

YBA Policy/Framework for families with a close relative in prison or at risk of a prison sentence

THIS POLICY/Framework IS DISPLAYED ON OUR YBA WEBSITE AND AVAILABLE TO PARENTS ON REQUEST. INFORMATION ABOUT THIS POLICY WILL BE INCLUDED IN OUR NEWSLETTERS AND PARENTS WILL BE ADVISED THAT THE SCHOOL SUPPORTS FAMILIES AFFECTED BY IMPRISONMENT AT OPEN DAYS AND OTHER SIMILAR EVENTS

Policy/Framework purpose: Our school is committed to support the children and young people who have a family member in prison or at risk of a prison sentence. Our School will ensure positive outcomes for this group of children and young people in line with our commitment to inclusion and to enabling all children to thrive and achieve their full potential. This is the responsibility of the whole school community.

Our School's Promise to Children and Young People

YBA makes the following promise to children affected by the imprisonment of a family member.

Our school will:

- provide you with someone who will listen to you;
- treat what you tell us in confidence (unless this would mean someone might be harmed);
- support you in any way we can to achieve your full potential;
- not judge you or disrespect you by the actions of any members of your family;
- not assume that we know how you feel;
- respect your right to choose whether or not to keep in touch with family member in prison; and
- give authorisation for you to visit an imprisoned family member without implication to attendance records.

Our School's Promise to Parents, Carers and Guardians

Our school will:

- work with you, so that together we can support the child/young person;
- do all that we can to make sure that the child fulfils their full academic and social potential and that the situation they are in does not put them at any disadvantage;
- provide emotional support to your child to help them cope with separation from their imprisoned parent;
- agree a plan with you so that if the child/young person wants to keep in contact with a family member in prison, this can be done without missing out on important schoolwork;

- keep a list of sources of help and support families affected by imprisonment;
- be informed and to seek to undertake specialised training to help us understand the issues that affect families around familial imprisonment to be able to offer families support and guidance of other professionals and organisation; and
- be discreet.

How will we fulfil our promise?

1. Training

Training and information will be provided to members of staff at our school about the impact of familial imprisonment upon children. This training will include:

- a) The impact on and risks to children with a family member in prison or at risk of a custodial sentence
- b) Recognising the signs of familial imprisonment including changes in behaviour and performance
- c) Basic principles of responding to disclosure
- d) Confidentiality and information sharing
- e) Attendance issues
- f) Advice for children and understanding the prison regime
- g) Advice to parents/carers on what to tell the children
- h) Supporting the child
- i) How to incorporate information about prisons into the curriculum

2. Designated person

The Head Teacher has appointed our YBA Behaviour Manager to act as the first point of contact for information and advice. Their role is to:

- a) Encourage the family to have confidence and trust in the school's commitment to providing care and support whilst avoiding labelling the child or family or sharing details unnecessarily with others
- b) Liaise with the family and seek their consent to provide additional support for the child as necessary
- c) Discuss information sharing with the family so that the designated person is clear about who can be included in the sharing of information
- d) **Use our knowledge gained to create a culture where imprisonment is openly discussed with children and young people and they can feel comfortable talking about its impact without shame or fear of stigma**
- e) Where appropriate, obtain the views of a parent in prison via the prison's Family Engagement Worker
- f) Liaise with relevant school staff on a "need to know" basis
- g) Provide a point of contact in the school for external agencies in order to share information

- h) If consent is provided, use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to identify the needs of the child
- i) Consider convening a multi-agency meeting to address the identified needs to provide support for the child
- j) Monitor the achievement, attendance and behaviour of the child
- k) Consider the purchase of resources on the subject of prisons and prisoners for the school library
- l) Keep appropriate and current records with reference to information sharing guidance

3. **Designated Governor Committee – Student and Staff Wellbeing Committee**

The School Governing Board has nominated the governing SSW subcommittee to support the designated person and to oversee and review this policy on an annual basis. This subcommittee and Behaviour Manager will work together to ensure that families are made aware of the policy; to promote awareness of the issues across the school; and to foster a culture of sensitivity and care.

4. **Including the imprisoned parent in their child's education**

Wherever appropriate, our school will include a parent with parental responsibility who is in prison in the education of their child by maintaining contact with that parent. Copies of any school report or newsletter will be forwarded to the prisoner and where possible a virtual parents evening can be offered

5. **Absences from school**

Where permission is requested and it is reasonable to do so, we will authorise absences from school in order to visit a family member in prison. We will ensure that the child is supported in catching up on work missed. If the child is missing too much school, we will discuss with the family other ways of maintaining contact, such as letters and recorded messages.

6. **Information on support available**

If a parent or carer informs our school that a family member of one of our pupils is in prison, we will provide information on the support available to them. We will also provide advice and information on what to tell the children.