**HMP and YOI New Hall**

**Family and Significant Others Strategy**

Local Policy Document

January 2024

Review Due: January 2025

HMP & YOI New Hall



A family sitting on a couch

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**Families**

Welcome everyone!

In this booklet we will explain how we will support you and your loved ones to keep in contact whilst they are in prison.

Families come in all shapes and sizes 😊 so when we talk about ‘families’ we include blood relations, legal guardians, friends, and those that have been identified as a next of kin. Lots of our people have experienced ‘non-traditional’ upbringings and we want to make sure that everyone is included.

Positive family contact can act like a comfort blanket and really help to make someone feel like they still matter. It can help prevent someone returning to crime, drug and alcohol misuse and prison.

We recognise that not all relationships with families are positive. Family members may sometimes have been the victims of a prisoner’s offence such as domestic abuse and substance misuse. We know that family relationships in these circumstances can be strained and in some cases are very badly damaged. The purpose of this booklet is to suggest ways in which we can help bring prisoners and families closer together again to hopefully repair some of those connections.

Coming to prison can be a scary time, some prisoners really struggle with the impact of losing their freedom and can become withdrawn, turning to substance misuse or self-harm as methods of coping when they are missing their family and friends. Working together to help maintain your relationships means we can reduce that anxiety and frustration.

Government research has shown that people in custody who receive visits from a family member are 39% less likely to reoffend. (Lord Farmer Report 2017)

**What we aim to do** 

* Support prisoners and families in maintaining good relationships.
* Help improve parenting skills for prisoners and guide them through their children’s educational experiences.
* Provide advice and guidance to families and prisoners, keeping the family friendly focus in New Hall.
* Offer support with troubled relationships.
* Reduce / remove barriers to enable family members to visit the prison so they can experience quality visits in a welcoming environment.
* Involve families in resettlement, the sentence planning process and in times of crisis, where appropriate.
* To establish links with local authorities in the support of families and children.
* To better inform and train staff on children and family issues.

**Letters** 

Prisoners really enjoy receiving positive letters from home and you can send as many as you like. Our postal address is:

[Prisoners name and prison number}

HMP and YOI New Hall

Dial Wood,

Flockton,

Wakefield,

WF4 4XX

**Parcels** 

One parcel of clothes can only be accepted in the first 28 days of a someone being sentenced. If your family member is on remand, they can have parcels sent in freely until they have reached their clothing allowance.

Anyone staying with us for 4 years and over can have 2 additional parcels sent in yearly, 1 in summer and another in winter, your family member will have the details of the items allowed and when it can be sent in.

We also have several catalogues where prisoners can purchase clothes directly. There is a limit - that we stick to.

**Telephone calls** 

A free phone call is given to every prisoner on reception. A member of staff will make the initial call and check that you are happy to receive it, at which point your family member will be able to chat to you for a few minutes. After this, prisoners can make calls at their own expense from 06.00 – 21.00 every day as each cell has its own phone. Phone credit can be purchased weekly with canteen orders, but you must be an approved contact.

All telephone calls made by a prisoner are recorded and may be live monitored. This is to ensure that we are fulfilling our obligations regarding public protection and the security of the prison. Our monitoring systems are regularly inspected by the relevant authority to ensure that we are complying with the strict laws that are applied in this area.

**E-mail a prisoner** 

You can now e-mail your family member through the ‘Email a Prisoner’ process. This method is quicker and cheaper than sending letters through the post – they are normally received by the recipient on the same day as they arrive at the prison.

For more information, please go to:

[www.emailaprisoner.com](http://www.emailaprisoner.com)

**Visits** 



Visits take place between 14.00 – 16.00 on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday.

The visits hall can take up to 25 visits at one time and has a children’s play facility attached which is run by qualified playworkers from New Hall Kidz. Each prisoner is allowed to have 3 adults and 3 children (under 16) per visit.



You can book a visit by:

1. Calling the prison visits booking line on 0300 0606515
2. On-line at: <https://www.gov.uk/prison-visits>
3. Via the staff in our visits centre (for this you will need access to your mobile phone as a confirmation code will be sent to you by text)

You will need the following information:

* Prisoner number
* Prisoner’s date of birth
* Names and dates of birth for all visitors coming with you.

The prisoner must add you to their visitor list before you can book a visit and you should then get an e-mail confirming your visit within 1 to 3 days of booking.

