



HMP & YOI Bronzefield

Family and Significant Others

STRATEGY 2025-2026



Contents

- Director's Message
- Facts and Figures
- Aims of the strategy
- Our Population
- Measuring Success
- Visits
- Safeguarding
- Specialist Staff and Units
- Interventions and Support
- Feedback
- Birth and Mother's Charter – Annex A
- Care Experience Charter – Annex B
- Development plan – Annex C

Director's Message



Families and significant others can play a vital role in facilitating a safer and calmer atmosphere within HMP Bronzefield and following release into the community.

Our strategy to strengthen ties with families and significant others compliments our overarching commitment to operate a safe, secure and enabling prison for staff, prisoners and visitors. Meaningful and constructive relationships with families and significant others whilst in custody can reduce anxiety, mitigate the frustrations and isolation of imprisonment, and potentially reduce violence.

This strategy has been influenced by *the HMPPS (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service) Delivering Effective Family Practise Operating Guidance*. The following quote is the opening paragraph to the guidance which firmly places families and their significant others at the centre of reform:

'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.'

This strategy is also in response to the Lord Farmer report of 2017 *'The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Re-offending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*, and the Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties HMPPS Policy Framework.

When a woman comes to prison their family ties are likely to consist of their parent/s (who may have their own health issues), and their children (many of whom are in the care of their already struggling parents).

There is an ongoing interest in the relationship between prisoners and their families, both in terms of the role of family as a conduit to reducing reoffending and how offending behaviour impacts on children and families.

As mothers are predominantly viewed as primary carers family engagement has an important relevance within a female prison for both prisoner and families alike. There is strong evidence that shows working with families within a custodial setting develops benefits in terms of reducing reoffending.

Findings from several Resettlement Needs Analysis' and relevant surveys (such as Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction) show that family circumstances and relationships in childhood have a strong influence on an individual's future and their behaviour.

Prisoners contact with their families is an important factor in their transition back into society and is a significant factor to successfully reducing reoffending. Prisoners who maintain family ties within custody are more likely to secure accommodation and employment upon release resulting in a lower reconviction rate than those who receive no family support.

Most prisoners see their families as important to them and a significant means of support while they are in custody. Therefore, I and the staff team at Bronzefield are committed through this strategy in supporting our women to strengthen their ties with families and significant others.

Charlotte Wilson
Prison Director – HMP & YOI Bronzefield

FACT AND FIGURES

- It is estimated that over **200,000** children each year are affected by parental imprisonment.
- There are no definitive statistics on the number of offenders who are parents, the number of children who have a parent in prison or what happens to dependents when parents are imprisoned.
- The odds of prisoners reoffending are **39% lower** for those who receive visits from a family member.
- Prisoners who improve their family ties are **less likely** to use class A drugs on release from prison.
- In 2021, **63%** of women reported having a child under the age of 18 and its likely many are single parents and thus have more caring responsibilities.
- **A quarter** of prisoners were formally in the care of the local authority. Yet the leaving care population represents about **1%** of young people.
- Only **5%** of children with a mother in prison remain in the family home.
- An estimated **24-31%** of female offenders have dependent children.

FACT AND FIGURES

- For **85%** of mothers in prison it is the first time they have been separated from their children for a significant amount of time.
 - Only around **1 in 4** imprisoned mothers report that their children lived with their partner during their imprisonment.
 - **Only half** of the women who had lived with or were in contact with their children prior to imprisonment had received a visit since going into prison.
 - Maintaining contact with children is made more difficult for women in prison due to the distances they are held from their home area. This is on average, **66 miles**. This is due to the limited number of female prisons.
 - At least **20%** of women in prison are lone parents before imprisonment, compared to **9%** of the general population.
 - Of **69%** of prisoners who received visits, **41%** went on to re-offend within 12 months.
 - Of **31%** of prisoners who did not receive visits, **68%** went on to re-offend within 12 months.
- Ministry of Justice, Longitudinal Cohort Study 2013 – Hopkins and Brenton Smith

Aims of our Strategy

- To reduce the risk of reoffending by ensuring relationships are not only maintained but strengthened by maintain contact and a feeling of purpose whilst in custody.
- To help prisoners forge a new identity for themselves, which is an important precursor to desist from crime, based on being a good role model to their children and families.
- To engage partners, parents and families who also need support, not just because of the key role they can play in rehabilitation, but also because of the hidden sentence they are serving.
- To understand that 'good' family contact has an important role to play, not only in supporting prisoners whilst they are in custody but also supporting their rehabilitation after release.
- To reduce the risk of intergenerational offending.
- To embed the Care Experienced Charter developed between Bronzefield and Peterborough. This can be viewed at Annex B.
- To recognise and understand the unique needs of our diverse population such as foreign nationals, Care Experienced and those far from home to provide a bespoke service.
- To outline the provisions and support available at HMP & YOI Bronzefield to both prisoners and families alike and to provide a framework that is dynamic. This will lead to improving outcomes and informing future developments to ensure that Family Engagement works for all prisoners within Bronzefield. Our development plan can be viewed at Annex C.

In summary, this strategy will:

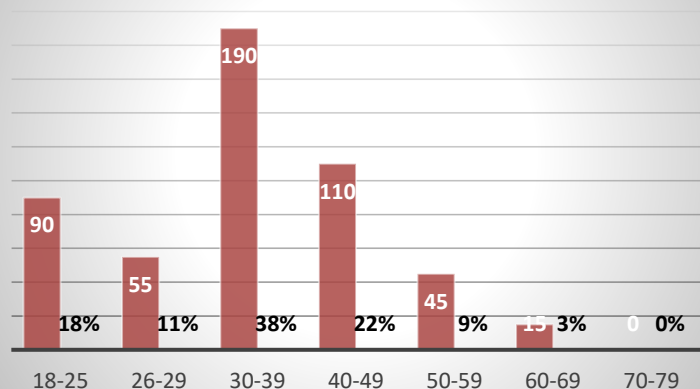
- ✓ **Contribute towards improving outcomes for children of offenders**
- ✓ **Reduce the risk of re-offending by promoting contact with family and significant others**
- ✓ **Improve awareness and access to family support**

