

## Questions frequently asked by partner agencies/ referrers

### **What are volunteers not allowed to do?**

Volunteers are unable to:

- Transport families in their own vehicle
- Carry out intimate care in the absence of the parent/carers e.g. bathing, nappy changing
- Look after children in the parents' absence
- Carry out domestic tasks
- Provide more than 1 visit per week

### **How are volunteers matched with families?**

The Coordinator pays careful attention to matching volunteer's skills and experience to the needs of families. Many factors are taken into consideration, including:

- The family's needs.
- The volunteer's aptitudes, skills and experience.
- Practical considerations: geography, transport and time.
- Mutual interests or life experience.
- What motivates the volunteer?
- Issues around culture, gender, background and disability.

The success of Home-Start support is dependent on the relationship that develops between the family and the volunteer, so Coordinators make every effort to link sensitively and appropriately.

The Coordinator always accompanies the volunteer on the first visit to introduce the volunteer to the family and set the ground rules for visiting. The Coordinator will stay as long as appropriate to support the family and volunteer to get to know each other.

### **Do you have a confidentiality policy?**

All personal information about parents and families is treated as confidential, to be discussed only as necessary with the Coordinator in support of the volunteer and to assist the family. Any disclosure of 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 welfare and protection of a child when information shall be shared with the appropriate authority.

### **How long is support offered for?**

Volunteers provide continuous, regular support for a period of time consistent with a family's needs. These are assessed initially and reviewed periodically.

Home-Start Harlow's aim is to encourage families towards independence so that the volunteer is no longer needed. The review process will determine how long the volunteer's support is likely to be needed and clear plans will be made for ending the support in discussion with the volunteer and family.

### **How are volunteers screened?**

All volunteers meet the requirements of our personal specification. They are interviewed before being invited to attend a 40 hour preparation course and will undergo a final interview before a decision is made by the Coordinator about their suitability for placement with a Home-Start family. We take up two references and an enhanced DBS check.