



HM Prison &
Probation Service



HM PRISON
SERVICE

Public Sector Prisons

Families and Significant Others strategy

HMP Ranby

Governor Nigel Hirst

Published January 2020

To be reviewed by January 2021

Contents

Introduction	
Background	2
Definition of “Family”	2
Benefits of “family and significant others”	4
Lord Farmer report	4
1. Partnership working	5
2. Understanding and supporting family needs	6
3. Developing and maintaining positive relationships	8
4. Breaking down barriers	10
5. Care leavers and Care Experienced	11
6. The Future	12
7. Intergenerational Offending	13

Background

Supporting prisoners to develop meaningful and positive relationships with their family or significant others should be a primary focus for anyone caring for those in custody who hope to achieve positive change and transform lives. Family and significant relationships are considered as a key means by which we can prevent reoffending, and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational crime. HMPPS therefore has a moral and ethical responsibility to assist any meaningful and constructive relationship in preparation for their release.

We are committed to transforming prisons into places of safety and reform and we recognise the need to provide those in our custody with stable environments, as well as opportunities to change their behaviour and turn away from a life of crime. Relationships with families and significant others is a pivotal in achieving this.

Definition of “Family”

For the purpose of this strategy document, *Family* is defined as either a blood relative, legal or significant persons that a prisoner identifies as their next of kin. For care-leavers this may be someone that provides a legal service, friend or associate. Many of those in custody will have experienced an upbringing with a range of adults having cared for them, and similarly those in custody with children may have other arrangements outside of a family arrangement. It is important to accommodate all ‘family’ arrangements where they provide a constructive and supportive relationship for the prisoner and their family.



We recognise that not all family relationships are positive. Family members may sometimes be the direct or indirect victims of a prisoner’s offence such as domestic abuse. These individuals have the right to protection from their perpetrator and in all cases, permission should be sought from the victim and any relevant partner agencies before making contact. This will enable the victim/family unit to be supported in the community. E.g., Victim Liaison Officer or Local Authority Adults Social Care/Children’s Services

Benefits of “family and significant others”

Families and significant others can play a vital role in supporting a safer and calmer atmosphere within the custodial environment and also play an important role in supporting men on community sentences. Men are less likely to reoffend if family relationships are maintained throughout their sentence.

Positive family relationships significantly contribute to good order and there is Anecdotal evidence that positive family engagement programmes show reduced incidents of disorder and anti-social behaviour. It is likely that having meaningful and constructive relationships with family and significant others reduces anxiety, reduces violence and mitigates the frustration and isolation of imprisonment. Bringing families closer together and encouraging them to be more accountable for their behaviour and offending can reducing reoffending and improve outcomes, but more research is needed in this area.

Lord Farmer report

The Farmer review was commissioned as part of the Governments plans to carry out an overhaul of prisons and published August 2017. This was carried out to demonstrate understanding of the importance of good family and other relationships to prisoner’s rehabilitation and is now used as a support mechanism in addressing and improving relationships for those in our care.

The report can be found here

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf



The Farmer report made 19 Recommendations that put family and significant others at the heart of prison reform. It supports efforts to improve the relationships between prisoners and their families or significant others and the services that are provided

The Farmer report states and HMP Ranby supports that “*family should be the ‘golden thread’ running through the processes of all prisons*”, as well as in the implementation of

standards presented in the Prison Reform White Paper - Public protection, Safety and Order, Reform and Preparing for life after prison

1.Partnership working

Delivering effective family practice cannot be achieved in isolation and as such we are committed to working in partnership with key local and national stakeholders. Through close working arrangements we are able to provide a bespoke service that is able to cater to the needs of prisoners and their families during their time in custody and then following on into ongoing support after release.



Barnardos



Nottinghamshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust



jobcentreplus



Shelter



HM Prison &
Probation Service

2. Understanding and supporting family needs

Understand

To tailor HMP Ranby's delivery of family practice and ensure its effectiveness we need to understand the needs of the population.

To achieve this, we will conduct regular information gathering exercises from which we can identify key areas.

