

Referral Procedure

A Brief Summary of Our Approach

Home-Start aims to give support to families with at least one child under 5 to prevent difficulties escalating into crisis. Home-Start is not a crisis intervention service. The scheme works within the **Stroud District Council boundaries**.

Home-Start volunteers may offer:

- A listening ear
- Help with the children
- Reassurance
- Practical help.

They may encourage families to:

- Make effective use of local resources
- Keep appointments
- Renew links with family and friends.

Volunteers will not normally care for children in the absence of their parents.

Referral Process

- Referrer talks to family about Home-Start, advising them that there may not be a volunteer available immediately.
- Referrer asks family for permission to contact Home-Start.
- Referrer completes form and sends a referral form to Home-Start at the main office address below. It is advisable that the referrer contacts Home-Start directly to discuss the family's circumstances in more detail and to ascertain the availability of volunteers.
- Home-Start will write to confirm receipt of referral form within 1 week.
- Home-Start will write an introductory letter to the referred family within 1 week.
- Organiser will arrange to visit the family as quickly as possible but within 4 weeks.
- If Home-Start can help, we will try to find a suitable volunteer to work with that family and then inform referrer of what is happening (within 6 weeks).

General Information

- We try to match volunteers that will be compatible with the family, once we have assessed their needs.
- Referrals are made by a variety of agencies including health visitors, social workers, doctors and teachers. We also accept self-referrals.
- Support to families is reviewed every 3 to 6 months.
- Referrers are informed when support is reviewed and when support ends.
- It is Home-Start policy not to discuss the family with the referrer/outside agencies unless the parent(s) give specific permission for us to do so, or if we have concerns about the care of the children.

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**Home
Start**
Support and friendship
for families

**Home-Start
Stroud & Dursley**