

HOME START

Lorn

Home-Start Lorn Scheme Newsletter

July 2024

Home is where we start from
across Oban, Lorn & the islands.



Since April this year, so far we have supported....

48

Families
supported via
1-2-1 support

73

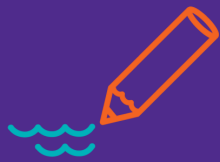
Children
supported via
1-2-1 support

221

Parents
supported via
group activities



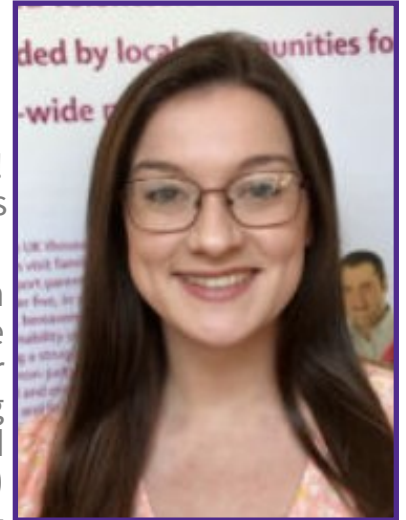
Summer News 2024....



Manager's welcome...

Welcome to the first edition of our new quarterly newsletter! We're excited to share some of our most recent achievements and updates with you.

We have been working extremely hard across our service both in the Lorn area and on the Island Of Mull to make sure we are supporting the families who need us and responding to our community's wants and needs. Currently, we are supporting 117 families across Lorn and Mull. They are being supported through our three support options, 1) Groups 2) Volunteer 3) Allocated workers. We also continue to offer extensive fully-funded groups across the service to engage with families, while also creating peer support environments. We currently run 4 permanent weekly groups and several additional bi-weekly and pop-up groups in Oban and the surrounding villages and one permanent group on the island of Mull as well as bi-weekly and pop-up groups. We are also getting ready to run another summer timetable!



In the last quarter, we also announced our exciting new project.....opening a Family Centre! We have taken over two empty shop fronts in the hopes of creating a safe and fun space for families to meet other families to build on their support networks, a space for professionals to meet with families in a neutral setting and a quiet area for families to receive one-to-one support and or access to staff should they need someone to talk to. We will run weekly groups from the space and develop these groups into workshops and classes to help parents develop skills in areas that most interest them e.g. writing housing applications, cooking classes, writing job applications, applying for college, trauma training, infant mental health, first aid, child development etc. All support will be FREE.

Meet the rest of the Team

We now have a permanent team of 7 staff; 5 in Oban and two on Mull. Since January 2024 we've also had a Social Work student on placement (see page 2!)





What Katrina (our social worker placement) said...

“During my placement with Home-Start Lorn as part of my social work degree, I have been thoroughly impressed by the entire service. Engaging with staff, volunteers, parents, and children has shown me the critical importance of early intervention for families in need and the profound positive impact it can have on their lives. Witnessing firsthand how fortunate these families are to have this support in Lorn makes me wish there was a Home-Start in every area. Even after my placement ends, I will continue to follow Home-Start Lorn’s activities and will advocate for your work and similar third sector supports from afar!”

Update from our Board of trustees...

We have a committed board of trustees with a wealth of skills and life experience, including the Chair who managed a Health and Social Care Partnership in Glasgow, a mother who was in receipt of our service, a policy lead within Children in Scotland, a director at SAMS, a retired GP and obstetrician, and a retired head teacher.

Our Chairman Mark Feinmann:



Welcome to Home-Start Lorn’s inaugural newsletter! We have much to celebrate and many thanks to give to all those past and present who have helped to make Home-Start the go to support for young families in Oban and on Mull.

The last year has been very busy. We have supported over 130 families, at least 40 of whom have had access to a volunteer and 30 who have been supported by our staff team of now seven people. Ensuring families have access to a range of groups (from messy play or infant massage to Bookbugs) has been a core principal to the majority of our services and we are proud of the fact that the grapevine has increasingly been the means by which families access our resources.

