

PROJECT WEST

SUPERVISED FAMILY TIME

How It Works

Safe, child-focused time together

Supervised Family Time enables a child to spend time with a parent or other family member in a carefully managed setting. A Project West supervisor remains present throughout, supports safe and positive interaction and records an objective account of the session.

1 WHAT SUPERVISED FAMILY TIME MEANS

Supervised Family Time is used where a child needs a higher level of oversight because of safeguarding concerns, family circumstances, a court direction, a care plan or professional assessment. The child's welfare remains the central consideration at every stage.

- The supervisor remains with the child and family throughout the session, including when they use the playroom, garden or community facilities.
- The supervisor sits in the room or garden with the family, or remains alongside them in the community, close enough to see and hear the interaction while remaining as discreet as possible.
- When a child needs to use the bathroom, the supervisor follows the agreed safeguarding arrangements, remains immediately available and provides age-appropriate privacy while ensuring that the required level of supervision is maintained.
- There is no private or unsupervised time unless Project West has received clear written authority and has formally agreed a different service arrangement.
- The supervisor observes interaction, promotes the child's comfort and safety and intervenes when necessary.

2 WHAT A SESSION MAY FEEL LIKE

The aim is for Family Time to feel as natural and child-focused as the required level of supervision allows. Families may talk, play, read, eat, complete activities and use the garden, subject to the Family Time Plan, risk assessment and centre rules.

- The person having Family Time is encouraged to take the lead in caring for and engaging the child.
- The supervisor does not take over ordinary parenting tasks, but may offer proportionate guidance, prompts or reassurance.
- Children are not expected to perform, show affection or discuss matters they do not wish to discuss.
- The supervisor may redirect conversation or activity if it becomes adult-focused, distressing, unsafe or contrary to the agreed plan.

3 THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

- welcome the child and family and support a calm beginning and ending;
- remain attentive and positioned so that interaction can be properly seen and heard;
- observe the child's presentation, responses, communication and interaction with the adult;
- support appropriate play, care, boundaries and age-appropriate communication where needed;
- record significant events, direct speech, interventions, concerns and positive interaction objectively;
- act promptly if the child becomes distressed or if safety, behaviour or boundaries give cause for concern.

4 BEFORE FAMILY TIME BEGINS

1. Referral and documents

Project West requires a completed referral form and all relevant safeguarding, risk and legal information. In private law cases, a copy of the current court order or drafted order is required.

2. Review and acceptance

Project West reviews the requested service, risks, practical arrangements and whether the referral can be safely accommodated. A referral is not accepted until this review is complete.

3. Separate pre-visit meetings

Each participating adult must attend a separate pre-visit meeting, normally by Zoom. The process, expectations, risks, prohibited matters and arrangements for the child are discussed.

4. Family Time Plan and contracts

The agreed arrangements are recorded in the Family Time Plan. The relevant contracts must be signed before sessions begin.

5. Funding and booking

Funding, invoicing and any Local Authority purchase order arrangements must be confirmed. The current pricing schedule may be supplied or attached separately.

5 ARRIVAL, THE SESSION AND DEPARTURE

Arrival

- Adults and escorts must follow the agreed arrival arrangements and report promptly to staff.
- Staggered arrivals and departures are used where a current court order, Child Arrangements Order or non-molestation order expressly requires them. Project West does not impose staggered times merely by preference.
- Where a formal arrival buffer applies, the required timing is recorded in the Family Time Plan.

During the session

- The supervisor remains present and records the session while allowing the family appropriate space to interact.
- Only people authorised in the referral, order and Family Time Plan may attend, unless an additional attendee is later agreed in writing by the relevant parties or referrer, is consistent with any court order and is accepted in advance by Project West following risk review.
- Any change to venue, duration, attendees or supervision level requires prior agreement and, where applicable, written professional or court authority.

Departure

The supervisor supports a child-focused goodbye and follows the agreed collection arrangements. Any significant difficulty, distress, incident or late collection is recorded and escalated as appropriate.

