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| In the Family Court sitting at Bristol |
| In the matter of the Children Act 1989 |

**Local Authority
Social Work Evidence Template**

**(SWET)**

**Version: June 2022**

This document is intended to summarise **not** duplicate other documentation contained within the court bundle and should be succinct, approx. 20 pages in length (excluding appendices), with clear links or references to other sources of more detailed information e.g. an expert report or parenting assessment.

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| **Local Authority and Social Worker details** |
| Court case number |  |
| Filed by [local authority] | North Somerset Council |
| Social work statement number in the proceedings, e.g. 1st, 2nd (N.B. A final statement should be completed on the Final Statement Template) |  |
| Social work statement number of this witness 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 statement 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:

***LEGAL: once the report has been completed, ensure that you update the page numbers on the table by clicking on anywhere on the table contents. The “update table” tab will appear on the top left (just outside this box). Click ‘Update Table’ and select “update page numbers only” (this should be the default) and the table will automatically update.***

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## 1. **Overview of which court order or order/s are being sought**

*Welfare Checklist consideration (Section 1(3):*

*(g) The range of powers available to the court under this Act in the proceedings in question*

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

* *This is an overview, an opportunity to summarise the salient points of the child and family’s circumstances in a few paragraphs, ideally less than one page.*
* *There is no need to repeat in detail anything covered in other documents contained within the court bundle.*
* *State the order being sought from the court and why the local authority believes action is required now.*
* *Please include references to sources of other information, such as the case summary or the social work chronology to be as succinct as possible.*
* *It might be helpful to think about: past harm, future danger and complicating factors here.*
* *And, if interim order(s) are being sought, please provide evidence of why this is being requested i.e. why now, what has changed?*

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## 2. Family network composition

### 2.1 The child/ren

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name(s)**  | **Gender** | **Date of Birth** | **Child’s current placement status** | **Child’s current legal status** |
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### 2.2 Child/ren’s family network

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*This section should include family members and any other people the child/ren have significant relationships with, such as close family friends. Who is important to them? Please specify the individual’s relationship in respect of each child subject to the application. Please set out these individual’s full names, their dates of birth, their nationality, ethnicity and their current addresses unless this needs to be kept confidential for safety reasons. In such situations, send this information directly to the court as well as Cafcass,* ***do not*** *record it here.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Relationship** | **PR** | **DOB** | **Nationality** | **Ethnicity** | **Address (where safe to disclose)** |
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### 2.3 Has anyone listed, above, been identified as an alternative carer(s) for the child/ren?

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Alongside the name, it is helpful to include a brief note about how and when they were identified e.g. put forward by a parent, via a family group conference (or similar), or identified by the social worker. Detail the stage of assessment reached.*

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## 3. Child impact analysis (complete for each individual child)

### 3.1 **Description of the child’s day to day experiences during the period under consideration**

*Welfare Checklist consideration (Section 1(3)):*

*(d) His/her/their age, sex, background and any characteristics of his/hers/theirs which the court considers relevant*

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Think about what has it been like for them – what is it like for them now and why a court order is now being sought?*

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| **CHILD 1****CHILD 2****CHILD 3** |

### 3.2 The child’s needs. An analysis of the harm they face. Risk and protective factors

*Welfare Checklist consideration (Section 1(3)):*

*(b) His/her/their physical, emotional and educational needs*

*(c) The likely effect on him/her/them of any change in his/her/their circumstances*

*(e) Any harm which he/she/they has/have suffered or is/are at risk of suffering*

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

* *The social worker’s analysis of the harm the child (or each child) has suffered or is likely to suffer, and why they are at a high level of risk, should touch on the event/s that led to the application. This information should be balanced, and protective factors should be identified here too. The welfare checklist should be applied as appropriate throughout (see section 11).*
* *It may be helpful to specifically consider the interim position, harm and any changes proposed.*
* *Set out the steps taken to meet the child’s identified needs e.g. the services and support that have been and/or are being provided as well as the outcomes (or intended outcomes).*
* *The aim here is to provide an understanding of the impact of what has happened on the child (or each individual child within a sibling group).*
* *It is important to note that the same event can affect children within the same family differently, so this differential impact should be drawn out in the analysis, as well as the factors supporting a child’s resilience in the face of what has happened.*
* *The evidence used here can be primary – the direct experience of the social worker – or secondary – the social worker’s evaluation of evidence from assessments or the views of other people who know the child/ren or who have assessed their needs*