The Board of Home-Start doesn’t want to sit on its laurels and we are constantly asking those who use our services or refer to us, whether there are improvements to be made in what we offer. Our family centre in Oban, our expansion of specialist group based activities are all the product of our active listening programme. We want to do more of this, so the more you tell us what matters to you, the better we can become.

I want to particularly thank the hardworking staff, our volunteers and Trustees and our funders, who make what we do possible. Particular thanks goes to Hannah for the effort she has put in.

Do watch this space, in the Autumn we hope to hold an event to meet you in person and hear what you have to say. Home-Start should be the place where any family can come for support and advice! We are beginning to get there.

Mark Feinmann
Chair HSL



Oban and Mull group news



At Home-Start Lorn we run weekly groups such as Messy Plays, Sensory Sessions, Swimming groups, Well-being walks, and much more! All of our groups are FREE and open to absolutely everyone, all you have to do is sign a joining form. We have our summer timetable currently running throughout the months of July and August, where we will be running extra fun groups each day for everyone to join, such as island walks, lunches, soft play afternoons, book bugs sessions and lots more! We are also hoping to organise some exciting day trips! This has been made possible by a successful funding application and money we have been so kindly awarded. The funding we receive is the reason we are able to run all of these groups for families and we are so grateful for the support. All of our groups are inclusive, friendly and welcoming for everyone. Lastly, keep a look-out for our upcoming dates for the next Baby Massage block which is also FREE.



Message kelly@homestartlorn.org.uk for more information about groups in Oban or rebecca@homestartlorn.org.uk for information about groups on Mull. Alternatively just drop in to any of our groups for a cup of tea and a chat! We'd love to see you :)



Mulling over Mull!



We had a very busy start to the year as we opened our first office on Mull. We are based in the Harbour Building and are loving our new accommodation on the island- if anyone is in Tobermory and would like to pop in for a chat and a cuppa with our team please feel free to do so!

We had a fantastic response from local businesses who offered to have one of our new fundraising tins in their establishments - We now have tins spread out across Mull from Caignure to Salen and Tobermory. All funds raised from the tins will go directly back into the community and supporting local families.

Our groups continue to be very well attended and loved by the families on the island. We recently did a partnership group with another local charity, Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust, who attended our weekly Friday group and provided SO much entertainment! The families loved their puppets and dressing up costumes they brought, and we all had fun completing their rainbow scavenger hunt! We have also recently had equipment donated in order to do some planting during our Friday group, so families can take home their very own sunflowers to grow. A huge thank you to Browns in Tobermory for donating seeds, pots and compost to us to allow us to do this.

We completed our most recent block of baby massage back in March which was really well attended and loved by lots of lovely local babies and their Mums. We had a total of 9 babies complete our 5 week block and hope to run another block in the coming months.



Last, but by no means least we are thrilled to welcome Kirsty to the team on Mull. Kirsty joins us as a family co-ordinator alongside Rebecca and we are really excited to see how the service grows and develops with 2 members of staff on the island.

Kirsty joined the team in June and said:

My first few weeks with Home-Start Lorn/Mull had been packed with positivity and lovely people.



I feel very welcomed into the Home-Start family and proud to be part of such an amazing team.

Seeing and hearing first hand what a huge difference our wonderful volunteers make to the day to day living of the families they support, has been inspiring.

I have started reaching out to local communities and have been delighted at their generosity and positive feedback.

Many thanks to Browns (Tobermory) for the compost, pots, and sunflower seeds. The children loved digging and planting seeds! (I had great fun too!) Hopefully they each have a giant sunflower soon.

I have really enjoyed these first couple of weeks, and am so looking forward to many more in the future.

