



**HOME
START**
Erewash

**IMPACT
REPORT**
2023-2024

CONTENTS

- 1 Who are we?
- 2 Welcome
- 3 Why we exist
- 4-6 How we support families
- 7 The difference we make
- 8 The heart of Home-Start
- 9 Thank you



WHO ARE WE?

We are Home-Start Erewash. We work with families across Erewash, Derbyshire to give children the best possible start in life.

Children's life chances are closely linked to family circumstances like social disadvantage, insecure or inadequate housing, family relationships, parental mental health and parenting behaviours. Research shows that stressful life events are associated with worse outcomes for children.

So, in communities across Erewash our home visiting volunteers work with parents in their own homes to strengthen their ability to give their child the best start, regardless of what life throws at them.

Our community groups provide families with much needed connection and specialist support with perinatal and infant mental health and school readiness.

Our vision

We want to see a society in which every parent has the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life and enable parents to achieve fulfilment in their own lives.

Our goal

We want to be seen as the provider of choice in offering support to parents experiencing difficulties, especially mental health issues, in areas of Derbyshire where need is acute, but supply is unavailable.

WELCOME



Chair's welcome

It is my honour to introduce Home-Start Erewash's Annual Report. Reflecting on the past year, I am immensely grateful for the unwavering support of our donors, partners, volunteers, and colleagues. Together, we have continued to provide vital assistance to families in need, ensuring that no one has to face life's challenges alone.

Our vision remains clear and resolute:

"For every parent to have the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life, while enabling parents to achieve fulfilment in their own lives."

At Home-Start Erewash, we are proud to bring this vision to life, creating a meaningful and lasting impact on the families we support.

To all those who have played a part in supporting our mission — through donations, partnerships, volunteering, or working alongside us — thank you for your unwavering dedication.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I am confident that, together, we will continue to drive our vision forward and make a profound difference in the lives of the families we serve.

Andrew
Chairperson



Manager's welcome

The challenges facing charities and communities have grown significantly during this period. More than ever, our service has been a lifeline, as deeper cuts to early years support and an increasingly competitive funding landscape have tested us all.

Our focus on the design of targeted group support has been incredibly well received. Parents tell us that they feel heard and supported, empowered to apply their learnings and reflections to create meaningful, lasting changes that shape their children's futures.

I am immensely proud of our team. When faced with obstacles, they find solutions. When the weight becomes too much, they step in to share the load. Together, we laugh, cry, and above all, continue to offer warmth and care to parents navigating overwhelming challenges.

At the very heart of our service is one simple truth: we care deeply about every family member we support.

While our journey is far from over, neither is our determination. The challenges ahead are real, but so is our commitment. We will continue to adapt, innovate, and respond to the evolving needs of families with young children.

To everyone who has been part of this journey—our donors, volunteers, and partners—thank you. Your unwavering belief in Home-Start Erewash inspires and drives us forward every day. Together, we are shaping brighter futures, one family at a time.

Bren
Manager

WHY WE EXIST

Here in Erewash child poverty has risen sharply, with 30% of children affected, 68% of these live in working families. Families that were already experiencing financial difficulties are facing challenges that now feel insurmountable.

Beyond the obvious challenges we have found that the cost-of-living crisis is limiting children's access to socialisation and play, both crucial for their development, socially and emotionally, particularly for those children born into lockdown who already missed vital socialisation opportunities.

10% of the children we support have diagnosed additional needs. Many more are in the early stages of diagnosis and few have the supports needed in place. **20% of the children we support have child protection plans in place.** Many more have been in receipt of early help via social service provision but this service is now being cut, we are facing significantly increased demand as a result.

