WHERE'S DAD?
Living with a dad in prison
written and drawn by Phil Forder
A Parec Supporting families Publication
Huw: Dw i, dwi byw yng Nghaerdydd... oh!
I'm Huw and I live in Cardiff and as you probably guessed I'm Welsh.

This is where I live, our house is in the second row, and that's my school in the foreground, and that's the garage where my dad works.

Well, I used to work. It's a long story, let me tell you.

I knew something was wrong. When Gran came to meet me from school, she only does that if there's a problem at home. I hoped my parents hadn't been arguing again.

It was a brilliant feast, almost too good, something was up. For sure and she wasn't acting her normal self either. She kept asking me if I was alright.

When we got home, Mum had been crying. She kept hugging me a lot. Something was definitely wrong.

Then it dawned on me...

WHERE'S DAD?
Mum told me that Dad had gone away to work for the government. Wow! I thought he was like James Bond!

I was told it was best if we kept it quiet. It was our secret.

I felt proud until Friday. That is when at school Sam Jones (the school bully) said to me in the playground:

Look out! There's the thiefs son. How's your dad enjoying prison?

Why don't you read the papers?

At first I cried until I couldn't any more. I was in shock. I couldn't believe it. But by the end of the day, I was angry.

I kept thinking 'He'll be back soon'. Nobody sat in his chair and his slippers were always ready.

That night I had a dream. It was horrid. My Dad locked up. I awoke in a sweat.

Mum! I miss Dad. I want to see him again. Five years is such a long time.

You will know we've got a visit booked for Tuesday.

I couldn't wait.
I was surprised at how new and clean the prison looked. It had a clock tower outside.

There were lots of people visiting that day. The lady at the desk mentioned a family day.

We were taken into the visits hall where there were lots of games and puzzles laid out for us kids and there was lots of food waiting. It looked like there was going to be a party.

Then came dad. It was great to see him again. We sat down and had a meal together. It was like being in a cafe.

While eating a man in uniform came over. Dad told us it was Mr. Roberts his personal officer.
My job is to keep prisoners safe while they are in jail. I make sure your dad gets all the things he needs.

Things like a daily job, clean clothes, toilet visits, wages and access to the phone. Basically, I make sure your dad's looked after.

There are many people who work in HMP Parc who are there to help your dad. There are teachers, medical staff, physical trainers, clergy, probation officers, counsellors and many more.

Anyway, glad to have met you. Catch you later.
**Knock Knock**

**Wake up!**

**For breakfast**

**But Dad you must get so bored sitting in your cell all day.**

**But I don’t.**

**Well just some of the time.**

**We get woken up at 7:30. I get washed and shaved.**

**For most of the morning I go to school just like you.**

**Until lunch time.**

**Then in the afternoon I work on the wing as a cleaner.**

**In the evening we have association.**

**It’s a time when all the prisoners can relax together.**

**Obviously I do spend a lot of time in my cell but I use it to read and write letters, and we do have a television too.**
Hi my name's Dai! Would you like me to paint your face?

Can you do tigers?

There were lots of things for us kids to do at the Family Day, some things were done by prisoners, others by officers.

We made fridge magnets.

Greetings cards.

And we played games.

But the best bit of all was a play called the Gruffalo, acted out by the officers. It was very funny. Dad told me that the Gruffalo was Mr. Roberts, Dad's personal officer.

Finally we had a family photo taken.
Soon it all came to an end.

And then came the hard bit.

Well son!

Dad... I... Er... Sneeze.

Today has been great.

And now I know what prison is like.

But I still really miss you.

I know that son

And no matter what else

The biggest hurt is being away from you and mum.

I phone. Yeah.

Love you dad.

God.

I didn’t realise just how important they are to me.

I gotta sort myself out and get out of here.

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Compiled and drawn by Phil Forber for G4S, HMP PARC

Some Useful Numbers

NSPCC

Childline 08001111

G4S PARC Supporting Families

Advice, support, referral for the children, families, and friends of those held at HMP & YOI PARC

G4S 08453631132

Action for Prisoners’ Families

0115 9052736

www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

Prisoners’ Families Helpline

0808 808 2003

www.prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk

Parentline Plus

Free parenting helpline

0808 800 2222

www.parentlineplus.org.uk