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| 3.2.1 Child/ren’s Needs |

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| **CHILD 1****CHILD 2****CHILD 3** |

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| 3.2.2 Identified risks posed to the child/ren |

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| 3.2.3 Identified protective factors for the child/ren |

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| 3.2.4 Analysis of harm and impact on the child/ren |

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### 3.3 The child/ren’s wishes and feelings and how these have been identified (include the child/ren’s own statement, where age appropriate)

*Welfare Checklist consideration (Section 1(3)):*

 *(a) The ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child/children concerned (considered in the light of his/her/their age and understanding);*

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*It is important that how, when and in what circumstances the child/ren’s views were expressed is documented here. For the very young, and those with additional needs or disabilities which may limit verbal communication, the use of creative approaches and direct observation and interpretation by social workers is crucial.*

*This space may be used to summarise the direct work that has been completed with the child and the outcome of this, who they enjoy spending time with, plus their view of the care plan and their understanding of proceedings (where applicable).*

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| **CHILD 1****CHILD 2****CHILD 3** |

### 3.4 The child/ren’s participation in the court case

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Child/ren should be as fully involved in proceedings as their needs dictate.* *Set out the appropriate level of involvement for each child in line with their best interests, with clear reasoning.*

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## 4. Analysis of the evidence of parenting capability

### 4.1 **Summary of work previously undertaken with child/ren and the family that has led to these proceedings e.g. pre-proceedings or convening a family group conference (or similar).**

*Welfare Checklist consideration (Section 1(3)):*

*(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;*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Organisation** | **Description of assessment/intervention** | **Outcome and effectiveness** |
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***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*For the child’s mother, father and anyone else with parental responsibility, please consider:*

* *Analysis of the capabilities of each parent to meet the child/ren’s needs, including relevant risk and protective factors and an analysis of the evidence of any capability gap (why is an order being sought now?) and if/how this can be bridged in the child/ren’s timescale*
* *The analysis should address the fundamental question: ‘Can this person provide this child/ren with a good enough standard of care for the rest of their childhood?’*
* *Include details of support or interventions (either past or present) from any professional agency involved with individual members of the family or the family as a whole, as applicable, detailing learning, changes, progress and the gaps that remain.*
* *If a parenting assessment is required, is in progress or has been completed, please include this information here.*
* *Indicate whether there is an international dimension and whether the relevant consulate has been notified.*
* *Please also use this space to record details of attempts to seek out absent parents.*

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| 4.2 Mother’s Parenting Capability  |

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| 4.3 Father’s Capability |

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| 4.4 Other members of the household and/or person(s) with parental responsibility |

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## 5. Analysis of the evidence of wider family and friends’ capability as alternative carers for the child/ren

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Demonstrate what is known about the capabilities of wider family members and/or friends to meet child/ren’s needs as alternative carers, including an analysis of skills or resource gaps and if/how they can be bridged in the child/ren’s timescale. Key considerations for a viability assessment:*

* *Unsuitable family network members should be excluded via a comprehensive filtering process.*
* *In considering the viability of someone to become a child/ren’s permanent carer, three additional tests should be met in line with the current Regulations that apply to proposed placements. They are:*
1. *That the carer understands in broad terms the needs of the child/ren*
2. *That they understand the level and type of care the child/ren will need throughout their childhood because of their earlier experiences*
3. *That the carer has expressed an authentic willingness to be part of the team around the child/ren until matters are fully resolved.*
* *With reference to (a), it would be helpful to share an overview of what information has been shared with potential carer(s) to enable their understanding of the issues.*
* *The genogram and ecomap (as appropriate) in Section 12 below should be comprehensive and inclusive, clearly identifying relatives who are already protective contacts for the child/ren.*
* *It may also be helpful to reference the status or outcome of viability assessments – if they have not yet started, include details of when such assessments will happen or note whether they are currently in progress.*

### 5.1 List of unsuitable family members, who were discounted

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| **Name of family member and relationship to child** | **Reason why discounted** |
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### 5.2 Capabilities of wider family members and/or friends to meet child/ren’s needs including an analysis of skills or resource gaps and if/how they can be bridged in the child/ren’s timescale.

