

HOME START

Lorn

Home-Start Lorn Scheme Newsletter

October 2024

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



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

40

Families
supported via
1-2-1 support

67

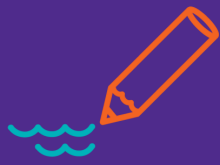
Children
supported via
1-2-1 support

571

Parents
supported via
group activities



Autumn News 2024....



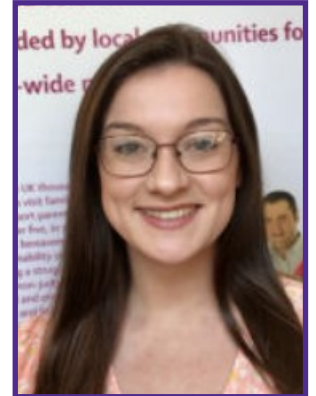
Manager's welcome...

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

It's been another busy quarter here at Home-Start Lorn! Currently, we are supporting 123 families across Lorn and Mull. They are being supported through our three support options, 1) Groups 2) Volunteer 3) Allocated workers.

Our groups continue to be as busy as ever with the introduction of our new group in Oban called Brunch and Blether, replacing our previous stork café and our three new groups in Mull due to having increased service capacity with the introduction of our new family coordinator, Kirsty! We now have a biweekly group in Craignure, have restarted our biweekly group in Salen and are about to start a monthly group in Pennyghael. All support continues to be offered free of charge to all supported families. We also survived another summer timetable which involved us putting on groups every day across the service during the summer holidays to help keep families entertained, supported and to get families out of the house. This included island trips, picnics, beach days, walking groups and some very messy, messy plays. All activities were again - free for all families!

We are in the final weeks in our current accommodation before we move into our new office space. We have been overwhelmed with the kindness shown by the community in both welcoming us to the street and in donations of equipment. We are so grateful and excited to have our family centre opening soon for everyone to enjoy!

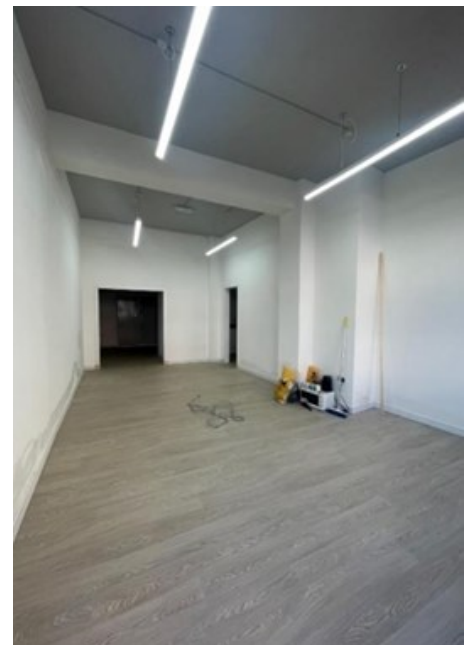


Family Centre latest update

We're nearing completion on the office side, with only the electrical panel left to install. So far, we have replaced the back windows and front door, installed new flooring, stripped and painted all the walls, updated the plumbing, renovated two bathrooms, made electrical upgrades including new lighting and plug sockets, remodeled the kitchen, built a storage cupboard, and created a back room for one-on-one support.

We're starting to move items into the new office as our lease for the current premises ends on Monday, November 4th.

On the family centre side, the flooring has been completed, and the accessible toilet has been constructed. The next steps include painting and decorating, further electrical upgrades, plumbing work, and installing a fully functional kitchen.



Oban and Mull group news



PlayTalkRead - Around one year ago we sent an enquiry to the skills network Scotland about having a visit from one of their play buses ran by their Play Talk Read team. Every year they do a tour around Scotland with their play bus where they visit different locations and allow families to enjoy free games, crafts and sessions on their play bus. In October we finally got a reply to advise they would love to come for a visit. We therefore launched a partnership with them which saw the bus go over to Tobermory for the first time ever and planned its return to Oban for the first time in 4-5 years. The sessions were offered initially exclusively to our families and then to the wider community. Both visits were completely sold out (free to attend) and were fantastic days loved by all who attended. People are really keen for us to continue this partnership so we would look to make this a permanent fixture in our group offering every year.



Family Picnic

Our busy summer timetable concluded with the annual Family Picnic held at Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds. A massive thank you to everyone who joined us. Despite the horrible weather we had such a lovely time and it was our busiest picnic yet with over 70 people attending throughout the day! Special thank you to The Oban Fire Service for coming along, to Sarah for hosting our bookbug session and to all staff and volunteers who helped make the day possible.





Mulling over Mull!

Family Co-ordinator, Kirsty Canning, shares the update below all about what Home-Start Lorn is up to on the Isle of Mull:

The Isle of Mull has been super busy re starting groups, creating new ones and continuing with family favourites.

We made the most of any good weather, having sunny days in parks, with Bookbug songs n' stories, scavenger hunts and boat trips. All have been thoroughly enjoyed and well attended.

