



HMP HIGHPOINT FAMILIES AND SIGNIFICANT OTHERS STRATEGY 2025

"Family and significant relationships are considered as a key means by which we can prevent reoffending and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational crime. Supporting a prisoner in a meaningful and constructive relationship with his or her 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. HMPPS therefore has a moral and ethical responsibility to assist any meaningful and constructive relationship in preparation for their release."



SPOC for Policy: Emma Cheal

Effective Date: January 2025

Review Date: January 2026

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Foreword by Nigel Smith:

As a governing governor I take the subject of maintaining family for those in our care very seriously and I am always looking for opportunities and ways to improve the services we offer.

Governing Highpoint comes with a number of challenges. One of those challenges is that many of our men are separated from their families by a distance which means maintaining ties through visits can be costly and difficult to some.

I believe that the services which men can access have improved however, a recent needs analysis commissioned by the Head of Reducing Re-offending highlighted 59% of men rarely or never receive visits at all. As a result of this and during the coming months, I will be asking my Senior Leaders Team to provide me with innovative solutions so that we can better support these men.

In developing this strategy we have considered the Lord Farmer report, '***The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Re-offending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime***' which was published in late 2017.

The report makes 19 recommendations which the Government is committed to implementing and refers to a local minimum "family offer" recommending that establishments deliver and develop in the following areas:

- a. Visitor Centre / Visitor Reception Services
- b. Staffing structure to ensure family work represents as an operational priority
- c. Extended Visits – to enable supportive relationships to flourish
- d. Family Learning – to equip prisoners to maintain and improve relationships
- e. "Gateway" communications system to demonstrate how the establishment have responsive communication systems in place for families

Highpoint's FaSO Lead is the Head of Reducing Reoffending. We also have a FaSO Champion, the CM of Operations. They support the Head of Reducing Reoffending and the Head of Operations in the creation and development of a healthy relationship between prisoners and their families and significant others.

Finally, I welcome any views, ideas or general thoughts on how we as an establishment can continue to improve our offer in this area and ask that you forward these to Emma Cheal, Head of Reducing Re-offending who is the FaSO lead at Highpoint.

Nigel Smith

Introduction:

HMP Highpoint is committed to reducing re-offending through:

- Utilising all services available within the establishment and the community.
- Developing effective strategic partnerships in addressing offending behaviour and delivering support services and interventions aimed at reducing re-offending whilst providing value for money.

We believe that resettlement is a process that begins at the pre-sentence stage and continues through the sentence and into the community upon release. Our resettlement processes will often continue with the processes that have been started at previous establishments.

We recognise that effective resettlement services are important factors in reducing re-offending leading to fewer victims. HMP Highpoint already has an overarching Reducing Re-offending Policy Document and accompanying Delivery Plan.

It is also our belief that in addressing offending behaviour, it is often necessary to assist the prisoner in retaining close family ties, and to involve the family (where practical) in addressing offending behaviour. Often, families of men are unrecognised victims of their offending and are potentially a significant influence in addressing offending behaviour.

We aim to address this acknowledgement on two fronts:

- Ensuring that family contact through telephone conversations, letters and visits is facilitated and encouraged with care and dignity, thus promoting the best interest of children.
- Involving the family as support for the prisoner in addressing offending behaviour, often providing emotional support, assisting with financial pressures and providing accommodation.

In terms of resettlement, this strategy outlines measures and facilities that are in place to assist in reducing re-offending by way of supporting and facilitating family contact and interaction.

Our Strategy:

The aim of our strategy is to:

- Deliver a co-ordinated and integrated response to maintaining family ties.
- Contribute to safer communities and minimise the risk of harm to victims.
- Contribute to the overall aim of the Criminal Justice System to prevent re-offending and protect the public.

HMPPS in isolation cannot deliver successful resettlement services; they must be delivered in partnership with other organisations which in this case primarily relates to Ormiston Families, Suffolk Libraries and Phoenix Futures.

Governance:

Resettlement Policy Committee - as part of the establishment's commitment to work with and involve all agencies across the prison, we have developed a Resettlement Team with the following aims and objectives:

- Co-ordinate resettlement activities for the whole establishment liaising with the individual's Offender Manager and partner agencies.
- To monitor the delivery and effectiveness of resettlement services.
- To provide all agencies working within the prison with an avenue to share working practices.
- To apply strategies under the following pathways:
 - Drugs and alcohol
 - Attitudes, thinking and behaviour
 - Employment, training and education
 - Mental and physical health
 - Children and families
 - Accommodation
 - Finance, benefit and debt

The committee meets bi-monthly, is Chaired by the Head of Reducing Re-offending and a formal record is kept. Ormiston Families, Suffolk Libraries and Phoenix Futures are invited to this meeting and their contributions form part of the standing agenda. The FaSO partnership committee meets monthly and is chaired by the Head of Reducing Reoffending as the contract provider manager with the Families provider Ormiston Families.

