**HSWF Volunteer Guidelines – when a child is removed into Local Authority Care (LAC)**

Home-Start Wyre Forest is committed to providing support to parents of children under five years to produce the best outcome for the family. The needs of the child are paramount.

There are times when a parent`s care is not safe, appropriate or adequate to meet the needs of the child and on these occasions a child may be removed into LAC.

As a volunteer, please consider :

* We need to provide support in the interests of keeping the child and family together - a child may only be removed for a short period of time and may soon be returned to the care of the parents. Consistent support from Home-Start may be key in enabling the parent to make the changes needed to continue caring for their child.
* If it is not appropriate to return the child to the parent`s care until more detailed assessments are carried out, or legal processes completed, we can still continue supporting the family, if it is appropriate to do so.
* A planned ending will be considered in cases where the child will not be returned HOWEVER- this needs to be handled sensitively as it may indicate to the parent we have information about their child`s future they have not yet been told.
* Our responsibility and duty of care to the parents we support should be the deciding factor in determining the continuation of support after a child has been removed – essentially we should not be removing support if

1. There are plans to return the child or
2. No alternative support is in place for the parent for the original needs.

**Your co-ordinator will provide you with additional support and guidance if this**

**situation should occur**.