To improve this we will include;

- Annual establishment needs analysis which will be shared with Barnardo's to help inform the service provision and ensure alignment with need
- 2 visitor surveys per year
- Forums with the families and/or significant others of men held in our care
- Forums with prisoners held at HMP Ranby
- OMiC Key worker and POM feedback sessions linked to sentence plans
- Commissioned analytical assessment of needs via independent academic bodies
- National and Regional data sources i.e. Office for national statistics
- HMIP, MPQL and OSAG visits for independent audits of our delivery



Support

A family member or significant other being in custody can often cause significant upset to families, particularly children and dependents. As a result it is vital that we support the family unit as soon as possible.

Providing key information and support at the point of arrival for both prisoner's and their families is critical to maintaining family ties effected or displaced by custody.



HMP Ranby will achieve this via:

Prisoners

- i. Screening for issues during the reception and 1st night process. Where issues are identified they are either resolved (where possible) or signposted to the appropriate agencies who can help.
- ii. Providing effective and practical information to new arrivals as a means to support and facilitate their communication needs with their families and significant others including:
 - PIN phone process and communications compact
 - Prisons mail system
 - E-mail a prisoner
 - Prison Voicemail
 - Visiting times and process
- iii. Providing effective and practical information to new arrivals to help them adjust to HMP Ranby and the custodial environment
- iv. Providing peer-led advice and support from the point of arrival
- v. Ensuring that where safe to do so contact is made with families or significant others on arrival into custody via the facilitation of a phone call, or any needed phone calls
- vi. A focus from keyworkers on family contact

Substance misuse

Working with families is key to Ranby's approach to tackling substance misuse. We will engage with families, friends and peers to help our men develop networks that will support them to avoid substance misuse. Ranby's substance misuse strategy aims to tackle the demand for drugs alongside restricting supply, as it is only by reducing the market for drugs within prison, that we will be able to reduce their availability. Reducing the demand for drugs relies upon men understanding the consequences of drug use, both within the prison and the wider risks to themselves and their families, whilst offering opportunities that provide purpose and direction.

Lord Farmer's review of the importance of prisoners' family ties, highlighted links between family relationships and the use of illicit drugs. The role of families and fellow prisoners is acknowledged and understood at HMP Ranby and our attempts to support men to make and commit to good decisions and use positive influences is vital.

HMP Ranby acknowledges that drug misuse can also affect families and friends, as they try to support prisoners and can often find themselves under pressure to get into debt or to convey drugs into prisons. Ranby will draw on a range of resources and provide education and awareness campaigns to help our men and their families and significant others make good decisions, including careful guidance about the risks of emerging harmful substances.

Families

- i. Providing positive and practical key information to families through documentation and via communication with Barnardo's such as
 - Methods of communication

- Transport and travel information
 - Location and geographical information available through the Barnardo's support workers based in the visits centre
 - Visiting times and process
- ii. Supporting families who are experiencing difficulties with either emotional support or practical advice
 - iii. A 24hr safer prison phone line 01777 862342 where families can raise concern about loved ones and receive contact from staff in return to address these concerns and fears.
 - iv. Staff trained to support positive family relationships and recognise negative ones

3. Developing and maintaining positive relationships

Developing relationships

The development of family relationships will be a key element of sentence planning in both activity and targets set by prison offender managers (POMS) This will also be supported and driven weekly by Key workers under OMiC implementation.

POMs and Key workers will identify relationship issues where they arise and offer practical solutions and support to empower prisoners to take ownership of and improve relations with their families and significant others. They can draw on a number of progressive activities and advice/support services in this area where there is a need, such as:

- Financial and debt services or education
- "Fathers inside" courses
- "Story book dad" facilities
- Accommodations and housing advice
- Translation services
- Religious and emotional support via chaplaincy
- Health or substance misuse interventions and treatment
- Legal phone calls or Rule 39 legal correspondence



Maintaining relationships

Maintaining a positive relationship with family and significant others can be challenging when in custody for all concerned. As such it is important that HMP Ranby offers as wide a range of communication methods as possible, to allow for the maintenance of already established relationships and to build on developing relationships.

Likewise, to support reducing reoffending risks for prisoners, to deliver support and reduce the risk of intergenerational crime for families. It is important that prisoners held at HMP Ranby are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their families and significant others.