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| **FAMILY MEMBER 1****FAMILY MEMBER 2****FAMILY MEMBER 3** |

## 6. **The proposed S31A interim care plan – the ‘realistic options’ analysis**

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

**Realistic options**

1. *To be defined as realistic, the proposed placement must be assessed as sufficiently resilient and sustainable to justify the label of ‘permanent’.  Evidence of a robust filtering process is required to ensure each option assessed as realistic meets that standard.*
2. *In care proceedings, no arbitrary limit can be placed on the number of realistic options available for the child/ren, but one option must always be preferred. A clear reason (or reasons) must always be given for this preferred status in the body of this document.*
3. *Preferred status means that on the assessments and evidence available, the preferred placement should offer the child/ren the prospect of recovering from any trauma they have experienced: personal growth and development within a family where they are guaranteed unconditional love; strong educational prospects; good health outcomes; and – as far as can be predicted – one or more positive lifelong attachment/s which promote their unique identity.*
4. *Determining the rank order between realistic options is a matter of professional judgement about the relative importance to the child/ren of various attributes of the carers and/or the relationship between the carers and the child, or the carers, child and birth parent/s. Ideally, placements should be listed in order of preference / strength.*

***If this application is for an urgent removal of an unborn baby, please complete the separate balance sheet for unborn babies. If the unborn baby is the only subject of these proceedings then remove boxes 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 (and renumber the remaining boxes) and keep the following sentence:***

I respectfully refer the Court to the separate balance sheet, which I have prepared in respect of Unborn \*\*\*\*\* taking into account the principles in *Re C (A Child) [2019] EWCA Civ 1998*.

***If there are additional children or there these proceedings do not concern an unborn baby, delete the above text and proceed with completing the boxes below.***

### 6.1 List of options discounted as they were assessed to be unrealistic.

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| **Discounted option** | **Reason why discounted** |
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### 6.2 Table of realistic placement options (Please specify whether these are interim or final care proposals)

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| --- | --- |
| **Child** | **First realistic option: [please describe option]** |
| **Factors in favour** | **Factors against** |
|  |  |  |
| **Available Support** |
|  |
|  | **Second realistic option: [please describe option]** |
| **Factors in favour** | **Factors against** |
|  |  |
| **Available Support** |
|  |
|  | **Third realistic option: [please describe option]** |
| **Factors in favour** | **Factors against** |
|  |  |
| **Available Support** |

### Add additional tables for each child in a sibling group. Only list realistic options, whatever the number ie, 1, 2, 3, etc.

### 6.3 The preferred and proposed placement option for each child or each individual child if part of a sibling group with a proportionality evaluation that is a comparison of that option again other realistic options

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

* *This is a proportionality evaluation that compares the preferred carer against the other realistic options, there is no need to repeat the information set out in the table at 6.2.*

*It is helpful to explain why siblings will not be together, if that is the recommendation, and to reflect on the ‘cons’ of the placement even if it the best option [NB: a separate sibling assessment should have been prepared].*

* *An analysis of the likely impact of the preferred option on the child/ren should be included.*

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| **CHILD 1****CHILD 2****CHILD 3** |

### 6.4 Summary of diversity and cultural considerations

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Please have regard to* [*protected characterisitcs*](https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights) *including gender, religon or belief, race, disability, and how the child/ren’s cultural identity and beliefs will be met.*

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| **CHILD 1****CHILD 2****CHILD 3** |

