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| HMP Maidstone Families and Significant Others Strategy 2023September 2017 |
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| January 2023Reducing Reoffending Team |

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# Introduction

Supporting our prisoners to develop meaningful and constructive relationship with their 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. Family and significant relationships are considered as a key means by which we can prevent reoffending and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational crime. HMP Maidstone therefore has a moral and ethical responsibility to assist any meaningful and constructive relationship in preparation for their release.



For the purpose of this document, ***Family*** is defined as either a blood relative, legal or significant persons that a prisoner identifies as their next of kin. For care-leavers this may be someone that provides a statutory service, friend, or associate. Many of those in custody will have experienced a non-traditional upbringing, with a range of adults having cared for them, and similarly those in custody with children may have other arrangements outside of a traditional family arrangement. It is important to accommodate all ‘family’ arrangements where they provide a constructive and supportive relationship for the prisoner and their family.

We recognise that not all family relationships are positive. Family members may sometimes be the direct or indirect victims of a prisoner’s offence such as domestic abuse. These individuals have the right to protection from their perpetrator and in all cases, permission should be sought from the victim and any relevant partner agencies before making contact. This will enable the victim/family unit to be supported in the community. E.g., Victim Liaison Officer or Local Authority Social Services.

Other family or significant others may be enablers, contributing to their offending behaviour. Prisoners may be subject to harassment or restraining orders and the courts take primacy in how we manage familial and other relationships. We must therefore ensure that we prevent inappropriate contact.

The Government is driving forward the Family and Significant Others’ agenda as it recognises that supporting prisoners’ family and significant relationships can help improve prison safety and security, reduce reoffending, support desistance from future offending and the possible likelihood of intergenerational offending.

We are committed to transforming prisons into places of safety and reform and we recognise the need to provide those in our custody with stable environments, as well as opportunities to change their behaviour and turn away from a life of crime. Relationships with families and significant others can play a key role in this.

Families and significant others can play a vital role in facilitating a safer and calmer atmosphere within the custodial establishment and they play an important role in supporting prisoners on community sentences. Prisoners are less likely to reoffend if family relationships are maintained throughout their sentence.

Positive family relationships are also likely to contribute to good order within an establishment. Anecdotal evidence from establishments with positive family engagement programmes indicate reduced incidents of disorder and anti-social behaviour. It is likely that having meaningful and constructive relationships with family and significant others while in custody may reduce anxiety, mitigate the frustration and isolation of imprisonment, and potentially reduce violence.

Maintaining relationships is a particularly challenging task for foreign national Prisoners(FNOs) as their families are often based overseas therefore may not be able to visit. Conversely, it also needs to be acknowledged that some prisoners may be separated from family when removal occurs, which can present particular risks. Evidence suggests that a lack of familial contact can lead to violent or self-harming behaviours which have a detrimental impact on prisoners, their families, and others. This is why the Reducing Reoffending Team at Maidstone work closely with the prisons Safer Custody Team and PACT to improve these outcomes.

**Lord Farmer Report**

The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners’ Family Ties to Prevent Re-offending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime



In August 2017 Lord Farmer report, The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners Family Ties to Prevent Re-offending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime***[[1]](#footnote-2)*** in partnership with the membership charity Clinks, was commissioned by the Government to investigate how connecting prisoners with their families can improve offender wellbeing, assist in keeping the public safe and reduce reoffending.

The Farmer report was published on 10 August and made 19 Recommendations that put family and significant others at the heart of prison reform. It supports efforts to improve the relationships between prisoners and their families or significant others and the services that are provided.

All the Farmer recommendations are in the process of being implemented and outcomes will be shared with Lord Farmer at least twice per annum.

Lord Farmer recommended the development of performance measures that will hold Governors to account for positive family work outcomes. These measures will be used to demonstrate how the prison and family services support the enhancement of relationships in preparation for prisoner’s release and positive reintegration into society.

According to the Lord Farmer report, ‘Family should be the ‘golden thread’ running through the processes of all prisons, as well as in the implementation of standards presented in the Prison Reform White Paper - Public protection, Safety and Order, Reform and Preparing for life after prison.

Lord Farmer’s report referred to a ‘local family offer’ recommending that all establishments deliver and develop provision in the following areas and that these are reflected in their local strategies which should be a minimum offer:

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

**Lammy Review**

Another key aspect of families and significant others is recognising that they are diverse. All services or provision that we deliver must adhere to our duty under the Equality Act 2010[[2]](#footnote-3). We should reflect inclusivity and diversity that support people with protected characteristics. The Young (2014)[[3]](#footnote-4) and Lammy (2017)[[4]](#footnote-5) reviews highlight the need to reflect Black and Minority Ethnic prisoners as part of their recommendations with specific reference to race and faith.

