



## Home Link Family Support

*Working in partnership  
with families to give  
children a positive start  
and secure better  
life outcomes*



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## Who we are:

Home Link Family Support is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee established in 1986. We are based in Edinburgh, operating throughout Edinburgh and Midlothian and offering a range of early intervention home visiting supports to vulnerable children and their families.

### Services delivered:

- > **Antenatal Support Service**
- > **Early Years Family Practitioner (nursery)**
- > **Early Years Home Visiting**
- > **Group work -**
  - **Bookbug, Stay and Play, Young Parents, Raising Children with Confidence**
- > **School-based Therapeutic Services -**
  - **Empowering Families Partnership**
- > **Systemic Family Counselling**
- > **Young Parents Support Service**

## What we do:

- > We work with paid staff and volunteers to provide practical and emotional support to families with young children.
- > We aim to support parents to fully engage with the positive emotional development of their children, to help nurture healthy parent-child relationships, and to encourage parents to fully understand and participate in their child's early years learning. Through early intervention we seek to support families to bring up their children so that they can become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- > We also work with our strategic partners to influence the policy landscape and the impact upon families and young children in Edinburgh and Midlothian

## What our partners say:

*"It is a great service, it is very valuable. The only downside is there is always a long queue as there is just not enough of them. The initial consultation is fairly rapid but it can be a long wait for a volunteer. It's not the service's fault there just aren't enough volunteers".* (Health Visitor, Edinburgh).

*"It is very child and family focused and is a very valuable service supporting families just below the Social Work threshold. There is a lot of benefit from their preventative work and the de-escalation of issues. It is also a very cost effective service that the local authority would struggle to deliver themselves with their overheads".* (Education, Midlothian).

*"It is a very impressive organisation that has a strong base in the local community and delivers very high quality services. They continue to adapt as required and are always developing practice".* (Third Sector provider, Edinburgh).

*"They are a good multi-agency worker and a partner that we value".*

(Third Sector provider, Midlothian).

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## What our volunteers say:

*"You can see it is useful for the parents and the children. You see the children want to get the best out of their parents and vice versa. It's lovely to see those relationships grow. That's why I really enjoy it".* (Volunteer, Edinburgh).

*"You see some families at the start where the parents just shout at the kids, the kids play up. You try to show them how to deal with it. You know, talk to them about staying calm - all I ask them is to give it a try. By the end it is so nice to see everyone more relaxed compared to the start when it was so tense".* (Volunteer, Midlothian).

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## What our families say:

*"I knew instantly, as soon as I met my Support Co-ordinator that I could trust her.* (Parent/carer, Midlothian).

*"It's a very difficult voluntary job. You have to make that relationship work and that takes trust. Trust is so important. The fact it's a year too is brilliant. You know it's not going to disappear. A few months just wouldn't be enough to get a real benefit, it takes time to build up trust but then they'd be gone".* (Parent/carer, Edinburgh).

*"It was really good to have that option to meet at home, especially in the beginning as I would not have been able to commit to going out the house".* (Parent/carer, Edinburgh).

# The reason we are here!

This year we were fortunate to hear from a family we supported 3 years ago. At the time she was a lone parent of 3 children all under 5; she had recently separated from her partner, and was working hard to make it all work. She was quite overwhelmed and had no local supports, which influenced her mental health and in turn her parenting capacity. We matched her with a trained family volunteer who visited her and the children. As the relationship developed, the volunteer would take time at each visit to read a story to the children, giving mum 20 minutes to herself and generating new conversations with the children through the power of story. When our support came to an end mum and the children were committed to story time as part of the bedtime routine. As a result, 3 years later the oldest child won a prize at school for best reader in his class. Mum was so thrilled and wanted to let us know that the simple activity of story time has led to her son's investment in reading and learning. We give thanks to the volunteer for introducing books and to the mum for taking the time to tell a story that has influenced her son's future.

