



HM Prison &
Probation Service



HM PRISON
SERVICE

Public Sector Prisons

HMP/YOI Rochester

Public Sector Prisons

Families and Significant Others Strategy

November 2019

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Governor



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If you have concerns regarding a loved one at HMP Rochester please contact us immediately on
01634 803268

Introduction

When a person is convicted of a crime, being held in custody and sent to prison may sometimes be the punishment. This punishment also has an impact on the loved ones of those sentenced. Prisoners families and significant others are often referred to as serving a 'hidden' or 'invisible' sentence, as their hardships are not immediately obvious.

In September 2016 the Secretary of State commissioned the Lord Farmer Review; The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reducing Intergenerational Crime, report from this was published in August 2017.

*Lord Farmer's report found that maintaining supportive family and significant other's relationships is of paramount importance to achieving a reduction in re-offending. The 19 Recommendations from this report put Families and Significant Others at the heart of prison reform. Stating **"family should be the golden thread"** in all prison processes .*

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service supports the building of good family relationships and the maintenance of existing relationship to assist in the resettlement of our residents.

This Strategy aims to provide a framework for enabling positive interactions and outcomes for all those with a close family member in our custody.

Lord Farmers review is supported by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and Office for Standards in Education, who highlight the importance of positive relationships in successfully reducing risk of reoffending, helping our men to lead law-abiding lives upon release.

HMP/YOI Rochester is committed to actively seeking the involvement of families in our work to support individual prisoners.

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What is the impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families?

Where this document refers to “families”, we are including all positive and supportive external relationships; parents, partners, carers, personal advisors to care leavers, siblings, close extended-family members and those who hold significant roles in the lives of our men.

HMP/YOI ROCHESTER is committed to supporting all family arrangements where these provide constructive and supportive relationships for residents and their family.

Over 10 million children in the world have a parent in prison and Action for Prisoners Families estimates that in the United Kingdom approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year.

Research has shown that the children of prisoners are 3 times more likely to take part in anti-social and delinquent behaviour and it is estimated that 65% of boys who have a father in prison will go onto offend themselves.

That said there are a small number of cases where maintaining family ties may not be appropriate, possibly due to the risk of harm that a prisoner poses to the family. Safeguarding children and supporting victims will always be a priority for HMP/YOI Rochester and we work in conjunction with the National Probation Service to achieve this.

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Why focus on Families?

*There are currently **357 Fathers with dependent children** housed at HMP ROCHESTER. **160 of our residents are listed as cohabiting, married or in a civil partnership** and most of our men will have other positive external relationships that we as an establishment should promote.*

*In the past year **621 visits, on average, a month** were facilitated at HMP ROCHESTER. **This has meant 13,943 adults and 5058 children have had the opportunity to visit the men in our custody, building on and maintaining family ties.***

For the men in our custody supportive families are a great resource that often play a vital role in helping an individual move away from crime. A supportive family can also provide effective protective factors for prisoners at risk of suicide and self-harm. Having a stable family to return to upon release or to support progression to lower category establishment, can also encourage prisoners to engage in sentence planning interventions and maintain positive behaviour whilst in custody.

We have some work to do though as currently 31% of our residents received no visits in the past 6 months and roughly 10% of our residents have never received a visit at all.

Research shows that a prisoner who receives visits from their family is 39% less likely to reoffend within a year than a prisoner who does not receive visits.

When looking at the Criminogenic needs of the men in our custody 42% have relationships listed as an area that needs work.

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What are our aims?

We here at HMP/YOI ROCHESTER aim to ensure the interests of prisoners and their families are addressed through:

- *Providing a welcoming, comfortable and enjoyable visits experience.*
- *Extending the length of visiting sessions.*
- *Providing family day visits to allow fathers time to develop relationships with their children.*
- *Working with partners to provide advice and guidance to families and prisoners.*
- *Develop a programme of activities within the prison to promote positive family relationships.*
- *Providing positive communication systems.*

This is overseen by the Head of Operations and the Families team. Representatives from across the establishment and partner agencies have, and will continue to, contribute to this Families and Significant Others Strategy, to ensure FAMILY remains the focus of the work we do here. We will assure through the following processes:

- *Interdepartmental Risk Management Meetings*
- *Establishment HMIP Expectations Document and Action Plan*
- *Key Worker Supervision*

Measuring our success on outcomes and the progression on areas of development through:

- *Visitors Survey's*
- *Prison Council*
- *Families and Significant Other's Meetings*
- *HMIP inspections*
- *Prisoner MQPL*

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HMP/YOI Rochester's Family Offer and Vision

To improve the visits experience here at HMP/YOI ROCHESTER, many changes have already occurred. We know however this shouldn't be the end and our vision for the future is outlined below.