“Staying involved”

To ensure positive relationships are maintained, it is imperative that a whole family approach is applied to family decision making. Too often prisoners are not consulted about, or involved in significant or milestone decisions being made by their families and as such are at risk of becoming detached or separated from the family unit. Particularly where long periods of separation occur. Examples of such decisions include



- Choice of schools or further education centres for children
- Children’s exam options
- Children’s school issues
- Housing location or location moves
- Financial decisions
- Health matters
- Faith-based milestones or decisions

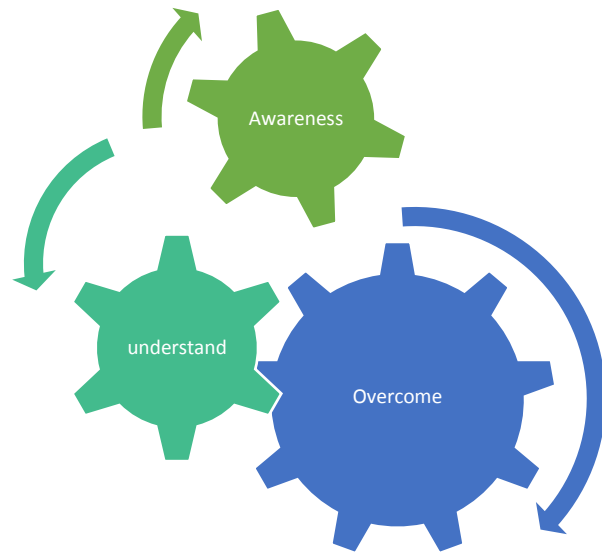
In order to assist prisoners in returning to a stable pro-social family and protective setting on release, it is crucial that we encourage the family to include prisoners in important family decisions and maintain their valuable role within the family unit.

Where it is identified that difficult, prolonged or complicated discussions are necessary for the family. HMP Ranby and Barnardo’s Children and Families Practitioners will facilitate sessions in a suitable environment. These sessions can be supported as required with professional advice linked to the issue i.e.

- Relationship counselling
- Debt advice
- Educational advice
- Psychology
- Health advisors

4. Breaking down barriers

The creation, development and maintenance of effective, positive and meaningful family relationships can often encounter difficult barriers or total breakdown for men coming into a custodial environment. There could be a number of reasons why this is happening so therefore it is critical that as an establishment we are aware of when this occurs at the earliest opportunity, the reasons behind it and where possible find a way to overcome these issues.



Being aware

Being aware of relationship issues or breakdown can be difficult and often prisoners are unwilling to disclose this information. Sometimes men are unaware that any breakdown is happening, or has taken place. As such, the relationships, rapport building and trust developed by key workers and POM's is vital to ensuring that disclosure is achieved. Key workers will track and evaluate family situations during their regular supervision sessions under OMiC and where indicators are found to suggest family issues, explore this with the prisoner. They will check for prisoners who appear to be socially isolated (not receiving visits or making phone calls) which could be a sign of relationship breakdown and make relevant POMS or Barnardo's aware as well as offering support and where needed referring for mediation for prisoners with difficult family relationships.

Understanding the issue

Once a key worker has identified that a relationship breakdown is occurring, has occurred, or established current barriers it will be their responsibility to explore fully with the men and gain understanding and viewpoints. It is important for the key worker to explore issues and feelings as this can often be misunderstood due to a lack of key information or subject to underdeveloped thinking skills.

Once the key worker has a full understanding of the situation they are required to consider it in consultation with the public protection team and POM, so that they are fully aware of any legislative requirements in place to protect victims or official requests for non-contact.

If no communication barriers exists then the Key worker or POM will liaise with the Barnardo's Families Team who may make contact with the family member to ascertain their viewpoint. This allows for a full 360 view of the current situation which he can discuss with the POM to establish any effective solutions. This could be a phone call or assisting a prisoner to reach out via email or letters.

Overcoming issues

There are a number of issues that prisoners could experience affecting their ability to maintain effective family relationship and contact. As such there cannot be a single fix applied to resolve



these. Each issue, or collection of issues require a bespoke solution to be applied by the Key worker, this then being further supported by the Barnardo's Children and Families Team, and prisoner in order to overcome or improve the current issues. Primary to this is ensuring that the prisoner (where possible) is fully aware of all the reasons that are contributing to his difficulties and is supported to develop an effective plan in overcoming these with the support of his key

worker.

