

EVA ARMSBY FAMILY CENTRE CONTACT SERVICE PROCEDURES

EAFC OVERVIEW OF CONTACT SERVICE



EAFC provide contact to families where children are Looked After by the Local Authority , in Care Proceedings in Court or where contact has been Court directed for any other reason. Referrals to the Contact Service are made by the child/ren's allocated Social Worker.

The Contact Team aim to ensure that each child has positive, stimulating, and safe contact with their Parents/Carers or family members. Where possible, families are allocated one Contact Supervisor, to supervise all the contact they have at EAFC .

Modelling and more practical support can be organised in consultation with the allocated Social Worker.

A record of the contact is completed after each Contact & made available to the Social Work Team within 5 days of the contact . The Parent/ Carer can access the record via the Social Worker

FACILITIES AND INFORMATION:

Contact is provided:

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday: 10.00am – 6.00pm.

Wednesday: 1pm – 6pm

Friday : 9.30am – 5.30pm

Contact does not take place at Weekends & Bank Holidays . Additionally **Contact Sessions do not take place on a day that the parent/s attend Court hearings** . EAFC experience is that parent/s find it difficult to focus on their child/ children if they see their child / children on the day of the court hearing. Contact is only rescheduled if possible.

The expectation is that Contact Sessions involving under 5's will take place before 4pm and that Contact Sessions for children over 5 years old will take place from 3.30pm when they are likely to have finished school .

Eva Armsby Family Centre has CCTV in communal areas to keep everyone safe. Contact Supervisors have access to cameras, for families to take pictures and remember their time together.

We have eight child/ family friendly rooms , A Sensory Room , A Soft Play area , a Play Street, and a large Outdoor Play Area with a Climbing Frame . Children have access to an array of toys , books , Paint & artwork materials. We have a Table Tennis Room & there is access to Computers if requested .

Parents/ Carers have access to a Kitchen where they can cook and facilities to heat up any food they bring. EAFC encourage healthy eating and Contact Supervisors will support parents in making healthy choices where required.



TYPES OF CONTACT SUPERVISED

Supervised Contact at EAFC: Referrals are made by the Social Work Teams. Children are either the subject of Public Law Court Proceedings or the subjects of a Care Order. Contact between Looked After Children & their parents take place at EAFC as per agreed arrangements.

Supervised Contact in the Community : Referrals are made by the Social Work Teams. Children are either the subject of Public Law Court Proceedings or the subjects of an Order. Community Contact ordinarily happens after a period of supervised contact in the EAFC or during a transition from a Carer to a parent.

Supervised Contact remotely : Referrals are made by the Social Work Teams. Children are either the subject of Public Law Court Proceedings or the subjects of a Care Order. Remote contact ordinarily happens when a Carer / Parent is living abroad / in prison / hospitalised / unable to travel to a Contact venue . A Contact Supervisor will be online throughout the Contact.



THE CONTACT PATHWAY:

1. CONTACT AGREEMENT MEETING (CAM):

All Parents/ Carers must attend a Contact Agreement Meeting (CAM) before any contact can be commence. The CAM is attended by the Parent/s , allocated Social Worker , Contact Supervisor , Supervising Social Worker , Foster Carer , EAFC Team Manager & any other professional the Social Work Team deem appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Social Work Team to invite professionals. The purpose of the CAM is to discuss why supervised contact has been requested, set out all expectations , EAFC Centre procedures and confirm the days and times of Contact . All parents will be required to sign the Contact Agreement .

2. CONTACT REVIEW MEETING (CRM):

The first Contact Review Meeting will take place 6 weeks after Contact starts. Contact Review Meetings will thereafter be held every 6 weeks if there are no concerns. Where there are concerns, or where a parent has missed three or more contact sessions, a Contact Review Meeting will be convened earlier than the scheduled 6 weekly.

The CAM is attended by the Parent/s , allocated Social Worker , Contact Supervisor , Supervising Social Worker, Foster Carer , EAFC Team Manager & any other professional the Social Work Team deem appropriate The purpose of the meeting is to share the strengths, worries and/or areas for development with the Parent/s. Changes can be made to the contact arrangements as required.

3. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN EAFC STOP SUPERVISING CONTACT BETWEEN CHILDREN & THEIR PARENTS / CARERS / FAMILIES

A decision regarding Supervised Contact ending can be made by the Social Worker working with the Child or the Court . EAFC does not make this decision, but we work closely with allocated Social Workers to progress the plan . Sometimes Supervised Contact ends immediately (a Child the subject of Court Order might be returned to the care of a Parent/ Carer) on other occasions it is planned (assessment has evidenced that the child can be safely supervised by family / friends in the community) . The Contact Service is flexible and will fully engage in planning for the Child/ Children where required.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: SUPERVISED CONTACT REPORT FORMAT

Supervised Contact Report

| Children’s names | DOBs | Mosaic numbers |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|
| | | |
| Name(s) of adults having contact and relationship to the child(ren) | | |

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|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Date of contact | | | |
| Regularity of contact | | | |
| Centre, remote or community | | | |
| Contact Supervisor(s) | | | |
| Scheduled start time | | Actual start time | |
| Scheduled end time | | Actual end time | |

If contact did not take place If contact did not take place.

Greetings.

QUALITY OF PARENTING

Basic care.

Ensuring safety.

Emotional warmth.

Guidance and boundaries.

Stimulation.

Presentation of child(ren) and parent(s)/adult (s).

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Relationship between parent(s)/adult(s) and with contact supervisor(s).

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ENDING AND REFLECTION

Ending.

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Reflection time.

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Action required.

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| Contact Supervisor | | Date: |
| Quality assuring manager | | Date: |

APPENDIX 2 : CONTACT AGREEMENT MEETING FORMAT

CONTACT AGREEMENT MEETING

(CAM)

This agreement sets out the roles and expectations of family members, Eva Armsby Family Centre staff in relation to supervised contact which is facilitated and managed by Eva Armsby Family Centre.

Please keep a copy.

Date of Meeting:

Names of Parents/Guardians present at the Meeting:

| Name | DOB/Age | Mosaic ID | Lives with | Race/ Ethnicity | Language | Gender | Disability Y/N |
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Apologies:

Subject Children’s Details:

Are any of the Children vegetarian, on a special diet, regularly take medication or have any special needs the EAFC need to be aware of?

Please explain:

People Attending Contact:

| Name | Address | Email address | Telephone | Relationship to Child/ren | Lives with (Yes/No) |
|------|---------|---------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------|
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Is an interpreter required?

Which language?

Children’s Foster Carers’ Details:

| Name | Email address | Relationship to Child/ren | Supervising social worker (if applicable) | Details to be kept confidential from parents (Y) |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
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Eva Armsby Staff Involvement:

Allocated Contact Supervisor:

Line Manager:

Children's Services Details:

| Position | Name | Team | Telephone & Email |
|-------------------------|------|------|-------------------|
| Allocated social worker | | | |
| Allocated Team Manager | | | |

Case Status:

Child/ren In Need (CIN) Yes No

Child/ren subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP (category) Yes No

Child/ren Looked After (Section 20) Yes No

Child/ren Looked After (Interim Care Order) Yes No

Legal Status of Child(ren)/current court orders:
(Interim Care Order, Care Order, Interim Supervision Order)

Brief Background of Concerns/Reasons for Supervised Contact:

From Parents/Family Members:

From Social Worker:

Goals and Expectations:

What does the family hope to gain from contact?

What does the Social Worker expect the family to gain from contact?

Contact Arrangements:

What is the estimated length of contact?

Frequency:

Day/s:

Time/s:

Food & Other Essentials:

Transport Arrangements: No taking of photo(s) or filming is permitted unless prior permission given by your child/ren's social worker.

Photographs & video recordings agreed should not be uploaded onto social media platforms.

Who transports the child(ren):

Contact Report Arrangements:

Contact notes will be provided one week in lieu.

EVA ARMSBY FAMILY CENTRE PROCEDURES:

ATTENDANCE

- Parents need to arrive to their contacts on time however we ask that you arrive at least 15 minutes before contact is due to start. This is to ensure that you arrive before your child / children. If you are going to be late and will not arrive before contact is due to commence, we ask that you call us. Otherwise, if you have not arrived before the time of the contact is to start and we have not heard from you, the session will be cancelled.
- If you need to miss a contact visit, please phone us at least one day in advance and where possible we will try and rearrange the date and time. If you do not do so, this will be counted as a missed contact visit.

- If you miss 3 contact visits, the visits will be suspended, and a review meeting will be held as soon as possible to discuss a way forward. You will have 2 opportunities to attend this review. If you do not attend by the second time, your contact may be terminated.
- Where it is considered that the child's contact with the parents should be suspended or terminated, the social worker must be informed on the same day.
- A Contact Review Meeting will need to be arranged with the Social Worker and the Parents.
- Contact should never be cancelled unless there is a very good reason, for example it is deemed that it would not be safe for it to take place, or the child or parent is too unwell for it to take place.