## YEAR *in* NUMBERS

**339** Families supported

**50** Funders and donors who contributed

**693** Children supported

**13,296**  
Home visits provided

**53** Volunteer network sustained

**31,536**  
Volunteer hours provided

**14** Staff members employed

**£275,940**  
Economic value of volunteer hours

**8** Sessional staff employed

**182** Hours of volunteer training delivered

# From the Manager

**We have had an amazing year. We have managed to deliver all our key services throughout the year, exceeding targets, and have expanded our service in Midlothian through our partnership with our Third Sector partners and schools in the Newbattle Learning Community.**

In addition to delivering the core services there have been many highlights and new developments this year including awards for our fantastic volunteers, the growth of the family group work programmes and securing the funding for the Family Practitioner post attached to Mayfield Nursery School. Our work in schools has expanded as the result of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF); through the Empowering Families Partnership we are providing therapeutic support to 10 primary schools.

Our single referral pathway with the two Home-Start schemes in Edinburgh, has been a great success, with families getting a service quicker and reducing duplication of services.

We have continued to offer our support to the Midlothian Sleep Advice Service with 2 staff providing support to around 20 families during the year.

We commissioned an independent review by Iconic of our early years home visiting services this year which provided us with invaluable feedback, set to influence the strategic direction for the coming 3 years. The review found that we were:

- > **accessible via the referral process**
- > **needs-led**
- > **providing early intervention**
- > **giving families flexible 'long term' support**
- > **evidently successful in the impact of support on the whole family**

We had a Team and Board Away Day in February where the strategic direction was set. We will be focusing on the following outcomes for the next 3 years:

- 1 Address the attainment gap by maximising children's readiness for learning**
- 2 Minimise the impact of social and economic disadvantages by delivering a range of prevention and early intervention approaches**
- 3 Design and develop a stakeholder framework for a stronger culture of co-production and collaboration in the organisation**
- 4 Leverage Home Link Family Support's experience and outcomes, developed in partnership from the Lawfield School intervention, to meet the wider aims of the Scottish Government (aligned with PEF) and scale up the good practice**

I am excited about the opportunities that will arise for our children and families over the coming years as a result of these outcomes being delivered.

As always, we cannot achieve anything without the dedication of the team, volunteers and Board, thank you to you all.

**Paula Swanston**, MANAGER

## Overview from the Chair

**On behalf of the Board I'd like to take a few moments to recognise some of the wonderful things we've seen from the staff, funders and volunteers over the course of the last year.**



The Big Lottery Funding award continues to allow us to support families in Edinburgh in ways that would not have been possible without this significant and long-term injection of cash. The staff are working hard to make sure the impact of every penny is maximised.

We also continue to build on the success of the Lawfield Community Project by seeking, and securing, opportunities to use a similar (award-winning!) model in other areas of Midlothian. The impact of what Home Link Family Support achieved, when coupled with the other agencies we partnered with, continues to benefit the families we supported in that project and provides a legacy which we are seeking to leverage to its fullest extent.

If our staff and volunteers are the beating heart of the organisation then the support of our funders is the blood which keeps it beating. It continues to be a challenging time for voluntary organisations - both in terms of availability of funding and the rising complexity of needs we encounter - and we are incredibly glad of the support we receive so I must, on behalf of the Board and the entire organisation, take the time to thank them for their continued support.

If you'll indulge me for a few more seconds, as my time on the Board comes to an end, I'd like to spend them reflecting on my 5 years as a Board member.

Much has changed over the last 5 years: we have moved premises; we have grown our funding significantly; we have evolved and adapted our services to the changing needs of the families of Edinburgh and Midlothian; we have won multiple national awards; we have lost funders but won many new ones; volunteers, staff and fellow Board members have come and gone. But one thing hasn't changed.

The commitment of our volunteers, staff, Board members and funders to deliver better outcomes to the families we support was always, and will always be, there. That is what Home Link Family Support is all about.

Many thanks.