The visitor’s car park is on the right-hand side as you drive down the hill towards the prison (or on your left if you have arrived via the New Hall Approach Road). The visitor’s centre is attached to the rear of the Departure Lounge – which is the building straight opposite the car park. You will need to drop in here to register for your visit.

Visits will be declined if you do not bring with you one of the following acceptable forms of ID:

* Passport
* Photo driving licence
* Formal recognised ID (citizen type) cards

Don’t worry - if you don’t have any of those documents, we will accept **two** of following:

* Birth Certificate
* Rail or bus pass (with photo)
* Cheque book or credit card
* Employers pass or student ID card
* Proof of age card
* Trade union or student’s union card
* Utility bills showing your name and address
* Marriage licence

**The Visitors Centre** 

Opening Times: 12.30 – 14.30

In the visitor’s centre there is a small tea bar run by the Mothers Union,

toilet facilities, a seating area, baby changing space and a small play area for children (children must be supervised by an adult in this area).

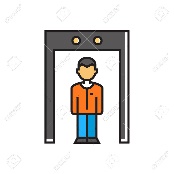
PACT (Prisoner Advice and Care Trust) staff will be waiting to greet you on arrival.

The visitors centre opens at 12:30 on visits days and closes at 14:30.

Any valuable belongings and items which are not permitted in the prison can be left safely locked away in the gate area in the main prison. You will be allocated a locker and will keep the key until the end of your visit.

If you choose to leave your visit earlier than the scheduled time, a member of staff will accompany you back to the gate to collect any belongings before you leave.

On your arrival at the visits centre your paper identification will be checked for security purposes. You will then be asked to comply with our Biometric process. This is an electronic system that uses fingerprint technology to check your identity. We will take your fingerprint for our records only and your photograph - these will remain on our records whilst ever you continue to visit our establishment. However, each time you attend the prison you will still be required to bring your paper ID in case our electronic system has technical issues.

**Searching** 

From the visitors centre our staff will take you up to the prison gate where you will be searched before you go into the main visit’s hall. We will check your fingerprint for a second time and ask you to walk through a metal detector portal. The portal will sound an alarm if you are carrying any metal items such as cigarette lighters and anything that could be used as a weapon.

You will then be asked to empty your pockets and a member of staff will conduct a ‘rub down’ search. This is to check that you do not have any other illicit items on your person such as drugs, large amounts of money etc.

Drug Detection Dogs often work in this area and are usually small friendly types who are trained to find illicit susbstances. They are controlled by a specialist dog handler and will normally walk quietly past you, have a quick sniff, and move on. We understand that not everyone likes dogs, please make staff aware if you are anxious, it will not prevent the dog from being permitted to carry out the search, but it will allow us to manage your anxiety.

**Remember** - there is nothing to worry about if you are not trying to bring anything into the prison that is not permitted 😊.

We take security very seriously, particularly as we have visitors who are elderly, disabled and of course we also have lots of children visiting. Anybody breaching our security processes will be dealt with immediately and appropriately, with support from West Yorkshire Police if necessary.

**CCTV recordings are in operation 24/7 throughout the establishment for your safety.**

Your visit will be declined / terminated if:

* You are under the influence of alcohol / illicit substances.
* You are rude / abusive / violent towards others.
* You do not adhere to the rules.

Staff are always there to explain these procedures and to help you understand the process.

**Anyone found trying to bring an illicit item into the prison will face police prosecution and possible imprisonment.**

**The Visits Hall**

The visits hall is run by Prison Officers and is a large open space that has seating arranged so that you can enjoy your time with your family member. On arrival you will report to the main desk where you will be checked in and allocated a table number.

We have a snack bar which is run by the prison – you are permitted to bring in a maximum of £20 in change (no notes please) to spend per visit. We also have a well-equipped children’s play area which is run by New Hall Kidz – another charity that has dedicated it’s time to making your visit comfortable and engaging.

We ask that all visitors follow any instructions given by the staff in this area to ensure that we can maintain your safety and the security of the establishment.

**Helping Children Visitors** 

New Hall Kidz Charity has produced a DVD that is aimed at children visiting the prison for the first time. We know this can be a daunting experience for young ones and the DVD shows them what to expect from when they arrive. It is professionally produced and aimed at children with a parent in HMP New Hall. Ask your family member in New Hall to request that a copy to be sent to you – it’s free of charge.

