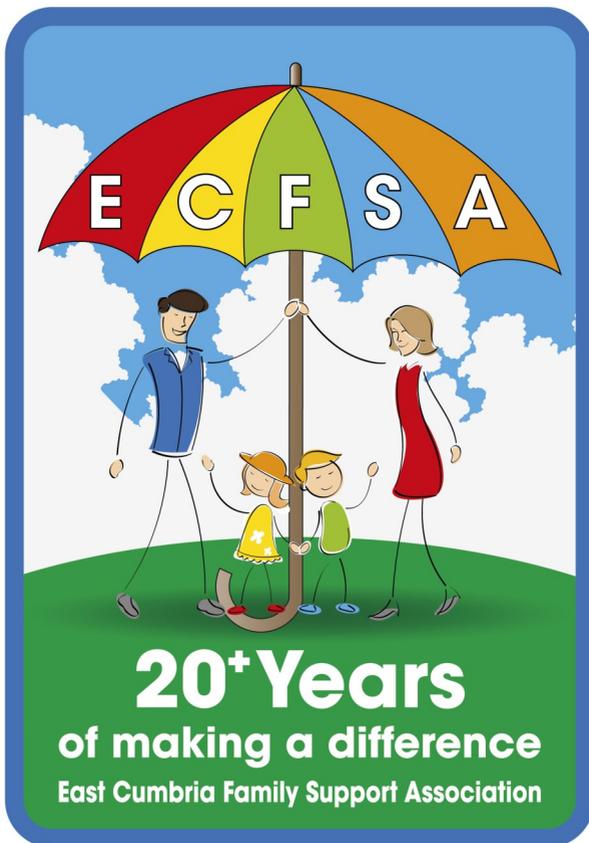


East Cumbria Family Support Association
ANNUAL REVIEW
2017-2018



Volunteers are at the heart of our organisation, enhancing the lives of children and families in the community.

WELCOME

It has been another busy year for everyone at East Cumbria Family Support Association (ECFSA) and much has been achieved throughout the year.

I do have to say, it has not been without its challenges, not least in respect of obtaining funding. We are all aware of the demands placed on our budgets and it continues to be the same for the organisations and families.

Increased pressures for families can increase the demand for our services. I am pleased to be able to say the loyalty, dedication and determination of staff, volunteers and trustees has, once again, enabled us to continue to maintain the consistently high level of service to the families we support.

I feel it is very important that, despite the pressures and demands on our service positive outcomes continue to be achieved and this must be recognised. I want to thank everyone who makes this happen within the organisation. This includes the support of our funders who continue to recognise the benefits the organisation brings to families and communities.

It has been exciting for us to be able to expand our work to the Workington area and has been a busy time recruiting volunteers and engaging with the local practitioners to ensure we can provide the appropriate support for each family.

As an organisation we are looking to the future and in the coming months you will see our name change. This is not simply a case of 'change for the sake of change' but rightly, to reflect that we no longer only provide support in 'East' Cumbria.

We can reflect on another positive year where families have engaged with our organisation to make improvements in their lives and there is much to look forward to, including change to the countywide approach for 'Early Help'.

I am sure you will understand, when you read this review, why I am proud to be Chair of Trustees.

Karen Morland, Chair of Trustees

Registered Office:
The Office, Mardale Road, Penrith, CA11 9EH
Tel: 01768 593102
Also
East Cumbria Family Support at Carlisle West Children's Centre,
Wigton Road, Carlisle, CA2 6JP. Tel: 01228 227348

OUR TRUSTEE BOARD

Finding the right mix of skills for a Charity's Board of Trustees can be difficult, but at ECFSA we are very fortunate to have a wide range of experience and commitment from our Trustees that forms an efficient, effective and professional Board.

The Trustee Board meets every 6 weeks and consists of:

The Chair, Karen Morland, brings a wealth of experience in management and HR. She has a stabilising influence on the board and provides support and guidance to the Chief Officer.

Vice chair Dot Metcalf is a retired Social Worker and her last role was with the Care Quality Commission. Dot has taken the lead role on the board of updating the governing documents and quality assurance.

Treasurer Peter Harrington, a local Accountant, is invaluable in these times of austerity, in ensuring the organisation is financially viable and accountable to our funders and donors.

Allan Buckley has a Social Work background. Allan has been very proactive in the review and update of all our policies and procedures. Allan has also taken part in the Task and Finish group that has been reviewing the structure of the organisation needed to take ECFSA into the future.

