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| HMP/YOI Pentonville  Family and Significant Others Strategy |
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| **Owner: Governor Ian Blakeman**  **Date: January 2020** |
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# Introduction

**Who are ‘family and significant others’?**

The term ‘family and significant others’, for the purposes of this strategy, encompasses a wide variety of personal relationships including: parents; siblings (including foster/adoptive); partners; children (young or grown up); grandchildren; and in some circumstances, very close friends. In some cases, men in custody may be carers for family members or may have no contact with family or relatives and consider other significant relationships and friendships as their closest means of support.

# National and Local Context

# This strategy has been developed in line with the national *‘Strengthening Prisoners’ Family Ties and Policy Framework’* and is intended to support meaningful and constructive relationships between prisoners and their families or significant others by identifying what is being done by the prison to promote family and other relational ties. The strategy recognises family and significant other contact as a rehabilitation activity, giving it equal regard to education and employment.

# There is growing recognition that relationships between prisoners and their families and/or significant others can encourage positive behaviour whilst in prison as well and providing an important support network. Evidence from the Ministry of Justice found that *‘for a prisoner who receives visits from a family member, the odds of reoffending are 39% lower than for those who do not’.* Research also suggests that regular and good quality contact with families and significant others helps prisoners to arrange accommodation and employment upon release.

# Developing and maintaining strong relationships with family and significant others is particularly important given that Her Majesty’s Prison (HMP)/Young Offenders Institute (YOI) Pentonville is a local remand prison with a diverse population. The experience of individuals within local prisons is more likely to be one of separation and disruption to family ties, coupled with uncertainty and insecurity about the future. Contact with family and significant others is therefore particularly important during this heightened time of instability.

# HMP/YOI Pentonville recognises that having a loved one in prison can be a difficult time for all involved. Though this strategy and its actions, we hope that we can provide a supportive, positive and rehabilitative experience of prison for prisoners, families and significant others.

# [https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/handlers/getimage.ashx?idmf=a3b1025b-ff72-40e5-b235-f88315f6c4f8&w=600&h=254&f=1](https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/pagescategoryour-impact)

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1. **Families and Significant Others Strategy Aims**

In response to recommendations and suggestions made in Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) reports, as well as research on family pathways in prison (including the Farmer Review), HMP/YOI Pentonville aspires to enhance existing facilities and strengthen support offered to develop and maintain positive relationships between prisoners, their family and significant others.

**In order to achieve this, HMP/YOI Pentonville aims to:**

* Ensure that prisoners have regular and positive contact with their families through a range of methods including phone, email and visits.
* Identify prisoners who do not receive visits and have contact no with family or significant others and signpost these individuals to the alternative support services available.
* Ensure that the specific needs of care leavers are addressed.
* Ensure the specific needs of foreign national prisoners are addressed.
* Ensure that contact is safe and appropriate for all concerned and special attention is given to the needs of children visiting.
* Ensure a ‘gateway’ communications system is developed so that families and significant others are able to contact the prison 24 hours a day and raise any concerns they have over a loved one (Annex A).
* Ensure that family contact is promoted as a right and not a privilege.
* Ensure that the ‘Family and Significant Other’ strategy is part of a ‘whole prison’ approach in which all departments work towards, and understand, the importance of supporting contact between prisoners, family members and significant others.
* Maintain and develop stakeholder engagement in the recognition of the importance of multi-agency working to deliver successful outcomes for prisoners and their families.
* Consider equality and diversity in each aspect of the strategy.

[](https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/what-our-service-users-say-about-us)

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#### Early Days in Prison and Safer Custody

**Safer Custody**

The first days in custody are crucial for establishing whether offenders have any immediate needs with regards to families and significant others. The involvement of family and significant others should begin at the earliest point when someone comes into custody. This support helps the individual to cope with the difficult times ahead as they adjust and settle into their time in custody.

#### Reception

#### All new arrivals into HMP/YOI Pentonville will enter Reception where they will be seen by a nurse and interviewed by a Prison Officer who will ask them a number of questions about their personal circumstances and their views and feelings about being in prison.