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**Prison Video Calls**

Video visits are available for those who struggle to attend the prison in person for a visit.

All you need to do is download the Prison Video Calls App to your phone or tablet.

To create an account, you must be over 18 and have your driving license, passport or other government-issued photo ID to hand.

To set up the call you must include the names and dates of birth of everyone who will be on the video call. You will also need to upload ID for people over 18.

Finally, add the name of the person you want to have the video call with as a ‘contact’.

Your family member will complete an application form to request a visit, staff will check that the contact is allowed and then the visit will be booked, with your family member being notified shortly after.

At the time of the visit prisoners are escorted to the Video Visits room where they will connect with you via a laptop computer.

Video Visits take place on a Tuesday and Thursday all day including evenings and on Saturday and Sunday (daytime only).

**Visitors Surveys** 

We are keen to do all we can to make your visit pleasurable and to keep you in touch with your loved ones whilst they are with us. To help us in developing our services we regularly conduct surveys of visitors and ask for feedback on your experiences. We also conduct surveys during family days. If you are asked to participate in a survey, please let us know about your experiences, and any improvements/changes you would like to see.

**Storybook mums** 

Our library service runs ‘Story Books Mums’, which enables a prisoner to record themselves reading a story to their children / grandchildren. When the recording is complete it is sent home so children can listen to it whenever they like.

**Family Services in the prison** A couple of logos with text

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PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust) work within the prison to support both prisoners and families. We have a full time Family Engagement Manager and a team of Family Engagement Workers, who spend their time helping prisoners to maintain a good level of family contact whilst they are in custody. They also help with rebuilding those relationships which may have broken down over time and support those prisoners who do not receive visits from their families. If you wish to contact PACT directly you can either speak to one of their staff during our visit or drop them an e-mail at:

[Newhall@prisonadvice.org.uk](mailto:Newhall@prisonadvice.org.uk)

**Adoption Support** 

Some prisoners may have lost their children to adoption or are going through the process when they are received into custody. PACT staff help prisoners with letter writing and encourage them to maintain letter box contact if it has been granted. They also facilitate final contact visits between Mum and child / children in our special extended family visits area. We understand how emotional and distressing these visits can be, so we ensure they are carried out with the utmost sensitivity. Post adoption support is then offered by the team.

**Parenting Course**

The Practical Parenting Course is a programme which has been specifically designed by us to be delivered within a prison environment. It is open to all women who continue to have contact with their children following release and is also open to prisoners who are grandparents that may have caring responsibilities for their grandchildren. The course is run over 4 weeks.

**Family Days** 

In partnership with the prison PACT run 10 family days throughout the year. Some are aimed at children with families, others are for those with only adult family members.

These visits usually take place between 10.00 – 14.00 and last for the full 4 hours. All eligible prisoners (those who are mothers, grandmothers and the sibling of younger brothers and sisters under 18 years of age) are encouraged to apply.

These visits are usually themed, especially at a certain time of the year i.e., Christmas and Easter and are full of fun with activities that you can all join in with together as a family unit.

Photographs can be taken at family days by our staff when consent is given as we understand photographs can be very precious and sometimes rare for those with a family member in prison.

It is not always possible to grant each applicant a place on every Family Visits Day as numbers are restricted, but we do all we can to ensure it is shared out fairly.

We run 7 of these days during the school holidays so that education and routine is not disrupted.

We also offer a lifer day which operates in the same way as a family day but is only open to prisoners who are serving life sentences.

**Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)** 

Some of our prisoners may be subject to court orders around child contact. They may have had contact restricted or removed themselves, or they may be the sole carer where an order has been made against the other parent.

In these cases, the PACT Family Engagement Worker is the key point of contact for Cafcass and they will arrange calls between the prisoner and the Cafcass worker.

The Family Worker is also able to offer the following services:

* Support with family contact through one-to-one work.
* Work closely with local authorities to introduce and maintain contact with children who are in care. This includes attending meetings either in person, via phone or video link to ensure mothers are informed and involved in their children’s care and future plans. PACT also facilitates contact visits and meetings with social workers.
* Provision of support around adoption; including letterbox contact, final visits and visits with adoptive parents and support around life story work.
* Provision of advocacy services at school meetings and multi-agency meetings
* Support around other family issues, i.e. information for women concerned about parents and their care, phone calls to hospitals and care homes to maintain contact.
* Provide telephone support to family members who are concerned about their relative in custody.