We are following the seasons with activities, arts and crafts, using natural resources wherever possible, from summer flower crowns, shell characters, to autumn leaf prints and a Halloween party coming this month!

Fun Fridays, held in Tobermory, in the very North of the island, is a family favourite. We've had some sunny sessions in the park, some colourful messy plays and some sensory delights. Islanders are very excited to hear about the return of 'Balamory'! A popular children's TV programme, filmed in Tobermory, with it's colourful houses and characters. Everyone is looking forward to hearing..... "What's the story in Balamory?"

Bumps, Babies & Toddlers has been restarted, with a warm welcome and good family support. Salen is in a super central location, opening it up to families from Ulva ferry and beyond. The Church hall room is large and cosy, with excellent facilities. The children love the climbing frame and slide, with endless requests of 'again again' and some very happy thrill seekers! I am now remembered as 'Kirsty shells' as the toddlers loved creating their own shell characters, with googly eyes and paint stick colours.

A Halloween themed messy play will take place here, on the 30th of October!

Back by popular demand, is Craignure Toddlers. This is also a great location, being our halfway haven and main island port, with a good sized, well maintained hall and playpark nextdoor. As housing and numbers have increased in this area, it's heartwarming to see how much the community has grown and welcomed families. Groups have been well supported by all generations, creating a wonderful nurturing environment.

We will be alternating Wednesdays between Craignure and Salen, and look forward to some super sensory surprises in the future!

New to the island is Pennyghael Puddleducks, on the last Monday of the month.

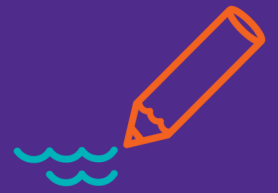
We are reaching out to families far and wide, from the South/Ross of Mull, creating a warm and friendly family place/space. Each month we will bring toys, activities, songs n stories, snacks, cuppas and a warm welcome to families.

It's great to see the community taking care of these fab facilities, working together, creating family safe spaces. I noticed it has a sought after garden area, which we will make the most of next spring/summer, weather permitting! For now, we will stay warm and cozy, in this newly refurbished community hall.

We wish you all a happy Halloween from Home-Start Mull, and a warm welcome to our future groups.



Other news...



Family Survey 2024

From 29th May – 24th July 2024 we ran an anonymous survey to gather feedback from families regarding the current service provision; including one-to-one support and groups. We were absolutely delighted by the response from families and wish to extend a heart-felt thank you to all who took part. Just a few of the findings are below. If anyone would like to read the full report please contact rachel@homestartlorn.org.uk to request a copy.

- The two primary reasons for receiving one-to-one support are; to look after children in order to provide parents with a window of respite (82%) and to provide company/conversation/friendship to parents (78.3%)
- An overwhelming 82.4% of respondents rated our groups 5/5 for satisfaction, with a further 14.7% rating them 4/5.
- The most prevalent challenge facing our families is having no local family in the area (62%). This was followed by struggling with the cost of living crisis (44.8%) and experiencing mental health issues e.g. anxiety (31%)

We also received some lovely feedback including:

Our volunteer is now a part of our family and has at times been a life line to me. It's such an integral part of my routine and helps me so much.

Everything is just magic! The whole team is always working the extra mile and bringing so many fun and thoughtful activities for all of us.

The results of the survey generated new ideas and interesting discussion amongst the team. There are a few changes planned to coincide with the launch of our new Family Centre. Most importantly we remain committed to delivering a completely free service to all local families requiring some additional and bespoke support with young children under 5.

Craggy Island Triathlon Fundraiser

Oban father, Cameron Hathaway, recently competed in the Craggy Island Triathlon on Kerrera and raised £1125 funds for Home-Start Lorn in the process. We caught up with Cameron after the event for a quick interview:

Why did you choose to fundraise for Home-Start Lorn?

My family personally benefitted from the amazing one-to-one support from this fantastic charity. When my oldest son was 2 and my youngest just 3 months, I was recruited for the Scottish Ambulance Service. This meant I had to leave my wife alone in Oban with our two small children and no local family, in order to complete a 4 month training course in the central belt. It was a challenging time but luckily Home-Start was on hand to offer some weekly support and respite for my wife, which I believe kept her sane! We are both very grateful to Home-Start Lorn so I was keen to give something back.

How did the triathlon go?

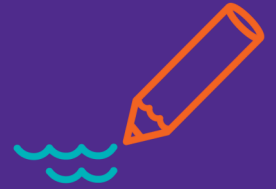
It was the second time completing the craggy island triathlon and I was very happy with how it went. I felt I was a bit faster this year and although very challenging I absolutely loved every minute! The support from all of the people who donated and the spectators on the day helped me push that bit harder.

What are you most proud of?

I'm just so proud of how generous everyone has been and the fact I have been able to raise money for this very important local charity!



Other news... cont.