#### This interview is very important as research identifies that in the first few nights in custody prisoners are particularly vulnerable. They are likely to have concerns about family members and worries about what will happen to them whilst they are in prison. This interview allows these questions to be answered and additional safety measures to be put in place if required.

#### If prisoners are considered to be particularly vulnerable, they are referred to the Safer Custody Team which assigns a member of staff to complete a welfare check within 24 hours. This check will establish special provisions that the prisoner may need and make referrals to the relevant service provider (e.g. social services).

#### Prisoners that are of risk of self-harm or suicide will be subject to the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process. This ensures that the individual receives the care and support that they require to get through a period of crisis. When an ACCT is opened, with permission from the prisoner, families will be contacted to inform them of this.

#### New prisoners will also be issued a telephone pin and offered a two-minute phone call to let their family or significant others know that they have arrived (this call is subject to public protection arrangements).

#### First Night Centre

#### Following the Reception process, all prisoners will be taken to the First Night Centre where a 3-day induction programme will be delivered which is designed to provide essential information about the prison, whilst helping new prisoners adapt to prison life and maximise the use of their time in custody. An induction booklet is given to each prisoner which contains lots of helpful information about prison life, including the different ways they can have contact their families, friends and significant others. On completion of the induction, prisoners will move to another wing location within the prison.

#### New arrivals into the prison are entitled to a ‘reception visit’ within 72 hours of arriving in custody without prior booking (this does not include prisoners transferred from other prisons). The reception visit is designed to help individuals to settle in their early days of custody.

#### On the first morning a Chaplain will visit each prisoner and ensure that contact with their family has been made or facilitate it. The Chaplaincy also deal with calls from family members who wish to know how to arrange visits and contact prisoners.

**Basic Custody Screening Tool**

Within 72 hours of coming into custody an Offender Supervisor will carry out the Basic Custody Screening Tool (BCST) Part 1 which seeks to screen for immediate and longer-term risks. This includes a series of questions about children and family relationships. Within five days of Part 1 being completed, Part 2 of this process is completed by a Community Rehabilitation Company. Part 2 should then generate a Resettlement Plan for the period 12 weeks prior to release and on release in the community.

#### What are we doing to strengthen our approach to providing safety and support for new and existing prisoners?

#### In conjunction with the Samaritans, the Safer Custody Team is responsible for managing the Listeners Scheme where prisoners are trained by the Samaritans to talk through concerns with other prisoners. Plans are in place to ensure that Listeners are regularly made available at reception to support new arrivals.

#### The Safer Custody Team are undertaking a review of the ACCT process and considering how best families can be involved in supporting their loved ones.

1. **Ongoing Communication and Contact in whilst in Custody**

There are a number of ways that communication and contact with families and significant others is possible whilst in prison, including regular telephone contact, letters, emails and social visits. At HMP/YOI Pentonville, we are committed to:

* Providing prisoners with regular and positive contact with their families, friends and significant others through a variety of methods.
* Ensuring that the establishment has responsive communication systems in place for families to support prisoners during times of crisis.
* Ensuring that a prisoners Incentive and Earned Privilege (IEP) status does not impact on their ability to have contact with their family (*IEPs are a system used inside prison to encourage positive and responsible behaviour and HMP/YOI Pentonville operates at three IEP levels: Basic, Standard and Enhanced*).
* Reviewing those prisoners who do not have social visits and supporting them to maintain contact by other means e.g. swapping visiting orders for pin phone credit.
* Taking steps to ensure that the visits experience is positive (using feedback, complaints and compliments) and the atmosphere in the visits centre and visits hall is welcoming and considerate to the needs of all, including children (in recognition that visits can be a distressing time for prisoners and their children).

**Communication**

**Telephone Calls and Voicemail**

Currently, prisoners are able to make phone calls to registered contacts during daily association times. Those who have an ‘enhanced’ IEP status are offered evening association on some weekdays.

HMP/YOI Pentonville recognise that access to phone calls in the evening and outside the typical work and school day is of benefit both for facilitating family contact and for accessing cheaper off-peak phone tariffs. In recognition of this, in-cell PIN phones are currently being rolled out across the establishment.

