Welcome to the Barnardo’s Portage Service in Leeds

Barnardo’s Disability Support & Inclusion Service has been commissioned to provide Portage to families living in Leeds. The service commenced delivery from 1st May 2013 and is registered with the National Portage Association (NPA). We are a city wide service, with Portage Home Visitor’s working within Leeds City Council’s wedge based system.

Portage is a home visiting educational and support service for children and young children with additional needs and their families. Mindful of the values of Barnardo’s and the NPA we aim to:

- work with families to help them enhance life experiences for themselves and their young children in which they can learn together, play together, participate and be included in the community in their own right;
- play a part in minimising the disabling barriers that confront young children and their families
- support the national and local development of inclusive services for children

The Portage Model is characterised by;

- regular home visiting;
- supporting the development of play, communications, relationships and learning for young children within the family;
- working together with parents/carers within the family and empowering them to take the lead role in the partnership that is established;
- helping parents/carers to identify what is important to them and their child and plan goals for learning and participation;
- keeping a shared record of the child’s progress and other issues raised by the family;
- responding flexibly to the needs of the child and family when providing support;
- Portage Home Visitors accessing support through regular supervision and team meetings, on behalf of the families they work with;
- Working closely with other agencies and professionals

Referral Procedures

The Portage Service operates an open referral system accepting referrals from families themselves as well as other agencies. Referral to the Service (where the child meets the criteria) requires informed parental consent so that families are able to decide for themselves whether they wish to receive Portage.

On receipt of a referral the Portage Co-ordinator will make an appointment for an initial visit to meet the family and explain the Service in more detail. Written information about Portage and Barnardo’s will also be given to the family.
Waiting List

Where there is a waiting list for regular home visits to commence, Barnardo’s has a clear procedure for prioritising referrals. Decisions are based on full consideration of each child’s individual needs and circumstances, taking into account:

- date of referral;
- age of child;
- whether the child is in the care of the Local Authority;
- level of other provision;
- parents’ wishes

Evaluating Outcomes for Families

The challenge for Portage Service is to find ways to capture and document positive outcomes for families. Barnardo’s Portage Service is committed to the adoption of a framework which looks at all aspects of monitoring and evaluation using qualitative and quantitative approaches. We work closely with Leeds City Council Children’s Services, Complex Needs Team to ensure that this aligned with the Local Authorities Children’s & Young People’s Plan.

Contacting the Team:

The Portage Team is based at:

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