Our service providers should be reflective of our service users and all staff should seek to be culturally competent with an understanding of the types of services that should be provided to meet their needs.

We will monitor the demographics of our prisoners via the Equality Action Team and focus on specific areas and services to highlight any areas of over or under representation and take corrective action where necessary.

We will also offer formal ways in which visitors can provide feedback to us, via user survey.

# Our approach



In order to provide the best service, we can we need to work together in partnership with all departments within the prison, prisoners’ families and significant others.

Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) now deliverer family services at Maidstone and will continue to provide support to families and significant others. The focus of their work will be helping individuals maintain family links and to assist in family matters where possible, they will be participating in reducing reoffending forums, equalities forums, family days, extended departure visits were applicable, family advice, and engagement. The service will also work with visitor’s centre, education services, and will enrichment activities and family learning at Maidstone.

PACT will also attend the monthly partnership meeting and provide a monthly service report to the Head of Reducing Reoffending.

At Maidstone, we will:

**Communicate a clear strategy**

* Ensure the overall Reducing Reoffending (RR) strategy is published and accessible to staff, prisoners, and visitors to ensure clarity and transparency on our rehabilitation efforts
* Ensure that the families and significant others pathway is a standing agenda item on the RR Terms of Reference meaning it is discussed at bi-monthly reducing reoffending meetings
* Promote the importance of the children, families, and significant others pathway internally and externally, including at regular partnerships Meetings
* Review the strategy based on feedback from prisoners, their families, our staff and partners

**Work in partnership to improve delivery**

* Head of Reducing Reoffending to communicate this strategy and vision to the team and partners, specifically PACT who will take ownership of areas such as the Visitors Centre and seek to improve it.
* PACT to provide more meaningful activities for prisoners and their children to participate in. For example, place focus on learning and education but make it fun. E.g. literacy / numeracy / art / video communication skills.
* Seek feedback on prisoner and family experience and act accordingly to improve. For visitors, via regular feedback and survey responses.
* Ensure that Prison Officers in the role of Key Worker are aware of the children, families and significant others pathway through awareness sessions.
* Work with Home Office Immigration colleagues with regards to deportation and considering family circumstances
* Work with the prisons security team to balance improving the visits experience with the need to maintain security, order, and control by meeting regularly with security manager to ‘walk through’ visits and experience searching

**Manage the children, family and significant other contract/s and performance**

* Ensure the provider opens the Social Visitors Centre between 12:30 – 1400 hours, Tuesday, Thursday, and Weekend days to allow visitors to check in and utilise the facilities
* Ensure that children, families, and significant other partners receive a comprehensive induction to HMP Maidstone, have relevant security clearance, key training and are aware on how to uphold the prison rules, regulations, adhere to policies and procedures and report corruption and wrongdoing
* Attend Reducing Re-offending, Risk Management and Equalities monthly meetings and provide children, families, and significant other related input
* Ensure that all children’s and families partners adhere to data protection and information assurance rules
* Ensure PACT provide a monthly performance summary to the Head or Reducing Reoffending and highlights are fed into establishment Senior Management Team

**Develop links to improve safer custody outcomes**

* Facilitate and promote the children and family’s provider in delivering case work sessions with prisoners to help resolve relationship matters and make referrals to the Offender Management Unit as appropriate
* Develop and enhance support systems to maximise the contribution of prisoners’ families in the reduction of re-offending, for example, involving them in ACCT reviews, celebrating achievements and qualifications
* Attend contribute and participate in safer custody forums and meetings
* Ensure information is effectively and appropriately shared with prisoners’ families, for example, making the prisoner induction information booklet available to family members
* Ensure that children and families providers do not offer inappropriate advice to prisoners on unrelated internal issues, such as: medical, adjudications, I&EP, allocations, access to property complaints, immigration, legal or regime matters to avoid a conflict of interest through quality assurance checks, observations, and regular service update reports
* Look to commission the Racial Equality Foundation to deliver a ‘Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities’, violence reduction and parenting 12-week workshop

**EMERGENCY CONTACT**

**If you are concerned that there is an imminent risk of danger to a prisoner and you wish to speak to a staff member to raise this concern, then you can call the switchboard:**

**01622 775300**

**The staff member answering the phone will not be able to discuss the prisoner with you, but they will immediately pass your concern onto a senior member of staff for action. We aim to address any issues raised in this way immediately and will let you know what the outcome is should you leave your contact details.**

*The dedicated confidential telephone number is: 01622 775615 (Office hours only)*

***If you are concerned about a loved one for any reason - don’t let him suffer in silence, we are here to help call the number above and we will assist and look after him.***