The Prison Voicemail service is in operation at HMP/YOI Pentonville, enabling offenders to receive messages left by their families and significant others via the PIN phones

**What are we doing to develop our service around telephone contact?**

* **Work is underway to roll out in-cell phones across the whole prison, giving prisoners much more flexibility on when calls can be made. Currently, phones are being installed in cells on the First Night Centre, A, C, and D wing.**

**Telephone contact for Families and Significant Others to raise concerns about a loved one**

A key recommendation by Lord Farmer is for the establishment to have a dedicated phone line that is listened to and acted upon. This includes recording and acting upon concerns of family members or significant others about mental and physical health. HMP/YOI Pentonville have produced an information leaflet for families and significant others (Annex A) that provides information on how to contact the prison 24 hours a day if there are concerns about a loved one’s wellbeing. The Chaplaincy department can also be contacted to pass on concerns about loved ones as well as bad and good news.

**Foreign National Prisoners**

Foreign National prisoners represent approximately one fifth of the prison population and we recognise the added complications they face in maintaining contact with their families and significant others. In HMP/YOI Pentonville, all foreign nationals will be given an international pin for the telephone and receive a free 5-minute call abroad each month.

Irish prisoners are also provided with additional credit via the Irish Chaplaincy Commission.

**Prisoners Receiving no Visits**

Convicted prisoners who have not received any social visits within the past month may apply via an application to exchange two visiting orders for £5 pin credit on a monthly basis, to support them with them to maintain contact with their families.

**Emerging Technology around Video-Link**

There is a piece of work ongoing nationally about how video calls can be facilitated between those in prison and their families and we will continue to take an interest in this piece of work with a view to adopting any emerging technology.

**Letters and Email**

Email a Prisoner (Friends and family can send an email by visiting [www.emailaprisoner.com](http://www.emailaprisoner.com) and signing up) and ordinary postal mail operate within HMP/YOI Pentonville. Prisoners are entitled to send one (if convicted) or two (if unconvicted) letters per week free of charge, subject to security and safeguarding measures. All prisoners may purchase additional stamps in their weekly canteen.

Within the prison, we try to ensure that letters are distributed quickly and that prisoners are provided with the resources to send letters to their relatives and friends.

We provide help for individuals who have difficulty with reading and writing. Should prisoners have any difficulty or need additional support, they are encouraged to speak to prison officers on their landing, their dedicated key worker or a peer support worker from the Insider Prisoners team (*Insiders are prisoners who work on the wing to support other prisoners with any issues*).

**Contact**

**Social Visits**

At HMP/YOI Pentonville we understand the importance of social visits to a prisoner’s wellbeing, the importance of these for families and significant others and the role they play in reducing the likelihood of prisoners reoffending. We therefore strive to continually find ways to improve the service we offer and welcome feedback from staff, prisoners or external agencies on the overall visitor experience.

Visits occur on a daily basis, in the mornings and afternoons with a total of 11 sessions provided during the course of each week. The only slots when visits are not available are Thursday, Friday and Sunday mornings.

There are three ways to book a visit:

1. Visitors can call our booking line number 020 7023 7251
2. Visitors can use our online booking system to make a booking request. This will be processed by the booking team and they should have a reply within 3 working days. [www.gov.uk/prison-visits](http://www.gov.uk/prison-visits)
3. Visitors can email our booking team directly [socialvisits.pentonville@hmps.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:socialvisits.pentonville@hmps.gsi.gov.uk)

Visits are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The most popular times for visits are afternoons and weekends. Weekend visits have the highest number of children attending.

All visitors coming into HMP/YOI Pentonville will be searched in line with our local procedures. This process can be daunting for both adults and children and, therefore, every effort from the searching staff is made to reassure visitors in a friendly and professional manner.

All visitors will be treated with decency and respect at all times. It is vital that children do not feel scared and apprehensive about this process and therefore staff will aim to provide a friendly atmosphere. All searching processes will adhere to the needs to each individual including any searching of religious articles, religious beliefs and disability concerns.

Within the visit’s hall is a small snack bar that offers food and drinks to all visitors. Visitors are able to purchase food from the snack bar to take to their table. Trusted prisoners assist in the tea bar to make the process as efficient as possible.

