

family
action

Trustee Recruitment Pack

Together, we change lives.



2025 V1



Welcome

from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about the role of a Trustee at Family Action, a dynamic and growing charity. I am lucky to chair a board of committed and engaged trustees but we are now looking to strengthen the Board.

Under the leadership of our CEO, David Holmes CBE, and his Executive Group, Family Action has doubled in size and reach over the past six years. Working from the heart of local communities across England and Wales, Family Action has been supporting people through change, challenge and crisis for over 150 years. We now support over 60,000 vulnerable families across the country every year, and feed 350,000 children a day through the National School Breakfast Programme. We provide practical, emotional and financial support to help children, young people and adults overcome their challenges and look forward to the future with more confidence.

We have been providing that life-changing support for over 150 years. Our history is our strength, we know families and we have been by their side for decades. We work through some 175 community and national services to tackle some of the most complex and difficult issues facing families today – including financial hardship, mental ill health, social isolation, parenting challenges, domestic abuse or substance misuse.

We were honoured to welcome Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales as our Royal Patron in our 150th anniversary year in 2019, and in recognition of Family Action's commitment to supporting families throughout Covid and beyond, we were delighted to be awarded the Third Sector Charity of the Year 2021. Furthermore, the strides we are taking to develop a positive internal culture, demonstrated by our achievement of a 1-star rating with Best Companies representing 'Very Good' levels of Workplace Engagement. We are also the 14th Best Charity to work for and 73rd best large company to work for (in the Q3 2023 Best Companies awards).

Family Action's work is wide-ranging and supports some of the most vulnerable in our communities. We are looking for a trustee who is prepared to give time and energy to help the charity to continue to evolve and expand its vital work.

I look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "I. Hargrave".

Ian Hargrave
Chair of the Board of Trustees




In this pack

We hope this pack contains all the key information that you need to decide whether being a Trustee here at Family Action is right for you and for those we support. Please scroll through, or click on the links below to take you to the various sections.

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Through change, challenge and crisis, Family Action is here for any family in need and anyone without family support. It's what we've done for over 150 years.

Across the UK, we protect children, support young people and adults and offer direct, practical help to families and communities.



Our mission

Family Action supports people through change, challenge or crisis. It's what we've done for over 150 years. We protect children, support young people and adults and offer direct, practical help to families and communities.

We see first-hand the power of family to shape lives, for better or worse, so we speak up for the importance of family in national and local policymaking, amplify family voices and represent the changing needs of families in the UK today.

Our vision and ethos:

At Family Action, our vision is of a society that understands the importance and power of family as a foundation for individual futures and connected, resilient communities. Because family is the key to positive futures, for individuals and society: whether it's recognising the value of family networks and support in the present or understanding the impact of trauma from the past, understanding the power of family to shape futures at every age is vital.

We all have our own family stories. Some are tougher than others. But the story of today doesn't have to be the story of tomorrow, for any of us.

Together, we change lives.

Our values:

We have a strong and successful history of building stronger families, and as we look to the future our values and behaviours define us and underpin all the work we do.

We achieve our ambitions by always:

- **Being people focused**
- **Reflecting a 'can do' approach**
- **Striving for excellence in everything we do**
- **Having mutual respect for everyone we work with, work for and support through our services**





1869

The Charity Organisation Society (COS) was founded by a group of social reformers including Octavia Hill, William Gladstone and John Ruskin

We founded the principles of modern day social work.

1870

1908

The first Pension Act is introduced following campaigns from us for a state-managed pension.

We set-up some of the first Citizens Advice Bureaux in the country.

1938

1953

Queen Elizabeth II becomes our Royal Patron.

We rebrand to become Family Action

2008

2019

HRH The Princess of Wales becomes Royal Patron of Family Action

Family Action is awarded Third Sector Charity of the Year.

2121

About us

Founded in 1869, the charity was providing services to children and families before the first aeroplane flew, before the first car was invented, even before it was first made compulsory for all primary age children to attend school.

Our history is remarkable – we were there at the very beginnings of social work, we ran the first Citizens Advice Bureaus in London and were the forerunners of JobCentres.

Today, Family Action supports over 60,000 families and hundreds of thousands of children and young people a year through some 200 community-based services, as well as supporting thousands more through national programmes and grants.

We've been supporting people through change, challenge and crisis for over 150 years.

The role of a trustee

The Charities Act 2011 defines charity trustees as ‘the persons having the general control and management of the administration of a charity’. For Family Action the charity trustees are known as the Trustee Board.

At its simplest, the role of the Trustee Board is to receive assets from funders and donors, safeguard them and apply them for the charitable purposes as declared in the objects of Family Action. The Trustee Board must always act in the best interests of Family Action exercising the same duty of care that a prudent person of business would, or looking after the affairs of someone for whom he/she has responsibility. The Trustee Board must act as a group and not as individuals

The duties and expectations of a Trustee include:

- To ensure that Family Action complies with its governing document (i.e our Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that Family Action pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure Family Action applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e. it must not spend money on activities, which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be.
- To contribute actively to the Trustee Board’s role in giving firm strategic direction to Family Action, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of Family Action.
- To ensure the financial stability of Family Action.
- To protect and manage the property of Family Action and to ensure the proper investment of Family Action’s funds.
- To appoint and support the Chief Executive and monitor his/her performance.
- In addition to the above statutory duties, each Trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise. The Charity Commission provides a raft of guides regarding trustees’ duties.
- Adhere to the Family Action Trustee Code of Conduct.

In addition to the above duties, all Family Action trustees should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions.

This may involve leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise. The Charity Commission provides a raft of guidance regarding trustees’ duties.



