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| **HMP&YOI Low Newton**  **Family & Significant Others Strategy** | | |

HMP & YOI Low Newton

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| **Signed** | **Donna Pearson** |
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HMP/YOI Low Newton – Family and Significant Other (F&SO) Strategy Aim

The Family and Significant Others (FaSO) strategy is designed to help us improve on the existing measures we have in place to promote meaningful contact between prisoners and their families. Research has identified that by having regular contact with families and significant others, and involving them with sentence management reduces reoffending and increases the likelihood of a successful transition into the community. Our aims are aligned with that of the Reducing Reoffending Strategy, and are discussed both Family Services Contract meetings and Reducing Reoffending Pathway meetings.

Governors Vision



Low Newton’s ambition is to create an environment where respect and compassion for each other is at the heart of everything we do. A place where people can live and work in the knowledge that their wellbeing is looked after, and they are given the opportunities they need to recover, develop, and grow in a procedural and morally just environment. We will work as a team to accomplish our goals and support one another to achieve the best possible outcomes. We will empower people to innovate and be a part of our success. We will trust people to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons. We will strive to be a centre of excellence for others to aspire to, and we will celebrate our success, recognising the exceptional work of our individuals and teams.

Governor G Pidduck

The Family Services Provision at Low Newton

Within Low Newton we have a wide range of services, which can hopefully assist with most, if not all of the situations which may arise for our prisoners in relation to their family and significant others.

The lead for this pathway is the Head of Reducing Reoffending, Donna Pearson. It is the Pathway Leads responsibility to strategically plan provision, and ensure that it is appropriate for the needs of our population. The responsibilities of the family lead are available to view at the back of this document (annex A)

The Family and Significant Others champion, is the prison Family Support Worker, Holly Claydon. Holly drives forward the strategy action plan at an operational level, as well as undertaking some complex casework.

Nort East Prison After Care Society (NEPACS) provide two family workers, Janine Sanderson and Vicky Guisti, who provides our Early Days in Custody service.

We have two Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Liaison Officers (PMBLO) Officer Staton and Officer Hicks.

In addition to this, NEPACS provide the Departure Lounge, which offers a service for prisoners and their loved ones prior to release, and on the day of release.

The prison have two avenues of telephone support for families:

NEPACS offer a confidential telephone support service for prisoners and families

Freephone 0800 012 1539

HMPYOI Low Newton Safer Custody Department has a dedicated line for people to call if they are concerned about someone in prison. 0191 376 4189

All information is located on the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-newton-prison), and is checked and updated regularly.

Areas for Development – to be added to action plan

* We will ensure that all new staff entering Low Newton receive basic training on the FSoS offering, and that yearly refresher training is offered to all staff to update them with any developments as part of lock down training days
* We will ensure that the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-newton-prison) is reviewed between the HoRR and Family Services Manager at least quarterly and updated when necessary
* We will aim to have FSoS training implemented into the lockdown training schedule at least twice per year

Family work and Safer Custody

Our dedicated emergency line is available for people in the community as well as prisoners within the prison to report any concerns that they have. If you think the prisoner is at immediate risk, please call the switchboard on 0191 376 4000 and ask for the Orderly Officer and explain that your concern is an emergency. The number is also advertised on the [GOV.UK website,](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-newton-prison) and on the [NEPACS website](https://www.nepacs.co.uk/).

In a recent local needs analysis, 52% of prisoners stated that they wished for their family or significant other to be involved in their time in custody. Where prisoners are subject to Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) procedures, we will always ask our prisoners if they would like family or significant other involvement in the review process. This occurs at three points during the process (concern and keep safe form, sources of support form and care plan.)

Areas for Development – to be added to action plan

* We will seek to relocate the emergency line to the communications room to ensure that when anyone has concerns about a prisoner, they are able to speak with a person, and not have to leave a message on an answering machine
* We will ensure that it is well documented on all ACCT documents that prisoners have been asked if they would like their families and significant others involved in the process, and that it has been revisited should they have changed their minds further down the line.

Our offering to Families and Significant Others

Visits

All information in relation to visits is located on both the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/low-newton-prison) and also the [NEPACS](https://www.nepacs.co.uk/) website.

We have a welcoming Visitors Centre adjacent to the entrance of the prison. It operates as a Departure Lounge for those prisoners who are released from custody, and their families who may come to collect them on the day of release, and also as a welcoming place for visitors to attend prior to, and after their visit.

We offer a wide range of visits in addition to legal and domestic. These include child visits with both mothers and grandmothers, family visits, professional visits where social workers and foster carers can bring children in to see mum, extended play days and community days for our Building Positive Relationships cohort. We also hold quarterly Lifer Days.

All prisoners have incell telephony, and are able to make calls out at any time of the day or night. Video calls are available to those who require them.

