

West London Mental Health



NHS Trust

Broadmoor Hospital

Child visiting information

*We care
to make the
difference*

Child visits

at Broadmoor Hospital

Patients at Broadmoor benefit greatly from keeping in touch with their families and friends when they are in hospital, including children. It's also really important for children too to spend quality time with their relatives and understand that they are safe and being looked after in hospital.



This leaflet sets out when child visits are allowed, how you go about making them happen, and what you can expect when a child visits.

It might sound like a complicated or difficult process, but it's simply aimed at protecting everyone's best interests and keeping everyone safe and our staff are trained to help you every step of the way.

Introduction

Visiting a secure hospital can be a little intimidating, but at Broadmoor Hospital, we do all we can to make the experience a positive one.

Staff focus on ensuring both the safety and wellbeing of children (that's anyone under 18) and safe and enjoyable interaction between our patients and their younger visitors.

If the patient's clinical team thinks that a visit might be possible, we will ask for consent from the child's parent/s or adult with parental responsibility.

We need to hear the child's views as well, to help decide whether the visit is in the best interests of the child. This information will be gathered by a children and families social worker in your area who will come to visit you.

To make sure child visits are managed consistently, The Department of Health has issued 'Directions' about children

visiting high secure hospitals which we must follow. These state that:

- The child's welfare comes before the interests of anyone else.
- Their welfare should be safeguarded and promoted by all staff.
- Contact with patients should be supported when it's in the child's best interests
- The spirit of the Directions will also apply to patient contact with children on home or outside visits.

When are visits allowed?

Relationship Rules

Department of Health 'Directions' look at two groups in relation to contact with children at high secure hospitals, and different rules apply to the two groups:

1. If the patient has been convicted at any time of any offence listed at Schedule 1 of the Sex Offenders Act (1997), or has been convicted of murder or manslaughter, or been found unfit to be tried, or not guilty by reason of insanity, in respect of these offences, then the patient can only apply to receive visits by a child if they:
 - a. Are the parent of the child (including adoptive and step-relationships).
 - b. Are the grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt or cousin related to that child by blood, half-blood or marriage.
 - c. Have parental responsibility for the child.

- d. Were co-habiting with the child's parent immediately before detention under the mental health Act (1983). and where the child was treated as a member of the household.
2. If the patient is not convicted of any offence listed above (in 1), then the patient can apply to receive visits from any child.



How do I apply for a child visit?

The patient starts the process by making an application for child visits. The Hospital Social Worker or the Primary Nurse can help with this.

The clinical team will discuss the application. They'll make a risk assessment and either approve or refuse its going ahead. If they can't approve the application, they'll let the patient know the reasons.

If it's agreed by the clinical team that the visit would be a good experience for the child, the following actions will need to happen before the child visit panel can consider it:

1. You'll be asked to sign a form giving consent to the visit.
2. Once that's returned, we'll inform you that we've asked the local authority to visit you. We have a legal responsibility to contact the Local Authority Children Social Services where the child lives and ask for their assessment about whether the visit is in the best interests of the child. We can't arrange a visit without doing this.
3. The local authority will send us a report which is put before the monthly child visit panel, alongside the clinical team's assessment. The 'nominated officer', assisted by the panel, makes the decision whether child visiting can start. As well as the hospital's nominated officer, the panel includes the hospital's named doctor for safeguarding children, a psychologist and a representative of Bracknell Forest Council's children and families team.

The process can take some time - on average eight weeks - and particularly complex situations can take longer to resolve



due to the number of people that need to be consulted for advice before a decision is made.

Once it's been agreed the child can visit, the hospital social worker will visit you at home to talk more about child visits, answer any questions and show you photographs of and a DVD about the hospital.

It's important to ensure that you or any other accompanying adult is on the approved visitor list. If you aren't sure about this you can talk to the Social Worker or look at the main visitors' information leaflet.

Children aged 16 or 17 may be able to visit unaccompanied with the nominated officer's consent.

The Nominated Officer
Social Work
Broadmoor Hospital
Crowthorne
Berkshire
RG45 7EG

Tel: 01344 75 4520

For more information, please refer to the Child Protection Policy (C18) and the Child Visits to Broadmoor Hospital Policy (C11). You can get both documents from the address above, or on our website at www.wlmht.nhs.uk.

The visit suite is open from 9.30am to 11.30am in the morning and between 2.30pm and 4.30pm in the afternoon (except Christmas day).



What can I expect when a child visits?

Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult at all times. We ask you, the accompanying adult(s), to work with us to make sure the visit goes well which includes keeping everyone safe.

In the best interests of the child, all visits are facilitated by staff, at least one of whom has specialist training in child visits. The child will not see any other patients during the visit.

All visits involving children take place in the family visit suite, a comfortable, child-friendly room with a range of facilities such as toys, video games system, TV, VCR, books and games to help children feel at ease.

There are large sofas to relax on and kitchen facilities so that patients can offer refreshments such as hot and cold drinks for their visitors if they wish.

If the member of staff facilitating the visit thinks the visit is upsetting the child, or not going well for the child, they have a legal responsibility to stop it. The accompanying adult can also ask for the visit to be stopped and, of course, so can the child.

If the patient decides he doesn't want to continue at any point the visit can be cut short. If there are concerns about the patient's mental state at the time of the proposed visit, we may need to cancel it, but if this happens we'll discuss the reasons with you.

All visitors, including the child, will be searched with a wand before the visit. We have buggies that we ask you to use

within the hospital for security reasons and staff will help you make the change over as you come through security.

There are child-friendly toilets and nappy changing facilities within the child visit area. You can bring baby food and bottles into the hospital but for security reasons, the reception staff may ask you to taste some before you can bring it in.

After a visit

Staff complete a report on the visit and will ask for the child's feedback as part of this. The nominated officer reads this afterwards, and uses the feedback to improve visits and facilities.

We welcome your feedback on visits, too. If you have ideas on how we could improve the visiting experience, do let us know, either by talking to the member of staff who accompanies you or calling us or writing, after a visit.

Our social workers will contact you after the visit to check that everything went well. In the child's best interests, we keep approval for a child to visit under constant review and it is reviewed formally every year.

To do this, the local authority will also contact you to check that the child is still enjoying the visits. These reports also give us feedback which we use to improve the visit suite.

We hope you find Broadmoor Hospital a welcoming and safe place to visit.



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Tel: 01344 77 3111

Email: communications@wlmht.nhs.uk

Web: www.wlmht.nhs.uk

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Crowthorne
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RG45 7EG