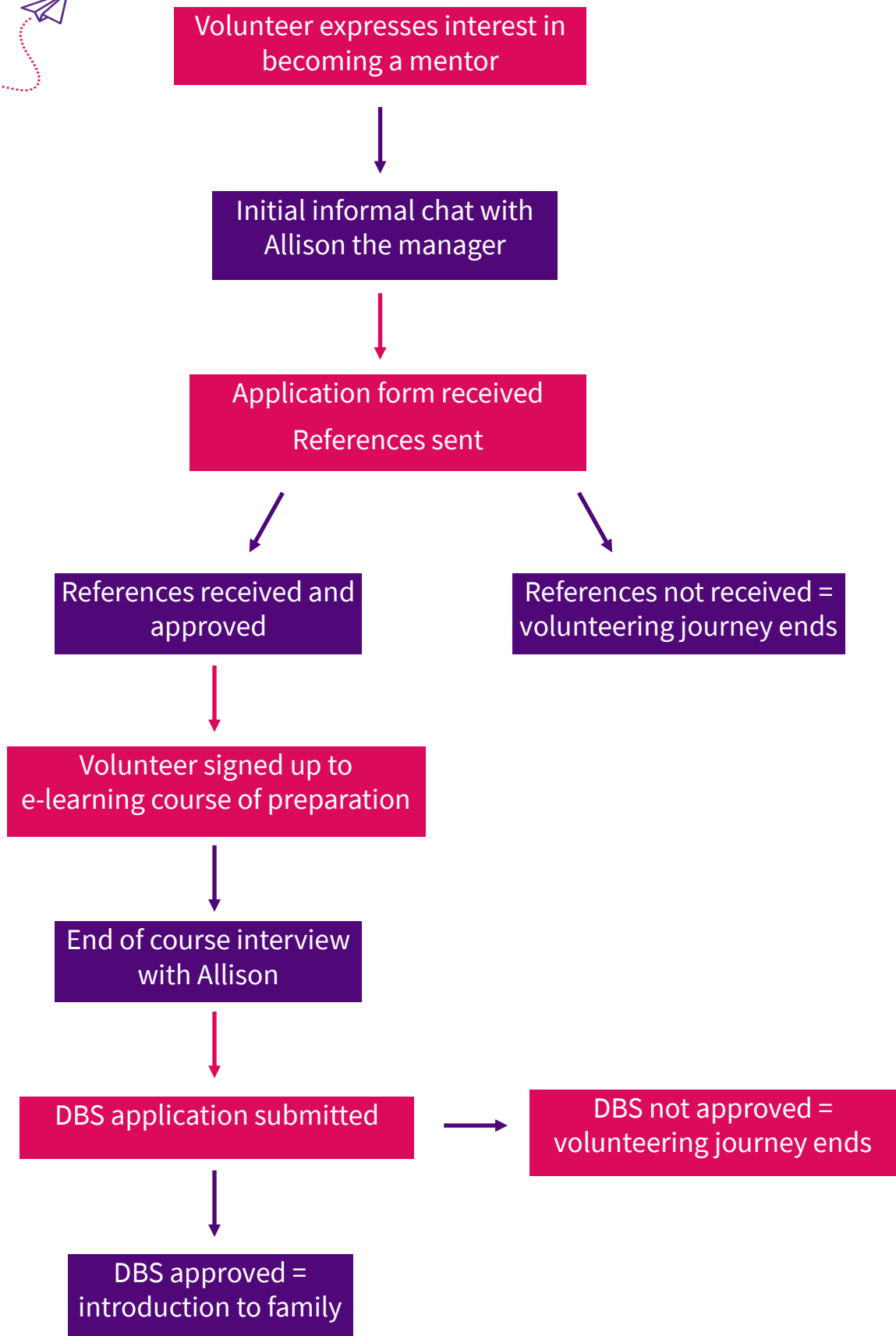
- Encouraging parents to get out in the fresh air, this is so beneficial if they do not have a green space of their own or they lack the confidence to take the children to a play area/walk in the country parks
- Supporting parents who have lowered mood, anxiety issues and or depression
- Form filing
- Meal planning
- Budgeting
- Signposting to other services and much more

Twins Group.