Our Population

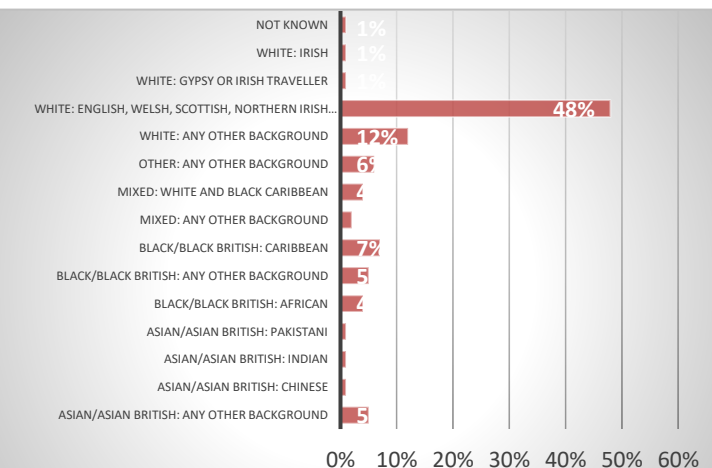
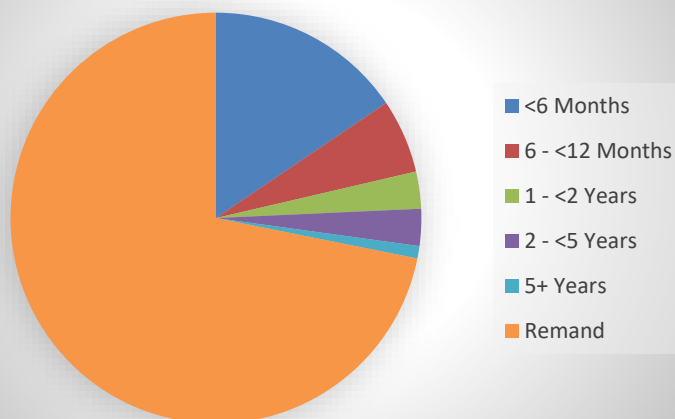
HMP & YOI Bronzefield is a modern purpose-built prison for women that opened in June 2004 performing the function of a local prison and accepting prisoners direct from the courts.

HMP & YOI Bronzefield has an operational capacity of 527 which includes a 12 bed Mother and Baby Unit and is run by Sodexo Justice.

Age Band



Time to Serve



Ethnicity

Measuring Success

There are several ways that Bronzefield is held accountable for the service they deliver to the women in our care and our offers to families and significant others. These include:

- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP). *Our latest inspection took place on 24th January – 31st January 2022.*
- Measuring the Quality of Prisoners' Lives (MQPL) *Date of Survey 23rd - 26th August 2021*
- HMPPS Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)
- Prison Rating Tool
- Focus Groups
- Surveys and feedback
- Thematic Reviews

What does success look like?

- ✓ Reduction in the number of prisoners who do not maintain contact with the outside world whilst in custody.
- ✓ Mothers and grandmothers have a voice which informs our wider strategy.
- ✓ Women who are primary carers are supported to continue this role in custody and on release.
- ✓ Reduction in levels of violence and self-harm.
- ✓ Families or significant others are involved in our procedures such as sentence planning, resettlement planning and managing violent behaviour via the Challenge, Support and Intervention Plans.
- ✓ More prisoners return to their family home on release and continue to receive support.
- ✓ Staff understand the needs of women who are mothers and grandmothers and are confident to discuss this with women.
- ✓ Women with children over the age of 18 are not excluded in our strategy and continue to receive support.
- ✓ Those women with care experience aged 25 or under can re-establish contact with their Personal Advisor in custody and can access relevant services and support in custody and on release.
- ✓ We understand contact with some family members may be inappropriate and not beneficial to either the prisoner or their relatives. They may be the victim of criminal activity, strong influencers provoking either criminal behaviour or coercive control to either party. This will be robustly managed to protect the safety of everyone by our Public Protection Team.



Bronzefield's Children, Family & Significant Other Committee Meeting

Our Children, Family & Significant Other Committee meet on a quarterly basis to review our delivery against, policy, HMIP expectations, prisoner & visitor feedback and is our commitment to continuous development in this area.

Terms of Reference

- Maintain and build family ties through multidisciplinary prison representation
- To monitor and develop family services that help reduce the risk of re-offending
- Develop working partnerships with key stakeholders
- To develop and review a working action plan based on the strategy document
- Oversee the delivery of family services (HMIP compliance, MQPL and Survey/Focus Group Feedback)
- Increase engagement of prisoner's families to ensure family members have a better understanding of what services are available within HMP Bronzefield.
- To analyse feedback from prisoners on family services through Key Worker sessions
- To provide pregnant prisoners with all the available information and support
- To monitor engagement with maternity and health care services
- To identify the prisoners most at risk and agree follow up action
- To provide ongoing support for mothers who have experienced separation from their children
- To review safeguarding procedures from the reception process through to release

Agenda

- Feedback from all departments involved with Families, Children & Significant Others
- Perinatal Prison Update
- Family Support Worker Update
- Support for prisoners who do not receive visits
- Data sets
- Safeguarding Update
- Policy and Strategy Review
- External Partners
- Any other business



Visits

Visits Timetable

The Social Visits timetable is as follows.

Monday	1400 – 1500	1600 - 1700	
Tuesday	1400 - 1600	1700 – 1800	
Wednesday	1400 – 1600	1700 – 1800	
Thursday	1400 – 1500	1600 – 1800	
Friday	1400 - 1600		
Saturday	0930 – 1145	1400 – 1500	1600 – 1700
Sunday	0930 - 1145	1400 - 1500	1600 - 1700

After consultation with the Prison Council, individuals, focus groups and surveys our Visits timetable provides families with longer visiting sessions and increased visiting slots.

Remand prisoners have hourly visits on all the days that we are open.

Sentenced prisoners have up to 4 visits per month, 5 per month if they are Enhanced.

Prisoners can book their own visits via the pods on their residential locations.

Legal visits occur in the Visits Hall every weekday morning. Legal visits can also take place via our Video Link facility.

The Visits Hall

The Visits Hall has capacity for 25 visits at a time, with the women allowed up to 3 adult visitors at a time and unlimited child visitors. Please note any more than 7 visitors may require for the Family Room area or garden to be booked.

The Visits Hall has a Cafeteria, called Vita Nova, which is very popular with the women and their visitors and offers a wide range of hot and cold freshly made food and beverages. Only card payments can be accepted as the prison cannot accept cash.