From May 2018 Governance for Ormiston will be managed by the AUM Land Based Activities and will be subject to a formal recorded meeting once per quarter. This meeting will also test compliance as the establishment moves to introduce the recommendations from within the Lord Farmer report.

Governance of Suffolk Libraries is managed by the Learning and Skills Manager and is formally monitored via the Quality Improvement Group where they also form part of the standing agenda.

Highpoint has a separate Drug Supply and Reduction Strategy and accompanying monthly meetings where performance is closely monitored.

Measuring our success in developing the Children's and Families pathway

- Prisoner Needs questionnaire.
- Prisoner forums
- Families' questionnaire
- HMIP
- Prisoner MQPL

Section 1: Visitor Centre/ Visitor Reception Services

Our Visitor's Centre is a warm and welcoming environment which also offers a play area for children. Formerly contracted to Children's Links responsibility moved to Ormiston Families in the autumn of 2017.

Although we have two facilities, one North and one South, only the South centre is open to greet visitors. Ormiston staff are on hand to offer advice to first time visitors as well as answering queries from regular visitors. There is a quiet / prayer room for those who wish to make use of it.

The centre is open for at least one hour prior to visits commencing and on arrival visitors have their ID checked in the centre and after being given a wrist band they are asked to proceed to either North or South gate.

The centre remains open for approximately 30 mins after the start of visits, this is to allow any visitors that are delayed booking in. Once this is closed the visit's centre doesn't re-open until the end of visits to allow the visitor to collect their belongings or in the event a visitor wishes to leave during the visits centre, then staff will escort them out to re-claim their belongings, the visits centre will then be closed again.

Section 2: Staffing Structure

The staff profile at Highpoint is designed to ensure that all key domestic and extended visits are staffed to provide a safe decent and secure environment for prisoners and their visitors.

Social visits arrangements:

South, Friday PM, Saturday PM, Sunday AM, Sunday PM and Monday PM.

North, Friday PM, Saturday PM and Sunday PM.

Ormiston families also ensure that all visits are detailed to enable the play area to be open so that children can play in supervised circumstances. Further details of visits can be found later in this document.

We recently rolled out the Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model which introduces a Key worker model.

Key worker – all men at Highpoint have a Key Worker. The Key Worker is a prison officer who is there to develop a working relationship with the individual and help to act as a positive role model throughout a person's journey in custody. The focus of this role is to counter the negative effects of imprisonment and to encourage people in prison to identify and resolve issues and concerns for themselves and encouraging progression, rehabilitation, family contact and resettlement planning. This is a whole prison approach and has been designed to

be supportive, to make men feel settled, safe and calm and in turn empower them to progress through their sentence and engage with their rehabilitation.

The Key Worker will be responsible for developing individual progression plans and the most important aspect of this is that developing the plan is a positive experience. The aim is to help the individual to have hope and aspirations and to give them achievable goals whilst in custody and into their future life with family and friends upon release. Encouragement will be given during these Key Worker sessions to ensure that contact with friends and family is maintained and positively encouraged to help motivate individuals to reduce their risk of future re-offending.

Section 3: Extended visits

Ormiston Families supports children, young people and their families to manage the challenges they face and improve their life chances. Their vision is that “every child and young person is loved, nurtured and valued”.

Ormiston Families delivers four core programmes in the East of England. The Nurture Programme supports the development of children in their early years; The Engage Programme improves outcomes for young people in education; The Unite Programme helps families affected by imprisonment; and The Connect Programme supports children, young people and their families in the community.

The service at HMP Highpoint sits in the **Unite Programme** where they work with prisoners and their families to minimise the impact of imprisonment on their children. The service supports the continued development of family relationships throughout the sentence, playing a critical role in reducing reoffending rates.

We offer a range of ‘specialist visits’, these have to be applied for and are extra to the prisoner’s visits quota. All of these visits are held on a Wednesday on a rotational basis to allow more prisoners to access them. They are also rotated between North and South sites to allow prisoners from both sites to access the visits.

Children’s visits - These visits allows greater freedom for the family to interact with each other and to also enjoy a family meal together, family photos are taken and the Father/Stepfather is encouraged to join in messy play with their children.

