

Home-Start Lomond - Operations Report 2024-25

Laura Eales – Service Manager

Outputs

- Over 700 hours of 1:2:1 support to families
- 4 hours a week of peer-support activities for registered families
- 3 hours a week of family sessions for wider-public
- 3 hours a week of peer-support sessions for Naval families
- 4 family days out for registered families
- 8 buggy-walks
- 1 parenting skills workshop, 1 Childsmile session and 1 Reading Force session
- 15 feeding support sessions
- 10 volunteer well-being sessions

Report

Since April 2024 we have provided support to almost 100 families with 37 of them having received 1:2:1 staff/volunteer-led support. Families continue to come to us via professional referrals from Health Visitors, Social Workers and Primary Care Professionals but we have also seen a steady increase in families self-referring for registration and support.

We are demonstrating significant positive impacts on feelings of isolation, mental health and parental confidence as well as supporting families to develop beneficial parenting strategies, strong inter-family relationships and rewarding friendships in the wider community.

"I arrived in Helensburgh completely alone, away from any family or friendships I had had, pregnant and with a toddler. Home-Start Lomond not only provided me with unimaginable support – as little as just sitting with me during the worst days and as far as holding my hand during labour. They have given me the confidence to go outside to numerous groups they have organised and introduced me to people who are in the same boat as me, from where I started feeling better about leaving the house on my own and made friendships with people who, to this day, are some of the most genuine people I have ever come across. I now regularly meet with them for walks, coffee dates, etc. Home-Start Lomond is more than just a charity, they're lifesavers who created not just a community but also a family!" (Registered family with an 18 month old daughter and 2 month old twin boys, March 2025)

We have faced some challenges such as our struggle to recruit new volunteers to the extent that we have delivered our service this year entirely with pre-existing volunteers. However, in March we held an Open-Day session to attract new volunteers and we currently have 5 trainee volunteers coming into our service for the new financial year. We have retained all of our existing volunteers this year, which is encouraging as it indicates that our volunteers feel recognised and rewarded by the work they do. Indeed, we have provided 10 volunteer well-being activities during the year ranging from yoga sessions, walks, craft activities and nights out.

Another challenge that we have faced and which will continue to be a pressure for us is funding. As a new charity, we are ineligible for a lot of grant funding and we do not receive any funding from Argyll & Bute Council for the service that we provide in support of health and social care in the

area. We are currently heavily reliant on military funding despite being a service for the wider community and we will be focusing on this challenge in the coming year.

In summary, we have had a positive year with lots of development and grounding for our new service and have forward plans to stabilise and grow.