



# What to expect: Supervised Contact with Looked After Children

When the Court rules that your child or children are to become Looked After a ruling will also be made about contact arrangements.

This ruling will make clear

- If contact has to be supervised.
- Who can attend supervised contact sessions.
- How often supervised contact can take place.
- How long each supervised contact will last.
- If the contact is at a family children's centre or out in the community

**The contact arrangements for each of your children might be different and the amount of contact for different family members might also be different.**

**Before your first Supervised Contact the Social Work will write a Contact Agreement with you.**

This agreement will set out the Do's and Don'ts for contact sessions and will include

- What you can expect from Children and Families Services.
- What is expected of you in relation to contact. (eg, arriving on time, not being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, etc)
- Where and when contact will take place.
- How long the contact will last.

- Any arrangements which are specific to your family.
- What you can and can't bring to contact sessions.(eg toys or food)
- Who will arrive at contact first.
- Who will leave contact first.
- The use of mobile phones and taking photographs or videoing
- Discussing the case and any Court related issues with the child

**This agreement is to make sure that everyone understands what will happen at each contact session. It should be signed by both you and the social worker before the first contact takes place.**

If things change then a new agreement must be signed.

It is preferable if your mobile phone is switched off during the entire contact so that you have good quality time with your child.

## The Contact Supervisor

You will be allocated a family support worker/ contact supervisor who will attend all contact sessions.

The contact supervisor will be your main point of contact for issues about contact.



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The Contact Supervisor provides support and advice during contact sessions. They will try to remain in the background as much as possible during contact.

The aim of contact sessions is to provide a positive experience.

**The Contact Supervisor will stay in the room for the whole of the contact session.**

**They will take notes about how the session is going.**

If the contact supervisor feels that to continue with the session would be unsafe for your child they can bring the session to an end.

If you are involved in legal proceedings (about your children), your solicitor will give you a copy of these notes. You should receive these notes on a monthly basis.

Nearly all Supervised Contact sessions take place at a Contact Center. In West Berkshire this is usually at North Thatcham Children's Center. However, sometimes other venues will be used for example Call Us House, Didcot Children's Centre or the Rivermead Community Centre. The venue depends on availability and we try to ensure that they are as close to the family as possible.

Occasionally supervised contact can take place in the community. However, **this can only happen if the court has agreed to it.**

## How Supervised Contact is reviewed

Supervised Contact is reviewed at each LAC Review.

(If there are problems with the supervision arrangement, the contact supervisor can be invited to the LAC Review to discuss how problems might be solved. **(As long as your child has agreed to this).**

**Your Child can refuse to attend contact sessions.**

Additional contact review meetings can be arranged if contact needs to be reviewed more frequently.

*Children and Family Services want you to understand how we can best work together to put the needs of your child or children first.*