### Introduction and purpose of the report

# Placement with Parents Agreement / Reunification Assessment

This document acts as a combined Placement with Parents Agreement and Reunification Assessment, however if the care plan for the child is to remain in the care of the Local Authority then only the Placement with Parents Sections need to be completed to allow extended Family Time. If the Care Plan is one of Reunification, then both the Placement with Parents Agreement and Reunification Assessment must be completed.

**Section 1 – Placement with Parents Agreement**

A Placement with Parents agreement is a legal document which sets out the assessment and plan to which an agreement can be given by an Assistant Director for a child who is in the care of the Local Authority and subject to a Care Order (including Interim) to stay in the care of a parent for a period exceeding 23 hours. A Placement with Parents agreement must be completed irrespective of whether the future care plan is one of Reunification.

For children in care under a Section 20 arrangement, the “Discharge from Care for a Child Under S20” policy should be followed.

**Section 2 - 4 – Reunification Assessment**

A Reunification Assessment uses an evidence-informed framework for analysing and classifying the risk of re-abuse or continuing maltreatment to inform decision-making with regard to reunification. The Framework seeks to ensure that children and young people’s best interests are central to all decision-making. Children should only be returned home when the classification is considered to be ‘Low Risk’ or ‘Medium Risk’.

Where the classification is ‘High Risk’, further support can be offered to the family to attempt to reduce the risk, but alongside this concurrent planning for possible permanent separation may be desirable, especially with young children. The risk should be reclassified within an agreed time period and Sections 2,3 and 4 should be re-completed to evidence reduction of risk to Medium before a return home.

Where the classification is ‘Severe Risk’, reunification should not be considered.

This assessment does not serve the interest of the local authority or the parent but rather

the child, [name …], and his or her best interests and his or her right to have a safe, nurturing

environment in which to develop.

The Reunification Practice Framework requires the assessment of the parent(s)’ capacity to

change and their ability to sustain that change over time as this is a critical part of decision

making and planning for reunification.

This assessment is also informed by the information gathered in the chronology and genogram.

### Assessment in relation to –

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| Child/Young Person Name/s: |  |
| DOB: |  |
| Agreement to being placed with: |  |
| Completed by and Role: |  |
| Date: |  |