Areas for Development – to be added to action plan

* We will ensure that information available for families is quality checked for accuracy every six months. Changes, should, however, be updated as and when they are implemented
* We will continue to be creative in relation to the provision on our family days
* We will commit to updating the fabric of both the visits area and play area, and ensure there is provision for visitors, including children with neurodiverse needs by providing sensory activities
* We will ensure better promotion of videocalls due to the uptake being low
* We will work with the Visitors Centre to improve accessibility for those with mobility issues

Inclusion

Our provision seeks to ensure that hard to reach prisoners are able to access the same level of support as the rest of the population. The needs of those who are care experienced are overseen by a dedicated Single Point of Contact within the Offender Management Unit (OMU). Financial exemptions are granted to ensure that Personal Advisor payments are able to be received for eligible prisoners, and Care Leaver Forums are facilitated by OMU.

We also have the ability to tailor a visit to accommodate prisoners, and or families who have particular needs. Where a prisoner or visitor may struggle with the standard visits setting, we are able to accommodate a visit in our family suite. For example, this is sometimes utilised where a visitor or child is neurodivergent.

Foreign National Prisoners, those with close family abroad, and appellants have the entitlement to pay for PIN credit through their private cash. The usual £50 PIN credit limit does not apply to these categories of prisoner. Foreign national prisoners are also entitled to convert their standard visiting orders to phone credit to make calls abroad or to purchase airmail letters.

Areas for Development – to be added to action plan

* We will endeavour to provide a selection of sensory materials for visitors with neurodiverse needs
* We will continue to facilitate care leaver forums to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the population

Safeguarding

The establishment lead for Safeguarding is Senior Probation Officer, Laura Wood. All staff are required to undertake mandatory Safeguarding Training. Whilst this is available via E-learning, we also encourage attendance at external training events for those staff who are actively involved with family services.

Separate Policies are published for Safeguarding both children and adults.

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

We understand the impact that support from Family & Significant Others can have on Reducing Reoffending. Where appropriate, and subject to risk assessment, we encourage prisoners to utilise ROTL to enable them to spend time in the community with close family members who they have a positive relationship with. Close family members are children, partners, siblings and parents but could extend beyond this to non family members where there is a strong, positive relationship.

Areas for Development – to be added to action plan

* Continue to promote the use Maintaining Family Ties and Childcare Resettlement Licence ROTL

Provision for prisoners who do not have any family contact

Support for this group of prisoners is provided by our team of Family Workers who facilitate the Building Positive Relationships groups. Whilst organised and facilitated by our family workers, the structure of them is agreed by the prisoners who attend. Essentially it is a group visit which takes place in the visits hall, where prisoners come together to take part in a variety of activities. This includes prisoners who may still have contact via the telephone, but do not receive physical visits.

In addition to this, the Official Prison Visitor Scheme is available through the chaplaincy. The scheme sees volunteers visit specific prisoners, who would otherwise not have visits. Known only by their first name, the volunteers build up a professional relationship with the prisoner over time, providing consistent contact and support.

Areas for Development – to be added to action plan

* Ensure that when special events are planned for prisoners with family, that provision is given also to those who do not
* Ensure that lists of prisoners without visits is printed off and recorded at regular intervals

Action Plan

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Action | Owner | RAG rating | Target Date | Progress |
| We will ensure that all new staff entering Low Newton receive basic training on the FSoS offering, and that yearly refresher training is offered to all staff to update them with any developments as part of lock down training days | MM / DP |  | April 25 | The first Family Services training event took place in Autumn 2024 and will be repeated yearly. Discussions to take place with People Hub re training for new starters |
| We will ensure that the GOV.UK website is reviewed between the HoRR and Family Services Manager at least quarterly and updated when necessary | DP |  | March 25 | Last Reviewed and updated December24 |
| We will aim to have FSoS training implemented into the lockdown training schedule at least twice per year | DP / VA |  | March 25 |  |
| We will seek to relocate the emergency line to the communications room to ensure that when anyone has concerns about a prisoner, they are able to speak with a person, and not have to leave a message on an answering machine | LW |  | March 25 | Job has been requested via IT, approved by HoBA and paid for via VRF |
| We will ensure that it is well documented on all ACCT documents that prisoners have been asked if they would like their families and significant others involved in the process, and that it has been revisited should they have changed their minds further down the line. | LW |  | March 25 | Is this consistently happening |
| We will ensure that information available for families is quality checked for accuracy every six months. Changes, should, however, be updated as and when they are implemented | DP |  | Mar 25 | DP to implement QC process |
| We will continue to be creative in relation to the provision on our family days | DP |  | Mar 25 |  |
| We will commit to updating the fabric of both the visits area and play area, and ensure there is provision for visitors, including children with neurodiverse needs by providing sensory activities | DP & Family Team |  | April 25 |  |
| We will ensure better promotion of videocalls due to the uptake being low | HC |  | April 25 |  |
| We will work with the Visitors Centre to improve accessibility for those with mobility issues | DP / GI/ Amey |  | September 25 |  |
| We will endeavour to provide a selection of sensory materials for visitors with neurodiverse needs | DP / HC |  | April 24 |  |
| We will continue to facilitate care leaver forums to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the population | TE |  |  |  |
| Continue to promote the use Maintaining Family Ties and Childcare Resettlement Licence ROTL | SW |  | Ongoing |  |

Head of OMU Services

*Strategy Le*

NEPACS

Family Support Worker