We also run a fortnightly twins group. Our twins group started in 1999 to provide parents of multiple births an opportunity to meet, share experiences and find information on local services that are accessible for families of multiples. Parents of and those who are expecting multiple births are welcome to come along and meet other local families of multiples. At twins group we provide play activities for the children (4 years old and under).



The journey of a volunteer mentor





About the role of a volunteer mentor.

The role of a Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey volunteer mentor

Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey is a voluntary organisation in which volunteer mentors offer emotional and practical support to young families under stress in their own homes helping to prevent family crisis or breakdown. Volunteer mentors, who are parents or have significant parenting experience understand that sometimes family life can be tough and that is why their support can be so valuable in helping another family. Volunteer mentors are central to the Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey service; we could not offer families the same support without them. Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey volunteer mentors give a high level of commitment and reliability and in return, receive high-quality preparation and ongoing training, supervision and support from the Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey manager.

What do Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey volunteer mentors do?

Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey volunteer mentors aim to build the confidence and independence of the family they support by:

- providing emotional and practical support
- committing to 2 hours per week of home-visiting according to the family's needs
- visiting the families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each individual can be 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 family in which time can be shared and an understanding developed, providing a regular, reliable presence in that family
- drawing on their own experience of parenting to encourage 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 in the community

What are the responsibilities of a Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey volunteer?

Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey asks all volunteer mentors to commit to the Home-Start ethos and to understand and implement relevant Home-Start's policies which will be explained at the volunteer preparation course, also:

- to complete the course of preparation, provide two suitable references and complete an enhanced DBS check
- to attend any follow up training required by Home-Start UK
- to abide by the policies and practices set out by Home-Start UK
- to sign their acceptance and understanding of the Home-Start Safeguarding/Child Protection Code of Conduct, ensuring their commitment to their safeguarding responsibilities as a volunteer mentor
- to be introduced to and visit a family regularly (usually 2 hours a week) and to work towards identified aims of support as agreed with the family
- to share information with the manager and contact the scheme immediately if there is concern about the physical or emotional well-being of any member of the family
- to ensure that the child's needs and experience are at the centre of their thinking and they act on concerns about their safety or welfare
- to keep essential records of visits to families and submit these monthly via the volunteer diary sheet
- to attend regular 1:1 supervision meetings with the manager according to Home-Start guidance
- to submit travel and telephone expenses monthly, which will be paid at the agreed rate by the Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey board of trustees
- if applicable - to inform their insurance company that their car is being used for voluntary work with Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey for which expenses are paid and provide Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey with sight of their relevant tax, MOT and insurance cover for the car as requested



What is the time commitment?

In addition to a minimum commitment of weekly home visiting for 2 hours volunteer mentors are required to

- complete the e-learning course of preparation with 8 hours of face to face contact time, to ensure you are prepared to support families
- attend supervision sessions with the manager according to Home-Start guidance (normally every 4-6 weeks)

Person Specification

A Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey volunteer mentor should:

- be local to Sittingbourne and or Sheppey
- be a parent themselves or have significant parenting experience e.g. a social worker, midwife, health visitor, child minder
- be prepared to undertake the Home-Start course of preparation
- understand why families may need support from Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey
- have knowledge of child development or willingness to undertake training
- have a positive, non-judgmental attitude to working with people of any gender, family status, sexual identity, or who are from any ethnic origin, culture or religion, or who may have a disability demonstrate a sensitive and caring attitude towards others have a clear understanding of the confidential nature of the Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey service, and not to break confidences shared by the family, other than when disclosure is essential to protect the wellbeing or safety of a child
- have time and enthusiasm for Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey, be reliable and understand the importance of reliability to the family
- have good communication skills including an ability to listen
- have a warm and open personality and a sense of humour
- be prepared to keep records as required by the scheme

What will Home-Start Sittingbourne & Sheppey do for our volunteer mentors?

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

- excellent preparation for your role through the preparation course
- formal and informal support from the coordinator, other volunteer mentors and the board of trustees
- 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, becoming a trustee)
- the opportunity to be involved in a vital local service and to be part of a national and global network
- after you've volunteered for 12 months we will provide a reference if required

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!

Please note all applications are subject to a satisfactory DBS check & references.