**Section One: Summary of data**

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| **1.1 Summary of child’s and family’s history**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *What is the child and family history prior to child coming into care. The history provided by the family should be checked against history on ICS alongside history of professional network.* | |
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| **1.2 A summary of how and why the child came to be in care**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *What were the circumstances which resulted in the child coming into care. What were the risk factors which meant separation was undertaken and where applicable a Care Order was needed. Risk Factors (Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse, Mental Health, Neglect etc) should be listed.* | |
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| **1.3 A summary of plan for the child when he/she originally came into care and child’s understanding of why they are looked after**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *What was the initial and subsequent plans since the child has been in care, including holistic needs such as education, health and placement in addition to planning for independence.*  *Awareness of changes that have taken place in the birth family whilst in care/accommodation, understanding of what life would be like should they return home, which relationships are important to the child/young person and child’s view of parent’s new partner (if applicable*)). | |
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| **1.4 Length of time the child/young person has been Looked After and number of placements. Summary of any significant events since entry into care/accommodation impacting on factors that may lead to a reunification home.**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *Summary of child’s progress in care, placement progress, number of episodes in care* | |
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| **1.5 Child’s strengths and vulnerabilities**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *Considering health, education, emotional and behavioural development, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation and self care skills). Health, education, family (contact time too), identity, social presentation, self-care – How are these needs now being met in care, how would these needs be met by their family and are there gaps in support provided by the family, which need interventions of support* | |
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| **1.6 The child/young person’s level of attachment to the birth parent/s, including regularity and quality of family time between birth parents and child/young person whilst Looked After)**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *How has family time progressed since being in care?* | |
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| **1.7 The child/young person’s relationship with and attachment to the current caregivers.**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *Child’s relationship to current carers and what would the impact on reunification be with them and what would contact with their carers look like should they be returned home* | |
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| **1.8 Evidence of parental capacity to change and views on capacity to change in time to meet child’s needs**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  (*Attendance, attitude and motivation in relation to taking part in the assessment. Whether the problems that initially resulted in the child coming into care are acknowledged and are being addressed and whether the parents/carers acknowledge and are ready and able to address any remaining or new risk factors. Whether they are likely to be able to make the necessary changes within the child’s timescale taking account of the child’s age and developmental needs. Previous attempts at return to birth parent/s – why did these not meet the needs of the child/young person?).*  *What support has been provided to the child/family since the child has been in care to support change? What is the professional networks assessment of how the family can meet the child’s needs, should they go home?*  *List the risks/reasons for separation identified in part 1.2 and explain how progress has been made, this cannot be just self-reported and must be backed up with evidence, our observations in addition to the views of professionals.*  *Where Neglect was a historical concern, the GCP2 Assessment should be considered.*  *We can also put here any gaps which continue to need support around.* | |
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| **1.9 The impact of the wider family and environment of the home and community at this time, both in terms of protective and risk factors**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *(Please comment on the home environment and impact this would have on the child returning to live there, community resources, wider family support and the impact if a school change might be required)*:  Finance, employment, housing, community resources – What is the current situation, is it working, what would a placement/reunification mean for the family in these areas and what support is needed in these areas to support reunification.  ***Consider the Preparation for Return - Checklist***   * *Is funding needed for any equipment to ensure the home environment is ready and safe* * *Family Time arrangements – what support is needed with increased Family Time* * *Sleepover plan - who will support in caring for the child including childcare either in the child’s home or who the child might stay with?   - has a FGC been held to formalise arrangements* * *Finances (arrangements to apply for benefits, debt management, any assistance needed with one off purchases for equipment)* * *Transport arrangements* * *Health appointments* * *Housing situation – have longer term plans been explored* * *Arrangements for clubs/hobbies/activities/keeping in contact with friends* * *Safety – are there any immediate risk/hazards that need addressing* | |
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| **1.10 Outcome of police checks on adults living in the household and agency checks on everyone in the household**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *This is on the parent’s home to which the children are being planned to return to – who lives there, who will the children have regular contact with and agency checks with police and other local authorities if needed?* | |
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| **1.11 Details of proposed placement with the parent**   |  | | --- | | *DELETE*  *What timescale is the proposed placement, where will the child live and with whom? Is the placement suitable for the child’s needs? Will the child be there all the time, or stay with other friends/family as a regular occurrence? What supports will be in place (who will do what and by when) What monitoring of the PWP will be in place, including unannounced visits. What are the views of the child and their family ?* | |
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| **1.12. The aims and objectives of the proposed placement (there needs to be great clarity about why this placement is being proposed) and long-term plan for the child**  *DELETE*  *What are the timescales for the child to be with family? What does the transition timescale look like? What are the interim support arrangements from the current carers? What will be the child’s care plan through the transition? What are the plans and timescales for discharge following return?* |
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| **1.13 . Any identified areas of risk involved in the placement**  *DELETE*  *What are the identified risks of PWP and how will they be managed in placement? What agreements from family are in place to ensure safety for the child (example – should parents use alcohol, they must ensure a member of their network cares for the child.)? Has a FCG been undertaken to enable the network support to the child and parents?* |
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| **1.14. Details of supervision of placement**  *DELETE*  *What visits (including timescales of visits) will be undertaken to the child whilst with parents? Will visits be scheduled/unannounced/planned/unplanned/weekdays/weekends/evenings/mornings etc? Will anyone else visit? Are arrangements needed to support contact with non-resident parent? What would trigger a change in the visiting schedule? What would trigger removal of the child from the home and change from the reunification plan to remaining in the LA care and does the child and family fully understand this*  *A clear Safety plan must be included within this section.* |
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| **1.15 The support and services to be provided to the family and child to meet the child's needs**  *DELETE*  *What support is being provided by family and professionals including Early and Targeted Support? Can these services continue under PWP? Can they provide more services to the family if the child were no longer Looked After?*  *Any identified risks within section 1.13 need to be mitigated through current and future support/interventions.*  *Health - What is the plan for the child’s health and emotional development whilst with parents? Will additional support be needed such as referrals to local services. What will the social workers be responsible for? What will the parents/child be responsible for?*  *Education - What is the plan for the child’s education whilst with parents? Will additional support be needed to transition/settle the child in school considering change of placement. What will the social workers be responsible for? What will the parents/child be responsible for? Are there other services needed to ensure the child’s educational needs are met* |
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| **1.16. Contingency plans in case of breakdown**  *DELETE*  *What would trigger a change to this agreement? What would returning to a care placement look like? What is the contingent plan for this child and how will this be achieved?* |
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| **1.17. Views**  Child’s views –  Parents views –  Carers views -  Social Worker’s views –  Views of the IRO –  Any other linked professional (teacher, CAMHS worker) |