**Dave Kerr**, CHAIR



# Service Achievements

Awarded Third Sector Community Partnership of the Year and Scottish Government CYPIC Awards Co-production with Families.



## VOLUNTEERING

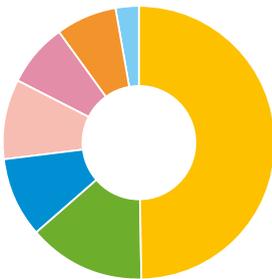
Our volunteers are truly amazing and are the bedrock of the organisation. Without their time and commitment, we would not be able to support so many families, would have no governance and would be very disorganised with our administration.

**53** volunteers visited families throughout the year- thank you!

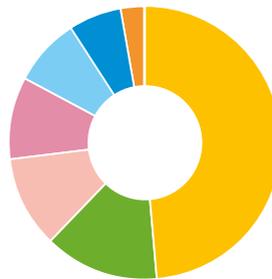
**12** Board members helped make sure we headed in the right direction and **1** efficient volunteer ensured the training materials were ready throughout the year.

## Numbers of families and children supported across the services

FAMILIES



CHILDREN



### Service

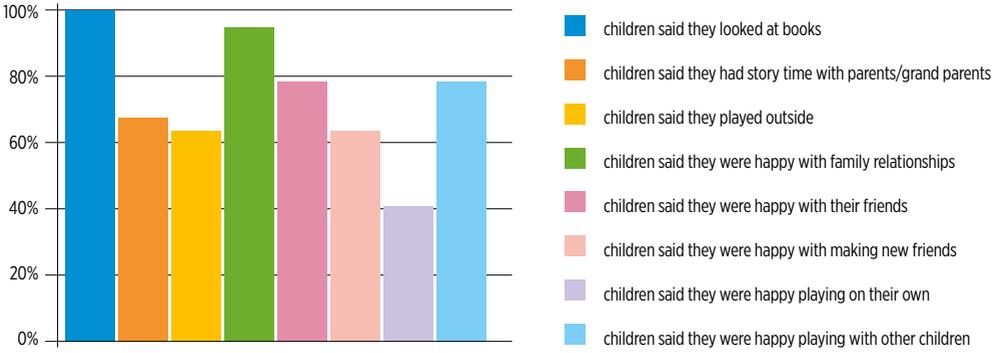
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	Antenatal Support Service
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	Early Years Family Practitioner (Nursery)
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Early Years Home Visiting Service across Edinburgh and Midlothian
<span style="color: green;">■</span>	Group Work - Bookbug/Stay & Play/Young Parents Group
<span style="color: pink;">■</span>	School Based Therapeutic Services - Empowering Families Partnership
<span style="color: lightcoral;">■</span>	Systemic Family Counselling
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span>	Young Parents Support Service

### Families

### Children

32	43
9	19
169	338
47	94
26	67
32	76
24	56

# Children's Self Evaluations



## Volunteer training network

In spring 2018 we provided the following additional training courses for volunteers and staff members:

- > **Bookbug Training (Part 1 and 2)**
- > **Autism Awareness**
- > **Child First Aid**
- > **Mental Health First Aid**
- > **Maternal Mental Health**
- > **Meaningful Play**



In general the courses were well attended with an average of 7 out of 10 people present. Everyone received a feedback form, most of which were returned to us. The feedback we have received has been positive, with the majority of people mentioning how useful and relevant these courses were to their volunteering/staff roles.

We were particularly interested in areas of improvement for future training courses. Overall, everyone seemed very happy with the training they received and identified no areas for improvement, with the exception of the Meaningful Play course where it was noted there could have been more time for practical activities. This has been very valuable to us as we will use this to improve the next course we provide.