6 FOOD, GIFTS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND COMMUNICATION

- For the first session, the resident parent provides the child's food, drink and all necessary items. From the second session, this becomes the responsibility of the person having Family Time.
- Project West requires healthy food options. Sweets and chocolate are not permitted.
- Gifts may be given unless a court order, Local Authority social worker or CAFCASS officer has expressly stated that gifts are not permitted. Any restriction must be communicated clearly to Project West.
- Service users may not use personal mobile phones or devices during sessions. Photographs may be taken only by Project West staff using a Project West device and in accordance with the agreed arrangements.
- Family Time is conducted in English because Project West supervisors speak English. Where a child or adult cannot communicate sufficiently in English, an independent interpreter must be arranged and funded as agreed.

7 SAFETY, BOUNDARIES AND INTERVENTION

The supervisor will intervene when necessary

Discreet supervision does not mean passive observation. The supervisor will give guidance, redirect or stop an interaction where this is required to protect the child, maintain agreed boundaries or comply with the Family Time Plan.

- Topics, questions, promises, messages or behaviour identified as inappropriate or prohibited will be stopped or redirected.
- The supervisor may pause an activity, move the child to a safer area, seek coordinator support or bring the session to an end.
- Immediate safeguarding concerns, disclosures, suspected intoxication, threats, violence, unauthorised recording or serious breaches are escalated without delay.
- Project West cannot change a court order, care plan or professional direction without appropriate written authority.
- English must be sufficiently understood by the supervisor. An interpreter facilitates communication but does not replace or assume the supervisor's safeguarding role.

8 REPORTS, ATTENDANCE AND INFORMATION SHARING

- A written report is produced for every completed Supervised Family Time session, normally within 7 to 10 days.
- The report records direct observations, significant dialogue, the child's responses, care provided, interventions and relevant concerns or strengths.
- Reports are normally sent to the referrer. In private law proceedings, both parties are blind copied into the communication when reports are shared.
- Supported Family Time and handovers do not include a session report, although an attendance record may be provided where requested.
- Where a session is cancelled or not attended within the chargeable notice period, the cancellation or non-attendance is recorded in accordance with Project West procedure.

9 SUPERVISED FAMILY TIME IN THE COMMUNITY

- Community Family Time begins and ends at the Project West centre and is available only where the proposed arrangements have been agreed and risk assessed.
- The same supervision standard applies in the community: the supervisor remains with the child and family, stays close enough to see and hear interaction and records the session.
- Community venues and activities must be suitable for the child, safe, practical for supervision and agreed in advance. A room at the centre is not held while the family is in the community.

- Travel in the family member's vehicle is considered only where authorised and supported by verified driving licence, insurance, MOT, vehicle and child-seat arrangements. It is not permitted where known alcohol, drug or other safety concerns make driving unsuitable.
- The Family Time Plan will record the approved venue, travel, emergency, bathroom and any supervisor comfort-break arrangements.

10 PAYMENT, CANCELLATION AND CHANGES

- Payment is due 72 hours before the session unless a separate funded arrangement has been confirmed.
- A cancellation made with less than 72 hours' notice is chargeable under Project West's terms.
- Families and referrers must tell Project West promptly about any change in risk, court orders, health, medication, address, placement, attendees or practical arrangements.
- Continued sessions remain subject to safety, cooperation with the agreed rules, funding and staff availability.

11 MAKING AN ENQUIRY OR REFERRAL

To discuss Supervised Family Time, contact Project West with the child's details, requested frequency and duration, proposed venue, legal or care-planning context, known risks and funding route. Suitability and availability can be confirmed only after the referral and relevant information have been reviewed.

Telephone	020 8422 8184
Email	info@projectwest.co.uk
Address	27 Sandringham Road, Northolt Village, UB5 5HN
Opening	Monday to Sunday, 9:00 am to 6:30 pm, except Tuesdays, which are reserved for internal administration

Acceptance and commencement

Project West cannot commence Family Time until the referral, safeguarding information, pre-visits, signed contracts, funding and practical arrangements are complete.