**In the Family Court sitting at**

**In the matter of the Children Act 1989**

**And in the matter of [name of children ]**

**Local Authority
Initial Social Work Statement**

**WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

This document follows the template recommended by the President of the Family Division, in compliance with the Public Law Outline 2014.

**The child(ren)**

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| **Names**  | **Gender** | **Date of Birth** | **Child’s current placement status** | **Child’s current legal status** |
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| **Local Authority and Social Worker details** |
| Filed by  |  |
| Social work statement number in the proceedings, e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd |  |
| Social work statement number for this witness e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd |  |
| This witness’s name, qualifications, experience, and office address |  |
| This witness’s HCPC registration number |  |
| Dated |  |

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| 1. **Case details**
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| * 1. **Family Composition**
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| **Name** | **Relationship** | **Parental Responsibility** | **DOB** | **Nationality** | **Ethnicity** | **Address** |
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* 1. **Genogram**

**Key:**

Female

Male

* 1. **Ecomap (risky and protective contacts)**
	2. **Summary of reason/s for order sought**

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| 1. **The social work chronology (key elements)**

 The Court is referred to the full LA chronology filed. This provides a fuller account of the history in this case. For the purposes of this statement I provide below key incidents which are crucial to the understanding of the reasons for proceedings and experiences of the family. |
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| **Date** | **Incident or sequence of incidents relevant to the child’s welfare** | **Significance** |
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| 1. **Analysis of harm**
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* 1. **The social work analysis of the harm the child (or each child) has suffered and/or the/any risk of harm the child continues to face, including the analysis of the event/s that led to the application i.e. the threshold as described in the application form**

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| * + 1. I have considered the harm which (the child) has suffered or is at risk of suffering as a result of the parenting they are receiving, pursuant to my obligation to consider the Welfare Checklist at S 1 (3) (e) of the Children Act 1989.
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| * 1. **List of previous assessments and interventions**

Prior to proceedings being issued the family were the subject of a number of assessments, and interventions which I summarise below. Any reports arising from the assessments are available to the parties as part of the disclosure within the proceedings. |
| **Organisation** | **Description of assessment/intervention** | **Date** | **Outcome and effectiveness** |
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| 1. **Child impact analysis**
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* 1. **Description of the child/ren’s daily life and experience at the time harm was identified**

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| * + 1. In considering (the child’s) experiences I am mindful of my duty to consider their age, sex, background and any relevant characteristics per S1( 3)(d) of the Children Act Welfare Checklist
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* 1. **Any continued risk of significant harm including impairment of development to the child balanced against any factors which mitigate that risk and support the care of the child**

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* 1. **Analysis of child’s needs, against the welfare checklist**

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| I have considered the child’s physical, emotional and educational needs per the requirements of the Welfare Checklist at Section 1 (3)(b) of the Children Act 1989 **The wishes and feelings of the child concerned****The child’s physical, emotional and educational needs****The likely effect on the child if circumstances changed as a result of the court’s decision****The child’s age, sex, backgrounds and any other characteristics which will be relevant to the court’s decision****Any harm the child has suffered or may be at risk of suffering****Capability of the child’s parents at meeting the child’s needs** **The range of powers available to the court**  |

* 1. **The child’s wishes and feelings and how these have been identified**

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| * + 1. I have considered the child’s ascertainable wishes and feelings per the requirements of the Welfare Checklist at Section 1 (3)(a) of the Children Act 1989.

.]* + 1.
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* 1. **The child’s own statement (where applicable)**

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* 1. **Proposals for further assessment/s and consideration of the child’s timetable**

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| 1. **Analysis of Parenting Capability**
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* 1. **Analysis of each parent’s capacity to meet each child’s needs, including analysis of any capability gap and whether/how this can be bridged in the timetable for the child**

In accordance with S(1)(3)(f) of the Children Act 1989 over the course of the proceedings I have considered how capable each of (child’s) parents, and any other person in relation to whom the court considers the question to be relevant, is of meeting (the child’s) needs.

