

Service Agreement - Standard

South West Family Services provides child and family support services predominantly across South-West England and sometimes further afield. These standard service terms apply to all families regardless of commissioning agency or funding body. Agreement to our service agreement is a condition of providing services.

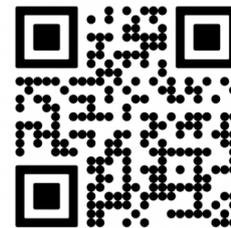
Our Family Time Services: Full details of all of our Family Time Services are available on our website.

Supervised Family Time	Supported Family Time	Handover Services
<i>If there are worries about risk to children, then you would generally use a supervised service. The family are always accompanied closely, and the worker is always within sight and sound of the child. Full reports are provided, and the worker will manage the session and give directions around interactions, conversations and activities as appropriate.</i>	<i>Supported services are used when there are no concerns about risk, but the family need some support to spend time together. The family are accompanied, but no reports are provided, and the worker does not manage the session or give directions around interactions, conversations or activities.</i>	<i>Community based handovers are for supporting children to move between their parents, so parents do not have to meet. We collect a child from one parent and take them to the other in a community location, ensuring parents do not meet.</i>
Indirect/Virtual Services	Letter or gift exchange	Communication Service
<i>Video calls or phone calls where a child can spend time with a parent, supported and supervised by a family support worker. Sometimes this is completely virtual and with some families the child meets a worker in person to do this while the other parent is present by video call or phone call. Sometimes this is done by letter, gift, cards or video messages and it is not always a 'live' session but can be pre-recorded.</i>	Letter and gift exchange as well as other methods of contact is when we receive and send-on letters or gifts when it is not appropriate for parents to know each other's locations. All letters/gifts are checked carefully and delivered within 48 hours of receipt as detailed in our service agreement.	Our communication service is for parents who struggle to communicate effectively and need support, usually after court proceedings have concluded. We can help with discussing important topics, sharing information, arranging contact and more. The service is largely by email, or by being joined on a co-parenting app as a professional.

Our Family Support Services: Full details of all of our Family Support Services are available on our website.

Welfare Check	Family Reunification Programme	Independent Child Perspective	Enabling, Advocacy and Escorting
ICFA from Cafcass	Parenting assessments	Talking Services	Child & Family Support Programme
Therapeutic Life Story Work	Parenting Courses & Training	Family Mediation	Independent Social Workers

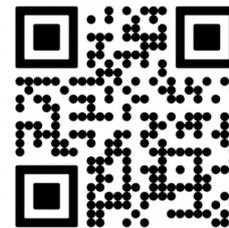
New Referral/Registration



1. **Initial Registration:** For all new clients we charge a registration fee which is payable once all parties documentation is received. The fee cannot be waived and is non-refundable. The fee covers the administration and to review and assess the suitability of our services.
2. **Service Arrangements stage:** For all new clients we arrange a short meeting to discuss details, make agreements and explain our services. No services can start until this stage has been completed. Usually, it takes a maximum of 30 minutes, is held virtually, and can be done as soon as registration and fee payment has been received from both parents. This meeting can be held with both parents/carers or individually if preferred and can be on the phone, online or in-person.
3. **Planned reviews:** For all active clients we arrange a review of the service arrangements as required and periodically. After each session we consider any changes and then carry out a more structured review when we seek views from everyone involved and meet to discuss any planned changes. These generally take place every 3-6 months, depending on the frequency of your families' sessions.
4. **Location, Inside and Outside:** Our service is based on services operating in the community for most of our families so long as a court order doesn't specifically say 'must remain inside' or our internal risk assessment doesn't prohibit this. This might be parks, cafes, play centres and other activities. Sometimes we ask families to remain inside for initial sessions to get to know you. Some activities are not agreed or are agreed in a specific way. Any changes to location, activities, attendees or other differing arrangements must be communicated to the office a minimum of 3 days before all sessions for agreement.