**Care Leavers** 

Staff at HMP New Hall are keen to support those who have been through the care system. We appreciate that some may have been through exceptionally traumatic times in their lives may need additional support.

Within the Offender Management Unit, we have ‘Care Champions’ who are able to offer specialist support and referral to services designed to help those with experience in the care sector.

**Safety Concerns? – Don’t Worry - Here’s How to Contact Us….** 

**The Safer Custody Hotline Number:**

**01924 840723**

Ring this number if you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of your loved one whilst they are staying at HMP and YOI New Hall. This is a recorded message facility which is checked regularly by staff. You can help us by leaving the following information:

***Prisoner name and number***

***Your concern***

***Your contact details so that we can call you back if necessary.***

(Please do not contact this number for routine enquiries.)

**In the event of an emergency where the situation may involve an immediate threat to life, please contact 01924 803000.**

**Online….** 

Find [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and then enter HMP and YOI New Hall into the search bar. Here you will find lots of information about our prison along with the link to the Prisoners Families Helpline – [www.prisonersfamilies.org](http://www.prisonersfamilies.org).

**Reporting a Crime…..** 

Remember, there is a free and simple way to report a crime through the national Crime Stoppers helpline. We all have a duty to help people lead law abiding and useful lives whilst in custody and on release – so if you feel able you can contact Crime Stoppers in confidence on 0800 555 111 to report any illicit activity which may jeopardise your family member having a successful release.

**Safeguarding / Substance Misuse** 

The prison works as a multi-agency team to meet the needs of prisoners in ensuring that they remain safe. We work closely with our substance misuse services both in and out of prison to identify anyone with a substance misuse need as this can have negative effect on their parenting capacity and pose a risk to any children involved. Although the service is confidential, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults must override this.

Our Substance Misuse Team have members of staff who specialise in the following areas:

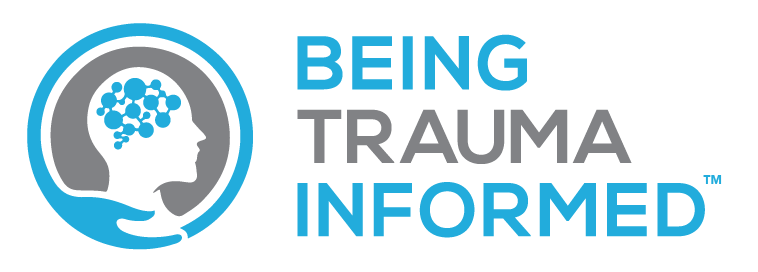
* Resettlement
* Perinatal
* Service user involvement
* ISFL (Independent Substance Free Living)
* Recovery Champions
* Complex care

**Safer Custody** 

Some of our prisoners have complex needs and can present us with a range of difficulties and challenges. From time to time, we may contact appropriate family members for advice on what has helped that person in the past. It can also be useful for family members to take part in some of our regular meetings to support their family members. If you are asked to do this please attend if you can, your knowledge and experience is very valuable in these cases.

HMP & YOI New Hall offers a ‘Listener’ scheme which has is run by the prison in partnership with The Samaritans, who train prisoner volunteers to listen to their peers when they are in a time of crisis. The service is confidential unless there is a risk to life or the security of the prison.

There is also access to the Samaritans Freephone on the BT phones that are available in all cells.

**Being Trauma informed** 

Staff are provided with Trauma Informed training to support and understand our prisoners with trauma they may have suffered prior to coming into custody. We have embedded a trauma responsive approach over the years to ensure that we fully understand why someone presents in the way they do and how best to support their needs.

***The next steps……***

This strategy is a live document and will continue to develop with feedback from families and the support of key prison functions.

We hope to make New Hall the place that uses prison time as the window of opportunity to build and maintain strong family ties.

**Remember - strong family ties reduce the chance of your family members re-offending**

**Family Strategy Group Committee members:**

**Core members**: Head of HORR

Head of ESW

Head of OMU

Head of Operations

Head of Safety and Equality

Head of Residence

Head of Perinatal Pathway

PACT Family Engagement Manager

Action For Children

Activities Custodial Manager

Visit’s Custodial Manager

CIT Manager

Care Leaver Champion

**Governor L Sandow**

**Head of Reducing Reoffending**

**January 2024**