



## **Little Stars**

### **Referral Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Little Stars works on a referral basis and accepts referrals for families and children aged 0 – 13 years (Including pregnant women 30+ weeks) through our baby bank and tots to teens service, and 4 – 17 years through our Cool for School uniform service.

This policy outlines who the accepted referral partners are, the expectations of each referral partner and the procedures in place to deal with each request.

#### **Making a referral -**

Referrals can be made through the Little Stars website by completing our baby bank and cool for school referral forms.

#### **Referral partners -**

Little Stars understand there are a lot of support services and points of contact where a professional will identify a child or family in need. Therefore, Little Stars will aim to accommodate referrals made by any relevant professional working closely with the child or family. We request that referral partners make all reasonable effort to understand the family situation to enable them to make a fair and informed decision when seeking support from Little Stars. Referrals must be made via the professional/business email address. Referrals made from personal email addresses claiming to be professionals will be queried. Self-referrals or referrals made by friends or family will not be accepted.

#### **Timescales -**

Little Stars aims to respond to all referral requests within 48 hours and will have the items ready for delivery or collection within 14 days. In the event of an emergency referral, please make this clear on the referral form and we will work to the best of our ability to get this ready sooner.

#### **Collections -**

Little Stars are based in Shrewsbury and referrals are available for collection from our Head Quarters...



Collection times will be shared with each referral partner when referrals are ready.

### **Repeat referrals -**

While Little Stars are available to support families through immediate challenges, Little Stars services are designed for short-term assistance. To ensure we can help as many families as possible, we can accept up to three referrals per family. For ongoing or long-term support, Little Stars recommend exploring other resources that may better address the family's evolving needs.

Additional referrals must always be made by the referral partner after the appropriate intervention with the family. Please indicate on your referral whether this is a repeat referral and provide us with some context around the situation, so we are best positioned to provide appropriate support.

### **Fulfilling requests –**

As Little Stars rely on donations of preloved items, stocks sometimes fluctuate, therefore there will be occasions where we cannot fulfil a referral request. We will always try our best to provide as many of the items as possible, and where applicable will try to offer a suitable alternative. Items such as double pushchairs are in high demand but we will add the family to a waiting list and get in touch with the referral partner when the required item becomes available.

Some items must follow health and safety guidelines; therefore, they can only be given if they are brand new. This includes stairgates, cot and moses basket mattresses. Little Stars rely on funding to provide these items which could impact how quickly the requests can be fulfilled.

Little Stars follow the *Lullaby Trust Safer Sleeping advice*, therefore must abide by British Safety Standards for cots and cot beds. This subsequently causes stocks of these items to be very low due to limited donations and therefore also requires funding support to supply these larger pieces of equipment.

To help us understand the need for the item and capture the impact it would have on the child/family, referral partners will be asked to complete an equipment request form.

We are unable to provide preloved car seats and very rarely receive donations of new ones, therefore it is unlikely we can fulfil requests for these.

### **Monitoring and evaluation -**

As the need for Little Stars services continues to grow, we require extra support through funders and donors to help continue our work. To help raise awareness of the need for this support and to monitor the impact, Little Stars need to collate more of the stories of the families who are being helped. To gain a better understanding of the family circumstances and evaluate what difference our service has made to them, Little Stars require additional information from referral partners and will share a monitoring and evaluation form once the referral has been



processed. We would be grateful if the referral partners support us by completing these forms with as much detail as possible.

**If the items are no longer required -**

If the family has received duplicate items or no longer requires some, or any of the donations we've provided, we kindly ask that these items be retained and returned to us. This will allow us to redistribute them to other families who are in need. If your contact with the family is due to end shortly, please ensure they are aware where the items have come from, and share our contact details with them. We can be contacted via [enquiries@littlestarscharity.org](mailto:enquiries@littlestarscharity.org)