**Embed Equality, diversity, and inclusion in this pathway**

* Work with the Equalities Manager and Team to improve the information readily available to visitors (in different languages) by updating notice boards, leaflets and promoting interaction with staff
* Work with the Equalities Manager to provide Easy Read information allowing those with learning disabilities or difficulties to understand and access our services
* Promote Equalities information highlighting our commitment to eliminating discrimination, bullying and harassment as per our Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED)
* Ensure the Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (DiRF) and process are explicitly clear for visitors
* Security Manager to conduct quarterly ‘walk through’ visits to check security and visitor experience and take corrective action where needed
* Ensure the Assisted Visits Scheme is publicised in the Visits Centre
* PACT to attend contribute and participate in equalities forums and meetings

**Better use of digitalisation and technology**

* Promote the use of e-mail a prisoner method of communication
* Work with the security team to put into place a process for prisoners to respond to e-mails received
* Promote better use of the Prisoner Voicemail scheme. This allows prisoners and their families to leave (security cleared) pre-recorded messages via the phones. Particularly helpful for Foreign Nationals where their families may be in different countries and time zones or at work during association periods.
* Progress the ‘Digital Dads’ – video recording of a story book initiatives

**Promote best practice and Innovation**

* Promote the good work of the children & family’s team to all staff and visitors via different methods
* Improve education, health, and well-being at family days through activities and other initiatives, i.e., use of PEIs, smoothie bikes, teamwork.
* Regularly reward good work by staff and prisoners through informal and formal recognition schemes, this can include local, regional, and national level awards.

**Visitors Centre & Social Visits**

The Dinsmore Centre is the port-a-cabin building just inside the prison social visitor entrance. This is a place for visitors to relax, speak to our staff, secure possessions into lockers and obtain information before going into the visit’s hall. We are working with PACT and our security team to constantly improve the visits experience, this includes having a member of PACT staff on hand to meet and greet visitors and where possible provide a post visit de-brief to those visitors who may need it.

To date, the visitor centre has been deep cleaned, new child friendly notices, books, and toys.

Further work identified:

* Stencils for the windows and welcome to HMP Maidstone mats
* Recycle old furniture
* Explore digital feedback system, replacing paper one currently in use

Number of visits sessions per month:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Basic** | **Standard** | **Enhanced** |
| 2 Visits per month | 3 Visits per month  | 4 Visits per month  |

Social And Legal Visits schedule:

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| **Social Visits***The Visitors Centre opens at 12:30* |
| Day | PM  |
| Monday | Closed |
| Tuesday |  14.00 – 16.00 |
| Wednesday | Admin |
| Thursday | 14:00 – 16.00 |
| Friday | Closed |
| Saturday | 13:30 – 15:30 |
| Sunday | 13:30 – 15:30 |

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| **Legal Visits** |
| Day | AMSlot 1 | AM Slot 2 |
| Monday | 08:45 – 09:45  | 09:45 – 10:45  |
| Tuesday | 08:45 – 09:45 | 09:45 – 10:45 |
| Wednesday | 08:45 – 09:45 | 09:45 – 10:45 |
| Thursday | 08:45 – 09:45 | 09:45 – 10:45 |
| Friday | 08:45 – 09:45 | 09:45 – 10:45 |
| Saturday | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | Closed | Closed |

(It is recommended that visitors arrive at least 15 minutes prior to visits starting, to allow for the ID process to be completed)

Please remember that families/friends can book visits by using the on-line booking facility. We recommend using the online booking system which is quicker, easier and more cost effective. However, if this isn’t possible, the phone line is available.

Family/friends can book a visit on-line via: [www.gov.uk/prison-visits](https://www.gov.uk/prison-visits)

Telephone number: 01622 775619

Email: socialvisits.maidstone@justice.gov.uk

All you need is:

* the name and date of birth of the person they are visiting
* The prisoners number.

Video Link

Our Video Link facilities are limited. Prisoners may apply to the Offender Management Unit (OMU) for consideration of the following:

* Legal / criminal matters
* Civil matters
* Social service / immigration matters
* Parole process
* Inter-prison video links.

The Offender Management Unit will consider the application and complete a risk assessment for each case.

**Official Prison Visitor (OPV) Scheme**

Officially appointed Prison Visitors are independent volunteers recruited by Establishments on behalf of the Prison Service, who visit prisons to befriend prisoners. They are neither paid civil servants, nor religious volunteers and the scheme is separate and distinct from the Independent Monitoring Board.

"It is like having a member of my family come and see me every week. It just, you know, helps me through."

As a Foreign National prison, there are likely to be several prisoners who for a variety of reasons are unable to have family visitors to the establishment or are unable to contact family. Official Prison Visitors can provide a much-needed sense of “normality” for those in this position. It is envisaged that our scheme would cater primarily for them.

The Chaplaincy Team take the lead on promoting the scheme. Prisoners wishing to take part should complete a general application and submit to the Chaplaincy Team.