Charges & Timescales

1. **Charges** for private clients are inclusive of tax, and reports if applicable. Our charges are transparent and are available on our website. Travel costs and additional venue or staff costs are always advised at the point of booking so there are never any surprises. Concessionary rates may be available – please contact the main office to explain your situation. We reserve the right to amend our pricing structure and will always give you 14 days' notice if this happens.
2. **Payment** must be received at least 3 days in advance of the planned session, or the session will be cancelled. All invoices and payments are sent and received electronically. We do not accept cash. We do not chase for payment, send reminders or let people pay after the session has taken place.
3. **Cancelling and Refunds:** We understand that sometimes things change and with this in mind we will work with you to rebook sessions which are cancelled at least 48 hours in advance. If you are not able to give this notice you remain liable for the session costs and if already paid no refund or replacements services will be offered. If the service does not go ahead in other circumstances or for any other reason no refund or replacement services will be offered, however it is for the Director to determine whether a refund or replacement services can be offered on a case-by-case basis.
4. **Lateness for sessions:** If parents are late or cancel at short notice this will incur additional charges which will be advised by the management team. Payment of this must be received no less than 3 days before the next booked service or services will be suspended.
5. **Report timescales and use:** We commit to all reports being sent within 3 days, although we usually send them much quicker. Our services are enhanced accredited, and reports can be used within family court proceedings.
6. **Other charges** such as providing duplicate reports, printed reports, other records, and travel are charged in addition to our usual services and are always agreed in advance when the invoice is



issued electronically.

- Court attendance:** Attending court to give evidence or providing statements is not included in any service provided by South West Family Services but a quotation can be provided on request. The party requesting our attendance is responsible for our costs to include travel, accommodation (if applicable) and time charged as detailed in our most current charges available to view on our website. The Director or a Service Manager will provide statements and/or attend court if required, but it is our policy that our family time supervisors or family support workers do not provide statements or attend court. If in exceptional circumstances a family time supervisor or family support worker is required to provide any evidence to the court, it is on the basis that the Director or a Service Manager will attend alongside them without exception and the expenses for will be included within the quote. Parents are further responsible for costs for the Director and/or the member of staff to be represented by counsel at any hearings they are required to attend. A quotation can be provided on request.
- Court Reports and Statements:** In addition to the above, we can provide summary reports, court statements and letters on specific issues but please note these are always shared with all parties transparently and are not completed unless full payment is received in advance.
- Important Note:** Charges are subject to change, and our most up-to-date charges, notes and terms are available on our website under 'Services and Charges' and 'Service Agreement.'

Feedback & Complaints

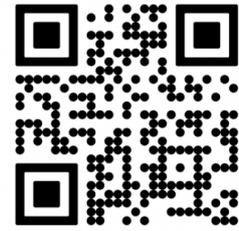
- Feedback and Complaints:** We will routinely ask you to provide feedback either verbally or in writing to help us improve our services. We will also do this with children. If you wish to give feedback, you can do this via the links on our website or in conversation with the team.
- Complaints:** If you are not happy, we have a robust complaints procedure to deal with complaints quickly. Our complaints procedure is approved by our accreditation organisation. Stage one is to always speak to the staff member or the main office but if you wish to make a complaint. The procedure is available on our website or by contacting the office.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding:** We may need to share information with a variety of professionals including the Police or Social Services where we identify a risk to a child, young person or vulnerable adult. This will only ever be done in a safe and legal way, sharing information on a 'need to know' basis. Where it would not place the child at further possible risk, we would seek to inform all parties with Parental Responsibility before doing so. Our safeguarding policy and procedural guidelines are available on our website.
- In Emergency Situations** or if your child is injured or unwell we will seek help and notify all parties as soon as reasonably possible. If we must vacate any premises, we are using your child will always remain with the staff member until the resident parent is able to collect them.

Reports, Policies & Your Data

- Some services include brief reports, full reports and other types of correspondence.
 - Brief Reports** and email updates are short overviews. They include basic details and do not provide full contextual information.
 - Full Reports:** Full reports are much more detailed and most often used in court proceedings or as part of a wider assessment. They are not a 'word for word' transcript of

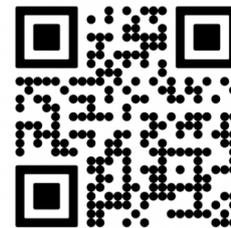


the session but will include full details intended to provide an overview of sessions.

2. **Your Data:** You are entitled to request a copy of any data relating to you in line with our information policy which is available by emailing the office.
3. **Information Sharing:** Reports and some other types of correspondence are provided to both parents where a case has been self-referred to us. If a case has been referred by a professional, we will usually provide reports to these people. Sometimes a Court order will also provide direction about the distribution of reports and as long as we are in receipt of the order we will assist you in complying with this. Any professional with a legitimate reason for accessing information about you will be issued reports and case details by phone, email, printed format, face to face or any other manner of communication upon request. By entering this service agreement, you give your express consent to information sharing to support all services in working together for families, but we will always tell you when.
4. **Retention** of your data is in line with GDPR, data protection regulations, and our own organisational policies. We will retain all records relating to children until the calculated date of when they reach 25 years of age. Records relating to clients or service users above 18 years of age will be retained for 6 years unless relating to children when the former period applies. All other data will be retained for 6 years and then securely destroyed. Routine communication such as emails and text messages are routinely deleted once they are no longer needed to ensure we are not holding any data which we do not need.