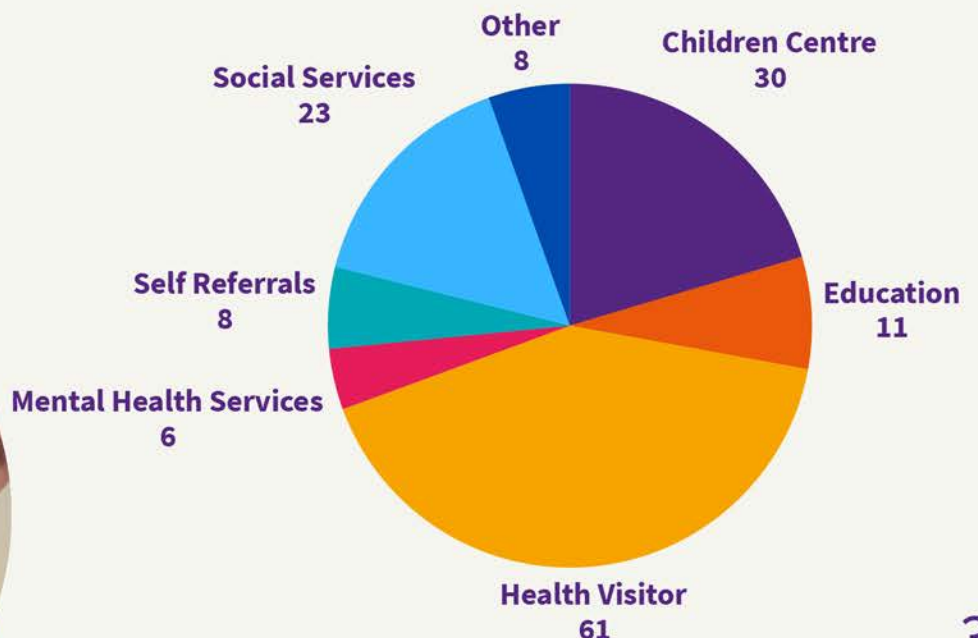
74% of families are presenting with more complex needs which include addiction, recovery, domestic abuse and violence. An increasing number of families are presenting in crisis, placing more children at risk of adverse childhood experiences and trauma. There is no other support available to most families we help.

We support families at the most challenging point in their lives. This year, this included:



Referrals

Families who need our help are referred to us by a wide range of local partners.



HOW WE SUPPORT FAMILIES



“Home Start was my saving grace at a time when me and my family were so fragile. They picked out the best volunteer we could have ever wished for and I cannot begin to explain not only the sheer love and care we all felt from our very special volunteer when we needed it most, but also who truly helped in every aspect they possibly could.”



HOME VISITING

What we do:

We carefully match each family with a volunteer trained to offer practical and emotional support. Every family in need is different and so is our help. Our volunteers offer friendship, they listen, they become a trusted source of much-needed support. From teaching parents how to enjoy playing with their children, to supporting parents to learn to cook low cook nutritious meals, to providing a non-judgemental listening ear through to giving parents confidence to take their children to the park or the library – our volunteers do all kinds of small, brilliant things that make a massive difference to families.

Our volunteer will visit every week for 2-3 hours. Support ends when the family feels ready, sometimes it's a few weeks, other times much longer. Volunteers have regular supervision sessions and throughout our support our Family Support Workers check in with the family too.

Why:

Our Home Visiting service strengthens early relationships, placing children on a positive developmental trajectory. Most often, parents are the best providers of nurturing care and their wellbeing is essential for their children's wellbeing and development. Parents are most able to provide the care that children need when they have positive relationships themselves, when they are emotionally, financially and socially secure, and when they are in families and communities that nurture them and attend to their needs - this is what our volunteers make happen.

‘As soon as I wake up and realise it's Tuesday, I smile because my volunteer is coming today and I really look forward to her visits’

SUNFLOWERS



What we do:

We support children and their families to get ready for school. Through evidence-backed, fun activity-focussed group sessions, we help children to develop the vital skills they need to successfully transition into formal education. From games to practise key skills like sitting and listening, to really practical stuff like how to hold a pencil or use a pair of scissors – Sunflowers is making a big difference to local families. This is a 6 week programme which takes place at least 4 times a year

Why:

School readiness can positively change a child's life-chances. Children who start school with the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills they need are far more likely to thrive, evidence shows that children that meet criteria for school readiness are more likely to succeed academically, likely to earn more as adults, be healthier – even live longer. However, 50% of teachers note worsening levels of school readiness. Many children enter school unprepared, facing challenges like following instructions, dressing independently, and using the toilet.