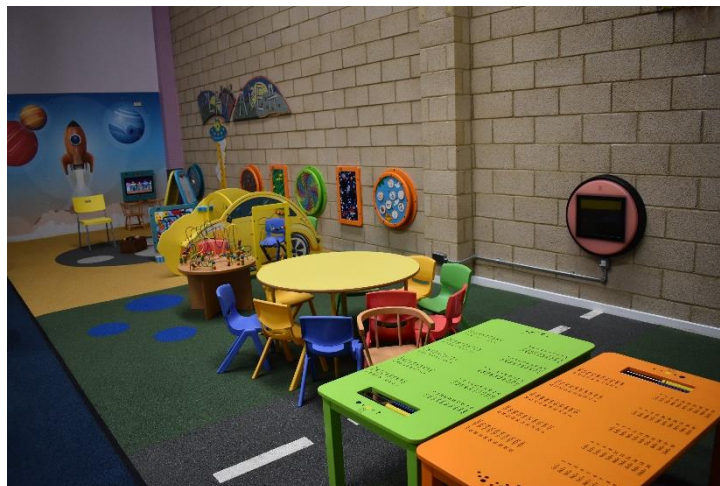
We have now introduced table service to ensure visit times can be maximised with loved ones rather than queuing for refreshments.

Extended Visits

Visits staff will accommodate extending visits wherever possible to support maintaining family ties in this way. It is common for visits to be extended to a whole afternoon, upon request, which both women and their visitors appreciate thoroughly.

Play Facilities

The Visits Hall has a large Play Area for children where they can interact with their family. As well as the Play Area, there is the option for the women and their children to engage in activities at their table while on their visit, this includes drawing, colouring and games.



Family Garden



Our newly designed family garden was achieved with the support of one of our partner's, Bright Horizons.

The garden is open to all prisoners and visitors on a risk assessment basis, and when staffing measures allow.

The garden provides several child friendly activities to encourage play and movement during visit times. Please ask a member of staff for a consent form and consideration for your visit to be relocated to the garden area.

Family Room

Bronzefield's family room is a child-centric, enriching play environment which is in the prison's visiting area. It is designed to support positive interactions between children and their relatives; and to encourage more children, to visit more frequently, so that family relationships can be maintained, to support reduced reoffending.

The space contains defined play areas, for babies through to teens, opportunities for children and their parents to enjoy role play, art, construction, reading, games, and homework activities together. Building and sustaining family ties is not only a vital part of successful rehabilitation but it plays an important role in improving the life chances of the next generation.

There are separate baby changing facilities located at the back of the family room which all visitors/carers are welcome to use when needed. Essentials such as nappies and wipes are provided to use if required. This space is due to undergo some changes to enhance the space even further during 2025 -2026.

Community Café

In the external Visitors Centre, there is a Community Café where visitors can relax prior to or after their visit. The Café has a wide range of freshly made sandwiches and cakes and hot and cold drinks for sale.

There are information notices available in this area for visitors to Bronzefield.

Child Contact Visits

Contact visits are when a child spends time with someone close to them who they do not live with. Such visits are overseen by a professional or family member to ensure the safety of the child and to monitor what is in their best interests. The purpose of contact visits is to develop and maintain family ties and to provide a child with a sense of belonging. Such visits are organised by our Family Support Worker to ensure that consistency is in place for both mother and child. Photographs are offered during these sessions to enable life story work.

The prison will work with families and professionals where the children are “looked after” by the Local Authority Children Services. The prison will advocate for the mother to be involved and be present at meetings involving her children where she has parental responsibility, or where this is shared with a Local Authority.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER A MOTHER DOES NOT LOSE THEIR PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY BY GOING TO PRISON.

Who has Parental Responsibility (PR)?

V6 Jan 2025
Rev. due Jan 2026

If in doubt or parental responsibility (PR) is unclear: ask to see copies of any legal consent documents / court orders, and take advice from your legal or other advisory service
This is not a comprehensive list of all forms of legal order but covers the main scenarios.

Child or Young Person (CYP) has been assessed and is NOT believed competent to give their own consent at this time
(e.g. per GMC publication 0-18 years: guidance for all doctors, principles of Gillick competence; for 16 & 17 year olds follow MCA (2005))

Foster Carers may have delegated authority for routine health reviews, emergency healthcare, and to follow parental choice for routine immunisations but NOT give consent for Blood Borne Infection screening / genetic tests / safeguarding examination (non-accidental injury, sexual assault) / surgery / anaesthesia etc.

Separated Migrant Children
(may include UASC/refugee/trafficked & modern slavery) usually Child In Care Section 20, but social care can act in best interests as 'corporate parent'. More rarely section 20 is not used so seek advice if required.

Under 16 (<18 if relevant disability) living >28 days with non-direct relative: see [Private Fostering](#)

No legal orders in place irrespective of where CYP is currently / regularly residing

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangement Order (previously called 'Residence Order')

Child In Care / Looked After Child (e.g. foster care, placed with relative, residential unit, detained, note: can be 'in Care' but still living with birth/usual family)

Placement Order

Birth father*

Birth mother

Same-sex partners

*Father holds PR if: married to birth mother at time of birth, named on birth certificate, or parental responsibility agreement / order

If civil partners at time of treatment (e.g. fertility), jointly register birth, or parental responsibility agreement / order

PR shared with birth parents, but an SGO holder can override birth parents

Section 20 (Voluntary Placement)

PR remains fully with birth family (or SG if was on SGO, adoptive parents if post-adoption etc.)

Birth mother

Birth father*

Interim Care Order (ICO) or Full Care Order (FCO)

SHARED between birth family* and Social Care, but Social Care can potentially limit parental PR or override parents if in CYP's welfare
*or SG if was on SGO, adoptive parents if post-adoption etc.

Social Care, ideally Senior Manager e.g. Service Manager (not foster carer, residential home worker etc.)