Adult only family visit – These visits are open to those men who have adult family members so wouldn’t meet the criteria for Childrens visits.

Lifer and IPP visits – These are held quarterly and support those with longer sentences maintain family ties. Ormiston facilitate the play area for these visits.

These extended visits are a great opportunity for families to spend quality time together in a relaxed setting which is far more conducive to fostering close relationships.



Ormiston facilitate a play area for **every domestic visit on both south and north** with a fully stocked play area being available in south. Children are able to come and go in the play area and join in arts activities, this enables time for families to discuss matters of a private nature.

The play area is a bright friendly place and normalises a sometimes-intimidating environment.



Delivery of play in north is limited though and will form part of the review of visits this year.

Coach visits – In the foreword of this strategy we acknowledged the number of men who rarely or never receive social visits. Further analysis has shown that the two main issues for men and their families is cost and distance to travel. Prior to COVID Highpoint offered the following ‘a free coach service (approximately quarterly) from two pick up points in London. This has proved very popular with men some of which have received their first visit at Highpoint as a result of this’. This is something that we are very keen to re-energise and are currently in discussion with the coach company.

HMP Highpoint operates regular **official visits** for all prisoners. These are for legal matters as well as visits from officially recognised agencies. There are two sessions per week on each side of the establishment. There is good uptake on these and the visits hall is big enough to allow privacy for all sessions.

Accumulated Visits - Prisoners have an opportunity to apply for accumulated visits and this facility may be of particular interest to men being held at Highpoint whose families are located some distance away and / or are ineligible for support under the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme.

Applications can be found on each residential unit. Granting accumulated visits will be at the discretion of the Governor of the requested establishment and will depend on population pressures. If approval is given, the terms and conditions of the transfer will be agreed in writing prior to any move.

ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence) allows prisoners to leave prison for a limited time so that they can take part in activities outside of the establishment that directly contribute to their resettlement into the community or their development of a purposeful, law-abiding life. A good example would be to develop or maintain family ties.

RoTL from closed conditions has very clear and restrictive guidelines. Applications can be submitted for any form of ROTL according to the requirements of PSI 13/2015, para 4 4.2.

Men may be released on resettlement ROTL to undertake activities that are linked to objectives in their sentence plans. The following principles are adopted:

- All RoTL must have a clear, recorded link to an objective identified in the individual offender's sentence plan and/or resettlement goals. The prisoner must make this link when they apply.
- The time allowed for the release must reflect the time required to conduct these activities, including travel time.
- The activity must be one which cannot be met within the prison, unless it is specified why release is required in the individual case; e.g. that conducting the activity in the community will help to test the prisoners decision-making or other need identified in a particular case.

RoTL has been used with great success at Highpoint with many men finding their transition back into the community eased by regular opportunities to engage with their families in a community or home setting.

Section 4: Family learning

One to one support for men in residential areas with child / family related issues is also offered by Ormiston staff who are available to provide support and where appropriate sign post to other relevant agencies which may be beneficial. Ormiston can liaise with other agencies like social services on behalf of prisoners to attempt to strengthen family ties

Phoenix Futures (PF) have a Family Practitioner available to work with family members of men who are currently engaging with them.

The service offers the following:

- Strengths-based assessments to determine a package of support.
- Holistic support focused on family member's strengths and wellbeing as well as improving communication, relationships and resilience.
- Supporting family members to prepare for release.
- Advice & information for family members regarding addiction and substance misuse
- Referrals on to relevant services for family members.
- Group sessions on Parenting and Relationships

What is the process for starting work with a man's family members?

- Any man working with PF can use the family service.
- Referrals come from men at point of Induction, or any point during their sentence when they begin working with PF. Referrals can also come from any staff as long as the man is working with PF.
- All men assessed by PF are asked if they want to work with the Family Practitioner both at induction and assessment.
- In order to begin working with a family member, the family practitioner will see the men one to one for an assessment to outline needs and desired outcomes.
- The family practitioner then undertakes a series of security checks. This includes contacting both the Prison Offender Manager and Community Offender Manager to inform them that family work will be commencing if all checks are cleared.

If a prisoner feels that they would benefit from working with the PF family worker then they are encouraged to speak with the PF Peer Worker or their keyworker.

Section 5: "Gateway" Communication Systems

Men are encouraged to maintain contact via the following communication systems;

Stories onto DVD offers men the opportunity to read a book, transferable onto DVD and sent out their families. This creates a keepsake for the child who can watch their father whenever they like. Suffolk Libraries and Ormiston Families jointly manage this process.