Visits centre

- **Current**

- The Visitors' Centre at HMP Rochester is open from 11:00 and closes after visits are finished at 5pm.

- **Vision**

- To continue to be able to provide extended visit centre opening times, operated by trained staff to allow families time and space to relax whilst waiting to visit and time to compose themselves before their onwards journey home.
- To provide current relevant information for visitors regarding our residents day to day regime, specific information regarding coping with a loved one being in custody, information on assistance available to visitors to HMP ROCHESTER.
- To make the process of visiting a loved one less daunting for all visitors especially children and vulnerable adults.

- **Current**

- The visits centre at HMP ROCHESTER has recently been redecorated and fitted with new lockers for personal belongings. The centre is now run by Spurgeons who provide family services and refreshments.

- **Vision**

- To improve the look and feel of the visits centre, to enhance the exterior of the centre with plants and flowers, and ensure signage is clear and visible for all.

- **Current**

- A visitor's survey is readily available for visitors in the visits centre and visits hall. The family's team collect these daily and the data is discussed at a monthly meeting between the family service provider, Spurgeons, and The Prison's family team.

- **Vision**

- To purchase an Ombea express pod, which will allow more confidential data collection allowing us to focus on customer satisfaction in a timelier manner.
- To invite families and significant others to attend focus groups for their input in the visits process.

- **Current**

- At present there have been no critical friend exercises run to test our processes against other sites and embed best practise.

- **Vision**

- To hold, at least twice yearly, Critical friend exercises where feedback on the processes will be recorded and action plan drawn up.
- To send members of the family's team to other sites to see other establishments family offerings and to bring back best practise from first-hand experience.

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VISITS HALL

- **Current**

- The visits hall has a designated children's play area with a large selection of toys and games to suit children of all ages. This area benefits on a Wednesday and Thursday from the added supervision of SPURGEONS workers, who actively engage with families and especially children bringing toys to tables to ensure a good experience is had by all.

Vision

- To maintain a clean, safe and child friendly environment with fully trained staff to engage and supervise children, with an aim of providing this service on every visits session.

- **Current**

- The visits hall has a large underwater themed mural on the wall, which has been there for a while.

Vision

- To replace the mural with either a new mural or with Spurgeons information for families.

- **Current**

- With the recent change of family service provider a number of issues had been highlighted and actions taken to rectify these were put into place immediately. With the reduction in cost of items from the tea bar and the provision of food at family day visits

Vision

- To be able to provide food for families on extended visits, to reduce the cost of visiting a loved one.
- To refurbish the tea bar area and provide new fridges ovens and facilities to ensure the best service is provided to customers.
- To ensure a menu is available to Residents when they come in to the visits hall to maximise the time spent with visitors.

- **Current**

- The visits hall has been used to celebrate success of our residents with their loved ones however this has only been done once before, as an establishment we should look to celebrate the positive things our residents do and promote this to their loved ones .

Vision

- To use the visits halls regularly to celebrate our resident's successes for example the completion of offending behaviour courses.

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Visits Duration

Day	AM Session Timings	PM Session Timings
Monday	-	14:00 – 16:00
Tuesday	-	14:00 – 16:00
Wednesday	-	14:00 – 16:00
Thursday	-	14:00 – 16:00
Friday	-	14:00 – 16:00
Saturday	09:00 – 11:00	14:00 – 16:00
Sunday	-	14:00 – 16:00

Above is HMP ROCHESTER's current visiting times for our residents and their visitors. The duration of all visits sessions, for all prisoners regardless of their Incentive level, is 2 hours.

Vision

After conducting research into visits sessions, Monday visits tend to have reduced numbers compared to the rest of the week, with enough spaces available during the week to be able to accommodate those that do book on a Monday. Our vision is to use this Monday session to offer something different to our residents and their families & significant others.

FAMILY DAY VISITS

Current

The administration and delivery of family days throughout the year is overseen by Spurgeons and Prison Staff. In 2019 HMP ROCHESTER had 16 family days scheduled and are split between children Under 5 years of age and over 5 years of age and take place in and around the school holidays. Spurgeons' play workers provide guided activities for the men and their children to enjoy together, as well as Physical education Officers running a selection of mini games.

Vision

To increase our offering of extended family visits over the coming next reporting year to include extended visits for those men with children under 2, incorporating some parental learning, particularly for those men with very small babies so that they can participate in care of the new born.