Birth mother

Birth father*

Post Adoption Order (no longer looked after)

Adoptive Parent(s) only

Emergency Medical Situations (including out of hours) & Deprivations of Liberty for 16- and 17-year-olds
Overriding duty remains to give life-saving emergency treatment in the CYP's best interests

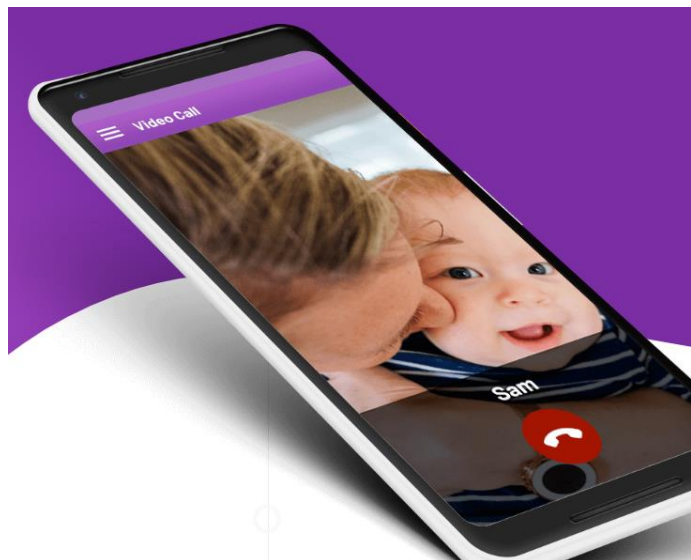
- Police Powers of Protection:** <72hr and no change to who holds PR
- Emergency Protection Order:** 8d (max 15d) PR SHARED between birth family and Social Care but is limited to what is directly necessary to safeguard the CYP. Court can grant Social Care ability to limit/override parental PR for CYP's welfare.
- Emergency situations where the decision of a person with PR means the CYP is at risk of significant harm (e.g., refusal of essential treatment) take urgent advice from your organisation's Legal Services / MDU / MPS and contact Social Care – an emergency Court Order may be required.
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards for 16- and 17-year-olds who lack capacity to consent to the care arrangements** - For authorisation make an application to the Court of Protection as per Re D (A Child) ([2019] UKSC 42) except for those detained under the MHA 1983. For details see [Deprivation of liberty and 16-17 year olds](#)
- If the young person has capacity to consent to the confinement and gives their consent, there will be no DoL- but if they do not consent to the confinement the young person will be deprived of their liberty and issues/concerns can be taken to the High Court for adjudication under Inherent Jurisdiction.

Dr Nadya James (nadya.james@nhs.net): Cons. Community Paediatrician, Designated Doctor CIC, MA for Adoption, Nottingham Children's Hospital. If planning to adopt this for your organisation, please contact me to ensure the latest version. Responsibility remains with the individual to ensure that they access any appropriate and up to date legal advice and take into account any relevant local legislation or details of legal orders specific to an individual case.

Purple Visits

Purple Visits enables prisoners to have virtual contact with visitors who struggle to come to Bronzefield. Prisoners can book Purple Visits themselves and have regular 30-minute virtual visits. These occur either in a room within the Visits Hall that offers privacy, on the Mother and Bay Unit as well as on the Houseblocks. This has proved very popular and has been used to facilitate virtual visits abroad.

purple visits



Purple Visits (Virtual Visits) are available from; 09.00am to 18.00pm Monday to Thursdays
09.00am to 17.00pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

If a visitor would like to book one, they will need to download the application to their mobile device/tablet via the apple app store or google play and follow the instructions.

Or visit <https://www.purplevisits.com/>

Prisoners who do not receive Visits

Prisoners who do not receive visits are identified monthly and offered alternative options for support.

The option of a Purple Visit is always explored in the first instance and if this is not an option then Visits staff will support with the following;

- The Official Prisoner Visitors scheme
- New Bridge Application
- Email a Prisoner process
- Additional Phone Credit
- Prisoner Penfriends

Email A Prisoner



emailaprisoner

The quickest way for your family and friends to write to you is for them to sign up to emailaprisoner.com

They will need your prison number and date of birth. Emails will come straight to the kiosk - if the sender has selected the reply option you can type your response straight back

Looking for someone new to talk to?
Want someone to visit you?

Sign up to New Bridge!

We pair people in prison with a volunteer to connect over letters and (after 6 months) visits.

Our volunteers are non-judgemental and completely independent from the prison service

- They are friendly people from all walks of life who enjoy getting to know new people
- The same volunteer will stay in contact with you even if you are moved to different prisons



“When you have no contact with family, a friendly letter makes your day and helps you through – knowing someone is there to send you a letter can cheer you up”

“I feel a lot calmer and valued as a person. My befriender writes regularly and has visited me twice”

To apply, please write to us with your name, location and prison number at the following address:

New Bridge Befriending Team,
1a Elm Park, London, SW2 2TX


new bridge

What is an Official Prison Visitor?

OPVs visit prisoners who rarely, if ever, have visits from friends or family members. They may be the only contact a prisoner has with the outside world – hence our motto “Bringing the outside in”. Once appointed, OPVs are volunteers and are independent of the prison and its staff. Through regular visits, a relationship is built where trust, empathy and understanding are key. Discussions are always confidential, unless an OPV feels there are grounds for concern relating to the prisoner’s health or safety, as well as that of fellow prisoners, staff or the prison estate.

Prisoners will know their OPVs by their first name only, thus preserving anonymity and security.

OPVs are appointed by the Governor of a prison close to where they live or work. This authority may be passed to the Managing Chaplain in the prison’s Chaplaincy. Prisoners should be made aware of the OPV scheme when they first arrive, and can request to be visited by an OPV; it is for the Managing Chaplain or Liaison Officer to allocate an OPV to a prisoner.

OPVs come from all sections of the community:

- They are male and female
- They are of every race, religion and colour
- They are unpaid volunteers.
-

The NAOPV is especially interested in encouraging applications from members of the BAME and LGBT communities, as they are currently under-represented.



WHO WE ARE?

Prisoners' Penfriends supports the wellbeing of prisoners by extending the hand of non-judgemental friendship via letters and emails. The charity makes it possible for volunteers, in the community outside prison, to write to prisoners, in prisons in England and Wales – and to do so in complete safety.

WHAT WE DO

Today Prisoners' Penfriends serves around 200 prisoners in the UK and processes approximately 3,700 letters a year.

Our scheme is available in around 90 prisons across England and Wales. To join our scheme, a prisoner can write to our PO Box (address below), and we send them an application form on which they set out their interests and have the opportunity to tell us about themselves. As soon as we receive these forms, the prisoner is matched with a volunteer, who is informed of the prisoner’s offence and interests.

Prisoners' Penfriends is unique in that every correspondence is carefully supervised and every letter is checked, ensuring that our volunteers are protected from harm.

If you are interested, just write a letter stating your name, number, and prison to;

Penfriends
PO Box 33460

Neurodiversity

As part of our commitment to supporting neurodivergent individuals, we are developing a family strategy that recognises and responds to the needs of prisoners, visitors, and their children with neurodiverse conditions such as autism, ADHD, and learning differences. Our Neurodiversity Support Manager is actively involved in identifying and supporting these needs, both for those in custody and during family contact. We offer a range of adaptations for visits, including access to quieter spaces, visual schedules, sensory aids, and flexible visiting times where appropriate. Easy-read, neurodiversity-friendly leaflets are distributed during visits to help families understand the support available.