Further information: <http://www.naopv.com/index.htm>

**Assisted Prison Visits Scheme**

The Assisted Prison Visits Scheme (APVS) provides a contribution towards prison visit

costs for close relatives, partners, or sole visitors. The visitor must be on a low income.

Help is provided for English, Welsh, and Scottish prisons. Limited help is available for

Channel Island prisons. Different rules apply to Northern Ireland prisons (ask at the prison you are visiting for information).

The minimum age to apply for help from the APVS is 18 years (16 years when visiting a

prison in Scotland). Eligible children are included on the claim.

Claims are processed by the Assisted Prison Visits Unit in Birmingham, part of Her

Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service.

To get help you must be listed on both the visitor and low-income list below:

**Visitor:**

Husband, Wife or Civil Partner

Partner - living as a couple before the prisoner went into prison

Parent or Grandparent (includes stepparent or adoptive parent)

Brother or Sister (includes half-sibling or stepsibling)

Son or Daughter (includes step or adoptive)

Next of Kin (as noted by the prisoner in prison records)

Sole Visitor (only social visitor in the four weeks before a visit claimed)

Escort to a qualifying adult or child (see Escort Section)

**Low income:**

Income Support

Income - based Job Seekers Allowance

Employment and Support Allowance (Income related)

Universal Credit\*

Working Tax Credits (with Disability or Child Tax)\*

Child Tax Credits\*

Pension Credit

Hold HC2 or HC3 Certificate

\* An income limit applies to Universal Credit and Tax Credits (see Payment Rates

Section)

Apply online at <http://www.gov.uk/helpwithprisonvisits>

The online application process allows you to upload your income details, receipts and

visit confirmation. Payment is made into your bank account or cashed at a Post Office.

You can get a confirmation of visit form at: <https://gov.uk/government/publications/assisted-prison-visits-form>

or email: assisted.prison.visits@noms.gsi.gov.uk

or write to:

Assisted Prison Visits Unit (APVU)

PO Box 2152

Birmingham

B15 1SD

More information displayed on the Assisted Prison Visits Scheme (APVS) Noticeboards.

**Email a prisoner**

We know the ability to maintain family contact and ties are paramount to assisting and aiding rehabilitation and ensuring that prisoners maintain meaningful contact with the outside world.

The facility for prisoners to receive emails from friends, family and official contacts is available to all prisoners in England and Wales through [www.emailaprisoner.com](http://www.emailaprisoner.com). This service is available to anyone with an email address and there is no charge to register as a user.

The service is designed to be offered to establishments at no extra cost, all materials will be supplied by ‘emailaprisoner.com’.

Primarily family and friends are the main users, however this service is widely used by other organisations such as Probation Services, Resettlement Agencies, Legal Professionals, Drug & Alcohol Councillors, Housing Advise Agencies and Youth Offending Teams.

At HMP Maidstone an email containing the previous 24 hours’ worth of messages will arrive in our dedicated ‘email a prisoner’ functional ‘mailbox’ each morning.

Correspondence staff will open this file and print out all the messages each morning, all the messages received are subject to the normal prison procedures for monitoring as laid out in the Prisoner Communication Policy.

Each message will then be placed in a sealed envelope with the prisoner’s name, number and location clearly written on the front. Correspondence staff should aim to ensure this is completed in time for the messages to be distributed with the rest of the day’s correspondence during the lunch period.

Please note that no mail will be distributed on a Sunday or Bank Holidays.

The responsibility for delivering emails to the establishment lies with **www.emailaprisoner.com** and any queries with regards to non-delivery of messages should be directed to them.

Please note that if the content of any email is deemed unsuitable as directed in the Prisoner Communications Policy, then the email must be referred to a Security Manager.

Legally sensitive material/communications sent via **www.emailaprisoner.com** are not subject to the usual privileged handling arrangements afforded privileged mail.

HMP Maidstone recommends sending sensitive materials through the traditional channels.

Standard child protection measures will be applied as laid out in PSO4400 and the Prisoner Communication Policy.

If there is any doubt to the identity or age of the sender of the email, the delivery of that message will be delayed until verification can be made as stated above.

Prisoners can then respond to an email received on the response form attached to the email. The response will be collected with all other correspondence from the wing by staff, checked in the same manner as any mail leaving the establishment and uploaded to the ‘email a prisoner website’ who will then be responsible for providing the response to the recipient.

Prison Voicemail Scheme

Launched in October 2015, the Prison Voicemail service aims to facilitate more frequent communication between prisoners and social contacts outside of prison through the exchange of voicemails. It is currently used in several prisons across England and Wales.

## A recent customer survey found that 83% of prisoners and 92% of families say the service makes the sentence easier on them.

## What’s it for:

The only HMPPS-approved service that reduces call costs to mobile phones

Enables approved contacts to leave you voicemails if they miss your call or have an important message for you.

