Addressee Name

Full Address

Postcode

|  |
| --- |
| Date:  |

SENT BY [HAND/ RECORDED DELIVERY]

**IMPORTANT!**

**PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER – TAKE IT TO A SOLICITOR NOW**

Dear [parent and/or full name(s) of all people with parental responsibility]

**Re: West Sussex County Council concerns about [Insert name(s) of child(ren) and dates of birth]**

I am writing to you on behalf of West Sussex County Council, Children’s Services. The reason I am writing to you is that West Sussex County Council is extremely worried about your care of [name(s) of child/(ren)]. We have already set out our concerns in [reference to the Letter before Proceedings/pre-proceedings meeting/child protection case conference/any social work meetings]. We have tried to work with you to help you to improve your care of [name(s) of child/ren] but things have not changed sufficiently.

I am therefore writing to let you know that **we are going to make an application to Court to try to make sure [name of child(ren)] is/are safe**. This could mean that [name of child(ren)] will be removed from your care. You will soon receive a copy of our application to the Court and other important documents, which set out the key issues.

**WHAT YOU MUST DO NOW:**

1. **Get a solicitor**: It is really important that you get advice from a solicitor who specialises in family law as soon as possible. They will help you understand the situation and advise you about your rights and your options. If you give them this letter you will not have to pay for that legal advice.

In case you do not already have a solicitor, please find enclosed a list of local solicitors who have experience in this area of work. They are all independent from Children’s Services.

**Information your solicitor will need:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Local Authority Legal Contact: Name Address Telephone no: Email Address: | [enter name of solicitor]West Sussex County Council Childcare and Advocacy Team Room 202, County Hall, West Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RQ[enter telephone number][enter name]@westsussex.gov.uk |

1. **Get your wider family involved:** Our concerns about [name(s) of child(ren)] are very serious. If the Court decides you cannot care for your child(ren), we will first try and place them with one of your relatives or a person or persons close to your child(ren), if it is best for your child(ren) to do this. You should therefore let us know immediately who in your family might be able to care for your child(ren). Please also ask them to get in touch with us directly.

Yours sincerely

[name]

**Group Manager [Service]**

cc Social Worker [name]

Local Authority in house Legal Team