One Page Profiles are used to help staff prepare for individual needs ahead of visits, and prisoners are encouraged to request additional support, including guidance on EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans) for their children or strategies they can implement at home or school. This offer of support also extends to staff and their families, promoting a wider culture of inclusion. Looking ahead, we aim to introduce Neurodiversity Awareness Months, where families with neurodivergent children can attend specially designed activities such as Sensory Story sessions and Write Dance with integrated sensory experiences, making visits both engaging and accessible for all.

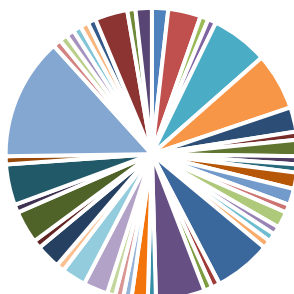
Foreign Nationals

Foreign National Offenders (FNO) represent 23% of our population from over 45 different countries. There should not be an assumption that because a prisoner is a foreign national or subject to deportation that they do not have family resident in the UK who can visit. It is still important to facilitate contact with family who reside overseas. At Bronzefield we adopt a flexible approach for FNO's to access the telephone and virtual visits to enable them to engage in meaningful contact with family resident in different time zones. FNOs are more likely to have family abroad which is an obstacle to ongoing family visits.

Every FNO will receive an airmail letter each week to correspond with family members abroad. If they are not receiving visits additional funds can be given to call home. Prisoners are encouraged to utilise Purple Visits where possible. Staff will work with FNO to try and identify whether a prisoner has a "significant other" in the UK if all family members are living overseas.



Foreign National Population



Albanian	American	Angolan	Belgian	Brazilian
Bulgarian	Chinese	Citizen of Antigua and Barbuda	Colombian	Croatian
Cuban	Czech	Dutch	Estonian	French
Gambian	Georgian	Honduran	Indian	Indonesian
Iraqi	Irish	Israeli	Italian	Jamaican
Japanese	Jordanian	Latvian	Lithuanian	Macedonian
Malaysian	Mauritanian	Mexican	Nigerian	Polish
Portuguese	Romanian	Slovenian	Somali	South Korean
Spanish	St Lucian	Swiss	Thai	Trinidadian
Vietnamese				

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Policy

Sodexo Justice Services operates by a Child Safeguarding Policy and an Adult Safeguarding Policy which reflects the requirements of HMPPS Policy Frameworks. These also cover site specific processes for how to report a safeguarding concern. If staff have a cause for concern for any child or adult that visit's the prison, either in a social or official capacity staff have a duty of care to report these concerns using our internal processes which all staff are trained to follow.

Please speak to a member of staff if you have something to report.

All prisoners are interviewed at Reception when they arrive at Bronzefield. The staff will ask several safeguarding questions relating to their children or caring responsibilities for vulnerable adults and enquire who is providing ongoing care in their absence.

Safer Recruitment

Safer Recruitment is a set of practices to help make sure staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children. It is a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to keep children safe from harm. Safer Recruitment is a statutory responsibility for an establishment or sector where staff have direct contact with children for at least three days in each 30-day period.

It is a requirement for all employees to have an up-to-date enhanced DBS check. Bronzefield has a dedicated Workforce and Vetting team dedicated to ensuring all staff have the relevant level of vetting to work at HMP Bronzefield.

Training

All staff at Bronzefield will have completed Safeguarding Awareness Training as part of their induction package. There are certain areas of the prison that require further in-depth training of safeguarding procedures. These areas include, Visits, Mother and Baby Unit, Reception and the Offender Management Unit. This training is facilitated by our lead Safeguarding Agency – Surrey County Council. This is to ensure the most relevant up to date training is being delivered to our staff.

Our staff will receive “Hidden Sentence Training”. The impact of imprisonment is not limited only to those in prison. Most Prisoners have family members and friends who also experience the consequences of imprisonment, albeit in different ways to the person in prison.

While prisoners experience the direct effects of being in prison, their families live their lives in what has been described as “the shadow of prison”.

There is little consideration given to the experiences of families interfacing who (often through no fault of their own) must interact with a Criminal Justice System that does not take them into account.

Family members of prisoners are rarely directly involved in the crimes that their imprisoned family members have committed, however they tend to feel like they are being punished alongside their family members. This is especially relevant for children who might not have a full understanding of the situation. If a family member is struggling, they are encouraged to speak to a member of staff, some of these issue may include; Financial problems, Housing, Telling the children, Breakdown in family relationships, Coping alone - becoming a single parent, Getting a break / childcare, Worried about the prisoner, Visiting prison / staying in touch, Finding out about prison, Preparing for release, Hostility from the community.

Specialist Staff

Pregnancy and Mother and Baby Unit

Bronzefield has a dedicated 12 bed mother and baby unit, for mothers who are due to have their children whilst in prison. Placements are recommended through a multidisciplinary board which includes a Social Worker from the mother's home area and decisions are made on the best interest of the child and the safety of the other mothers and children residing on the unit.



Years Manager oversees a team of early years practitioners who run and operate the unit's nursery and support the new mothers navigate their way through the first few weeks following birth. Our Early Years Manager will ensure all staff are up to date with the Early Years National Framework guidance when publications are issued by Government or the Department of Education.



Early Years Manager

The Prison Mother and Baby Unit has an OFSTED registered nursery. Our most recent inspection in 2025 met the requirements required. The Unit's Early

Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Liaison Officer

Bronzefield has a full-time committed Pregnancy & Mother and Baby Liaison Officer who sees all pregnant women within 5 days of arrival into custody. The PMBLO will offer practical items required during pregnancy and guide the expectant mother through the MBU application process if they wish to apply. As we are one of six female prisons to operate a Mother and Baby Unit, many women remain in our care from pregnancy to birth. They will receive the same services i.e. access to a midwife and health visitor as they would in the community.

Family Support Worker

Bronzefield has a full-time dedicated Family Support Worker. Their role is to support mothers primarily maintain contact with their children. Whether this be through liaison with Children Services to facilitate supervised contact session, or to advocate and liaise with family members about the visiting process. Our Family Support Worker will assist mothers where children may be on a child in need plan; care leavers and families get the advice they need.