## How Prison Voicemail Works:

#### 1. Leave messages from your mobile at any time.

Call your Prison Voicemail number from your mobile at any time and leave a message. The message is **instantly available** at the other end.

#### 2. The prisoner listens to the messages.

They simply dial their Prison Voicemail number from any phone in the prison. The call costs them the price of a normal landline call.

#### 3. Get a reply, leave another message.

After listening, the prisoner can leave you a reply. When you receive a notification, just call your Prison Voicemail number to listen and respond.

Prison Voicemail does not charge the prisoner to receive or send messages, however they will still pay the normal landline rate from prison to access voicemails or do live calls (roughly 8p a minute). This is charged by BT in most prisons and is the cheapest call rate possible from prison.

More information: email info@prisonvoicemail.com to ask about a specific prison.

Website: <https://prisonvoicemail.com/prisons>

Video Visits

In principle all prisoners are eligible for video calling. All prisoners will be the subject of an algorithm when they first apply to have a video visit at HMP Maidstone.

The algorithm has been designed to support the decision-making process. Some prisoners may require a detailed risk assessment. If the risk associated with the prisoner cannot be managed, applications for video calls can be declined. The reasons for the decision must be documented.

The prisoner will need to sign and agree to a Prisoner Compact which sets out the terms of use that they must adhere to throughout the call. Visitor will need to agree to the terms and conditions and will do so by downloading the app.

The SPOC at HMP Maidstone will be the Visits CM who will be responsible for the daily security management of video calls and will take responsibility for the requesting and retention of video footage.

Video visits are available Monday to Thursday each week between the hours of 17.45 – 18.15 and 18.30 – 19.00 hours.

**Supervising staff**

Supervising staff should maintain visual contact with the prisoner whilst calls are made on the laptop. However, the calls should be conducted out of the hearing of staff (staff are not expected to be in the room) unless monitoring of the video call has been authorized under prison rule 35A/YOI rule 11. The laptop should be in a position where the supervising member of staff does not continually view the screen. Supervising staff must draw a radio. If any inappropriate behaviour is identified by staff or a technical fault is identified by the master terminal viewer, the supervising member of staff must take steps to either challenge the prisoner, terminate the call or confirm the technical so that it can be rectified.

**Live video calls**

Live video calls will be viewed by a member of staff via the master terminal. Only visual content (not audio) will be viewed. During call sessions the member of staff viewing the live streams must monitor all the calls concurrently. Calls should be observed at intermittent and irregular intervals and should not focus on one individual unless inappropriate behaviour or a technical fault is identified. The security settings must be always set at a minimum of “Medium”. Where fewer than 3 calls are active the member of staff monitoring the live visual stream must view the content intermittently and at irregular intervals and not complete constant monitoring.

Any prisoner is observed during live or retrospective monitoring deliberately breaching any conditions imposed upon calls as set out in the terms and conditions of use the person must be placed on a register of banned video call recipients, staff viewing the call will submit the details on an MIR.

**Prisoner’s complaints**

Prisoners wishing to make a complaint about visits/video visits should submit a complaint through the complaints process on form COMP1 in the first instance.

**Visitor’s complaints**

Visitors wishing to suggest / complaint about visits may do so in one of the following ways:

* Asking a member of visits staff for a Visitors suggestions / complaint form. These can be left with visits staff and will be forwarded to the Operations Custodial Manager/Head of Function
* Writing a letter detailing their experiences and specific complaint. This should be addressed to:

HMP Maidstone, 36 County Road, Maidstone, ME14 1UZ.

**Children & Family Days**

Children & Family Day visits will take place at HMP Maidstone as part of the prisons reducing reoffending strategy. They will take place on predetermined dates and where resourcing allows, additional days during school holiday periods.

They are primarily designed to give a better quality of interaction between prisoners and their children or in some cases grandchildren. It is hoped that through this interaction prisoners will develop closer bonds with their children and help them realise how criminality impacts upon them both.

## Prisoner eligibility

To ensure that only prisoners who have earned the privilege of visits in the relaxed atmosphere of family days apply, the following criteria will apply:

1. Prisoners to be of enhanced, standard, or basic status under the IEP scheme.
2. Must have no proven adjudications (other than a caution) for three months.
3. Have no positive MDT results for three months.
4. Are compliant to the prison regime especially in attendance to activities, and in respecting others.
5. That the application is endorsed by the Security Department.
6. Have not been placed on closed visits for past six months.

**Visitor eligibility**

The relaxed regime of family day visits is primarily to allow prisoners to develop and maintain closer relationships with their children, grandchildren, or nieces / nephews. Therefore, all prisoners attending the family day should have children visit otherwise there is no difference to a normal social visit. The visitors visiting with children therefore should be:

1. Wife.
2. Mother of Prisoners’ children.
3. Mother / Father.
4. Stepfather / Mother.
5. Brother / Sister.
6. Legal guardian.
7. Court appointed appropriate adult.
8. Social worker.

