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| **LETTER BEFORE PROCEEDINGS**Please do not ignore this letter – take it to your solicitor now.  | Wandsworth Council**Education and Social Services****Town Hall Extension****Wandsworth High Street****London SW18 2PU**Please ask for/reply to: Telephone: Fax: 020 8871 XXXXMinicom: 020 8871 Email:Web: www.wandsworth.gov.ukOur ref: Your ref: Date:  |
| *Address* |
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## Dear *(Parents Name)Ms/Mr/Mrs*

Re: WANDSWORTH CHILDRENS SERVICES CONCERNS ABOUT (*Child’s Name)*

 – LETTER BEFORE PROCEEDINGS

I am writing to tell how concerned the London Borough of Wandsworth Children’s Services have become about the care of your children [insert names of children incl any unborn]. We wish to undertake work with you under the PLO ( Public law Outline ) which is the step before going to court and the aim of this work is to try and support you to achieve change so that court proceedings do not have to be started

This letter is not intended to cause you any undue distress; on the contrary it is hoped that it will give you sufficient information to ensure you understand what we mean by doing pre-proceedings work in the weeks to come. I would like to emphasise that the local authority wants to work in partnership with you and help you to make the changes we think are necessary for your baby to feel a sense of belonging, feel safe and secure, and know that you will help your child understand themselves, their family and their life. Having these things as a child will help your child as they grow older and eventually becomes an adult. This letter contains the local authority’s recommendations about what needs to happen although as the father/ mother, you might have ideas about additional changes that you think are also necessary. We want to hear these and welcome your input.

**Here are the main things we are worried about**

*(These need to be broken down into specific concerns and must be in* ***plain English****) This sentence must be deleted on sending*

**What Children’s Services has done to try to help**

*(Bullet points of all actions taken / services and support offered, by whom and when) This sentence must be deleted on sending*

**Get your family and friends involved**

We would encourage you to involve your family and friends in this process, because they might be able to provide you with emotional and practical support both now and in the future. You should let us know immediately who the people in your family and friendship network are, so we can contact them about discussing what support they can give you.

**An important meeting about what will happen next**

I would like to invite you to attend a meeting to discuss the contents of this letter on [date and time] or virtuallyvia Microsoft Office Teams. At this meeting we will tell you about our concerns and our expectations of you, including the changes we think need to be made. We would very much like to hear your views about what support you believe would be useful to you during this process and throughout our involvement. If this is not convenient please let me know and we can work together to find a more suitable time. You can also bring someone with you to this meeting to support you, but I would ask that you tell me who this will be before the meeting.

**Get legal advice**

It is very important that you seek legal advice from a solicitor who specialises in public family law without delay. A solicitor can give you advice on your legal rights, your options and the PLO process in general. You are also entitled to bring your solicitor with you to the meeting. If you give your solicitor this letter, you will not have to pay.

 We have sent with this letter a list of local legal aid solicitors who work with children and families to help you find a solicitor. They are all separate from Children’s Services. Also included with this letter is an information leaflet which should help to explain the pre-proceedings and PLO process.

**Local Authority Proposals about what should happen next**

The Local Authority wants you to:

**What will happen if you do nothing**

If you do nothing we will have to think about going to court. If you do not answer this letter or come to the meeting, we will go to court as soon as we can to make sure (Child’s Name) issafe.

Information your solicitor will need is:

Local Authority Legal Contact: (Solicitor’s Name)

Address & Telephone number:

I know this will be a difficult letter to read and that this meeting may feel frightening. It is important for you to attend and I want to support you to come. If you need help with childcare, or transport to the meeting, do let me know and I’ll try to help. Please do not hesitate to phone (Social Worker’s Name) or me if you want to talk about this letter.

Yours sincerely

Team Manager

Enter Team

cc. (Solicitor’s Name)

 (Service Manager)