More information on visiting (including required identification and acceptable clothing) HMP/YOI Pentonville can be found here: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/contacts/prison-finder/pentonville/visiting-information>

**Supporting Families Financially with Maintaining Contact**

Individuals who have difficulty getting to the establishment may apply to financial support through the assisted prison visits scheme <https://www.gov.uk/help-with-prison-visits>. Staff across the prison have been made aware of the scheme and know how to signpost prisoners and families to it.

**Family Days and Extended visits**

HMP/YOI Pentonville regularly hosts family days every six weeks which provides a more informal setting for visits with children to take place. The family day provision was praised by the most recent HMIP inspection and we are pleased to announce that we will continue to offer this service. In line with recommendations from the Farmer Review, access to family day visits are not dependent on IEP level.

**Accumulated Visits**

For offenders who are not local to the London area, we can facilitate accumulated visits at prisons closer to their home. In many cases it will be appropriate to transfer the offender on a permanent basis to a prison closer to home but not always (i.e. someone facing trial, engaging with a specific intervention or programme). Ensuring that repatriation occurs at the earliest opportunity is a further recommendation of the Lord Farmer report.

**Closed Visits/ Banned Visitors**

Exceptionally we will place offenders on closed visits (where the visitor and offender will have no physical contact) or ban a visitor from HMP/YOI Pentonville. We only do this when credible attempts have been made to traffic illegal items into the prison via visits or when visitors have become unacceptably violent whilst on a visit. If these measures are put in place the reasons and route of appeal are communicated to both the offender and their visitor. Closed visits arrangements are used infrequently and are put in place for a period of 3 months but will be reviewed monthly by the Head of Operations in collaboration with the Security Department.

When action of this nature is likely to have an impact on child contact (i.e. a family member who normally brings the child to visit), we will explore other ways of mitigating the risks in order to facilitate that important contact.

To make the visits experience a safe one, the decision to allow any visit must be balanced against the need to maintain security and keep prisoners in lawful custody. The security measures that must be in place as part of the visits specification are set out in [PSI 15/2011](https://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/offenders/psipso/psi-2011/PSI-15-2011-Management-and-Security-at-Visits.doc), Management of Security at Visits. Visits must be well managed, monitored, and where necessary due to suspected or proven inappropriate behaviour, terminated to maintain the good order and discipline of the prison.

**Safeguarding Children**

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people visiting are one of our highest priorities. To ensure their safety and wellbeing any child attending without their parent will need a letter from their parent/social services giving the adult attending with them permission to bring the child. Anybody attending without this may not be allowed in. Families will also need to speak to their school or local education authority if you intend on bringing children of school age to visits during school time.

1. **The Visitor Experience**

The visits centre and hall at HMP/YOI Pentonville is run by a children’s charity called PACT, whose staff offer information and guidance to visitors to the prison; visiting a family member or significant other may be a difficult and emotional experience and the Visitors Centre and its staff play a crucial role in supporting visitors and engaging with their individual needs. PACT aims to make the visiting experience positive for all.

Facilities in the centre and hall include:

* Posters advertising the support services available in the prison.
* Refreshments facilities.
* Information and advice about life at HMP/YOI Pentonville (regime timings, entitlements).
* Lockers to leave your belongings in (£1 is required for this).
* Promotion of upcoming events such as family days.
* A children’s play area in the Visits Centre and Visits Hall.
* Toilets and baby changing facilities

In HMP/YOI Pentonville’s last HMIP report, they asked the establishment to look at making the visits experience better for everyone, including trying to ensure visits started on time and looking at improving the provision in the Visits tea bar. This are all areas that are actively under review.