The Maximum number of visitors to attend is three adults (children over 16 are classed as adults for the purpose of visits) and any directly related children. Applications for numbers outside of these limits will be taken on an individual basis.

**Application to attend**

Prisoners may apply for family day visits via the normal application system and should be addressed to the PACT Family Service in the resettlement department. PACT will sift the applications before discussion with the resettlement manager. Applications will then go to security for assessment.

Information needed: 

* Names and addresses of all adults.
* Relationship to the prisoner.
* Names, dates of birth and addresses of all children.
* Relationship to the prisoner.

**Care Leavers - vision**

Here at HMP Maidstone we are committed to identifying Care Leavers in Custody allowing us to provide support and guidance, helping them to realise their aspirations.

We will:

1. Identify the responsible authority and nominated Personal Advisor for each care leaver via the Prison Offender Manager (POM)
2. Record on P-NOMIS under ‘offender contacts’ the name of the Personal Advisor. As well as placing an alert on the prisoners P-NOMIS to identify that they are a care leaver.
3. Encourage and facilitate contact between the Personal Advisor and the prisoner throughout their journey because although Pas are professionals, they also take on the role of ‘parent’.
4. Risk assess applications and facilitate for Personal Advisors to enter the prison and support the prisoner via:
* Legal Visits
* Video Link
* Social Visits
* Sentence Planning Meetings
* ACCT Reviews
* Family Days
1. Encourage the link between care leaver and personal advisor, enabling the opportunity to re-engage with the care leaver and assess what individual support needed, detailing all of this in the re-assessed pathway plan.

**How to identify a care leaver**

All staff are responsible for identifying care leavers. When information is obtained either through self-disclosure or official documents, this information should be recorded onto P-NOMIS and shared with the OMU POM.

The allocated OMU Officer will then complete an assessment of the care leaver and liaise with the Personal Advisor.

**Information available to Care leavers**

* **Care Leavers information sheet attached to questionnaire**: The back page of the care leaver’s questionnaire is designed to be removed and kept by the care leaver providing them with a detailed entitlement summary and contact details for the care leavers association.
* **Notice Boards** – There are notice boards providing information fact sheets regarding entitlements and support around the establishment.
* **Information Packs** - Each Wing Office and the Library has an information packcontaining further information. This is clearly labelled ‘Care Leavers’.
* **Induction** – Information on induction advising Care Leavers of entitlements and support networks available to them.
* **Prison Officer Key Workers –** During your 1-2-1 Key Worker sessions, speak with your Key Worker about Care Leavers and any time spent in care.
* **Care Leaver Officers / Champions** – Designated Care Leaver Officers and champions in OMU for advice, guidance and support.
* **Within this strategy –** internal & external contacts.

**Why the interest in care leavers?**

Children and young people who have been involved in the care system experience some of the poorest outcomes of all young people in the UK.

It is estimated that approximately 70,000 children are looked after by local authorities in England and Wales at any one time. Although less than 1% of under 18s enter care annually, care leavers are estimated to make up 27% of the adult prison population (40% of young prisoners).

Care leavers are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and in custody. They often have poorer outcomes and are more likely to be reconvicted or breached when they leave custody.

Their custodial behaviour is often poor, and they have an increased risk of self-harm.

**A Care Leavers Personal Advisor plays an important support role, for example visiting the prisoner and writing to them.**

*“Prisoners live for visits and letters. They emphasise the importance of hope and a sense of the outside world”*

*“Visits give you a connection to the outside world. There is no escape otherwise”*

*“A prisoner’s mental health is often contingent with contact with the outside world”*

Lord Farmer Review

**Who are 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.

**Eligible**: young people aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and are still being looked after.

**Relevant**: young people aged 16 and 17 who have already left care and who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 including on their 16th birthday.

**Former Relevant**: young people aged between 18 – 21 who have been either eligible and/or relevant children in care either through a compulsory care order or remanded or accommodated by voluntary agreement including accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act. If, at the age of 21, the young person is still being helped by the responsible authority with education or training, then he or she remains a former relevant child’ Young people who go back to education or training under the age of 25 are also entitled to having their pathway plans switched back on and will be entitled to services as a ‘former relevant’ young person.

**Qualifying**: young people (age 18 to 25) who leave care after the age of 16 but who are not eligible or relevant because they did not fulfil the 13-week criteria.

