



Guidelines for Referrals

All correspondence should be sent to the Centre Co-ordinator:

16 Chapel Street, Belper, Derbyshire, DE56 1AR
01773 880364
contact@belpercommunitycottage.co.uk

The Belper Child Contact Centre is based at the Belper Community Cottage and opens every other Saturday 10AM-12PM. A Volunteer can also be contacted on Thursdays 10-12PM. A great advantage of the Belper Child Contact Centre is that each family always receives their own room which allows for privacy whilst families spend quality time together.

Please note that the Belper Child Contact Centre offers supported contact only. Supported contact takes place in a variety of neutral community venues where there are facilities to enable children to develop and maintain positive relationships with non-resident parents and other family members. Supported Child Contact Centre's are suitable for families when no significant risk to the child or those around the child has been identified.

The basic elements of supported contact are:

- Impartiality.
- Volunteers are available for assistance but there is no close observation, monitoring or evaluation of individual contacts/conversations.
- Encouragement for families to develop mutual trust and consider more satisfactory family venues.
- Apart from attendance dates and times, no detailed report will be made to a referrer, CAFCASS, solicitors, or court, unless there is a risk of harm to the child, parent or centre worker.
- An acknowledgement that it be viewed as a temporary arrangement to be reviewed after an agreed period of time.

In order for contact to begin at the Belper Child Contact Centre the following steps have to be completed:

- 1. Referral form:** A completed referral form should be sent to the Contact Centre either through the post or by email.
- 2. Appointment with a Contact Centre Volunteer:** Once a completed referral form has been received and reviewed both the resident family member and the visiting family member will each be given an appointment to visit the Contact Centre and speak with a volunteer face-to-face. Additionally during this visit in order to help the Centre to become more familiar, the child(ren) who will be having contact at the Centre will have the opportunity to be shown around and meet a volunteer whilst their resident family member is present.
- 3. Start date decided:** After the appointment with a volunteer, and if there are places available, a start date for contact to take place will be decided upon between the Contact Centre and both the visiting and resident family members.

Please read the below guidelines:

1. Please contact the Child Contact Centre first to check availability of space and time.
2. Where a Centre has a waiting list, a completed referral form should still be sent, the Centre will then notify you when a place becomes available.
3. Only people named on the referral form will be allowed admittance to the Child Contact Centre. This may be varied by written agreement by both parties.
4. Parents are responsible for their children at all times whilst they are at the Child Contact Centre.
5. The Contact Centre will ensure that both parents have read and understood the Child Contact Centre's information leaflet in advance of contact starting.
6. Only dates and times of a family's attendance will be disclosed unless it is felt that anyone using the Centre or a volunteer is at risk of harm. In the unlikely event of it becoming necessary to quote a Co-ordinator / Centre Manager in any report, due to a Centre user, volunteer being at risk of harm, the form of words used should be checked and agreed with that person concerned beforehand.
7. Child Contact Centres providing Supported Contact will not knowingly accept a referral when somebody involved has been convicted of any offence relating to a) physical or b) sexual abuse of any child, unless there are exceptional circumstances and they have sought appropriate professional advice
8. The Child Contact Centre reserves the right to reduce or terminate contact if it is felt to be in the best interest of the child.

9. Parents should be informed that because the welfare of the child is paramount, there might be times when contact cannot take place if the child is too upset even if there is a contact order.
10. Referrers should make arrangements for the provision of an interpreter where English is not the first language of the family involved and problems may arise with communication.
11. The Centre should be viewed as a temporary facility to help establish contact. The Child Contact Centre will review the family's progress after six sessions.
12. Please notify a Child Contact Centre Volunteer if the arrangements for contact are going to change or if contact is going to cease.

This Centre is a Member of the National Association of Child Contact Centres and operates in accordance with its National Standards for Child Contact Centres. We have working policies on the following:

- Child Protection.
- Confidentiality.
- Health and Safety.
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity.
- Domestic Violence.
- Volunteers.
- DBS Disclosures

All these policies are available to view at the Centre or by request. There is also a Complaints procedure, which can be used should there be any problems.