

What to expect: Written Agreements



Written Agreements are one of the tools used by Children and Family Services to help manage risk and need.

They help to make clear;
What Social Workers are worried about,
What support will be offered to families and
What families are expected to do to show that they are keeping their child or children safe.

Written Agreements are working contracts, so they will be changed in line with the level of risk or need which professionals judge to exist.

Written Agreements should be reviewed at least every four weeks, but can be reviewed more often. Your Social Worker will sit down and talk through the Written Agreement with you.

By signing a Written Agreement you are not saying that you agree with the concerns which have been raised, but you are showing that you are willing to engage with Children and Family Services while an Assessment is being carried out or a plan is being implemented.

Signing a Written Agreement means that you will do what has been agreed to look after your child or children.

You do not have to sign a Written Agreement, but if you do not sign it this might increase the Social Worker's concerns about the risk to your child or children.

If a Social Worker is worried that your child or children might be at risk and they are not reassured that you are taking the necessary steps to manage this risk safely, the Social Worker may feel it is necessary to start Child Protection procedures, to help ensure that your child or children are safe.

This does not mean that your child or children are about to be removed instantly.

Only the police have the power to remove a child without parental agreement or the agreement of the court and this can only happen in an emergency for a short period of time.

Written Agreements are not legally binding documents, but they are good evidence that you are working with Children and Family Services. They are a really good way to show the things you are doing to protect and care for your child or children.

You will be asked to sign 2 copies of the Written Agreement. 1 for yourself and 1 for Children and Family Services.

A Written Agreement will usually be printed out before you are asked to sign it. Occasionally when the Social Worker is given new information during a visit it might be necessary to draw up an agreement on the spot, or make changes to a printed agreement. If this happens you should be sent a typed copy of the new Agreement within 5 working days.

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

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