**What are we doing to improve the visits experience?**

* **A well provisioned children’s play area has been created in the visits centre and work is underway to ensure the space is secure enough to be used regularly.**
* **The prison are working with PACT to try and ensure we are frequently staffing and using the play area in the main visits hall.**
* **After consultation with the prisoner council, the menu is the visits café is being reviewed to offer healthier options for children and families.**
* **Enhanced programme of visitor surveys and focus groups will be implemented with prisoners and visitors to provide feedback on the visitor experience.**
* **‘Meet the Manager’ sessions will commence in 2020 with the Operations Governor attending the visits centre on a weekly basis to seek feedback on the visits experience. There will also be more governor presence in the visit’s hall throughout the week.**

1. **Care Leavers**

The Care Leavers’ Association (CLA, 2013) highlighted numerous factors commonly affecting those with care experience such as poor emotional wellbeing and mental health, underdeveloped social skills and difficulties in establishing trust or forming relationships. These factors can increase the risk of reoffending. It is therefore crucial to identify individuals who have been in care and work closely with local authorities to provide support for them. Care Leavers are a significantly over represented group across the prison population. At HMP/YOI Pentonville we are committed to:

* Identifying individuals who have been in the care system or who do not have family or significant others and support them to form positive relationships with peers in custody and appropriate contacts in the community.
* Developing the Key Worker training to include awareness of how to help prisoners with issues related to experience in the care system.
* Taking an interest in new interventions or courses aimed at Care Leavers with a view to implementing these within HMP/YOI Pentonville.

**What are we doing to strengthen our work around Care Leavers?**

* **Care leaver champions will be identified who will work as a point of contact for concerns specific to care leavers and who will organise forums to support and identify common issues that can be addressed for care leavers.**
* **Monthly figures will be published by the Head of Reducing Reoffending, identifying prisoners who have been in care.**
* **Stakeholder engagement with local authorities is underway to strengthen multi-agency working and subsequently the support for Care Leavers.**
* **Key Workers to be provided with training on the specific needs of Care Leavers.**
* **Adopting a cross-prison approach to implement the requirements of the** [**HMPPS Strategy for Care Experienced People**](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/983528/HMPPS-People-with-care-experience-strategy.PDF)**.**
* **Care Leavers are visited weekly by a named Chaplain.**

1. **Foreign National Prisoners**

The Safer Custody and Equality Team at HMP/YOI Pentonville is committed to providing equality of treatment and opportunity for Foreign National prisoners by addressing their specific needs. Upon arrival foreign nationals are encouraged to put an application into the Safer Custody and Equality department if they require assistance in:

* Understanding the prison regime.
* Language difficulties/translation.
* Communication with the outside world involving telephone calls and visits.
* Legal services and advice.

Foreign Nationals will be provided with a foreign pin and given a five-minute phone call free of charge on a monthly basis.

Foreign Nationals are also advised that Chaplaincy provides support for all prisoners regardless of faith and seeks to engage those who are isolated. This includes offering support as well helping to organise visitors through the Official Prison Visitors Scheme.

1. **Working in Partnership: Family Services and Interventions**

In line with recommendations made in the Farmer Review, which emphasised the importance of involving family members in a prisoner’s rehabilitation, HMP/YOI Pentonville is committed to:

* Working closely with external agencies to provide effective and relevant rehabilitation services.
* Facilitating family involvement in rehabilitative interventions.
* Providing consistent key work sessions to prisoners.
* Including the family, where appropriate in key meetings.
* Ensuring appropriate, targeted provision of support and services to Care Leavers.
* Advertising the services available widely internally and externally (to families).

HMP/YOI Pentonville work with a number of charities to provide a range of family services and interventions. As part of the prison induction process, prisoners are issued an induction booklet which contains information on all the services available. HMP/YOI Pentonville also employs ‘Insiders’ who are specially trained prisoners employed on each wing and able to deal with requests and advise prisoners on how to sign up to the services. We offer the following services to prisoners and their families:

***Interventions accessible to Family and Prisoners***

**PACT (Prisoner Advice and Care Trust):** PACT is a national charity who provide support to prisoners and their families to help minimise the effects of imprisonment on children and families. PACT deliver family services at HMP/YOI Pentonville

**Phoenix Futures:** Phoenix Futures is a leading Drug and Alcohol charity based at HMP/YOI Pentonville. The Family Support Service provides support to family members of prisoners who have drug and alcohol problems. The charity works inside and outside the prison (Visits Centre).

HMP/YOI Pentonville is working closely with Phoenix Futures to organise sessions in which family members are invited into the prison to attend the drug rehabilitation session and take an active role in the programme.