Every man on every living unit has access to a **telephone**.

All men are provided with a **weekly letter** which includes postage.

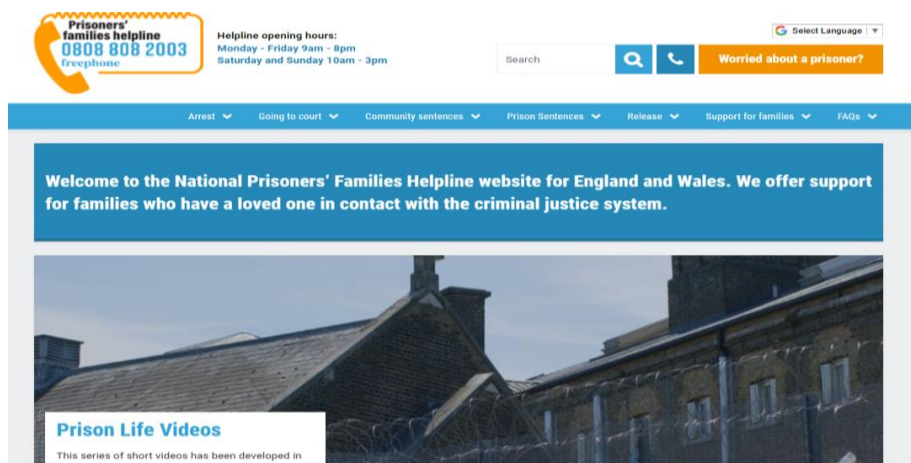
Email a prisoner is in place and working well for those families who wish to use this particular medium. Emails are received into a functional mailbox, printed off and sent to the prisoner at his living accommodation.

Prison video calling: Prisoners are currently entitled to a free video call, once per month. These can be requested via the 'Purple visits' app, which visitors must download and follow the instructions to register.

Section 6: Ways to get in touch if you have concerns about a prisoner at HMP Highpoint

Highpoint also has a confidential phone line which is available for any person (family, friend) to call if they have concerns imminent or not about a prisoner. This phone line is accessed daily by the IC Custodial Manager and a record of this is maintained in the daily log book. **Call 01440 743100** if you think a prisoner is at immediate risk of harm. Ask for the Orderly Officer and explain that your concern is an emergency.

The Prisoners Families Helpline is available for you should you wish to make contact with your loved ones prison to report concerns. This can be done via the Prisoners Families Website on a contact form, you will receive a response asap within 72 hours.



Section 7: Opportunities within Chaplaincy

Making Contact with the Family - Some new men coming into Highpoint may not have had the opportunity to contact their family to inform them of their transfer. When the men are seen by Chaplaincy as part of their Chaplaincy induction, they would be asked whether their families were aware of their transfer and if not, whether they would be happy for Chaplaincy to make contact on their behalf.

On other occasions, families may phone the establishment with concerns about the welfare of their relatives in our care, in which case the Chaplaincy would liaise with unit staff, other agencies, speak to the man and contact the family giving them the assurance that their relatives are being fully supported.

Chaplaincy Compassionate Visits - There will be times when a Chaplaincy compassionate visit is deemed beneficial. This is a special visit usually arranged for the man and his family for a number of reasons such as bereavement, maintaining family ties, relationship breakdown, disability issues, etc. The visit takes place in the Chaplaincy away from the usual visits location at Highpoint in order to help enhance the quality of the visit.

Marriage and Civil Partnership - The men are able to marry or engage in a civil ceremony whilst in custody. It is often Chaplaincy that has the lead role in processing a marriage application and arrangements for the ceremony. This will be done in cooperation with a designated manager. The designated Chaplain will be providing pastoral support and advice to both the man and his partner at every step of the way.

Relationships Breakdown - Often men and / or their family would approach Chaplaincy for support in restoring relationships which may have been caused or exacerbated by incarceration. The Chaplaincy would act as a mediator and explore various options to help enable the man make amends with his family.

Serious Illness or Death of a Prisoner's Relative - As soon as the news of serious illness and/or death of a man's relative is received and verified, Chaplaincy would usually offer the man the opportunity to make a public expense phone call to his family. The Chaplain would provide pastoral support to both the man and his family. A local protocol is followed in order to assess the possibility of whether the man would be able to visit his relative and/or attend their funeral.

Sometimes the news of a death can be very distressful which may warrant a Chaplaincy compassionate visiting order to give both the man and his family an opportunity to mourn their loss together.

Death in Custody - In the sad event of a suicide or sudden death in whilst in Custody, the Chaplaincy team would be involved in a pastoral capacity at all levels, with the family of the deceased, the men and staff.