EMBRACE

What we do:

Embrace is our perinatal and infant emotional health support group for parents and children 0-3 years. Led by our specialist perinatal and infant mental health coordinators each session covers a range of important discussion topics such as emotions, relationships, attachment, and communication. The sessions include activities that strengthen the parent-child bond and build confidence together. Embrace is an 8-week programme which takes place 4 times each year.

“This group really help me to understand more about myself and what I need to do to help me become a better person and a Mum to my children.”

Why:

One of the strongest predictors of wellbeing in early years is the mental health and wellbeing of the mother or caregiver. 87% of parents seeking our support are experiencing mental health problems. The Embrace group offers a safe, non-judgmental space for parents to share experiences, reducing isolation and fostering support, understanding, and empathy. Connecting with others facing similar challenges promotes emotional well-being through shared experiences and encouragement. 85% of parents who attend Embrace say that it has helped them to learn coping strategies to manage their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

CONNECTION CAFE



What we do:

Connection Café is a place where parents with young children can gather to enjoy a warm welcome, a drink, and something to eat. Café sessions are led by our Family Support Workers and supported by volunteers. It's free for the family to come along. The informal drop-in sessions at the cafés provide an opportunity for parents to connect with each other and share their experiences. We hold two free Connection Cafés every week, one in Ilkeston and another in Long Eaton. They last for an hour.

Why:

Connecting with other parents facing similar challenges provides comfort, understanding, and a sense of belonging. Our holistic approach to supporting families addresses parenting needs, offers resources, connections, and emotional support, helping parents thrive and create nurturing environments for their children. We link families to broader support, including other Home-Start services. This empowers parents to access practical resources and emotional support, building resilience and well-being through a network of peers.

- 75% of parents who attend Connection Café report that it has helped them to form a supportive new friendship
- 95% say they feel more connected to their local community

Real-life story:

Home-Start Erewash offered vital support to help Mum regain her confidence. She began attending the Connection Café in Long Eaton with Dad and, over time, felt brave enough to go alone with their child. Building on this progress, she joined the Embrace group, focusing on parent and child well-being. Mum actively participated, connected with others, and slowly opened up about her experiences.

At a follow-up visit, Mum shared some proud milestones:

- She began going out regularly on her own.
- She drove a car alone for the first time in nearly 10 years.
- She visited a play centre with her baby by herself.
- The family started planning a long trip to see relatives, something they had previously avoided due to Mum's anxiety.

Mum described the Embrace group as life-changing, helping her manage her anxiety and boosting her confidence. With her growing confidence, Mum joined the StARTer Kit group, which uses art to promote well-being. Mum rediscovered her passion for painting. Mum overcame agoraphobia, embraced new opportunities, and rediscovered joy and connection.



Last year together we helped to change the future for:

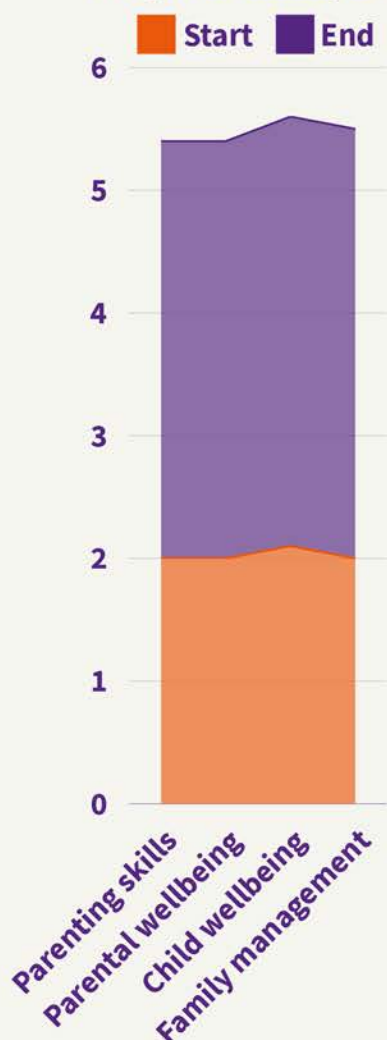
98 local families with 288 children

through our support in homes and the community.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE



Impact 2023/24



We collect feedback from the families we support at the start, during and at the end of our time together. This helps us to shape our individual support of each family, understand the difference we make and know when families are ready for us to step back. Across all of the families we supported this year:

Parenting skills increased 70%

This includes how parents feel they can manage children's behaviour and how well they feel they understand child development. This significant increase suggests substantial enhancement in parents' abilities to manage and nurture their children.