### 6.5 Summary of any health, wellbeing and educational considerations

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*It may be helpful to very briefly say how schooling arrangements have been considered as part of the care planning process and whether the child or one of the children has any regular medical appointments or ongoing health needs that have been factored into this decision. Consideration should also be given to ensuring the child’s interests and activities are supported.*

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| **CHILD 1****CHILD 2****CHILD 3** |

## 7. Family time/ the plan for contact

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*The contact or family time plan should involve siblings and anyone else with whom the child/ren has a significant relationship, in line with the genogram and ecomap. It must be kept under review as circumstances change.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Child** | **Who contact is with and relationship to the child** | **Frequency and duration** | **Level of support/ supervision required** | **Brief rationale for the level of contact proposed** |
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## 8. The range of views of parties and significant others

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*This section has a vital opinion-sharing purpose:*

* *Set out and analyse the individual’s views about what should happen for the child/ren in the future.*
* *Facts should be confined to those relied upon in evidence.*
* *Where possible, an indication of whether the facts are accepted or contested should be given here.*

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| 8.1 Mother’s views |

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| 8.2 Father’s views |

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| 8.3 Views of anyone else holding parental responsibility or wider family members |

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| 8.4 Views of other parties or significant others |

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

* *Significant others may include**the**Cafcass guardian, a health visitor, the IRO or court appointed experts.*
* *Where possible a short statement or email from the IRO should be included here.*
* *Please be sure to include the full name and job title of anyone providing a statement for inclusion here as well as the date on which they provided it.*

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## 9. Case management issues and proposals

### 9.1 Record case management issues here alongside details of any further proposed assessments

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Use this space to list any factors that may lead to delay, including any special factors or the vulnerabilities of key participants plus any further proposed assessments including why they are necessary. For example, this may include the assessment of family members in other countries, a parent having bail conditions, or the requirement for an interpreter or an advocate etc.*

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### 9.2 Significant events happening in the near future which are relevant for the child

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Event e.g. transitioning from primary to secondary school** | **Source of evidence/document reference** | **Significance** |
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## 10. Statement of procedural fairness

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*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.*

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## 11. The welfare checklist in full for reference

**NOT TO BE COMPLETED BELOW**

**Reference is given to the relevant section of the SWEIT**

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 their age and understanding);***To be addressed at Section 3.3 of the statement*** |
| b) | Their physical, emotional and educational needs;***To be addressed at Section 3.2 of the statement*** |
| c) | The likely effect on them of any change in his/her/their circumstances;***To be addressed at Section 3.2 of the statement*** |
| d) | Their age, sex, background and any characteristics of his/hers/theirs which the court considers relevant;***To be addressed at Section 3.1 of the statement*** |
| e) | Any harm which they have suffered or are at risk of suffering;***To be addressed at Section 3.2 of the statement*** |
| f) | How capable each of 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;***To be addressed at Section 4.1 of the statement*** |
| g) | The range of powers available to the court under this Act (Children Act 1989) in the proceedings in question.***To be addressed at Section 1 of the statement*** |

**Appendix**

## 12. The social work chronology (last two years)

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

* *List significant events which can be evidenced. It may be helpful to include details of the nature of assessments carried out, family engagement, interventions and their successes. Please note there is no need to include detailed supervision notes here.*
* *Focus on the* ***last two years*** *unless prior events are felt to be both significant and relevant, then provide a summary drawing out key incidents or events in the box, below [NB delete this guidance text before submitting].*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Incident or sequence of incidents relevant to the child’s welfare** | **Significance / Impact on the child** |
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### 12.1 If there has been involvement with the family over a longer period, please summarise this involvement here.

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Summarise historic incidents and events of relevance e.g. any previous proceedings with a connected person, if this seems helpful for context purposes and is not covered in the chronology of the last two years, above.*

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### 12.2 Genogram

***Legal will delete this guidance note:***

*Include family members and their relationship to each child, identify anyone who has been identified as a potential carer by adding ‘PC’ next to their name(s)*

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| I respectfully refer the Court to the attached Genogram created on [ ] |

**Legal Team will delete all guidance before submitting to court**

**and will update the table of contents.**