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| In the family court sitting at |
| In the matter of the children act 1989 |

**Social Work Initial evidence template (SWET) for use in urgent hearings only**

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| **Local Authority and Social Worker details** |
| Court case number |  |
| Filed by [local authority] |  |
| 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)] |  |

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

Signed:

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Date of completion:

1. **Order being sought from the courts and a summary of the reasons why?**

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| **No Order (indicate preferred option with ‘X’)** |  |
| **Interim Supervision Order**  |  |
| **Interim Care Order** |  |
| **Other Orders Sought** |  |

***Guidance to be deleted:***

* *State the order being sought from the courts and the immediate Care Plan proposed for the child/ren.*
* *Explain why the local authority believes the threshold for immediate separation has been met by outlining why action is required now e.g. police protection, possible non-accidental injury, on-going or serious incident of domestic abuse, international element or capacity to consent to Section 20 (this list is non-exhaustive).*
* *Detail presenting features and the risks to the child/ren which require their immediate and urgent separation from a parent/ caregiver.*
* *Please also state where the child/ children are now.*
* *This can be bullet points if easier.*

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| **Reasons for an urgent application for interim order(s):**  |
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1. **The impact of harm on the child/ren (including an initial analysis of risk and protective factors)**

***Guidance:***

* *Have regard to the welfare checklist when completing this section, namely the child’s age and needs, their wishes and feelings and the harm they have (or are at risk of) suffering.*
* *Set out any gap between the needs of the children and the capability of the parents in meeting those needs (without repeating any information you may put in section 3).*
* *Please briefly set out the child's daily lived experience (time permitting).*
* *Set out if and how the risks may be different for each individual child.*
* *Ensure that there is a clear distinction made between protective factors/ positives and Safety.*
* *For a new born baby ensure that you set out the likelihood of harm if they were placed in the care of their parent/s. Also set out any harm they may have experienced in utero (for instance are they born withdrawing from substances?).*

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1. **Initial analysis of the evidence of wider family and friend’s capabilities to meet the needs of the child/ren**

***Guidance:***

* *Set this out for each parent individually and as a couple (if possible) – so use sub-headings for each parent. This is for an urgent application so this is a summary only.*
* *Summarise their parenting capability/ set out what risk of harm they may pose to the child/ren or failure to protect the child/ren.*
* *What are the complicating factors for the parents/ caregivers which makes parenting/ meeting the needs of the children more difficult?*
* *Reference any work undertaken with the parents, child/ren and the wider family.*
* *Note any assessments that have been completed or that are in progress and any relevant interventions along with the effectiveness of this activity.*
* *Ensure rationale for maintaining contact / family time with anyone mentioned here is included.*
* *Cross reference to dates in the chronology and any assessments to support your analysis.*

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1. **Realistic placement option(s)**

***Guidance:***

*Briefly set out an initial paragraph outlining what the proposed placement for the child / or each individual child is. Include a brief analysis of the impact on the child of the preferred placement option and how parents and carers will be supported after the move.*

*Please use the Initial Balance Sheet Analysis to not only look at the proposed option but also to set out the analysis of the Local Authority of any other option/s that might be put to the court by other parties (for instance a Parent and Baby placement/ placement with a family member who the LA have assessed negatively).*

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| **The preferred and proposed placement**  |
| The proposed placement option for ………………. is |

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| **Realistic Placement Option – factors in favour** | **Realistic Placement Option – factors against** |
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| **Unrealistic Placement options - factors in favour (why the court or other parties may wish it to be considered)** | **Unrealistic Placement Option – factors against (why the Local Authority has discounted this option)** |
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**5. The range of views of other parties**

***Guidance:*** *This section has an important opinion-sharing purpose. Set out and analyse the individual’s views about what should happen for the child/children in the future. Stick to the known facts and where possible, give an indication of whether the facts of the case are accepted or contested.*

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| **5.1 Views of the child/ren** |
| ***Guidance****: In addition to the child/ren’s views, use this space to provide an initial indication of the appropriate level of the child/ren’s involvement in the court case, with reasons.* |

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| **5.2 Mother’s views (include full name and date of birth)** |
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| **5.3 Father’s views (include full name and date of birth)** |
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| **5.4 Views of wider family members (include full name and date of birth)** |
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1. **The family time plan**

The family time plan should seek to involve siblings and others with whom the child has a significant relationship. It must be kept under review as circumstances change.

***Guidance:*** *Detail initial arrangements for each child including:*

* *Who family time is with plus their relationship to the child/ren.*
* *What the nature of this family time arrangement will be (face to face/ video platform/ telephone/ letter etc.).*
* *The proposed frequency and duration.*
* *The location of family time.*
* *Whether support or supervision is required to facilitate family time activities.*
* *How the Local Authority will seek to ensure that the children and parents can attend and get the most from any arrangements.*
* *The arrangements may be different for each parent/ person and there may need to be some explanation as to why.*

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| **Child/ young person** | **Who family time is with and relationship of that person to the child/ young person** | **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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1. **Statement of procedural fairness**

***Guidance to be deleted:***

* *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 how this has been communicated.*
* *State whether these concerns have been understood and how the contents of this statement have been shared with them.*
* *If not, please be explicit about attempts to engage and detail here any help that has been provided, or will be provided, in order to support participation e.g. is an advocate or interpreter required?*
* *Please set out if there has been a Pre-Proceedings process and if the parents have had legal advice within this.*

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**[All guidance text to be deleted before submitting to the court]**

**APPENDIX 1: The social work chronology**

* *Recognising the gravity of the situation requiring an urgent application to the court, please list the most significant events* ***which can be evidenced*** *here.*
* *Focus on the last* ***three to six months,*** *time permitting.*
* *Make reference to any significant events in the last two years or beyond felt to be of relevance here.*
* *Please ensure that the chronology is fact not opinion.*

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| DATE | SOURCE/ EVENT/ DETAIL | IMPACT | Support offered by Social Care/  |
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**APPENDIX 2: 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 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 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 theirlife) 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.
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**Accompanying guidance for completing the SWET can be found here:** <https://adcs.org.uk/care/article/SWET>