Jane Taylor has spent her working life with young people, teaching at universities, and is very much involved with the community. Jane is involved in the development of a communication and engagement strategy and a service user group to inform the strategic planning of services.

Nick Mark is a minister serving in the United Reform Church involved in Brampton, Bewcastle, Carlisle and Penrith. Nick, previously a solicitor, is able to advise us on the legalities of running the organisation. Nick has taken part in recruitment of trustees and staff interviews.

Venetia Young is a retired GP, and a Family Therapist. She has provided training sessions for staff and volunteers on how to support parents with mental health issues, and in the use of genograms. Venetia is also part of the Task and Finish group reviewing the structure of the organisation and the safeguarding lead for the trustee board

Christine Renouf had an extensive career in Probation, Social Care and Voluntary Sector. Her latest role was as Chief Executive Officer of the National Youth Advocacy Service. Christine has taken on the lead along with the Office Manager in the implementation of the new GDPR laws, she is also on the Task and Finish group for the reviewing of the structure of the organisation.

THE STAFF TEAM



Pam Hutton
Chief Officer, Company Secretary



Sarah Craig,
Family Support Coordinator, Eden



Pauline Flynn,
Family Support Worker, Eden



Dan Nicholson, Family Support Coordinator,
Carlisle and Brampton



June Wordsworth, Family Support Worker,
Carlisle and Brampton



Val McQuillin,
Family Support Coordinator, Workington



Gail Leckie,
Contact Centre Coordinator



Kellie Bradburn-Sims,
Funding & Development Officer



Jane Huggett,
Office Manager

Home based family support.

Trained volunteers support families by providing practical and emotional help with parenting, respite, and offer kindness, understanding and a listening ear. The relationship that grows between a volunteer and a family builds confidence, self-esteem, trust and respect. This helps a family to recognise what they do best and feel worthwhile. If more appropriate the support is provided by one of our experienced Family Support Workers.

Individual parenting programmes

We have staff and volunteers trained in individual and group Family Links Nurturing Parents programme. This is delivered in the family home and can be tailored to meet each family's individual needs. There can also be flexibility in the length of time the support is needed to make the changes required.

Group and individual work with children

Best Buddies (5-8 year olds) and Risk and Resilience group (9-11 year olds) are groups for children to learn about making positive relationships, dealing with conflict and bullying and aims to give children confidence and improve self esteem. These groups are delivered in partnership with Carlisle Children's Centres.

Individual work with children gives them the opportunity to talk about their worries and explore their wishes and feelings to make sense of their particular situation. The work with children can sometimes be delivered alongside work with the parents to ensure the child's voice is heard within the support and outcomes for the family.

Eden Child Contact Centre

The Contact Centre offers supported contact between children and their non-resident parent or other members of their extended family in a safe neutral and welcoming environment.

THE FAMILIES WE SUPPORT

For families who do not have their own family around to support them for whatever reason it is difficult. As parents we have all had those moments when we have turned to our Mums or other close family members for advice and suggestions and just reassurance that we are doing the right thing.

Our volunteers and support workers feel very privileged to be invited into the homes of the families we support and understand how hard it must be to make the decision to allow someone they don't know into their's and their children's lives.

Comments from families:

"I feel that my volunteer cares about what happens to me and I haven't felt that from anyone else for a long time"

"When the volunteer takes my daughter out I can get on and do jobs."

"She will continue coming and I would like her to."

"My son is off the Child Protection Plan. The volunteer has been here the whole time."

"She has been impartial, supportive and very helpful."

"We are happier and more relaxed in general. The support has been more for the children's benefit as when I am more relaxed it has a positive effect for them."

"We are now a happy family"

WORK WITH CHILDREN

Group work

We have provided two Best Buddies groups and two Risk and Resilience groups this year. They have both been delivered in partnership with Barnardos.

The Best Buddies group has been delivered for the last 12 years and has always had a full membership at each running. The group has evolved and developed over the years as different workers have taken on the facilitation and put their own stamp on it.

Both groups receive referrals from schools and social workers for children where there are issues of low self-esteem and confidence. The group will also help children who are finding it difficult to make friendships and have relationship issues within their family.

Individual work

Individual work with children can be an opportunity for children to have a safe adult to talk to where their views can be heard. Children sometimes need to know why a parent may feel stressed or anxious and to know that it is not their fault. The volunteer or Family Support Worker will take time to build a trusting relationship with the child so that they feel confident to be able to talk about their situation.