**...the story of today doesn't have to be
the story of tomorrow, for any of us.**

A trustee's commitment

Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings. Board meetings are held five times a year and papers are distributed a week in advance of meetings. Meetings tend to last about three hours. New trustees will be offered an induction by senior staff at Family Action if they indicate a willingness to stand as Trustee.

Trustees are also expected to become a member of one of the Board's committees (currently Governance, Remuneration, Investment, Audit and Quality & Performance).

The committees meet between three of four times a year (for 2 hours each meeting).

Further to this, Trustees are encouraged to sit on a second committee or an ad-hoc sub-group (i.e., pensions or mergers).

Traditionally, meetings are held in London but many are available online also. Trustees can claim out of pocket expenses incurred in travelling to meetings.

Trustees will also have the opportunity from time to time to visit our services to develop their understanding of the work that the charity delivers, and to undertake and maintain appropriate learning and development where required.

Trustee Code of Conduct

A code of conduct for board members ensures high standards and makes it clear how any potential conflicts of interest should be raised and dealt with. Please view our Trustee Code of Conduct document [here](#).



Volunteering my time and expertise for an organisation like Family Action is a win/win. I get as much from serving on the Board of Trustees as I give in my professional skills.

The ideal candidate

The ideal candidate will have relevant qualifications with experience of the sector. It would also be an advantage if you had an interest in the provision of services to vulnerable people.

You will join an energetic and active board who take pride in their support of this over 150-year-old charity, with approximately 175 services nationally.

Each trustee is also expected to have:

- A commitment to the purpose of Family Action and understanding its work and services. This would include an expectation to visit at least one Family Action service each year.
- An expectation that they will attend every board meeting, and any committee meeting that they are a member of
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Integrity and an expectation that they will declare any conflict of interests as and when they arise
- An understanding of Family Action's objects and powers under its Articles
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind, ask questions of the Executive Group and participate fully in meetings
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to support other trustees.

In order to provide a range of skills necessary to provide effective governance of a complex charity, we have Trustees who have skills and experience in the following areas:

- Social Care
- Health services
- Grant Administration Services
- Setting targets, monitoring and evaluating performance and programmes
- Financial management
- Human resources and organisational development
- Understanding of the voluntary sector
- Experience of business sector
- Legal matters
- Fundraising
- Policy and advocacy
- Marketing and PR
- IT and Digital Experience



Who, how & where we work

Our skilled and experienced staff offer a range of services that support children, young people, families and adults. From our flagship family helpline, FamilyLine, to more specialist therapeutic services throughout the UK, we aim to serve the needs of communities across the country.

Generally sitting in nine different 'thematic areas', our work focusses on providing the right support, to the right people at the right time.

Family Action has some 175 services and is the proud provider of several national services, as well as local and regional services.

We work in the areas of:

- Domestic violence and sexual abuse
- Adult mental health and wellbeing
- Perinatal
- Children's Centres
- Family Support
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)
- Youth services
- Food programmes
- Care experienced and adoption support
- Grants



To find out more, please visit our website:



These sessions are amazing! Finding out what support is available and also just feeling like you're not alone. They really are a godsend.

Parent/carer, Neurodiversity Sheffield



Pregnancy/perinatal



Parents & carers



Children 0 -11



Young people 11 - 25



Adults

Family can shape the future

Our strategy, **Family can shape the future**, provides us with a clear framework and direction of travel for the next five years through five key objectives:

1 Ensuring we maximise our positive impact on society

Family Action recognises that we operate within a broader system and we must ensure we do all we can to leverage our unique position to facilitate change for the benefit of families in the UK.

2 Ensuring the quality of our work

Family Action aims to provide sector leading, high quality, impactful services at the right time, in the right way and by the right people. We are committed to improving and sustaining outcomes for children, young people, families and adults.

3 Ensuring a strong culture that enables our people to thrive

Our people are our lifblood; passionate staff and volunteers working together to achieve the best outcomes possible. We want a culture that supports this, with our people being supported, equipped and engaged – allowing them to thrive.

4 Ensuring our organisation remains relevant and resilient

We will ensure that Family Action is a strong, resilient and sustainable organisation that is able to manage uncertainty in a very challenging economic context, so that we are able to continue to be there for the people who need us.

5 Ensuring families in the UK are seen and heard

We want families to trust us an organisation that shares and amplifies their voice but, importantly, we will also create spaces and platforms for families to share their stories themselves, as the experts in their own lives and experience.

Family Action is here to support people through change, challenge and crisis.

Read about our impact: [click here](#).



How to apply

Family Action is committed to equality and diversity. We welcome applications from all sections of the community and from a diverse range of backgrounds, UK wide. We know that greater diversity will lead to even greater results for families and children and strive for our Board of Trustees to be truly representative of the diverse communities we support.

If you have any questions about Family Action or the role of a Trustee, or if you'd like to apply with your CV and covering letter, please contact:



Katy Mitchell, Executive Assistant to CEO and Executive Group



[Click here to email](#)

Please use your covering letter to show us why you would be a brilliant fit for our team, with examples and evidence that demonstrate how you meet the expectations of the role as set out in our job role profile.

Your CV and the covering letter should not exceed 4 pages.

We will then look to schedule an interview with Family Action. The nominated candidate will then be appointed by the Governance Committee and offered an opportunity to attend, as an observer, a Board Meeting, before formal appointment.

We look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your interest in Family Action.

**Whatever shape your family,
whatever you're going through,
we're here for you at every age
and stage of life.**

We are Family Action.

Family Action

34 Wharf Road
London, N1 7GR

Registered Charity number: 264 713

