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| In the family court sitting at |
| In the matter of the Children Act 1989 |

**Local authority  
Social Work evidence template (Final statement)**

* **The child/ren** use one template per family

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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** | |
| Court case number |  |
| Filed by [local authority] |  |
| Social work statement number in the proceedings, e.g. 1st, 2nd (**N.B**. Do not use this template for initial statements) |  |
| Social work statement number of this witness, including position statements and initial statements e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and date of statement |  |
| This author/witness’s name, qualifications and office address |  |
| This author/witness’s Social Work England registration number |  |
| I have been the allocated social worker for [insert name(s)] since [date(s)] |  |

**The facts in this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and the opinions set out are my own.**

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Signed:

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Date of completion:

**Please ensure that you update the page numbers on the table by clicking on the table followed by the “update” tab, selecting “update page numbers only” once the statement is completed.**

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**Please delete all guidance text before forwarding to Legal.**

## **Child/ren’s details**

**Guidance:** *Include any updates arising since the last statement or court hearing, the former details of proceedings do not need repeating. Please update the court on where the children have been placed during the course of proceedings; how they have been within their placement setting (which may have been remaining in the care of parents); what do we know about the children now? Please do not write anything in this section that is better placed in Section 4 (Child Impact Analysis/ views of child).*

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## **The Social Work chronology**

**Guidance:** *Record significant changes or events arising since the last statement was filed here. If there are lots of events for a chronology then you may wish to add in the chronology template at the end of the report and highlight the most significant events in this section. Please ensure the chronology is fact not opinion.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | SOURCE/ EVENT/ DETAIL | IMPACT | Support offered by Social Care/ |
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## **Analysis of risk and protective factors**

**Guidance:** *It may be that within this section you wish to succinctly outline those risk factors which brought this matter to the court. You can then set out what risk factors remain; what, if any, changes have been achieved; have any of those risk factors been mitigated and if so how?*

*If the final hearing is a composite hearing (with a Fact Finding only taking place at that stage) then you will need to consider risk and protective factors both if findings are made and if no findings are made.* *This will, in effect, be an 'either' / 'or' analysis.*

Final position.

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## **Child impact analysis and child/ren’s views**

**Guidance:** *Set out any additional evidence and analysis plus any updates to the child/ren's previously expressed views. What changes has the child/ young person made; what are their identified emotional and behavioural needs; what are their on-going health and educational needs? Provide the court with a 'pen picture' of each child now (their interests, their aspirations; their relationships with friends, brothers, sisters, parents etc.). Remember not only to highlight the concerns (and what is in place or will be in place to support the child/ young person), but also highlight those things or relationships which are positive and working well for the child and young person. Feel free to attach any direct work undertaken: (three houses; words and pictures) to support what the child is saying, what others are observing and what their needs are. This section should link to the Care Plan for each child / young person and highlight any particular aspects of the Care Plan for them.*

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## **Analysis of parenting capability**

**Guidance:** *Set out the final assessment of parenting capability, including a brief summary of any assessments completed since the initial hearing, state how family time has informed this view etc. Remember to refer to each individual parent and their capability to parent individually or as a couple – use a subheading for each parent. Remember you may have assessed more than one father and each parent/ person with parental responsibility has to be addressed here. Cross reference to any expert reports in respect of the parents and cross reference to any Local Authority Parenting Assessments that have been undertaken (summarise and then provide the paragraph/ page number within the assessment where further detail can be found – this evidences that you have carefully considered and analysed all available evidence before the court).*

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## **Analysis of wider family and friends capability**

**Guidance:** *Set out any additional evidence and analysis of assessments or work with the child/ren / young person's family and friend's network during the course of proceedings. Cross reference to Viability Assessments/ Regulation 24 Assessments/ Special Guardianship Order Assessments that have been undertaken. Also cross reference to the colour coded genogram.*

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## **The proposed S31A Final care plan – the ‘realistic options’ analysis**

**Guidance:** *Set out within your balance sheet analysis the proposed Final placement for each child and the reasons why this has been assessed as in their best interests; set out which order (if any- remember the 'no order' principle) is needed to underpin this plan and the reasons why. You will need to ensure that you set out all other options that may be put before the court even if these are not supported by the Local Authority. This will allow the court and parties to see that you have carefully considered all options and analysed and weighed up both the 'pros and cons' of each option. If there are different final placement options for each child/ young person it may be easier for you to add a realistic placement option for both. Please ensure that if the final care plan for any one of the children is for a Care and Placement Order with a plan of adoption, that the balance sheet fully considers and acknowledges the impact on the child and wider family of the child becoming an adopted person (section f of the Adoption and Children Act Welfare Checklist – below). Please add as many further tables as needed for the balance sheet analysis, so that you consider all unrealistic options.*

Final position.

The proposed realistic placement option of the Local Authority is:

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| **Realistic Final Placement Option – factors in favour** | **Realistic Final Placement Option – factors against** |
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| **Unrealistic Final Placement options - factors in favour (why the court or other parties may wish it to be considered)** | **Unrealistic Final Placement Option – factors against (why the Local Authority has discounted this option)** |
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## **Family Time – Final Proposed Plan**

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| **Child/ young person** | **Who family time is with and relationship of that person to the child/ young person** | **Type/ Frequency and duration** | **Level of support/ supervision required and location if known** | **Brief rationale for the level / type of family time proposed** |
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## **The range of views of parties and significant others**

**Guidance:** *Final position/s, where information has already been provided to the court in previous statements this can be summarised rather than repeating it in full here. Where these differ from earlier statements this should be recorded here too. Ensure the view of the IRO (where applicable) is included.*

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## **Statement of procedural fairness**

***Guidance****:*

* *Confirm here that the local authority’s concerns and the contents of this statement have been communicated to the child/ren, mother, father, and significant others, and state how this has been communicated.*
* *Have these concerns been clearly understood? If not, please be explicit about attempts to engage parties and any help that has been provided to them to participate in the process. This may include access to legal advice and representation, translators, advocates etc.*

Steps taken to ensure procedural fairness since the last statement was filed.

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**[All guidance text to be deleted before submitting to court.**

**Please update the table of contents.]**

## **The welfare checklist in full for reference**

The full Children Act checklist, to be used in care and supervision proceedings is found at section 1(3) (a) – (g) and requires the court to have regard to the following matters:

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| a) | The ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child/children concerned (considered in the light of his/her/their age and understanding); |
| b) | Their physical, emotional and educational needs; |
| c) | The likely effect on them of any change in his/her/their circumstances; |
| d) | Their age, sex, background and any characteristics of his/hers/theirs which the court considers relevant; |
| e) | Any harm which they have suffered or are at risk of suffering; |
| f) | How capable each of his/her/their parents, and any other person in relation to whom the court considers the question to be relevant, is of meeting his/her/their needs; |
| g) | The range of powers available to the court under this Act (Children Act 1989) in the proceedings in question. |

25. The full Adoption and Children Act welfare checklist, to be used in care proceedings where the plan is for adoption and in placement proceedings, is found in section 1 (4) (a) – (f) and requires the court and the adoption agency to have regard to the following matters (among others):

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| --- | --- |
| 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 their 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:   1. the likelihood of any such relationship continuing and the value of the child of its doing so, 2. 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, 3. the wishes and feelings of any of the child’s relatives, or of any such person, regarding the child. |

**Accompanying guidance for completing the SWET can be found here:** https://adcs.org.uk/care/article/SWET