Family Resettlement Worker

Bronzefield was selected to pilot a grant funded initiative arising from Lord Farmer's recommendations for women for a Family Resettlement Worker, employed by PACT. The grant spans public and private sector prisons. The role addresses resettlement work: identifying women coming up to release with family resettlement needs, offering and providing family group conferencing as appropriate, supporting women and their families prepare for the challenges of release, and offering through the gate support in the form of 'warm' referrals into community services.

Prison Based Senior Social Worker

Bronzefield was selected as one of 4 female prison to operate a pilot for a children's Social Worker initiative. Our Social Worker is provided to the prison by Surrey County Council and is an embedded member of our Safeguarding Team. Whilst advocating for mothers and working with home local authorities the role can navigate the rights of mothers with parental responsibility in prison and educate prison staff, especially for those going through family court processes or where there are child protection plans in place.

Interventions & Support

Story Book Mums

Women at Bronzefield who have children can create and send a story recording to their children. Parents can bring comfort to their children and share the joy of storytelling from behind bars. We can help support less confident readers and the editing process means that even less confident readers can take part. Participants are recorded reading a story with an audio recorder. We edit out any mistakes and add music and sound effects. The finished story is downloaded and shared with a family member / carer for the child to hear the story being read to them.

Childrens Birthdays

We know this can be a difficult time for women in prison. A member of visits staff can assist with the booking of the family room, decorations and ordering a birthday cake to celebrate a child's birthday. Our Family Support Worker can also assist with the selection of a small gift for the occasion.

Peer Workers

There are peer workers who provide emotional support to women with children and those who are expecting. Our Perinatal Peer Workers will support those who are pregnant, living on our mother and baby unit, or have been separated from a child within the past 12 months, including any cases that have experienced a pregnancy loss in that time. Our Motherhood Mentor is a great source of support to all mothers and grandmothers at Bronzefield, listening and gaining feedback on how we can better support them.

Breastmilk Storage

For any woman who are breastfeeding a child in the community can continue to do so whilst in prison. A safe and secure location can be offered during a visit. The prison also has the facilities to offer out breast pumps, storage bags for expressed milk to be stored and frozen appropriately. The frozen milk can be handed out to carers during visits for children to consume whilst at home.

Family Days

Family days and other planned activities help to improve positive relationships between prisoners and their children or other family members. Regular and good quality contact time between an offending parent and their children, may prevent them from reoffending, as the responsibility and impact of separation may be an incentive for them not to re-offend. Women at Bronzefield are able to apply for family days which bring together prisoners and their families outside their statutory visit entitlement often in more informal settings.

A risk assessment is conducted for any prisoner wishing to take part in special children's visits dedicated to enabling prisoners to spend time with their children or events which includes children and their carers'. A separate assessment is conducted for prisoners' subject to Safeguarding Children: Child Contact procedures. While it may be appropriate for a prisoner to have access to a named child under close

supervision; irrespective of the prisoner's wishes the primary consideration must be whether it is in the child's best interests for the prisoner and/or child to take part in such a visit/event. It may be unsafe to allow the same prisoner general access to children.

Bronzefield are committed to offer at least 5 Family Days per year. This will be advertised in the Visits area and to the prisoners throughout the year. Please speak to a member of staff for further details.

Staff are committed to raising awareness and supporting families wherever there is a need. We do this by signifying a variety of family awareness days throughout the calendar year.

DATE	EVENT
19th February	Movie Family Day
27th February	Pregnancy Focus Group - bi-monthly
16th March	Young Carers Action Day
18th - 24th March	Neurodiversity Awareness Week
30th March	Mother's Day
27th March	Mums Club - bi-monthly
1st - 7th April	Family Safety Week
2nd April	International Children's Book Day
9th April	EASTER FAMILY DAY
29th April - 5th May	Maternal Mental Health Week
5th May	International Day of the Midwife
11th May	National Children's Day
13th - 17th May	National Weaning Week
13th - 26th May	National Foster Care Fortnight
25th May - 2nd June	National Children's Gardening Week
3rd - 9th June	Child Safety Week
15th June	Father's Day
1st August	World Breastfeeding Week
20th August	SUMMER FAMILY DAY
3 rd October	Children of Imprisoned Parents Day
9th - 15th October	Baby Loss Awareness Week
21st October	National Adoption Week
End of October	National Care Leavers Awareness Week
29th October	Half Term Family Day
11th - 17th November	Baby Week 2025
22nd December	CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY

Restorative Families

Restorative Families is an intervention that is a family centred approach developed by the prison to bring family members together to repair harm or conflict. Meetings are facilitated by trained members of staff and must be a voluntary consented process for all involved. Meetings between the prisoner and family members/s are carefully planned and structured to address the unique circumstances initially raised. It is a space for concerns to be put forward safely and an opportunity for thoughts to be expressed. The aim is to reach and achieve a positive outcome together. At the end of the meeting a plan is written up which is owned by the family and is supported by the prison. Any referrals for a Restorative Family intervention are to be discussed with a member of staff or a Prison Offender Manager.

Family Learning

Bronzefield offers a wide variety of learning and education opportunities that contribute to family learning. These include;

- Storybook Mums
- Peer Support
- Ofsted registered Nursery for children living on MBU
- Family Stay and Play activities
- Ante Natal education
- Pregnancy Wellbeing
- Health Visitor access
- Baby Massage
- Circle of Security
- Distance Learning
- English E1-L1
- Maths E1-L2
- ESOL Entry Level 1-3
- BICS cleaning and Hazards cleaning
- Art
- Healthy Living – L1
- Nutrition – L2
- Fitness Instructing – L2
- Employability Skills
- Catering Qualifications
- Hair and Beauty Qualifications

Care Experienced / Young Adults

It is estimated that a quarter of prisoners were formally in the care of a local authority. Yet the leaving care population nationally represents about 1% of young people.

Care Experienced prisoners are more likely to have experienced significant trauma and abuse and other disadvantage that can put them more at risk of violence, self-harm and suicide when in prison.

This can affect their ability to form relationships that will help them to desist from offending and settle back into the community after their sentence.

Those cared for in the local authority may have been denied visits or contact with their birth family members because of the risks associated with them reconnecting. However, reconnecting with their extended family and feeling someone cares about them might make a significant difference to their motivation to get through their sentence well and turn away from crime.