**Guide to Rights and Entitlements 1**

How old are you?

|  |
| --- |
| 18 to 21 |

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|  |
| --- |
| Were you in care on your 16th birthday? |

|  |
| --- |
| You are not entitled to help from children’s services |

|  |
| --- |
| Were you in care for 13 weeks or more since you were 14 |

 ↓ ↓

 Yes

No
 ↓ ↓

|  |
| --- |
| You are what the Leaving Care Act calls a Former Relevant Child. Children’s services still have duties towards you. You MAY be entitled to:* Review of your pathway plan
* Provision of a personal adviser
* Financial assistance
* Help to stay on in education by helping to pay towards the cost of your education and have a place to stay (they will expect you to get a student loan if you are at university)
* You can also claim benefits (the same as any young person).
 |

 No Yes →

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|  |
| --- |
| You are what the Leaving Care Act calls a qualifying child. Children’s services may give you advice and support and keep in touch with you. Children’s services may also help you with education related expenses. |

**Guide to Rights and Entitlements 2**

How old are you?

|  |
| --- |
| 21 to 25 |

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|  |
| --- |
| Are you in education and training? |

|  |
| --- |
| You are not entitled to help from children’s services |

|  |
| --- |
| Were you in care on your 16th birthday? |

 ↓ ↓

 Yes No
 → No →

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|  |
| --- |
| You are not entitled to help from children’s services |

 Yes

|  |
| --- |
| Were you in care for 13 weeks or more since you were 14 |

 → No →

 ↓

|  |
| --- |
| You are what the Leaving Care Act calls a Former Relevant Child. Children’s services still have duties towards you. You MAY be entitled to:* Review of your pathway plan
* Provision of a personal adviser
* Financial assistance
* Help to stay on in education by helping to pay towards the cost of your education and have a place to stay (they will expect you to get a student loan if you are at university)
* You can also claim benefits (the same as any young person).
 |

 Yes

**What is a Pathway Plan?**

This plan is created by a designated personal advisor (care worker) in the community and is designed to consider the young person’s need for support and assistance and how best to meet these needs until the age of 21 (or longer if the young person is in education or training).

Areas covered include:

* Housing
* practical life skills
* education, training, and employment
* financial support
* Health
* Family and Social network

Together these elements are intended to provide a full package of support to the individual to enable them to make the transition from care to living independently. The pathway plan should be re assessed by the personal advisor, care leaver champion and the care leaver once identified.

The Maidstone Preparation for Release plan can complement the Pathway Plan.

**Effective Working Relationships**

Maidstone is dedicated to Developing an Effective Working Relationship with the Responsible Authority. The POM will liaise with the Personal Advisor in these instances.

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 P-NOMIS alongside other details of the young adult’s care leaver status
* Helpful information on how to support the individual via social visits, legal visits, video link and sentence planning meetings.
* An up-to-date Pathway Plan
* Contingency provision for support in the event of a crisis when released (including respite care where appropriate).

If the care leaver is not a Former Relevant Child but qualifies for ‘Advice and Assistance’ you should work with the Local Authority to establish what is or could be provide

*\*\*\*Cut and paste this letter template for use\*\*\**

HMP Maidstone

36 County Road

Maidstone

Kent, ME14 1UZ

Date:

For the Attention of the Duty Manager / Personal Advisor

RE: Insert Offender Name, DoB

I am writing regarding the above Prisoner who is currently in custody at HMP Maidstone. You have been identified as the Personal Advisor for this person.

I would therefore like to offer you the opportunity to visit them here at Maidstone and undertake an Initial Assessment of their needs.

You will then be able to identify what services your department are able to offer or which services in your area would best meet his needs.

Legal Visit Booking:

Social Visit Booking:

And/or

Conference Call – via the Offender Supervisor or Prison Officer Key Worker: E-mail Address:

Yours sincerely

Officer Name

Email

Telephone

**Families & Significant Others Points of contact**

Internal

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Job Role | Contact Details  | Base |
| Michael Rolfe | Head of Reducing Reoffending | Prisoners: General ApplicationE-mail Michael.Rolfe@justice.gov.uk | HMP Maidstone |
| Tammy Hayay | Families and Significant Others Champion | Prisoners: General ApplicationE-mail Resettlementteam.maidstone@justice.gov.uk | HMP Maidstone |

**National Information Centre on children of prisoners:** [www.nicco.org.uk](http://www.nicco.org.uk)

**Families & Significant Others Support**

Available support/information for Children and families and professionals working with them

|  |
| --- |
| PACT Children’s Charity – Resettlement Roundhouse  |
| Emily Pankhurst | Yvette Philpott – Family Engagement Manager |
| 01622 755459 | **T:** 07973924663 |
| **E:** Emily.Pankhurst@prisonadvice.org.uk**E:**Emily.Pankhurst@justice.gov.uk | E: yvette.philpott@prisonadvice.org.ukE: Yvette.Philpott@justice.gov.uk  |