Some feedback from those who attended the sessions:

*"The course was a really positive refresher for me"*

*"I really enjoyed the training"*

*"[there was] good background on play and importance for developing motor, social, literacy and cognitive skills. Think it was good, clear communication"*

*"I enjoyed [understanding] how important play is"*

*"It was a very informative session. Autism is a wide topic so impossible to cover all aspects in a 2 hour awareness session but I felt the presenter gave an excellent overview."*

*"I enjoyed the pace and content. The information given was helpful and practical"*



## Christmas wrapped up!

Our partnership with Freshstart and Scott-Moncrieff enabled 30 families to receive a Christmas food hamper and 84 children to receive presents. We would like to thank both organisations for their continued support.



## Midlothian Play Day 2017

We teamed up with Play Midlothian to support National Play Week in Vogrie Country Park. The children were invited to take part in a treasure hunt to collect items then make a model with their objects. This is an annual event promoting play and the value of play outside. We had 74 children participate throughout the day.

## Our Fundraising Runners- we thank you!



Cranley Nursery Group- 5k and Half Marathon runners of 2017

Sean Ferguson- Marathon runner - running throughout 2017-18!

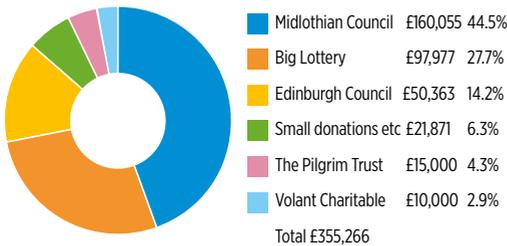
# Financial Statements Review



Home Link Family Support reported a deficit for the year ended 31 March 2018 of £49,241 (2017 – surplus of £42,635).

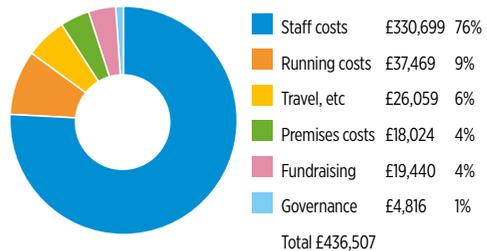
## Income

Midlothian Council remains the key funder of Home Link with £160,055 of grants in the year, accounting for approximately 44.5% of the total income received by Home Link. The City of Edinburgh Council grant of £50,363 and small donations and fundraising amounted to £21,871. The remainder of the income came from a number of grant bodies, including Big Lottery (£97,977), The Pilgrim Trust (£15,000), and The Volant Charitable Trust (£10,000).



## Expenditure

As budgeted, expenditure predominately relates to staff costs in relation to delivering the charitable activities. Staff costs represent 76% of total expenditure, with the other key category being running costs which has shown a decrease from the prior year as a result of decreased group work expenditure and printing, postage and stationery costs.

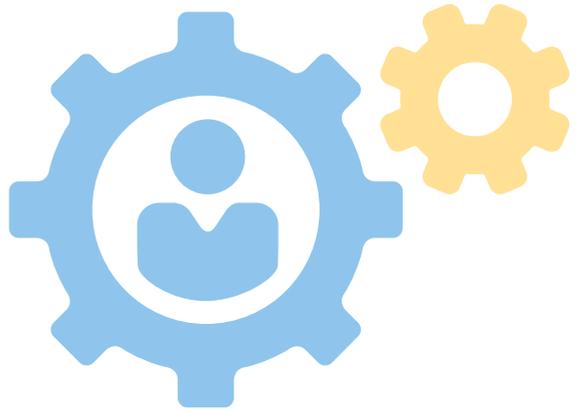


In 2017-18, we were successful in securing funding for the majority of frontline services. Our small grant applications and trust awards have reduced in comparison to last year. A deficit of £49,241 was generated (Prior year surplus: £42,635) based on income of £387,266 (PY: £413,179).

Home Link Family Support continues to have a good balance sheet with total reserves of £198,832 (PY: £248,073) made up of unrestricted reserves of £ 135,762 (PY: £146,882) and restricted reserves of £ 63,070 (PY: £101,191). We will continue to monitor the level of unrestricted reserves to ensure that the organisation is equipped to deal with the economic uncertainty which lies ahead.