**Story Sacks:** is delivered by ‘Best Start for Families’ to promote and encourage literacy through the story sacks packs (6 throughout the year). This involves a classroom session in the morning with the prisoners followed by an afternoon visit with their children reading.

**Bright Horizons:** This servicecreates play environments which help vulnerable children to build caring relationships and recover from trauma through play, strengthening family relationships.

**Arsenal Football Community:** Lord Farmer identified the importance of demonstrating mutually beneficial links with local businesses, schools and other bodies in the wider community and in doing so becoming a more ‘extrovert prison’. In line with this, HMP/YOI Pentonville will continue to uphold the strong links it has with the Arsenal Football Community who deliver sessions (6 throughout the year) in the sports hall during school holidays. These are interactive sessions that encourage families to bond through a range of sporting activities put on by the Arsenal Community Team.

**Family Days:** HMP/YOI Pentonville have a ‘Family Morning’ (3 throughout the year) for fathers with children under 5 years of age. This session takes place in the children’s play area at the back of the visits hall and encourages fathers to bond and interact with their young children through play.

**Time to Connect:** builds confidence and improves parenting skills, and the quality of relationships between parent and children with the aim of reducing the likelihood of re-offending by strengthening family ties.

**Chaplaincy –** The Prison Service recognises and respects the right of all prisoners to practice their religion. The HMP/YOI Pentonville Chaplaincy Team is committed to the pastoral care and spiritual development of all who live and work at HMP Pentonville. The team provide a number of workshops for prisoners and also support prisoners and their families when there is an illness/ bereavement in the family or family concerns.

***Interventions accessible to Prisoners***

**Family Engagement Workers (PACT)** – Support prisoners with individual one on one support for a whole range of services, from advice on speaking to family members, help with family courts, help with social/child services or advice on any other difficulties with family relationships.

**Mediation (PACT)** – This service provides prisoners assistance with trying to overcome difficult relationships between themselves and family members for any reason.

**Family Fables:** This is where men record stories for their children which can be listened to at home.

**Key Work -** The introduction of the Key Worker scheme has ensured that every prisoner is allocated a dedicated officer who is detailed one session a week to have one on one sessions with the individuals in their caseload. This provides a valuable opportunity for prisoners to share concerns with a dedicated officer. It is the intention that Key Workers will make the men they work with aware of the Families and Significant Others Strategy and signpost them to services relevant to them.

HMP/YOI Pentonville will continue to make sure that Key Worker sessions run as an operational priority and that maintenance of family ties is an important part of the session as well as identifying individuals who are not in regular contact with relatives on the outside.

**Contract Management**

Contracts between HMP/YOI Pentonville and our service providers are managed with regular dedicated meetings between partners and relevant senior prison managers.

There is an agreement between the establishment and our family support provider PACT and delivery of the contract and PACT performance is discussed at quarterly meetings with PACT management and the manager of visits. The meetings are minuted with actions and issues identified and addressed.

Weekly ‘Meet the Manager’ forums are promoted and hosted in the visitors centre which enable the users of the visits services to deliver feedback on the PACT and the visits experience. Any required actions from these meetings are noted and discussed at the quarterly meetings.

PACT have a full time Family Engagement Worker who works both inside the prison and in the visits centre. This is in addition to the Family Engagement Manager.

PACT have a ‘critical friend review’ planned for early 2020 which once completed, any recommendations will be encompassed within this family and significant other strategy.

###### **Consultation, Collaboration and Feedback**

At HMP/YOI Pentonville the importance of consultation and collaboration with staff, prisoners, families and significant others is recognised. To support the successful delivery against this strategy, HMP/YOI Pentonville is committed to:

* Ensuring that the Families and Significant Others Strategy is widely promoted and explained to staff, prisoners and visitors so they are aware of the support that is offered and how it can be accessed.
* Ensuring that the objectives of the Families and Significant Others Strategy are being delivered and progress is being monitored at a senior level.
* Providing formal and informal opportunities for feedback on the strategy and family services from those it impacts on.

The Families and Significant Others Strategy will be promoted in a number of ways, including being presented the ‘all staff’ briefings, distributed electronically via email, placing copies in the library and speaking at prisoner forums.