* **Action for Prisoners’ Families** www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk – Action for Prisoners’ Families, works for the benefit of prisoners' and prisoners' families by representing the views of families and those who work with them.
* **AFFECT** – AFFECT provides services for the families of serious prisoners and offers support groups to families in the south of England. [www.affect.org.uk](http://www.affect.org.uk)
* **Inside Time –** www.insidetime.org.uk – this website gives visiting and other advice
* **Prisoners’ Family Voices** is a web-based community which gives family members the opportunity to talk to each other.

http://prisonersfamiliesvoices.blogspot.com

* **Prisoners’ Families Helpline 0808 808 2003** info@prisonersfamilies.org

www.gov.uk

* **Prisoners’ Families and Friends Service 0808 808 2003** info@prisonadvice.org.uk www.prisonadvice.org.uk
* **Support for Families and Friends of Prisoners** info@prisonersfamilies.org **0808 808 2003**
* **I HOP ( Barndo’s )** <https://www.i-hop.org.uk> i-HOP is a one-stop information and advice service to support all professionals (working with children and families of prisoners) and all families of prisoners, bringing together useful information in one place

# Useful References

* [Transforming Rehabilitation: a summary of evidence on reducing reoffending  MoJ](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-rehabilitation-a-summary-of-evidence-on-reducing-reoffending) (2013)
* [Prisoners’ childhood and family backgrounds](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278837/prisoners-childhood-family-backgrounds.pdf) examines childhood and family background of prisoners, their current family relationships, associations between these characteristics and reoffending, and estimates numbers of children (around 200,000 in 2009) affected by parental imprisonment (2012)
* [NOMS Commissioning Intentions](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/280924/evidence-segmentation-2014.pdf) Factors linked to reoffending and desistance (2014)
* [Transforming Rehabilitation: a summary of evidence on reducing reoffending  MoJ](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-rehabilitation-a-summary-of-evidence-on-reducing-reoffending) (2013)
* [Prisoners’ childhood and family backgrounds](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278837/prisoners-childhood-family-backgrounds.pdf) examines childhood and family background of prisoners, their current family relationships, associations between these characteristics and reoffending, and estimates numbers of children (around 200,000 in 2009) affected by parental imprisonment (2012)
* [Prison Reform Trust Research](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/uploads/documents/KEEPING_IN_TOUCH_book4.pdf) looking at the potentially greater impact of imprisonment on children of women prisoners (2005)
* [Statistics on Women and the Criminal Justice System](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380090/women-cjs-2013.pdf) identifies that women are more likely to experience domestic violence (2013)
* [Evaluation of the Community Support for Prisoners' Families service](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/resources/research_and_publications/working-with-offenders-families/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-2400)  Emerging learning from a NOMS funded pilot of probation based family support services (2015)
* Emerging learning from a NOMS/Dept BIS management review about [better targeting of family case work and interventions](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/resources/research_and_publications/working-with-offenders-families/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-2400) (2014)
* [i-HOP](https://www.i-hop.org.uk/) Advice and Information for commissioners and professionals working with offender’s families (funded by the Department for Education)
* [Maintaining Family Ties PPO Learning Bulletin](http://www.ppo.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/LLB-Complaints-05_Family-Ties_web_final.pdf) relating to maintaining family ties with prisoners (Sep 2014)
* [Family Days in Prison, EuroPris summary](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/683596/200216-Family-Days-in-Prison.pdf) report comprising answers to a knowledge management system request from member administrations across Europe (March 2016)
* [Limerick Prison Family Days](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/683597/200216-Family-Days-in-Prison-Limerick-Prison-Report-for-Euro-Pris.pdf) additional information supplied by the Irish prison service in response to the EuroPris knowledge management system request (March 2016)
Barnados Locked Out - <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/locked-out-report.pdf>
* Beyond Youth Custody – <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/The-role-of-family-support-in-resettlement-a-practitioners-guide.pdf>
* Thematic report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons - Race relations in prisons: Responding to adult women from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (March 2009) <http://www.ohrn.nhs.uk/resource/policy/WomenandRace.pdf>

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| Job Description Head of Function leading on the F&SO Provision |

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| --- |
| Chair all local F&SO meetings and Manage F&SO Strategy |
| Provide assurance to Governing Governor and SLT that HMP Lewes is meeting all performance Targets/Measures. |
| Implement action plans when appropriate to support the F&SO provision  |
| Represent HMP Maidstone at Regional F&SO meetings  |
| The establishment lead has a local responsibility for the family service provider contract management  |
| Ensure HMP Maidstone is represented at meetings with Family Service Provider. – (HoF or Ops CM) |
| Ensure Ops is represented at Reducing Reoffending Meeting and that Pathway 6 – Children and Families, is updated and submitted. |

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/documents/2015/04/equality-act-2010.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <http://www.youngreview.org.uk/sites/default/files/clinks_young-review_report_dec2014.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)