We aim to add variety to the visits we offer, involving local businesses and looking at the wider community to try offer our residents and their families something different that will leave a positive memory of this crucial time spent together.

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Working in Partnership

In order to provide the very best service we can here at Rochester we will continue to work with all departments within the prison, service providers, residents, families and significant others.

Spurgeons deliver family services at Rochester and they continue to give support to families and significant others. The Spurgeons team, operating in close partnership with operational staff at Rochester, already offer a significantly improved offer to offenders and their families, with continuing developments to be implemented over the coming year, this service includes:

- The administration and delivery of family day visits.
- Spurgeons deliver a parenting course called Time for you and Your Child.
- Special visits for a family with particular problem or a family in crisis, where a normal social visit is not appropriate are in development.
- One to one support is also offered to offenders on specific family matters.
- Liaison with schools and other agencies to also ensure that adequate support is in place for children with a parent in prison.
- A dedicated Spurgeons Single point of contact to act as a liaison directly with Spurgeons helping to reduce confusion and concern from the men around Family days and visits.

This Service is continually assessed and development points actioned by means of monthly partnership meetings, to plan for the forthcoming weeks and discuss any emerging issues. This is also supported by Quarterly contract meetings where we will assess targets and service delivery targets.

Time for you and your child

Run by Spurgeons, Time for you and your Child, is intended to support fathers maintain their role in the family while in prison as well as providing them with ideas and information about ensuring healthy child development and behaviour. The intended learning outcomes of the course are to identify key stages of child development and factors that may impact on this development. Understand the essential role of parents. Identify the different stages of play and the role of the adult in supporting learning. To understand children's behaviour and strategies for influencing it. To develop and use effective communication skills.

The course, which runs over 8 weeks, has run 5 cohorts this year, with 40 men participating in total so far.

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Other Partnership Work

- We will continue to investigate the opportunities and make use of available and emerging technology, to facilitate stronger family ties and maintain regular positive contact.
- The potential facility for using SKYPE will be discussed and is under review with the new IEP policy.
- Some of our residents will be required to complete accredited behavioural change programmes as part of their sentence plans, such as the Thinking Skills Programme or RESOLVE. Approximately 6 weeks after completion of this a post programme progress review meeting is held. The resident is entitled to invite 2 approved visitors, their family or friends, to attend this meeting, which is a fantastic opportunity for their families or significant others to see the good work they have done. The meeting usually lasts around 60 minutes with the Resident and their visitor given time together in our visits hall afterwards. This is on top of their normal visit allowance.
- We will explore further opportunities of working with other third sector groups such as Forward Trust and Domestic abuse helplines.
- HMP Rochester's residents have the opportunity to purchase bikes from the Prison's workshop for their families to receive. This is run by the ABACUS Furniture project.
- HMP Rochester's Library runs Story Book Dads. This scheme allows residents to record themselves reading a book. Which is then sent out to their children.
- PACT deliver a coming home course for 8 men at a time, this course aims to support men leaving prison to reflect on their expectations and plans about leaving prison, and the kinds of relationships they will have on release. The focus is on listening, empathy for partners and family, expectations, planning ahead and taking personal responsibility. By the end of the course participants should be able to, recognise any family relationship communication traits that need improvement and suggest how this can be achieved, identify the network of support available to them and to the family members and be able to say who might be helpful in living well, set realistic goals, action and timelines for the immediate and longer term, identify underlying issues for themselves and family members and how to approach these with a view to their resolution.
- We are looking at reintroducing celebration events with our education provider to invite families in to celebrate the success of their loved ones, when they've completed courses at HMP Rochester.

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- The Chaplaincy runs Messy Church for families in the Outside Visits Centre on the last Saturday of every month. The families engage in craft activities making things which they can take in for their loved one. There has been opportunity in the past for children the children to take in the materials needed and make crafts with their dads which we are looking to expand as this is a great way to strengthen family ties.
- We are currently looking at ways to convert unused visiting orders so that they can be used as a way of maintaining contact with loved ones who maybe too far away to visit.

Departure lounge

As part of Rochester's pledge to establish the importance of maintaining family ties and understanding the link this has to reform we have identified a need to provide service facilities to our men on ROTL.

It has been identified that although maintaining family ties is essential to reform and rehabilitation it is also a difficult and also potentially highly risky time for our men as family can and are triggers for re-offending.

We currently have a number of men that are ROTL users specifically for maintaining family ties and we hope to create a facility whereby these men can liaise directly with their families in an environment that is monitored and offers services that are beneficial for the men and their families.