Feedback will be welcomed from all in order to ensure that the strategy is delivered in the most effective way possible. Receiving a wide range of feedback will ensure the strategy is continually adjusted to reflect the needs of those who deliver it as well as those for who it is intended.

**What we are doing to strengthen consultation and collaboration with all stakeholders?**

* **To enable families to have routine access to senior members of staff, ‘Meet the Manager’ sessions will be delivered from January 2020. This will give visitors a chance to speak directly to the managers responsible for delivering the services set out in the strategy.**
* **A senior member of staff responsible for family services will attend weekly meetings with the Prisoner Council (a group of prisoners who represent every wing will meet with a Governor on a weekly basis and bring issues on their wing’s behalf).**
* **Developing a programme of surveys for staff, prisoners and families/visitors to gather feedback progress and further areas for development.**

1. **Operational Considerations**

How the prison is run (including the staffing and systems) has a big impact on the services and support delivered to prisoners, families and significant others. HMP/YOI Pentonville is committed to:

* Training and supporting dedicated staff to run family and significant other services.
* Create a staffing structure to ensure family work is an operational priority.
* Promote a whole prison approach to the Families and Significant Others Strategy and ensure that all staff across departments work towards its successful implementation.
* Pursue the adoption of new initiatives and emerging technology where possible including better use of video-link for contact.
* Use data-driven analysis to inform and develop our current range of services.

Positive staff and prisoner relationships are crucial for ensuring that family and other relational ties in prison are supported. Much of the training that new prison officers undertake includes work which supports family and other relational engagement including ACCT training and five minute intervention training (supporting positive and pro-social interactions between staff and prisoners).

HMP/YOI Pentonville employ two full time experienced Supervising Officers as new staff mentors. Both mentors have been briefed on the Families and Significant Others Strategy and are able to offer advice to staff on how they can help support its delivery.

The staffing of visits is already an operational priority and is not dependent on staffing levels. In line with the Farmer Review, where possible, regular staff are deployed to work on visits who are therefore able to develop a report with the regular visitors and gain a good understanding of the area.

In relation to the use of technology, the digitalisation of prisons has already led to an improved visits booking system and the adoption of initiatives such as email a prisoner and prison voicemail. The roll-out of in-cell PIN phones is a significant step in facilitating better and easier family contact. We continue to take an interest in video calling for prisoners whose family are unable to visit frequently or at all, with a view to adopting emerging technology.

**What are we are doing to develop the way we deliver and support family services in the prison?**

* **Continue to detail regular staff on visits to ensure that they are delivered consistently.**
* **Looking at developing a training package for staff on the ‘family and significant others’ strategy.**
* **Rolling out in-cell phones across the establishment.**
* **Looking at how data is used to support the family and significant others agenda and drive identify needs.**
* **Considering technological advances that will support new and improved ways of working.**

1. **Equality and Diversity**

As a member of Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service, we are committed to treating all people fairly. HMP/YOI Pentonville is committed to:

* Ensuring that all service users and visitors with and without protected characteristics are treated with dignity and respect.
* Providing a range of services reflecting the diversity of families of various make-up, culture and faith.

At HMP/YOI Pentonville we treat our staff with respect and offer equal opportunities to everyone we work with. We insist on respectful and polite behaviour from staff, those in our care and others who we work with. We recognise that discrimination, harassment and bullying can still happen and we take quick and appropriate action whenever we find them.

HMP/YOI Pentonville is a diverse prison and for many of our prisoners and their family or significant others, English is not their first language. Some have limited or no literacy. Signage and leaflets are available in multiple languages and staff in the Visitors Centre and the prison are on hand to answer questions and communicate information verbally where required.

Our visitors centre and visits hall feature disabled access. Where special assistance is required (e.g. facilitating a visit between a prisoner and a child with additional needs for whom the social visits hall is a challenging environment) reasonable adjustments are made on a case-by-case basis.

We are committed to working with our partner organisations to ensure our range of services and the family learning programmes we offer reflect the needs of the diverse families of those in our care.

