

Project Name	Explorer Tots
Amount applied for	£8,360
Lead Organisation	Kirkstall Valley Development Trust
Ward/Neighbourhood	Kirkstall

Community Plan Objective	Best City for Communities
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Project Summary
<p>KVDT is committed to improving the well-being of residents of Kirkstall. One of the ways we want to do this is by providing affordable and regular Baby and Tots sessions for pre-schoolers. The benefits of this are several.</p> <p>Firstly, we provide quality sessions for children encouraging learning and free play. We are fortunate that our children and family's manager is a qualified teacher with 20 years of experience teaching in primary schools who is passionate about providing opportunities for children to learn and engage.</p> <p>Second, is it gives parents opportunities to meet other families in the area and consequently reduces isolation and improves well-being. We recognise the benefit of parents/carers supporting each other consequently making them more resilient by sharing their challenges and successes alongside our staff and volunteer who model good childcare practice.</p> <p>We have just introduced advice sessions based at Unit 11. We hope to include sessions about parenting, nutrition and potentially about finance which the parents/carers are able to access.</p> <p>Our project would be to deliver 2 hour, affordable, high quality tots sessions on 4 mornings each week which would be held either at the Community Hub and at Kirkstall Valley Farm. (We currently offer 2 but we would be unable to continue without some financial support – the cost of similar sessions in West Leeds cost £5-£6 for one hour sessions whereas we charge £2 for a 2 hour session but this means without funding we either have to raise our prices or stop providing them – our sessions are over-subscribed so we know there is a need for this provision)</p> <p>This project would benefit children under 5 years, during term time, and their families/carers. Using the sessions to give parents access to wider advice also enables us to get to know families who are struggling and to offer additional support including referrals to our food pantry or for food parcels.</p> <p>We will offer, where appropriate, a more bespoke service by offering short term support to help families overcome difficulties by either offering an intervention ourselves or by signposting to other services. An example of what that could be have recently supported a mum who suffers with severe anxiety. Her daughter has been given a nursery place but she was struggling to let her daughter to attend due to her belief that her daughter would be distressed and inconsolable without her. We have supported her by meeting her at the entrance to nursery and 'walking away' and leaving her daughter there. We brought Mum to the community hub for coffee to support her and help her manage her anxiety. This has occurred over the period of a few weeks and daughter is now happy and confident at nursery whilst mum has begun volunteering with KVDT with a view to joining our employability course provided by Flex (Askham Bryan).</p>

There will be a nominal charge of £2 per session. Similar sessions locally charge between £5 and £6 per hours session. Our session will also provide healthy snacks such as fruit for children and a cup of tea and coffee for parents and carers

When will the project run?

April 2022 – March 2023

Targets for the project and how success will be measured

The aim of the project is to deliver high-quality play led sessions available to children from Kirkstall at an affordable price. We will aim to engage 80+families who will report feeling more supported.

Children will learn through creative play and parents/carers will learn different methods of engaging their children in meaningful play improving well-being, problem solving skills, independence, creativity all whilst building their confidence.

Parents will report having made new friends and having increased their support network making them more resilient reducing anxiety and stress.

Where appropriate we will signpost those in need to appropriate support services to ensure they access all the help that is available. We are liaising with Early Help Hub and Kirkstall's Children's Centre for support and advice

Children will be, playing and learning, in a calm and positive environment where good behaviour is modelled – this will start to help children begin to be ready for more formal education settings and eager to learn.

For those parents who wish to return to employment we will signpost them to the Flex Employability course held at the Community Hub so they can begin to prepare for the move back into paid work. We will also offer volunteering opportunities as another route into being prepared for employment.

How the project will be promoted and/or participation encouraged

We will advertise events through schools and children's centre and via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and through the Community Hub also advertise through local media such as West Leeds Dispatch. We have found that word of mouth is particularly effective since it is local people we want to attract.

Exit strategy/How the project will continue after the funding

If this project is successful we will aim to make it a permanent offer and will look to secure other longer term funding to subsidize the sessions to ensure that they are as affordable as possible to encourage the widest range of people are able to attend

Other organisations involved

No

Financial Information	
Revenue funding requested	£8,360
Total cost of project	£15,272
Match funding/Other funding sources	£6,912
Available Funds in Group Bank Account	
Funding received since 2010	

Full Breakdown of Costs			
Item	Wellbeing	Other (with funding body)	Date of Decision
Staff 4 session x 3hours @£12ph for 36 weeks	£5184		
Admin 1 Hour pw @12ph for 36 weeks		£432	
room hire 4 session x 3hours @£15ph for 36 weeks		£6480	
resources (includes healthy snacks)	£1880		
Children manager planning, 2hours @ £18ph x36 weeks	£1296		
Sub Totals	£8360	£6912	

Details of volunteers	4 volunteers x 432 hours = £4,777.92
Volunteer role	Play support volunteers

Communities Team Comments