1. Assessing whether siblings should be placed together separately where the authority is considering a plan or adoption for one or more sibling
2. **GUIDANCE**
3. **Reminder this decision takes place in the light of the guidance set out in section 1 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 set out below.**

**Adoption and Children Act 2002**

1 Considerations applying to the exercise of powers

(1)This section applies whenever a court or adoption agency is coming to a decision relating to the adoption of a child.

(2)The paramount consideration of the court or adoption agency must be the child’s welfare, throughout his life.

(3)The court or adoption agency must at all times bear in mind that, in general, any delay in coming to the decision is likely to prejudice the child’s welfare.

(4)The court or adoption agency must have regard to the following matters (among others)—

(a) The child’s ascertainable wishes and feelings regarding the decision (considered in the light of the child’s age and understanding),

(B) The child’s particular needs,

(C) The likely effect on the child (throughout his life) of having ceased to be a member of the original family and become an adopted person,

(D) The child’s age, sex, background and any of the child’s characteristics which the court or agency considers relevant,

(e) Any harm (within the meaning of the Children Act 1989 (c. 41)) which the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering,

(F) The relationship which the child has with relatives, and with any other person in relation to whom the court or agency considers the relationship to be relevant, including—

(i) the likelihood of any such relationship continuing and the value to the child of its doing so,

(ii) The ability and willingness of any of the child’s relatives, or of any such person, to provide the child with a secure environment in which the child can develop, and otherwise to meet the child’s needs,

(iii)the wishes and feelings of any of the child’s relatives, or of any such person, regarding the child.

(5)In placing the child for adoption, the adoption agency must give due consideration to the child’s religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background.

(6)The court or adoption agency must always consider the whole range of powers available to it in the child’s case (whether under this Act or the Children Act 1989); and the court must not make any order under this Act unless it considers that making the order would be better for the child than not doing so.

1. **ANALYSIS PLEASE RECORD THE RELEVANT INFORMATION UNDER THE HEADINGS BELOW**
   1. Has a care plan been presented and approved by the court? If so please attach the plan to this decision making tool?
   2. What did the plan say about placement?
   3. What did the plan say about contact?
   4. Has the care plan presented to the court changed if so why?
   5. Has there been a report from a psychologist regarding the impact of separating siblings?
   6. What did it conclude?
   7. If not should there be one?
   8. Is there a written together or apart assessment?
   9. If not should there be one ?
   10. What would be the benefits of the children being placed together?
   11. What would be the disadvantages of the children being placed together?
   12. How could these disadvantages be reduced? e.g. extra support, respite care, therapeutic input?
   13. What are the advantages of the children being placed separately?
   14. What are the disadvantages?
   15. How could the disadvantages been reduced e.g. post placement contact? A plan of fostering rather than adoption?
   16. What is the likely effect on the child (throughout his life) of having ceased to be sibling a member of the original family and become an adopted person?
   17. What alternatives to the child ceasing to be a member of the original family have been considered i.e. placement in separate foster placement or special guardianship?
   18. What would be the advantages of this?
   19. What would be the disadvantages?
   20. How could be the disadvantages be reduced?
2. Recommended decision
3. Summary of reasons
4. **DECISION MAKERS DECISION AND REASONS**