REFLECTION TIME

- Parents are required to participate in a 15 minutes of reflection time at the end of the contact session with their Contact Supervisor. The children will also be having this space to discuss contact and their feelings with their Foster Carer/Guardian.
- Parents are invited to offer their views on how they feel that the contact session was for their child and how they can best meet the needs of their child / children during these periods.

FAMILY ROOMS

- We provide child and family friendly rooms which we maintain with care. Please start to tidy up the family rooms a few minutes before you are due to leave and put away toys and equipment where it belongs.

COURT

- EAFC do not facilitate contact if a parent has court hearing on the same day. If advance notice is provided (at least 5 working days), we will endeavour to move your contact day to an alternative day. Significant changes to Care Plans, Court proceedings and/or decisions made about the frequency of future contact are all likely to be potential tension points so extra vigilance should apply at any contacts arranged around these times.

COMPLEMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

- We have feedback boxes and comments books positioned in the reception areas for you as a way for you to let us know your views about our services.

- As part of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, EAFC operates within the Council's complaints procedure. However, in the first instance we would hope that families who use our service are able to discuss any problems that they may have with staff at the centre. If a complaint cannot be addressed satisfactorily at this level, then we are more than happy to encourage and support families in using the Council's complaints procedure.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- EAFC operates a confidentiality policy. Information regarding child protection concerns and child-care issues will need to be shared with the referring agency and other appropriate professionals.
- Where appropriate and able, we will discuss this with families prior to passing on this information.
- Children's and parents/carers information will be kept confidential from anyone else who uses the Centre; this includes the reasons why children and families are visiting the Centre.

FIRE PROCEDURE

- EAFC has a fire evacuation procedure. Where there is an emergency fire evacuation, EAFC staff members will ensure that all visitors are escorted safely out of the Centre.

CHILD PROTECTION

- We adhere to London Borough of Tower Hamlets Child Protection Procedures. Therefore, any incident or concerns which staff consider to involve abuse or risk of harm to a child will be reported to the social worker. Where possible, staff will inform the family that they will make or have made such a report.
- We believe that smacking is not an appropriate or effective form of discipline. We therefore ask parents/carers not to smack their children whilst working with us. Should smacking be observed, staff will discuss the implications of such behaviours and advise on other forms of discipline and behaviour management techniques and strategies. It is also our duty to report such incidents to the child's social worker.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Photos or video's taken of children during contact should not be uploaded onto any social media platform(s) without the permission of the social worker.

EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR

- We strive to make children's and parents/carers time here as positive and safe as possible. However, we understand that contact visits can be difficult or stressful at times.

- If visitors to the centre feel that they are becoming upset and angry, please ask for staff assistance to have some time out alone, or staff would be happy to discuss concerns or issues privately.
- Raised voices, swearing, intimidation or violence is never tolerated. If there is a serious or repeated incident, the visitor will be asked to leave and offered an appointment to discuss the future of the contact on another day.
- Alcohol and drugs are not permitted. If any individual attends the Centre under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, they will be asked to leave, and the incident will be raised and reported. This could lead to the termination of contact and a review will be called.
- There is a No smoking policy, in or around EAFC.
- The contact supervisor must immediately report to the Manager's/social worker any concerns about the parents' conduct during the contact.
- No child should be left unsupervised whilst in the venue.
- Relatives and friends can only attend contact if they are named on the referral form or communicated to EAFC by the Social Worker as persons permitted to attend.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

- At all times EAFC staff work towards equality of opportunity for all, and will not tolerate discrimination based on race, gender, religion, disability, sexuality or marital status.
- Contact arrangements must be made with the understanding that no child will be disadvantaged because of their race, gender, religious belief or disability. Where appropriate these issues should also be taken into account in discussions and in making plans with the child's family.
- We expect that all visitors to the Centre are treated with dignity and respect.

Important Dates:

| Events – dates for your diary | Agreed Date & Time |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Start Date | |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Contact Review Dates (to discuss progress of contact) | |
| Duration of contact | |

The reviews are important meetings. The progress of contact is discussed with yourself, with your child’s social worker and any other significant professionals such as Children’s Guardian. You will be given feedback from the Eva Armsby staff, and it will be a chance for you to have your say about how you feel it has been going. It is also a time where we might make any necessary changes to this agreement.

Signatures:

| Name | Role | Date | Signature |
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