Rochester has established communication with HMP Cookham Wood and Spurgeons to identify that this may be a co-agency run facilitation for men in our care. This service will look at facilitating;

- access to families to enable re-integration
- amenities such as Tea and Coffee (this will be provided by family services workers)
- A place to charge a mobile phone
- toiletry packs for men being released
- a store of excess kit for men to have the facility to have a change of clothes
- support numbers of charitable organisations and help lines
- Play areas for meet and greets with children and family members
- A decent and respectful area for family members to wait for their significant other as release is processed

The importance of re-integration with family has not gone un-noticed at Rochester and, together with service providers, we believe the facilitation of the departure lounge could be a positive stepping stone to the reducing of re-offending and the golden thread to reform.

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Care Experienced Men in Our Custody

At HMP/YOI Rochester we look to identify 'Care experienced men' through our initial reception, Nomis and Key worker interviews.

The transition to adulthood is a difficult time for many young people, and especially so for those young adults who have experienced care, who may often not have the emotional, financial or personal support of parents and other family members. It is important for us to identify those who have experienced Care to ensure they are given the proper support from the local authority through personal advisor support.

For those that require this extra support further information can be obtained from Spurgeons or our Safer Custody Department.

The Prison service see's someone who is care experienced as a person who has been in the care of the local authority as a child regardless of their current age, the time they spent in care or whether they meet the legal definition of a 'care leaver'.

Such is the importance of working with those who have experienced care, which is estimated to make up 27% of the adult prison population compared to 1% of general public, Her Majesties Prison and Probation service CEO Jo Farrar launched the strategy for care experienced people in 2019 .

Official Prison Visitors

A member of the Chaplaincy team at HMP Rochester will see all residents who have been identified as not getting visits and in liaison with the Official Prison Visitors (OPV) will arrange regular visits upon request.

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Home Detention Curfew

The Home Detention Curfew (HDC) scheme provides a managed transition from prison to community for those serving short sentences by use of an electronically monitored curfew (EM). Release on HDC should be a normal part of a sentence for most of those eligible, and refusal of HDC for those eligible and not presumed unsuitable for release the exception.

Research into the experience of being on EM suggests it may help some people to break habits and limit opportunities to commit crime, enhancing opportunities for employment and training, and allowing relationships to develop.

In the past 6 months HMP Rochester has released 130 men on Home Detention Curfew.

Release on Temporary Licence

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) facilitates the rehabilitation of offenders, by helping to prepare them for resettlement in the community once they are released. This includes, among other examples, finding work and rebuilding family ties.

At HMP ROCHESTER in the past 6 Months we have released on temporary license 787 men.

There are numerous reasons for these releases but relating to families we have licensed:-

- **261** men to maintain family ties.
- **22** men on a resettlement overnight release.
- **3** men to attend funerals.
- **3** men on a resettlement day release.
- **1** man to visit a dying relative.

Funerals or visiting a dying relative.

The men in our custody may be given Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) to attend a funeral or to visit a dying relative. If they are not otherwise suitable for ROTL then we will escort these men to these events.

The Prison services policy is for close relatives, a close relative is defined as spouse (including a person – whether of the same sex or different sex – with whom the prisoner was living as a couple in an established relationship immediately prior to imprisonment), parent, child, brother, sister (including half or step brothers and sisters), fiancé or fiancée (provided that the Governor is satisfied that a bona fide engagement to marry exists), or a person who has been in loco parentis to a prisoner, or to whom the prisoner has been in loco parentis.

We appreciate that the traditional family model doesn't apply to all of our men, and whilst not guaranteed, all applications will be assessed on an individual case basis.

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Safer Custody

It is important to us to try and engage families and significant others of our residents who are in crisis and it may be appropriate for family members to be invited to take part in a review process for residents being managed by the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process. However this has to be with the individual concerned consent

There is a Safer Prisons hotline that families can use to raise any concerns they may have for their family member. This is checked at various times each and every day to ensure that any messages left are dealt with immediately.

The dedicated confidential number is: 01634 803268

Additionally we have a direct line to Spurgeons for families and significant others to contact the prison during the working day in relation to family matters or advice, this number is for you to talk to staff if you are concerned about self-harm or the mental health of your loved ones.

Spurgeons Family Helpline: 01634 803121 /07970 638304

At Rochester we currently have the following technological services which help to maintain contact with families and significant others:

E-mail a resident: www.emailaresident.com

Prison voicemail: www.prisonvoicemail.com

We are constantly looking for new ways to bridge the gaps in communication between our residents and their families, one such means being the use of SKYPE which is being looked into as part of the new Incentives policy. However we welcome any suggestions through surveys, forums and meet and greet sessions.