Thank you to the families who allow us into their lives, and who work in partnership with us to provide the best outcomes for children.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The training and support we provide for our volunteers is very important to us. Volunteers starting their volunteering with East Cumbria Family Support attend an initial training session which includes our policies and procedures, volunteer safety and lone working and briefly covers topics which are expanded on in our Volunteer Development Programme. Volunteers will also be required to complete an e-learning safeguarding session and can then be matched with a family as soon as their references and DBS check are completed.

There is an expectation that volunteers will then attend our six week Volunteer Development Programme which includes sessions on:

- Levels of support for families and confidentiality
- Mental health issues and barriers to engagement.
- Relationships within families and play
- How to support parents with their parenting
- Domestic abuse awareness
- Safeguarding Level II.

Volunteers are also provided with ongoing support from their Volunteer Support Coordinator on an individual basis and at group support meetings held regularly throughout the year. These support meetings are an opportunity for volunteers to share their experiences with and gain support from other volunteers. The meeting also ensure volunteers are kept up to date with developments and usually include a training element.

Venetia Young, one of our Trustees, has provided 3 training sessions for staff and volunteers and shared her expertise as a GP and Family Therapist on issues relating to parental mental health. We hope that Venetia will be able to provide more of the valuable training to help us to support families.

THE WORKINGTON PROJECT

We set up a pilot project in Workington in October 2017, funded by Francis C Scott Trust (3 years) and Allerdale Community Fund.

We employed a Family Support Coordinator to recruit and train volunteers who will provide home based support for children and families in Workington town initially. We were very kindly offered a hot desk in the Barnardos Children's Centre for which we have been grateful. We hope in the near future to have permanent base for our member of staff and recruit a Family Support Worker to support families with a more complex need.

Recruiting volunteers is becoming more difficult nationally and it has been quite a challenge moving into a new area and promoting our service. We have engaged with the colleges in West Cumbria and hopefully they will be able to use us as a placement for their Health and Social Care students.

We have to date recruited 8 volunteers and have received referrals for 13 families wanting our support.

Referrals have been coming in steadily and the health visiting service and schools have been particularly keen to use our service. We have now started to support some families in Cockermouth.

A referrer commented about support provided to a Mum and her son to help with their relationship:

"He is sustaining better relationships in school and is making better progress. Mum is listening to his views and acting on them. He is appears happier and more relaxed in school and Mum says he is back to his old self at home."

We are hopeful that our volunteer base will increase over the coming months and we will reach out to the whole of Allerdale.

EDEN CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

The Contact Centre is an invaluable service, which has accommodated 8 families and enabled 10 children to maintain contact with their absent parent over the last 12 months.

The service is provided every other Saturday and provides a supported setting where parents and children can feel safe during contact. The centre is coordinated by a paid member of staff and volunteers who are there to lend a hand in the care of the children and any difficulties that may arise. The families are supported until everyone feels comfortable about the parent and child/ children moving on to have their contact in the community.

We are grateful to Barnardos North Eden Children's Centre for providing a venue, and CAFCASS for the funding for this much needed service.

Parents views:

"I know my child is safe"

"Eventually I would like him to stay overnight with me for the weekend."

"I have enjoyed seeing my son have a good time at the visits, it is good to be able to see him"

Child views:

"I am happy with the length of the contacts"



LINKS WITH OUR PARTNERS

ECFSA Chief Officer is co-chair of “The Cumbria Children and Young Peoples Voluntary Sector Reference group” (CYPVSRG). This group is an excellent vehicle for selecting representatives from the voluntary sector for representation on county wide strategic boards, giving the voluntary sector a voice in the strategic planning of services and promotion of best practice for children and their families.

ECFSA’s Chief Officer represents the CYPVSRG on the:

- Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB)
- LSCB Communication and Engagement subgroup as Chair
- Children’s Trust Board
- Cumbria Safeguarding Hub Programme Board through the LSCB

ECFSA staff members:

- Belong to the Domestic Violence Champions group.
- Attend and chair the Carlisle and Eden Practitioner Forums.
- Support the LSCB safeguarding training pool.
- Are committed to the Early Help Agenda, attend the Early Help Panels in Carlisle and Eden, engage in Team Around the Family meetings and for some families take on the role of Early Help Coordinator.

Training:

As a team we are committed to the development of good practice. We have attended the following training courses this year.

Safeguarding.