What families must agree and understand when using our services:

- I will always act in the **best interests of my children**. I will work with the service openly and honestly so support can be effective for the whole family.
- I will **meet my children's needs** during sessions. This includes basic care such as toileting, changing, feeding, giving guidance and boundaries, and bringing anything my child may reasonably need.
- I understand that **aggression, violence, intimidation**, or any behaviour that could make others



uncomfortable is not allowed. If this happens we will report this and services may be reduced or ended. Staff may ask me to leave if it is in the best interests of the child, the team, or myself.

- **I will arrive and leave at the agreed times.** If I am more than 10 minutes late, the session may be cancelled. If the session continues, it will still finish at the original end time. If I am often late, services may be stopped.
- **I will not bring anyone else** to a session unless this has agreed beforehand.
- I will not use my **mobile phone for calls or messages** during sessions unless this has been agreed. This applies to both parents and children.
- I understand that the visiting parent may **take photos or videos** of the child during the session if the child gives appropriate consent. It is recommended that these are not shared with others or posted on social media, but the service is not responsible for this. If the resident parent does not agree, they should seek legal or court advice. The service may change this rule for individual cases and will confirm this in writing.
- I understand that **taking photos or videos of the family hubs, offices, or staff** is not allowed unless the Director gives written permission.
- I understand that children **will not be taken out of the sessions unexpectedly or without planning.**
- I understand that the **resident parent must leave** the immediate area during the child's time with the visiting parent. The resident parent must stay close enough to return within 15 minutes in case the session needs to end early.
- I understand **pets are not allowed inside any of the family hubs.** If arranged in advance, pets can come along, and service animals are welcome with prior notice. Balloons, toy guns, and some activities are not allowed because they may upset children and if the team say something is not allowed during a session I accept this and if I don't agree I will speak to the office afterwards, not in front of children.
- I understand there is **no smoking or vaping** during sessions. I will arrive not under the influence of **drugs or alcohol.** If staff believe I am under the influence, the session may be cancelled.
- I can usually bring **gifts or cards for the child** unless a court order says otherwise. Children cannot take home or pass on gifts, letters, money, belongings, or messages for others unless the other parent agrees. Children can take one small gift from the visiting parent, and the team will help guide this during sessions.
- **I will speak in English if I can.** If I cannot, I agree the service must arrange an interpreter.
- I understand I must ask the Director before **giving staff any gifts.** I understand the team are there to support us all and it is not appropriate to add staff on social media or record them without prior written agreement from the Director.

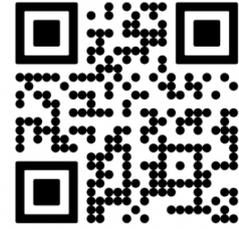
What families can expect from us when using our services:

- The **child's safety and wellbeing always come first.** Our safeguarding processes guide what we do. Parents are responsible for supervising their children during sessions, but if you or your child need any **special arrangements**, please speak to the office.



SOUTH WEST FAMILY SERVICES

office@southwestfamilyservices.com



- Sometimes we may need to **stop or cancel a service** if we believe it cannot continue. This can happen even if there is a court order, and we will explain this to you. If we have **concerns about a child's emotional or physical safety**, staff will step in and may **end the session early**.
- We work with other professionals when needed and will **share information** appropriately.
- We are required to tell you that we are **not allowed to physically restrain** or remove a child if a situation arises or escalates. Whilst we risk assess and are vigilant to minimise any risk our staff are not allowed and will not attempt to physically restrain a person from leaving the premises with a child. Should this occur, the Police will be contacted immediately.
- If children **travel in staff vehicles**, the vehicles will be legal, insured, roadworthy, clean, and driven by someone with a full licence. Children will only travel if the correct car seats or restraints are used.
- We will remain **impartial and respectful**. We do not take sides or contribute to power or control between parents. Parents with parental responsibility can make decisions for their child during their time together unless a court order says otherwise. We support arrangements we believe are appropriate.
- Our **reports and written communication** will be factual and based on what we observe or on the services we provide.
- We always follow our **policies, procedures, national standards, safeguarding guidance, and relevant laws**. Our staff are **trained** to at least the minimum required level and aim to support your family in line with the service you receive.
- **Health and safety** is very important to us. We have robust processes in place to keep children, families, and the team safe.
- If there are **major changes to the service** or how it is delivered, we will inform you and, when needed, agree this with everyone involved. ***Our service agreement is updated from time to time, and the most up-to-date version is on our website.*** Other policies are available on request.