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GOVERNANCE

This is how will we monitor our progress, and ensure what we've said we will do, is being actively worked upon.

Families is a standing agenda item at the reducing reoffending monthly meeting, this meeting is attended by all relevant stakeholders, where we can monitor progress and development needs in order to achieve our vision.

We will hold a quarterly specific Families meeting, where we will analyse emerging trends and data from all stake holders in the following areas, to help us inform this strategy;-

- Number of failed visits per quarter.
- Number of family visits held and the numbers who did not arrive
- The usage of E-mail a resident
- The usage of Prison Voicemail
- The use of the Prisons Crisis Line and our actions around this
- The use of Prison Visitors
- The number of men released on HDC
- The number of Men receiving ROTL's
- The times taken for Visitors to get from the Visits centre to the visits hall
- Key worker data
- First Night information
- Survey data and feedback from families.
- The number of men completing Family training

As well as the above it is important to continue to monitor the booking system for visits and understand how this is received by visitors to the prison.

In October we carried out a covert test on our booking system. **A covert test of visits booking took 1 minute 06 seconds to book a visit.** There was availability to book a weekday visit during the next week and a weekend visit within two weeks of the call.

As our aim is to ensure the Families and Significant Others Strategy is embraced in everything we do in this establishment, we will invite input from all areas, including but not limited to OMU, CRC, Probation, Education, Safer custody, Programmes, Health Service Providers, Chaplaincy, the PE department, Key workers and our Family Service providers.

Families and Significant Others will become part of Her Majesties Inspectorate of Prisons report and our progress will be externally monitored by this report, as well as by Regional leads who will provide assurance that we are doing what we say will or evidencing why we aren't.

Internally the establishment has committed to this strategy by creating a specific Families team comprising of a group of dedicated visits staff, a families supervising officer and families custodial manager, who reports directly to a Senior Management Team's Family Lead.

The strategy is a live document that will be changed according to the outcomes of the above governance methods.

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Available support/information for Children, families, significant others and professionals working with them

- Action for Prisoners' Families www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk – Action for Prisoners' Families, works for the benefit of prisoners' and offenders' families by representing the views of families and those who work with them.
- AFFECT – AFFECT provides services for the families of serious offenders and offers support groups to families in the south of England. www.affect.org.uk
- Inside Time – www.insidetime.org.uk – this website gives visiting and other advice
- Prisoners' Family Voices is a web-based community which gives family members the opportunity to talk to each other.
<http://prisonersfamiliesvoices.blogspot.com>
- Offenders' Families Helpline: 0808 808 2003 info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk
www.prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk
- Prisoners' Families and Friends Service: 0808 808 3444
info@pffs.org.uk
www.pffs.org.uk
- HMP/YOI Rochester's Safer custody concern line: **01634 803268**
- NICCO (Barnardo's & HMPPS Partnership) <https://www.nicco.org.uk/> - NICCO is a one-stop information and advice service to support all professionals (working with children and families of prisoners) and all families of prisoners, bringing together useful information in one place.
- Assisted Prison Visits scheme – who promote family ties by contributing to the cost of prison visits, for those in receipt of a low income. **0845 3001423**
- RELATE offer free couples counselling for Parents who live in Kent and Sussex, that are due for release or have been released during the last year. Referrals to this service can be done by contacting **0300 0030270**. Or by speaking to an offender manager who can email a referral.

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HMP/YOI ROCHESTER

FAMILIES SUCCESS PATHWAY

A Dedicated Families Team

To ensure families are at the centre of everything we do at HMP Rochester.

Spurgeons Family Services

Provide Family services, trained play staff on visits, family related training for our men, 'Time for you and your baby' and advice for visiting families.
Arrange Family day visits

Offender Management Unit, Probation and CRC

Release on temporary License.
Home detention curfews
Resettlement

Chaplaincy Team

Messy Church
Official Prison Visitors Scheme

Prison Officers Key Workers

First Night Interviews, daily interactions, Family and significant others information available through key worker. Book visits

PACT

Deliver Coming Home Course.

Prison Library, Education

Story Book Dads, Celebration events for families.

Prison Industries

Residents can purchase a Bike for their loved ones

Programmes

Family invited in to post progress reviews of behavioural change programmes.

Safer Custody

01634 803268 Crisis Number
Involve Families in Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process.

Gym Staff

Involved in family days, advice around healthy lifestyles



