

The Birmingham Child Contact Centre

What do we do? Provide a neutral meeting place, independent of referral agencies, where parents or other close relatives can meet their children with whom they are not in regular contact. The children are the most important people involved in the Contact Centre. Our aim is to enable them to keep in touch with their “contact” parent in a pleasant, informal atmosphere and so be helped through a difficult time in their lives.

What is on offer? We provide a warm, safe and welcoming environment, with play facilities for children and parents to share. Refreshments are available, and a room where resident parents who wish to wait while the contact takes place may be allowed to stay. Friendly helpers are available to assist with any problems that arise.

Where is it? We are based at Edgbaston Community Centre in 40 Woodview Drive, Birmingham B15 2HU. See the map on our Parent’s Welcome Leaflet.

When is it open? We are open every Saturday, initially **between 12.00 noon and 2.00 p.m.** We do not recommend bookings for less than two hours, unless there are special circumstances.

Is there a charge? No. The service we provide is free. We are a registered charity and are run mainly by volunteers. We are funded largely by Charitable Trusts.

Our Policies: We have written Confidentiality, Child Protection and Equal Opportunities Policies and a Complaint Procedure, all of which may be provided on request.

No assessments: To preserve our independence a representative of the referring agency should not attend when their client is present. If contact needs to be assessed by either CAFCASS or a social worker, we may be able to book another room for the purpose.

What to do before contacting us:

1. Please tell both parents that they are welcome to visit the Centre, a week before contact is to begin. Otherwise we recommend the resident parent to arrive half an hour before the first contact is due to begin, for the child to settle and for them to meet the volunteers.
2. Please make sure that BOTH parents know when they are to come to the Centre, and what time each visit is to start and end. Also, make sure that both parents have a copy of our Welcome Leaflet, which amongst other things, tells them where we are.
3. We also need to know if a child is allowed to leave the building with the Contact Parent and whether there is a court order to this effect or an agreement between the parties. Otherwise the child is not allowed to leave the Centre without the Resident Parent.
4. It is possible for the Contact Centre to be used as a handing over point for contact which takes place elsewhere.
5. Please make it clear to both parents that the children are the legal responsibility of one or other of them, at all times. At no time can any child be left at the Contact Centre without one or other of the parents being present.
6. It is possible for contact to occur without the parents meeting, if this is desirable. Please inform our Referrals Coordinator in advance so that arrangements can be made.
7. Make sure that both parents are aware that if Non-Resident Parent does not have contact because the children are kept in the waiting room, it will not be regarded as fulfilling a Court Order to make the children available for contact.

Please note: from time to time we do have a waiting list.

We are a candidate member of
The National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC) No. 1702/2

To make a referral:

- Complete the booking form and send it to our Referrals Coordinator, not less than 14 days before the date on which you would like contact to commence.
- If you do not have a Referral Form telephone or email our Referrals Coordinator. It is also available on our website.
- **Contact cannot begin until we have confirmed the booking.**
- Ensure that both parties are aware of and agree with all the details on the booking form. It is important to complete any conditions that might apply to the contact, to avoid any misunderstandings.
- **The initial bookings will not extend beyond the next court hearing or if it is based on an agreement between the parties beyond a three month period. This is to encourage parents to prepare for the next stage of contact. If it has been decided to extend the booking for a further period, please give us as much notice as possible.**

Note about Resident Parents:

Resident parents are required to leave the room during contact, unless it is stated otherwise on the Referral Form.

The Team Leader may use their discretion to allow a Resident Parent to stay, for a short while, if they feel that it would help the child to settle with the Contact Parent, and if the Contact Parent has no objection to their staying.

The Waiting Room may only be used by a Resident Parent with the permission of the Team Leader on the day. Children are not allowed to enter the Waiting Room.

Resident Parents will be discouraged from staying in the building for more than the first three sessions.

If parents dispute the arrangements, we refer them back to their legal representatives. Resident Parents are expected to cooperate by preparing their child for contact in a positive way. We reserve the right to withdraw use of the Contact Centre, if the terms of the agreement are not honoured.

Rev: 2019a

Referrers Information Leaflet



PROBLEMS WITH CHILD CONTACT?

Why not try

Birmingham
Child Contact Centre

Referrals Coordinator

Email: Referrals@birmccc.org.uk

Telephone: **07447 752900**