Ministerial Visit - During ChallengePoverty Week, Jim Fairlie MSP, the Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity, visited our new Family Centre in Oban. He came to learn how Scottish Government funding, supported by the Argyll & the Islands Community Led Local Development Fund, is enabling us to offer essential support to local families. We enjoyed a wonderful visit to the new centre, which was followed by a trip to one of our local family groups. There, Minister Fairlie MSP met some of our incredible families and witnessed our work in action! The visit went really well and all attendees were very enthusiastic about what we had achieved and the services we provide. The minister also provide some lovely feedback- " It was great to be there and meet you all, the work you do is amazing, and very ably led by the force of nature Hannah, well done folks" We also featured on the Scottish Government Rural twitter page!



Update from our Board of trustees...



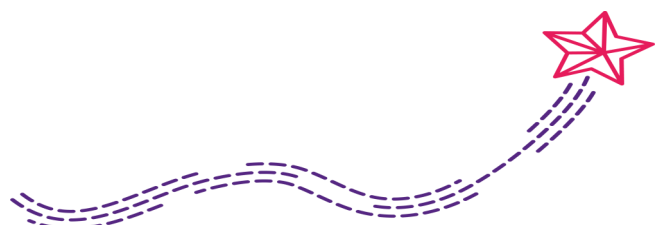
Trustee Caroline Boyle on why she enjoys being part of Home-Start Lorn:

I joined the Home-Start Lorn Board of Trustees in February 2021 and very much enjoy being part of the organisation and working with such a dedicated staff and Board. Working in education, previously as a Head Teacher and now as a Teacher Educator, I understand the importance, and the huge benefits, of being part of a team, all striving to do the best for the children and their parents/ carers in and around Oban and Mull. It is a real privilege to see the developments that have taken place over the last three years and to know that Home-Start Lorn is supporting a huge number of families in many different ways. We are all very excited about the new centre and know that it will bring many benefits to the organisation and the community.



Staff wellbeing boat trip!

The Home-Start Lorn team were so excited to receive a wee restricted fund specifically to be used for a staff wellbeing activity. We decided to use this on a boat-trip up beautiful Loch Etive. The tour included wildlife spotting and a wee visit to Ardchattan Priory. It was fantastic fun and we were very lucky to enjoy a rare window of good weather!



Funding News



We were absolutely delighted to have received the following funds between August—October:

SafeDeposits Scotland Community Fund have generously awarded funding to cover the running costs of our upcoming Family Ceilidh on Saturday 23rd November. We are so excited about this event and look forward to seeing everyone there! Tickets are now on-sale — please see poster on final page of this newsletter for more details.



The Oban Common Good Fund have kindly awarded funds for the purchase of some beautiful equipment for the new family centre. We can't wait for you to see it!



We have also recently received deposits from a few of our multi-year funders who make significant contributions to our core service costs which allow us to continue offering the service to vulnerable local families. Your ongoing support is very much appreciated.

An enormous thank you to all of our 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>



Family Feedback



One of our Oban families kindly contributed the following feedback about her first-hand experience of the service:

I honestly don't know where I would be without the help and support I've had from Home-Start. I'm a first time mum and really struggled especially in the beginnings of motherhood. I was given a few different forms of support including from professionals and Home-Start have been the best support for us. I've never felt that pressure that can come with professionals visiting you at home from anyone at Home-Start, just feels like someone you've known for years coming up to see you and give you a break. I have family around who are great but they're busy working or live further away and I've actually found it a lot easier having a non family member coming in, someone who you don't have to explain yourself to and who isn't going to ask questions but you know will listen if you need. The support has been non judgmental and friendly, I think the difference for me is I don't feel like I need to explain myself or give any details about how I'm feeling/ why I need support, if I don't want to, yet they're always there and don't question whether or not I might 'look' like need a hand. My wee one has bonded with the team & a volunteer and gets very excited to see them and to go out with them which puts me at ease. I know he always has great fun and is happy and safe away from me which helps me actually have time to relax rather than worry how my baby is getting on. We go to groups too, where I've met other parents and made friends. There's so much on offer and we always have a good time! We feel so included and welcomed too, there's no feeling like you're an outsider or are not included because you're a new face which can happen at other groups - plus no one judges.

Upcoming Seasonal Specials

HOME START
Lorn

Fundraising

CEILIDH DANCE

Royal Hotel
SATURDAY 23rd
NOVEMBER

Doors 7pm for 7.30pm

MUSIC FROM:
Angus J MacColl
and Friends

Tea
Coffee

Raffle

Tickets include welcome drink and hot roll

Tickets:
Adult £12
Children £8
Family (2adults, 2children) £35

Tickets:
kelly@homestartlorn.org.uk
Calling 01631 566749
Limited tickets available on the door.
Advance booking recommended

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

HALLOWEEN MESSY PLAY

OCTOBER 30TH
FROM 9.30AM

Bumps, Babies and Toddlers @ Salen Church

HOME START
Lorn

HALLOWEEN PARTY

Wednesday 30th
October
Go Bananas
3.30 - 5pm