Examples of issues experienced by prisoners include:

- Non-contact requests by partners or family members
- Social stigma of certain offences and families' reactions to these
- Victims within the family
- Domestic violence
- Ability to visit effective by financial circumstances
- Relationship or marriage breakdown
- Cultural views

5. Care leavers and Care Experienced

"A care leaver is someone who has spent time in the care of the local authority. Their eligibility for services from the local authority depends on when and for how long they were in care"

What do we know?

Approximately 25% of adult male prisoners were in care as children and most are taken in as a result of neglect or abuse. Transition to adulthood is a difficult time for many young people, but it can be especially so for young adults who have been in the care system. This can often result in difficulties with emotional, financial and personal support of parents and other family members. Compared to the general population care leavers are:

Less likely to be in education, employment or training. Over a third of 19 year old care leavers are not in education, employment or training;

- More likely to be attempting to live independently; and
- More likely to have a criminal conviction. Care leavers have been estimated to make up 27% of the adult prison population, despite the fact that less than 1% of under 18s enter local authority care annually.

Young adults in the criminal justice system who are care leavers may need more support to help them through their transition to adulthood than other young adults. They may also need help to understand the differences between the youth and adult justice systems.

What can help improve outcomes for care leavers at HMP Ranby?

- Identify care leavers and ensure responsible local authorities are engaged in planning appropriate processes via partnership working with their personal advisor
- We will effectively co-ordinate wrap around services and deliver them in a setting that enables development of reliable and trusting relationships with Key workers, POM's and partner organizations working in HMP Ranby
- Provide opportunities for reflection in supervision and encourage hope and optimism by implementing and utilising rehabilitative evidence based practices in HMP Ranby.
- Encourage development of positive social connections with external organizations and pro social peer groups
- Assist individuals to address some of the potential disadvantages of being a care leaver.
- Enable care leavers to have space to safely share experiences of being in care e.g. carefully facilitated support groups and peer mentors
- A Care Leaver Champion based in the Offender Management Unit leads on the above

6.The Future

HMP Ranby understands that although some work has developed and improvements have been made, there is still so much more we want to achieve. We feel it is important to involve family and significant others in key aspects of day to day prison life that our men experience. The main key themes that we need families and staff's help are listed below and are the foundations of our Action Plan. HMP Ranby will review and update this annually and will ensure that any feedback is contained from all participants including the prisoners and families, as their input is invaluable to us. We will also review all external agencies such as HMIP, MQPL and other significant reviews.

Area of growth	Who is responsible to implement	To be implemented by:
A set consultation process with prisoners / families and significant others	Barnardo's	March 2020
A family and significant others worker present in visits	Barnardo's	March 2020

<p>Keyworkers to be aware of the needs of their prisoners in relation to positive family contact</p> <p>Focus on family contact to be communicated to all keyworkers</p>	<p>Head of offender management unit and probation managers</p>	<p>April 2020</p>
<p>Contact with prisoners who have not received a visit in over 6 months to try and assist to rebuild family ties</p>	<p>Barnardo's</p>	<p>August 2020</p>

7. Intergenerational Offending

It is estimated that 200,000 children each year are affected by parental imprisonment, but there are no definitive statistics on the number of offenders who are parents, the number of children who have a parent in prison or what happens to dependents when parents are imprisoned.



HMPPS has a statutory duty to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children therefore contact must be in the best interests of the child.

Children of prisoners are three times more at risk of anti-social or delinquent behaviour than their peers, and are a vulnerable group that needs targeted support. Researchers at Cambridge University's Institute of Criminology found that if children had a convicted

parent by the time they were 10 that was the "best predictor" of them becoming criminal and anti-social themselves. The research, published in the journal *Legal and Criminal Psychology* in 1996, concluded: "A convicted family member influenced a boy's likelihood of delinquency independently of other important factors such as poor housing, overcrowding and low school attainment." This means that our strategy must have a moral imperative to focus on building positive family relationships between those in custody and their children to mitigate the risk of future offending by children, as well as reoffending by the adult.