1. **Development Plan**

HMP/YOI Pentonville are committed to the continual development of work to support family members, significant others and the relationships with their loved ones. In recognition of the work required to strengthen our services, the actions in the table below have been created and progress on these will be monitored monthly by the Head of Operations.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Who** | **Benefit** | **Target date** |
| The Visits Centre will be decorated and new furniture to be sought. | Head of Operations | This will provide a more welcoming environment for families visting the prison and improve the visits experience. | March 2020 |
| A programme of surveys and forums will be implemented to capture feedback on the visits experience for children, families, staff and prisoners. | Head of Operations/PACT | This will enable regular feedback to be sought and collated which will inform service development and improve the visits experience. | April 2020 |
| ‘Meet the Manager’ sessions to be implemented for families. | Head of Operations | This will assist families and the prison in developing relationships, building trust and enabling families to know they can easily access senior management if they have any issues. | January 2020 |
| Exploration of additional family support services that can be offered including parent’s evenings with teachers / homework club. | Head of Operations / Partner agencies | This would enable men in prison to still be an active part of their childs education and key aspects of their development. | June 2020 |
| ACCT process and restorative justice adjudications to be reviewed to consider how best to engage the family in the process. | Head/Deputy Head of Safer Custody | This will support families being engaged in key decisions about their loved ones whilst in prison. | May 2020 |
| Review the programme of training delivered to prison staff to include understanding the impact of visiting a loved on in prison. | Head of Operations/ Deputy Head of Operations | Staff working on visits can understand the issues (practical and emotional) that families and significant others can face supporting a better understanding for staff and a more empathetic approach with visitors. | April 2020 |
| Undertake a review of the Safer Custody Hotline process to ensure numbers are clearly publiscised and accessible to families and significant others. | Deputy Head of Safer Custody | Families and significant others will have clear information about how to contact the prison if they have concerns about the welfare of a loved one. | January 2020 |
| PACT to look redevelop the tea bar facilaities – bringing in their Family Tree Café. | Head of Operations/ Deputy Head of Operations/PACT | Creates an improved enviroment for children and families along with improving activities spaces for the men with specfiic employability links. | January 2020 |
| Recruit a Family Development Worker. | Head of Operations | The Family Development Worker will be employed by the prison service and work closely with PACT to enhance and strenthen the work that the prison delivers for families and significant others. | July 2020 |
| Critical Friend Review to be undertaken of the ‘visits experience’ by PACT CEO. | PACT | The review will ensure that the visits experience is reviewed from a family friendly perspective and will add to the feedback from HMIP informing service development. | April 2020 |
| Consistently staff the children’s play area in the visits hall so it is open regularly. | PACT | Children will have a better experience of visiting loved ones in prison. | April 2020 |

A**nnex A**



**Information for Family, Friends and Significant Others**

**on how to contact HMP/YOI Pentonville**

There are a number of ways to contact HMP/YOI Pentonville if you need advice, support or if you have concerns about a loved one.

**The Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)** operate the National Prisoners’ Families Helpline which provides information and support for families across England and Wales.

***National*** [***Prisoners’ Families Helpline***](https://www.prisonersfamilies.org/): ***0808 808 2003***

Open from 9am – 8pm Monday to Friday and from 10am – 3pm on Saturday and Sunday. All calls are free, from landlines and mobiles, and confidential.

**HMP/YOI Pentonville** ***Visit’s Centre: 0207 700 0912***

If you have any queries about visiting HMP/YOI Pentonville, you can speak to a member of PACT staff between the hours of 8am – 5pm.

***HMP/YOI Pentonville Safer Custody Line: 0207 023 7341***

If you have concerns about the safety of a loved one, you can call HMP/YOI Pentonville’s Safer Custody Team. If your call is unanswered, you will be asked to leave an answerphone message including key details of your concern.

A member of the Safer Custody Team will monitor the answer machine daily between the hours of 7.30am – 5.30pm and you will receive a call back within 24 hours.

***HMP/YOI Pentonville main switchboard: 0207 023 7000***

If you have an ***immediate concern*** outside of the Safer Custody Line operating hours, you can call the main switchboardand ask to speak to the Orderly Officer or Duty Governor who will be able to respond to, or escalate your concerns appropriately.