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| **Agreements and signatures for Placement with Parents Agreement**  Signed:(Service Manager) Date:      Agreed:(Assistant Director of Children’s Service ) Date: |

### Analysis of Risk

**Section Two: Analysing data and classification of risk for reunification**

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| **2.1 Analysis of risk and protective factors stating why future harm is likely or less likely**  (*Professional analysis of each individual child/young person’s best interests in relation to reunification, balancing individual attributes, risk and protective factors, experiences and expressed wishes and feelings as assessed above*)  *DELETE*  Use NSPCC Risk and Protective Factors tool - [Reunification: an evidence-informed framework for return home practice](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1095/reunification-practice-framework-guidance.pdf) (page 72). Refer to Section 1.2 and include how all concerns that brought the child into care are addressed now.  S*ummary of why child/young person was placed in care, what work has parent done, where parent is now and how long have changes been maintained/tested, where children are now and what your assessment/analysis is on whether it is safe for the children to return. If not, why not, if it is, are there gaps that the family needs support on*  *Split each risk/reason for separation and respond accordingly* |
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| **2.2 Summary of changes that would need to be made for reunification to occur and indication of timescales**  *DELETE*  *These are the gaps that have been identified in the analysis and what needs to be resolved to support reunification, could be bullet points with timescales* |
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| **2.3 Classification of risk for reunification of each child: Severe/High/Medium/Low**  *DELETE*  Use NSPCC risk classification traffic light tool - [Reunification: an evidence-informed framework for return home practice](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1095/reunification-practice-framework-guidance.pdf) (page 39-42).  List each risk/reason for separation and categorise –   * Low (Unlikely that abuse or neglect will re-occur), * Medium (Some possibility that abuse and/or neglect may occur), * High (Strong possibility that abuse and/or neglect will occur if child returns home), * Severe (Risk of abuse or neglect is too high to permit a return home).   A final summary category is needed for the risk of reunification as a whole –   * Low (a return home should be actively considered), * Medium (reunification should be considered, with written parental agreements, goals, and a package of preparation, support services and monitoring), * High further support and evidence of change are needed before a return home can be considered if the child’s timescale allows), * Severe (the child should remain in care). |
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### Decision Making

**Section Three: Decision-making, planning and monitoring**

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| **3.1 Decision on reunification (including legal or protective actions required).**  *DELETE*  *Overall outcome* |
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| **3.a If reunification is not possible**  *DELETE*  Summary of the next steps *(eg matching child long term with current carers/ review of contact/ support to be provided to the family to then reassess in xx months/ years time)*  *This section must be completed when the risk is High or Severe. If High, a timescale should be agreed for reclassification of the risk.* |
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| **3.b If reunification is possible**  *DELETE*  Summary of the next steps *(eg transition plan/increases in contact needed, recommended plan of work needed by Reunification Support Service, Funding requests needed – continuation of pupil premium/therapy if being used etc)* |
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### Parental Agreements

**Section Four: Parental agreements and Reunification**

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| **4.1** **What do parents need to achieve to enable reunification?**  *DELETE*  *(These need to be SMART goals –What services, interventions or support are required to facilitate reunification? What are the timescales for goals to have been achieved? What are the consequences if goals are not achieved? How will progress in achieving the goals be monitored? By whom? How often?)* |
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### Signatures and Agreements for Reunification Assessment

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**Name of Social Worker**

Date:

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**Name of Service Manager**

Date:

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**Name of Assistant Director**

Date:

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| 1. ***Title*** | *Placement with Parents / Reunification Assessment* |
| 1. ***Purpose*** | *To allow social workers/teams to assess and gain approval for Placement with Parents and/or progressing to Reunification.* |
| 1. ***Updated by*** | *Elaine Andrews Service Manager NW Looked After Team, Nicola Adesuji, Team Manager Reunification Support Service, Siobhan Walsh Assistant Director Looked After Children and Care Leavers* |
| 1. ***Approved by*** | *Siobhan Walsh* |
| 1. ***Date*** | *23.12.2024* |
| 1. ***Version*** | *V1* |
| 1. ***Status*** | *Completed* |
| 1. ***Review*** | *December 2024* |
| 1. ***Frequency*** | *Every year* |
| 1. ***Next review date*** | *December 2025* |

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| ***Approved by*** | *Siobhan Walsh* |
| ***Date*** | *23.12.2024* |
| ***Version number*** | *V1* |
| ***Status*** | *Completed* |
| ***Review frequency*** | *December 2024* |