Care Experienced prisoners are identified by the Offender Management Unit through an initial screening process. They are then sent a questionnaire to gather further information about their support needs. Once they have been identified they will continue to receive bespoke ongoing support dependent on their needs. We actively try to re-engage prisoners with their Social Worker/Personal Advisor in the community for continued support whilst in custody and beyond release. Bronzefield is committed to start up surgeries for women in this cohort to receive advice and guidance in the Autumn of 2025. Use this link to find out your local area offer: [Care Leaver Local Offer :: Home](#)

See our commitment to Care Experienced prisoners in our company Charter – ANNEX B

Working with Schools and Education Settings

We recognise by engaging parents with schooling can have a positive impact on children and will help parents develop an understanding of education and its importance. Prison shouldn't be seen as a barrier to

achieve this. The Families Team Bronzefield are here to support maintaining communication pathways with the parent whilst they are in custody.

A parent does not relinquish their Parental Responsibility rights by virtue of being in prison. Our Family Support Worker can provide support following consent to contact their children's school. This will improve communication and build a bespoke plan between the parent and the school offering the following;

- Virtual homework club via Purple Visits - [Purple Visits • Secure video calling](#)
- Sharing special events with schools such as Mother's Day, Christmas, Birthdays, Family Days etc.
- Virtual Parent Evening discussions
- Special Educational Needs updates
- Behaviour reports
- Celebrating achievements
- Child Development updates
- Seeking consent for school trips, lessons etc.
- Learning Looks
- EHCP reviews
- Sharing of annual School Reports
- Child Impact Assessments [A Child Impact Assessment framework | Prison Reform Trust](#)

Mum's Club

Mum's and grandmothers are invited to an informal group every other month in the family room. These sessions are themed and provide prisoners an opportunity to talk about being mothers and grandmothers whilst partaking in a themed activity, which may include crafting a decoration they can give to their children in a visit or send out via the post. Activities can include, preparing for Christmas, photo frame decorating, making Easter decorations. Prisoners can apply for this group on the pod system.

Pregnancy Focus Groups

Women who are pregnant in custody are invited to a focus group every other month. This is a listening group for women to meet with key staff and talk about their pregnancy journey. Information is shared in this group and ideas discussed on how to make being pregnant in prison as comfortable as possible.

Previous groups topics have included;

- Work locations
- Gym sessions
- Pregnancy food packs
- Yoga group
- Craft making
- Food and nutritional advice in pregnancy
- Birth plans
- Additional water bottles
- Cultural considerations

See our commitment to Mothers in prison in our company Motherhood Charter – ANNEX A

Feedback

Meet the Director

There will be an opportunity for visitors to meet the Director every 6 months. This is to ask for feedback to improve people's experiences of visits. This is advertised on the Pod and through posters in Visits and the Community Café.

Surveys

Surveys are distributed to all women who receive visits and to their visitors every 3 months to ask what improvements can be made, and for them to rate their experience. There is a tailored survey for teenagers visiting Bronzefield so their needs can be catered for. All feedback will be recorded and analysed through the quarterly Families and Significant Others Committee meeting for continued developments to be made.

Prisoner Forums

Each quarter there will be a prisoner forum where women will be invited to attend to meet with visits staff and management to hear feedback and views on visits, and listen to ideas and new opportunities to maintain family ties.

Website

Details of visits to the Prison can be found on the HMP Bronzefield website

<https://www.bronzefield.co.uk/home.html>

This website provides details of visiting times and how to get to HMP Bronzefield, as well as contact details to be able to contact the prison regarding any visits queries.

This strategy will be reviewed annually and updated through the prisons Families and Significant Others Committee.

Key Staff and Contact Details

If you're worried about a friend or relative in prison at Bronzefield please call our Family Concern Line on 01784 425 794

This voicemail is checked, and calls are logged daily during weekdays. Concerns are followed up by our Safer Custody Team within 24 hours.

If your concern is urgent or during a weekend, please contact the switchboard on 01784425690 and ask to speak to the Duty Manager.

You said, **We did...**

- ✓ Regularly update the information in the visits centre and visits hall
- ✓ Review and update the video and information on our website for Families and Visitors
- ✓ Ensure resources and facilities are available to enhance the visitor's experience, ensuring needs of children of all ages are met e.g. Parents Evenings
- ✓ Deliver planned and structured Family Days each year
- ✓ Enhance the physical environment of the outdoor visits and play area
- ✓ Promote an opportunity and embed a process for women to purchase items to celebrate dependants' birthdays through visits
- ✓ Ensure Key Workers understand the importance of family contact and how to access support
- ✓ Identify how bespoke care packages can be devised to support women who are:
 - Care Experienced
 - Young adults
 - Long / Life sentenced
 - Primary Carers
 - Foreign Nationals
 - Grandmothers
 - Women whose children have been removed from their care
- ✓ Ensure Safeguarding responsibilities are understood by all staff through induction, refresher and specialised department training
- ✓ Increase partnership working with community organisations
- ✓ Staff in visits hall to wear softer clothing, by way of polo shirts rather than officer uniform.
- ✓ Publicise the Birth and Motherhood Charter

Positive Feedback received from Visitors:

- Praise for **front of house and visits** staff who support during first visits.
- Staff are described as helpful, approachable, and professional.
- Clean visits hall.
- Family room is appreciated, especially for children with neurodiversity.
- Purple visits process.
- Presence of both male and female staff in visitor search appreciated.
- Body-worn cameras and radios noted as effective tools for managing difficult situations.

Our Partners

- PACT - [Prison Advice and Care Trust](#)
- Surrey Local Authority - [Surrey County Council](#)
- Health Visiting Service - [Health Visitors - HCRG Care Group Careers](#)
- Ashford and St Peters Maternity - [Home - ASPH Maternity and Midwifery Website](#)
- Bright Horizons - [Bright Horizons Foundation for Children](#)
- Corona Kids - [Corona Kids | About Us](#)
- Official Visitors Scheme- [NAOPV](#)
- New Bridge - [newbridgefoundation.org.uk](#)
- Surrey Leaving Care Service - [Surrey Leaving Care service - Search](#)
- West Sussex Leaving Care Service - [Leaving care local offer - West Sussex County Council](#)



National Association of
Official Prison Visitors



Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Surrey Heartlands
Health and Social Care
ACADEMY