Family members may gain support from contact with a Chaplain who is acting solely in a pastoral role and may derive consolation from the knowledge that the official rites and prayers were observed at the time of death of their relative where this has been possible. Usually, the family of the deceased are invited to view the deceased's cell and following this they would be offered the opportunity to visit the Chapel or the Multi-Faith Room to have a short time of prayer alone or with the Chaplain if they wish.

Section 8: What do we provide for men who have no Family or other supportive relationships?

For prisoners who may not have any family or friends or whose family is unable to visit, it may be possible to arrange for a volunteer prison visitor to attend. This scheme is run through the Chaplaincy (The Official prison visitor scheme) and the visitors who come in are all volunteers.

Keyworker sessions with men explore what options are available when men have no outside support. They will support men with no contact to progress and encourage progression to build trusted relationships.

Section 9: Decency

Highpoint has a Decency Strategy which strives to ensure that living and working conditions are the best that they can be. From having clean decorated cells to having the basics such as

a curtain and a clean toilet we encourage all prisoners to take pride in where they live. We deeply believe that this can be a new mind set for many men and that this positive change will follow them into the community when they return to the families and friends.

Section 9: Safeguarding children & public protection

HMP Highpoint recognises that Public Protection is *one of the core functions of the prison* service, NOMS and the MOJ. Public Protection is at the forefront of all that we do and is the responsibility of all staff regardless of grade or position.

In a small number of cases maintaining family ties may not be appropriate, possibly due to the risk of harm that an offender poses to the family. Safeguarding children and supporting victims should always be a priority in the work of all stakeholders working with us at. Safeguarding children and public protection measures are locally managed by the Offender Management Unit by the Head of Offender Management Services and Head of Offender Management Delivery.

Safeguarding of children is a priority and depending on the level of risk level a prisoner poses to children, will determine the level of contact they can have with children whilst in prison. The management of these restrictions can involve mail and telephone PIN monitoring and monitoring of contact with children during visits.

The levels of contact a prisoner at risk to children can have is detailed below:

Levels of Restrictions for Child Contact	
Level One	Full restrictions apply. No contact with any child permitted. All correspondence and telephone calls may be monitored subject to a risk assessment being carried out and regularly reviewed.
Level Two	Contact permitted with named child only via written correspondence. All correspondence and telephone calls may be monitored subject to a risk assessment being carried out and regularly reviewed.
Level Three	Contact permitted with named child only via written correspondence and telephone calls. Correspondence and telephone calls may be monitored subject to a risk assessment being carried out and regularly reviewed.
Level Four	No restrictions necessary, contact permitted with named child only via correspondence, telephone calls and visits. The prisoner may be allowed access to family visits with the permission of the Governing Governor following a further, individual risk assessment. Routine monitoring of correspondence, telephone calls, general observations in the visits area. This level of contact applies only to those children that the prisoner has permission to have contact with. All other children will be subject to Level One restrictions.

HMP Highpoint has a safeguarding strategy in place and all staff have access to safeguarding training.

Section 10: Care Leavers

A care leaver is someone who has spent time in the care of the local authority.

A care leaver's eligibility for services from the local authority depends on factors such as the duration and timing of that care.

Care leavers are split into three categories eligible, relevant and former relevant - more information on these categories and how they may impact you can be found in the HMP

Highpoint Care Leavers policy.

HMP Highpoint is dedicated in developing an effective working relationship with the Responsible Authority.

If the individual is assessed to be a Former Relevant Child and wishes to receive leaving care support, we should expect the Responsible Authority to ensure that the individual is provided with:

- A Personal Adviser- the details of whom should be recorded on Delius alongside other details of the young adult's care leaver status.
- An up-to-date Pathway Plan
- Support for release

At HMP Highpoint those that identify as a former relevant child can provide this information on reception interview. Prison Offender Managers will then contact the appropriate Personal Advisor to ensure continuity of support.

We are also exploring different methods of identifying care leavers, but all prisoners have the chance to tell us on induction if they are a care leaver.

HMP Highpoint has a Care experienced strategy in place and all staff have access to Care Leavers/ Experienced training.

Section 11: Our Future Commitments

In 2024/2025 HMP Highpoint is committed to improving its Family and Significant Other provision by the following:



To run regular Family and Significant other prisoner forums to include all parties within the prison.

- To develop provision for prisoners with no family or supportive others, including social events in the visit's hall.
- To ensure biannual forums and surveys are a priority, and outcomes are published through "You said we did" feedback.