Quacking Charities Day 2024



The sun shone once again for a wonderful charities day! 'Funfair themed' the team decided to dress up as Hook-A-Ducks and were over the moon to have so many of our wonderful families join us for the parade, the highlight of the day was looking behind me and seeing so many little ducklings and their families march behind us! The Oban lions judging panel were also impressed, awarding us best in show for the second year running, winning us the 1st place trophy and a cash prize of £20! Thanks to each and every family that took part. We ran a sell out tombola, a guess my birthday for beloved Windsor the giant dog (who has gone to a very loving home with 3 very excited little girls), popcorn, cakes and sweets for a donation. Again, a big thank you to everyone who donated prizes or came along to the stall on the day to support or take part. We raised an amazing £484 which will go straight back into providing support for all our families.



Volunteer news; Question for Chris

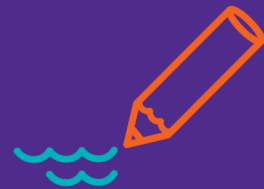
We asked our volunteer Christine Entwistle — What sort of things do you do as a volunteer? Chris said:

Any family with a child under 5 can request help from Home-start. There are many different roles for volunteers, whether it be supporting a family on a one-to-one basis, getting involved in the groups organised by Home-start, providing information and support for families coping with mental health issues, disability, challenging behaviour, low income, loneliness and isolation.



Support could be in the form of looking after a child for a couple of hours a week to give mum a much needed break. It may be accompanying them to swimming classes or going on one of the health walks which encourage parents to socialise with others and prevent social isolation. There is also a role in the groups whereby volunteers play with the children so parents can sit and chat with others. Some Volunteers have specific training and can help with managing challenging behaviour and provide support with mental health issues.

Other news...



BookBug Hero 2024- Our wonderful volunteer Jane (on Mull) has been awarded the “Bookbug Hero award for 2024” after being nominated by our families. This is a huge achievement—well done Jane! A detailed article can be accessed on the Scottish Bookbug trust website

<https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning-and-resources/scottish-book-trust-awards/announcing-the-winner-bookbug-hero-award-2024>



Family Survey 2024

At the end of May we launched an anonymous Family Survey to gather feedback about the service we offer. We strive to be family-led and the data collected will be very helpful for shaping the future of the service. We have asked questions about one-to-one support, the groups we currently offer, and requested ideas for future activities, or any gaps in the service which we will try to meet. The response so far has been fantastic, and we have already received some interesting feedback. *83% of families who have completed the survey so far report that they access one-to-one support with a Home-Start volunteer or staff member in order to enjoy a couple of hours respite.* We know that the raising of young children is an all-consuming and highly demanding job. Sometimes a 2-3 hour weekly break can make an enormous difference. If you would like to know more about this option, please contact manager@homestartlorn.org.uk. Huge thanks to everyone who has taken part. If you are a Home-Start Lorn family who has yet to contribute then please do so soon! The survey is open until Wednesday 24th July. Please find the link on our social media pages, or request it from any staff member.

Community Engagement

We are so lucky to partner with other amazing local services. In June we were invited to attend a midwifery team meeting to provide the latest information about our Home-Start service, and to discuss ideas for future partnership working opportunities which will help us reach and support more families. The meeting was really productive and we hope to be able to report back soon with some new developments....watch this space!



More news....Royal Scottish Dance Society- The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Oban and Lorn Branch welcomed 120 dancers to their annual weekend school in the Corran Halls, Oban in early March. This year they raised £470 for Home-Start Lorn.

Funding News



We are delighted to announce - thanks to the generous people at The National Lottery Community Fund and made possible by National Lottery Players, that we have been awarded a super duper community grant that will significantly help to fund our service.



The National Lottery Community Fund, Scotland Chair, Kate Still said: "Every day National Lottery funding is changing the lives of thousands of people in communities across Scotland. This project delivered by Home-Start Lorn, is a great example of community activity in action, showing just what can be achieved when people come together for a common cause or to help others."

Thank you funders!

Enormous thanks to all of our amazing funders. Without their support, belief in the service, and financial backing, we would not be able to operate.



As a charity, our continued service provision is always reliant on securing ongoing funding. If you are reading this newsletter and are in a position to make a monetary contribution, please see our website for full information about different ways to donate: <https://homestartlorn.org.uk/funding>