Prisoners • Families • Communities
A Fresh Start Together



ANNEX A

Birth Charter

Mothers Charter

	Pregnancy	Arrival
	Pregnant women in prison should:	On arrival all women will:
1	have access to the same standard of antenatal care as women in the community	be asked about their children and care arrangements, as well as their wellbeing around maternal separation
2	be able to attend antenatal classes and prepare for their baby's birth	be able to access key telephone numbers from their mobile on arrival, or assisted to attain key numbers
3	be housed, fed and moved in a way that ensures the well-being of mother and baby	be allowed unlimited phone calls on reception to ensure the welfare of all of their dependants regardless of time of arrival
4	be told whether they have a place on a Mother and Baby Unit as soon as possible after arriving in prison	understand what support is available in relation to being a mother and information about how to access it, including facility to contact their children
5	have appropriate support if electing for termination of pregnancy	be supported to inform their children of their reception into custody
6		be provided a HMP specific Motherhood booklet and access to peer support via the Motherhood Mentors if requested
7		be offered and supported through the application and decision-making process to apply for a Mother and Baby Unit place if they have a child in the community under 18 months in their care
	Childbirth	Visits
	During childbirth, women should:	All women wanting visits will:
8	have access to a birth supporter of their choice	be helped to prepare themselves and their children for visits and to understand the prison environment
9	be accompanied by officers who have had appropriate training and clear guidance	be allowed to see all of their children in a visit, regardless of the number, providing this is in the best interests of the children
10	be provided with essential items for labour and the early postnatal period	be able to freely play and physically interact with their children which will only be reviewed if and when security/safety issues arise
11	receive appropriate care during transfer between prison and hospital	have access to bookable private space for sensitive issues (such as final contact visits) and celebrations such as children's birthdays
12		have access to family friendly interactive resources to enhance the visit experience for children of all ages and needs
13		have access to at least four family days per year which is not determined by their IEP status
14		have their booked visits checked prior to a planned transfer and wherever possible, delayed to facilitate rebooking or enable contact with family to provide details in advance
15		be supported following difficult visits and welfare checked

Support		
	Women with babies in prison should:	Women with children will:
16	be encouraged and supported in their chosen method of infant feeding	be considered for transfer to an establishment as close to their children as possible to ensure regular and meaningful contact
17	be supported to express, store and transport their breast milk safely, if they are separated from their baby	know their legal rights and have access to family law advice
18	be entitled to additional family visits	be supported through an individualised support plan to help them maintain or regain contact with their children
19	be given the same opportunities and support to nurture and bond with their babies as women in the community	be informed of their entitlements to ROTL to maintain family ties, including grandmothers
20	be able to access counselling when needed	be supported to engage with services in the community regarding their children such as schools and social services
21		who are foreign nationals, will be provided with additional phone credit, airmail letters and support with Purple Visits to maintain contact with children overseas

Resettlement		
	Women with babies in prison should:	Prior to release we will:
22	receive appropriate resettlement services after release from prison	work collaboratively with mothers/grandmothers and agencies to determine what support is required

Sodexo Justice - Care Experienced Charter



We will:

- Help staff understand what care experience is like and what support is available
- Develop networks and relationships with local authorities
- Take time to develop relationships and build trust
- Explain why we are asking questions and ensure prisoners feel safe to talk about their experience, when they are ready
- Respect that not all who have experienced care will want to share this with us
- Assume everyone may have experienced care and provide information regarding support available
- Look for signs of care experienced, including no visits
- Ensure there is a dedicated SPOC and peer support who receive training and supervision
- Hold bi-monthly focus groups to enable those who have experienced care to come together
- Use the care experienced flag on NOMIS to add information including personal advisor details
- Contact the local authority/PA to inform them their young adult is in custody (with consent)
- Explain their financial, accommodation, education and health entitlements linked to their local offer via their POM
- Liaise with the local authority prior to a young person's 21st birthday to ensure they can stay with their current personal advisor rather than a duty worker each time
- Let eligible people up to 25 know they can request support and help them to request it

Care
Experienced

On arrival all prisoners will be:

- Asked about their family circumstances and whether they have had contact with their local authority
- Asked to consent to contact their personal advisor on their behalf
- Helped to understand what support is available and provided specific information about support relevant to them
- Encouraged and supported to add their personal advisor to their Pin phone and visitor list
- Shown positive examples of people with care and custodial experience who have overcome difficulties

Contact support. We will:

- Provide support to communicate with their personal advisor and/or other significant others
- Utilise and promote digital communication such as Purple Visits and Emailprisoner
- Enable contact to meet with their personal advisor outside of legal visits (visits, Purple Visits and Emailprisoner)
- With consent, invite their personal advisor to events and celebrations such as family days and sentence planning meetings
- Inform personal advisors of transfers to other prisons
- Assist with disputes about entitlements and statutory services
- Ensure personal advisors are aware of procedures for providing financial support and clothing

Resettlement. We will:

- Inform the personal advisor of key dates and significant events (with consent)
- Identify need and support access to activities such as basic life skills
- Support access to open bank accounts and obtain ID
- Work collaboratively with local authorities to contribute to pathway/care planning
- Liaise with other services such as health and pre-release team to determine what support is needed on release, such as safe and appropriate accommodation
- Consider the use of ROTL or virtual meetings so the young person can see where they might be living
- Ensure a handover meeting takes place with the POM/COM and young person prior to release
- Provide details of support in the discharge information
- Provide items on release such as clothing and toiletries



Our Development Plan

The Environment
Operate a booking-in system from the community café to stagger the processing wait times.
Re-open the soft play in the community café.
Enhance the Family Room space with more sensory equipment and furnishings.
Introduce a Bee and Butterfly theme for children who visit regularly and for family days.
Allow women to view the facilities in the Visits Hall prior to a visit to be able to better prepare their children before visiting.
Increase the use of purple visits for those not receiving face to face visits.
Our Communication
Use the community café TV for important notices and presentations during visitor waiting times.
Gather data of the ages of children who visit to inform our strategy further.
Produce a leaflet for visitors who are visiting for the first time. To include property, reception, visit booking, ID requirements, money procedures, contact numbers for safer custody and visits.
Review and reorder signage for the visitor entrance space.
Review website contents.
Process to be embedded to contact family member should a purple visit be cancelled, missed or connection issue to alleviate any worry.
For Children
Consider free food parcels for children during school holidays to lighten the financial burden for families.
Offer a variety of age-appropriate activities for all ages from 0-16. Including activity departure packs for children to be handed out when children leave.
More reading books to be made available in Purple Visit areas to be read to children.
Create a child friendly “Social Story” for parents to use to prepare children for visiting a loved one in prison.
Expand on the offer for parental education support plans between mothers and schools.

Staff with functional responsibility for the delivery of this Strategy:

Emma Charalambous	Head of Reducing Re-Offending
Karmen Russell	Families, Perinatal & MBU Manager
Katie Phillips	Early Years Manager
Caroline Dixon	Family Support Worker