In formulating my assessment and the analysis contained in this statement I have done the following prior to proceedings being issued:

* Met with the parents on x occasions, both at home and in my office
* Met with the child on x occasions [indicate where]
* Met with any other family members or relevant connected persons
* Conducted a meeting before proceedings at which the parents had the benefit of legal advice
* Conducted an assessment of parenting capacity
* Commissioned …independent reports
* Familiarised myself with the local authority records in the case
* Observed contact between [A] and [B]

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| **Mother**  |
| **Father** |
| **Other person with parental responsibility**  |

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| 1. **Analysis of wider family and friends capability**
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* 1. **Analysis of wider family and friends capability to meet each child’s needs, including analysis of any capability gap, and whether/how this can be bridged in the timetable for the child.**

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| * + 1. In accordance with S 1 (3 )(f) of the Children Act 1989 over the course of the proceedings I have considered how capable each of wider family and other connected persons are of meeting the child’s needs.
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| 1. **The proposed S31A plan – the early permanence and contact plan**
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The care plan, including the placement and contact framework (set in section 7) must set out how the local authority proposes a child can be given the security, stability and care she or he needs, for the rest of their childhood.

The care plan set before the court must include how the child’s array of needs are going to be met in the future.

* 1. **Consideration, comparison and evaluation of realistic placement options**

In reaching a recommendation as to the interim living arrangements for the [child], the local authority is obliged to consider a range of realistic options before reaching a conclusion as to which option is in the best interests of the child’s welfare in the interim.

In formulating the proposals for placement at this stage of the proceedings I have considered the full range of the powers available to the court per section 1 (3) (g) of the Welfare Checklist of the Children Act 1989. In doing so I have considered the prognosis of each option meeting the needs of the child(ren), with reference to the potential positive or negative implications for the child. These include the likely effect on the child(ren)of any change in circumstances in accordance with the Welfare Checklist at S1 (3) c) of the Children Act 1989.

Whilst my statement sets out a number of positive and negative factors, it is not the case that each factor has the same weight as all of the others. The ultimate balancing of the positive factors against the negative factors is a qualitative one, not a quantative one.

In reaching my conclusion as the best placement option for the child[ren] I have had in mind that [the child’s] welfare must be the paramount consideration

* 1. **Placement Options**

**Placement of XXXXXXX with mother/father/parents**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**Relevant Support Services and Monitoring Arrangements (specific details)**

*

**Proposed Contact**

**Consideration of Potential Orders**

**Analysis**

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**Placement of XXXXX with family or friends**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**Relevant Support Services and Monitoring Arrangements (specific details)**

**Proposed Contact**

**Consideration of Potential Orders**

**Analysis**

**Placement of XXXX in foster care**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

*

**Relevant Support Services and Monitoring Arrangements (specific details)**

**Proposed Contact**

**Consideration of Potential Orders**

**Analysis**

**Conclusion of this section of the statement**

* 1. **The Contact Plan**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Child** | **Who contact is with and their relationship to the child** | **Brief rationale for the level of contact proposed** | **Level of support/ supervision** | **Frequency and duration** |
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| 1. **Analysis of views and issues raised by other parties**
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* 1. **Mother’s views**

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* 1. **Father’s views**

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* 1. **Views of wider family members and connected persons**

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* 1. **Views of other parties or significant others e.g. Cafcass, the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**

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| 1. **Update and proposals for further evidence and assessment**
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* 1. **Update on matters set out in the application form, if any**

**[Delete this section and adjust numbering of paragraphs if 9.1 unnecessary]**

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* 1. **Proposals for further evidence/assessment**

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| * + 1. In accordance with the analysis in 4.6 above and the interim care plan filed herewith the Local Authority is recommending further assessment……./OR no further assessment………
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| 1. **Statement of procedural fairness**
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* 1. **Communication of the contents of this statement to mother, father, significant others and the child**

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| * + 1. The parents have been made aware of the concerns of the authority in a number of different ways. Parents were given notice of LA’s concerns by a letter before proceedings on…These were further discussed at a meeting before proceedings on… There was a follow up letter on… when the parents were informed that proceedings were going to be issued on the basis of….
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* 1. **How the Local Authority has been clear in its communications, transparency and disclosure/s of its concerns to mother, father, wider family members and significant others**

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| 1. **Signature**
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|  |  |
| Print full name |  |
|  |  |
| Role/position held | I am the allocated social worker to the child[ren] |
|  |  |
|  | **The facts in this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and the opinions set out are my own.** |
| Signed |  |
|  |  |
| Date |  |  |