CSE Awareness

Graded Care Profile

Signs of Safety

Outcomes Star

Children and Young Peoples Resilience courses.

www.eastcumbriafamilysupport.org.uk



Find us on facebook: East Cumbria Family Support



Follow us on twitter: @EastCumbriaFSA

LINKS WITH THE COMMUNITY

We have good links in the community with:

Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Penrith whose pupils collect and wrap toys for our families at Christmas.

Penrith Lions who for the last few years have paid the cost of the Christmas parties.

Mothers' Union who donate goods for the Christmas hampers for families.

CFM Cash For Kids who support us through their Christmas toy appeal.

Local community groups—for example Stainton village who have supported us through their Garden Gadabout and with hamper donations from their Book Club.

We have been instrumental in getting families the right support by signposting to specialist organisations that can help with issues such as; Debt and Financial Advice, Carlisle and Eden Food Banks, CAMHS, and Domestic Abuse Support.



We felt very honoured when the 2017 High Sheriff of Cumbria and his wife paid our charity a visit, organised by Cumbria Community Foundation.

The Sheriff chatted to families, trustees, volunteers and staff about our work in Carlisle, Eden and forthcoming project in Workington.

We were very pleased that at the end of his term we received one of his awards in recognition of our work in the community.

Vice chair of Trustees, Dot Metcalf, and family support volunteer, Dinah Hopley, attended the award ceremony at Crosby on Eden Golf Club to accept the award.

TRUSTEE REPORT—LOOKING AHEAD

Over the coming year we aim to:

- Through the Volunteer Recruitment Strategy, increase our volunteer base and continue to provide high quality training and support that will enable the volunteers to provide a high standard of support to the families who trust us to enter into their lives.
- Continue to provide support for families in their own homes, delivered by trained volunteers or paid family support staff.
- Ensure that children and young people have a voice and shape the way they are supported.
- Develop a Parents Forum that will help us to provide services that are community led.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are informed and trained in the up to date practice, so they can reach their potential and develop their skills
- Continue to work collaboratively with statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Maintain involvement with Cumbria Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Reference Group (CYPVSRG) and continue to represent the voluntary sector on strategic boards and forums.
- Work with partners to provide support to families that is meaningful and coordinated.
- Secure lines of funding that are long term and sustainable for the future of ECFSA.
- Continue to run Eden Child Contact Centre under the auspices of the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC).
- Take an active role in the development of services and practice across the county to give children and young people the best life chances
- Further develop our home based support service in Workington and into other areas of the county.
- Change the organisation's name to reflect the geographical areas we are working in.

FINANCES

East Cumbria Family Support Association is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee governed by its Articles of Association.

Our income for the year was £253,375 and expenditure £219,413. This enabled the Association to carry forward £159,661 into the financial year 2018-2019 (£147,858 in free reserves and £11,803 in restricted funds). This includes grants totalling £20,000 which were received during the year relating to the year 2018-2019.

This complies with our adopted reserves policy that requires us to hold three months running costs as unrestricted reserves.

Our dedicated volunteers provided over 3,000 hours of support.

We extend our thanks to the following organisations who funded our revenue costs for last year: Cumbria Children's Services, BBC Children in Need, The Henry Smith Charity, Garfield Weston Foundation, Frieda Scott Trust, The Sobell Foundation, Cumbria Community Foundation Grants, Kelly Family Trust, Hadfield Trust, Buckland Trust, Finn Family Trust, Local Committees and Penrith Lions.

Thanks to Francis C Scott and Allerdale Local Committee for funding our new project in Workington as part of our continued development within the county, and to Eden District Council and Eden Local Committee for funding our IT upgrade.

In addition we received many individual donations and generated additional income by hosting students on placement. Support from Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) enabled us to continue running Eden Child Contact Centre.

BANKERS

**Barclays Bank plc,
Market Square, Penrith
CA11 7BY**

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

**Stuart Oake
Chartered Accountant,
3 Portland Place,
Penrith, CA11 7QN**

OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our many supporters. Their continued funding and support, year on year, has enabled our organisation to flourish and develop.



Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION

The
Henry Smith
Charity

founded in 1628



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& Wales no. 802052 and Scotland
no. SC039957

FCSCT

FRANCIS C SCOTT CHARITABLE TRUST



KELLY FAMILY CHARITABLE TRUST

strengthening family ties

FSCT

FRIEDA SCOTT CHARITABLE TRUST



finnfund



You can support us to support families and children in Cumbria by donating now:

Text: **ECFS12 £5 / £10** to 70070

Online: <https://www.justgiving.com/ecfsa>

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/east-cumbria-family-support>

Raise **FREE** funds for us
every time you shop online!