Parental wellbeing increased 70%

This reflects how parents feel they cope with their own physical health and wellbeing, mental health, with feeling isolated and their self-esteem.

Child wellbeing increased 66%

This reflects improvements in children's physical health and wellbeing and emotional health and wellbeing. This improvement reflects a substantial positive change in the overall health, happiness, and development of children.

Family management skills increased 75%

This includes how parents feel confident in managing their household budget, day to day running of household, ability to cope with stress caused by family conflict, confidence in using other services/facilities in the area.

THE HEART OF HOME START

Volunteers are the real heart of Home-Start Erewash, trained to offer help in any way that they can.

Our volunteers are nothing short of remarkable. They embrace our training, prepare for the unexpected, and bring the unique gifts of their personalities to build genuine, trusted connections with families. These relationships are transformative, rooted in kindness, compassion, and understanding.

This year 36 incredible volunteers shared their time and expertise with families.



36

dedicated
volunteers

5184

volunteering
hours

£93k

estimated
social value

Louise's story

Louise, a single mother who works full-time, chose to volunteer with Home-Start Erewash after overcoming her own challenges.

Having experienced the isolation of being a single parent with a young child when she returned to the area, Louise deeply understood how impactful a service like Home-Start Erewash could have been during her toughest times.

Now matched with a family of three, Louise provides both practical and emotional support. Her dedication has had a transformative effect on the family. The mother, once struggling, has shown remarkable improvement in her well-being—she's brighter, more motivated, and has even started attending the gym, a reflection of her renewed focus on self-care.

For Louise, volunteering has been a journey of mutual benefit. While offering invaluable support to the family, she has discovered a renewed sense of purpose and enhanced her own mental health and self-worth. Louise's story is a testament to the power of giving back and the profound connections that volunteering can create.



THANK YOU

Volunteers:

Wassila	Diane	Susan
Gillian	Deborah	Fiona
Michele	Zoe	Jane
Mary	Shelley	Leanne
Philip	Kellie	Jessica
Sonia	Tracey W	Lesley
Liz	Tracey C	Gail
Gemma	Nikki	Shannon
Rebecca	Lauren	Alison
Ingrid	Liesl	Sarah

Staff:

Alison Poole
Grace Butler
Harjinder Khosse
Katie Orchard
Nikki Walkinshaw
Bren Butler

Social Work Students:

Amy C
Sofia M
Rebecca H

Trustees:

Andrew Dickson - Chair Appointed Oct 2023
Christina Ashcroft
Laura Mansfield Appointed Dec 2023
Nina Rimmington Appointed Feb 2024
Liam Caldecott Resigned Nov 2023
Sylwia Juranek Resigned Nov 2023
Alison Ingram Appointed Jun 2023- Resigned Nov 2023
Dr Ja Ryong Kim Appointed Apr 2023- Resigned Aug 2024
Louise Heron Resigned Feb 2024
Stephanie Zemlak Appointed Sept 2024
David Fisher Appointed Sept 2024

Our supporters:

We would not be here without the generous donations of our supporters. We would like to thank:

Church Wilne Rotary Club
RG Hill
Friends of Home-Start Erewash
CAF
Nottingham Energy Partnership
All Saints Church
Church of Christ Ilkeston
Bates Charitable Trust
Owen Willis Charitable Trust
The National Lottery Community Fund
Public Health- Children & Young People
Severn Trent Water
BBC Children In Need
Derbyshire MIND
GEM Radio (Bauer)
Costco
East Midlands Airport
Homestart UK Breathing Space
Albert Hunt
Home-Start UK - Cadent
The University of Derby
Co-op
Alchemy Foundation
Bates Charitable Trust
Henry Smith Charity
Erewash Borough Council
Derbyshire Mental Health Forum
Home-Start UK- Empowering Women

"A HUGE MASSIVE THANK YOU to each and every one of you within Home-Start, but most of all the wonderful volunteers who give up their time for free to help those when they need it most."