**Home-Start Lorn: what sort of organisation we are, and the kind of leader we need as our new Manager**

Home-Start Lorn is a well established local organisation that has been working with volunteers to support families with young children in the Oban area for over 30 years. Our strategic goal is to ensure that every family, with a child under 5 years of age, can utilise the support we provide, so as to give their children the best possible start in life, so they are able to take up and benefit from the opportunities available to them.

We are a small service with an establishment of four posts - a Manager, a coordinator on Mull, a administrator and a Family Support Worker. Two of these posts are currently vacant.

We wholeheartedly sign up to the principles of intensive family support detailed in the Scottish Government’s recent publication - the Promise:

* Early intervention and prevention has long term benefits for families. We see ourselves as a universal service that does not stigmatise, is criteria free and can be accessed by any family
* We want to build relationships with our families built on trust and honesty, which listens to what they have to say and builds on their strengths and helps them to say what they need in order to flourish
* We work in partnership to support a family’s involvement in their community. Building partnerships within communities, developing effective peer support that can enable the journey of the family is key to a positive and effective outcome.
* We work in a spirit of openness, encouragement and enjoyment. We aim for a broader celebration of parenting and accessible and nurturing support
* We are aware of the impact of poverty and debt as key stressors in our families and communities, when combined with such issues as mental health problems, domestic abuse , poor housing or substance abuse the challenges of parenting can be magnified. Our support must be cognisant of these issues and aims to ameliorate their impact

As we emerge from the impact of Covid, Home-Start Lorn is in a great position to deliver its strategic aims.

* + The service is well recognised and valued in the communities of Oban and Mull largely because of the stability and commitment of our retiring manager, whose 24 year employment has nourished families who have returned as volunteers and Trustees
  + We have financial security for at least the next couple of years and a robust financial plan to ensure we can expand and develop. We have been very successful in our recent applications for funding.
  + We have an active chair and Board of Trustees who are committed to developing the service. We are currently advertising for a Family Support Worker.
  + We have transferred our data management to Charitylog and have ambitious plans to ensure that qualitative and quantitative data informs our practice
  + We currently have a pool of 24 volunteers who support 14 families. We aim to double the number of families and volunteers over the next twelve months with the additional focus of perinatal support and for families with mental health challenges.
  + The pandemic has led us to adapt our approaches to include phone, video and social media contacts, and more practical support for day to day needs. Home-Start Lorn serves families in two localities: Mull and Oban and villages. We have had to be innovative in ensuring support continues to be available to families and hope to use this experience to improve the service we offer
  + We have good working relationships with the Health and Social Care Partnership, Housing Associations and local voluntary organisations. We are proud of our partnership working.

To lead and manage our work, we want someone who:

* Shares our passion and ambition for our support for children and families and will help us implement our ambitious plans of ensuring that Home-Start Lorn is the go to voluntary agency that can offer universal family support in the early years.
* Can help us extend our service to providing perinatal support and to families with mental health problems and are looking for someone who has experience of developing these services.
* Demonstrates shared values with us and has the capacity to foster relationships central to how we work
* With trustees, will help lead improvements in how we meet changing needs, post-lockdown, and deliver objectives in our plans to widen diversity and ameliorate the impact of poverty
* Will build further on local partnerships that benefit families we work with
* Makes sure we continue to assess the impact we are making and learn from this knowledge
* Will lead and support our team of staff in a collaborative and flexible way, looking after people’s well-being and supporting them to develop their skills and knowledge, as our services evolve
* Will lead and support our families and volunteers in the Oban area providing direct family support where appropriate
* Has the ability to balance compassionate leadership\* with delivering the necessary management and administrative tasks required in a small, independent Third Sector organisation

\* “Compassionate leadership in practice means leaders listening with fascination to those they lead, arriving at a shared (rather than imposed) understanding of the challenges they face, empathising with and caring for them, and then taking action to help or support them”. The Kings Fund, 2019