The Board of Directors are confident that Home Link Family Support is well placed to meet the financial challenges which face all charitable organisations. Home Link Family Support has already secured the majority of its 2018-19 funding and beyond. The Board are confident that the management and staff team are well placed to continue to provide the excellent services which have built Home Link Family Support's reputation.

**Kirsten Abel** TREASURER



## Board Members at October 2018

Jane Ramage	Acting Chairperson
Vacant	Vice Chair
Kirsten Abel	Treasurer
Maria Thomson	Secretary
Lis Craig	
Nicky Yarrow	
Sarah Wade	
Denise Nesbit	
Jules Robinson	
Rhonda Hogg	
Val Clapton	

## Staff members at October 2018

Paula Swanston	Manager
Michele Milligan	Depute Manager
Siobhan Bremen	Business Support Administrator
Jane Ellis	Volunteer Officer
Helen Gault	Antenatal Service Coordinator
Nadia Almaini	South Edinburgh Family Support Coordinator
Heather McKie	Midlothian Family Support Coordinator
Lyn Williams	Midlothian Systemic Practitioner
Julie MacLeod	Therapeutic Practitioner- Newbattle Learning Community
Rachel Almeida	Young Parents Support Service Coordinator
Katerina Vassakou	South Edinburgh Family Support Worker
Catriona Paterson	Early Years Coordinator- Edinburgh (Maternity Leave)
Lyndsey Mullen	Early Years Coordinator- Edinburgh
Annie Farquharson	Sessional Book Keeper

## Sessional Therapeutic Staff

Liz Notarangelo, Pascaline Mullard, Lora Thomson, Sara O'Connor, Helen Beech, Jenni Johnston, Natasha Dimaki

## External Supervisors

Pauline Holland and Lynne Spitteri







## Home Link Family Support

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Scottish Charity No SC001360 | Company No 229797

DESIGN: [www.lennon.design](http://www.lennon.design)

## Funders and donors 2017-18

On behalf of the Board, staff, volunteers and the families we support we would like to give our sincere thanks and appreciation to all our funders and donors this year. Without your support, we would not have been able to help so many vulnerable children and their families.

The Clemence Charitable Trust  
The Schuh Trust  
The Pilgrim Trust  
Edinburgh City Council  
Inner Wheel Club of Edinburgh  
Lothian Health Board Endowments  
Mrs Katherine MacKenzie  
The Big Lottery Fund  
Midlothian Council  
Karen Murray - Cranley Nursery Group  
Sir Ian Stewart Foundation  
Women's Fund for Scotland  
Phil Watt  
Wilmcote Charitable Trust  
The ABC Foundation  
Reuben Foundation  
Roger & Sarah Bancroft Clark Charitable Trust

Chance to Flourish  
James Wise Charitable Trust  
Anna Robertson  
The Cotton Trust  
Eliza C Pedersen's Trust  
Mrs J B Wood's Charitable Trust  
Mactaggart & Mickel Homes Ltd  
Roger Vere Foundation  
Christopher Lowe  
Jenny Lowe  
The Barrack Charitable Trust  
The Hugh Fraser Foundation  
Corra Foundation: Henry Duncan Award  
The Len Thomson Charitable Trust  
Dr Mike Wilson  
The Castans Trust  
Souter Charitable Trust  
The Courant Fund for Children

The New Maclay Murray & Spens Charitable Trust  
Sir James Miller Edinburgh Trust  
Inchrye Trust  
The Pleasance Trust  
Widowers' Children's Home Trust  
James Wise Charitable Trust  
St Columbia's Church  
The Cotton Trust  
Roger Vere Foundation  
New Park Educational Trust  
Denise Nesbit  
Dr Guthrie's Association  
Stella Symons Charitable Trust  
South West Neighbourhood Partnership  
Cruden Foundation Ltd  
Cash for Kids

