



Case Examiner Decision
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FTPS-23792

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The role of the case examiners

The case examiners perform a filtering function in the fitness to practise process, and their primary role is to determine whether the case ought to be considered by adjudicators at a formal hearing. The wider purpose of the fitness to practise process is not to discipline the social worker for past conduct, but rather to consider whether the social worker's current fitness to practise might be impaired because of the issues highlighted. In reaching their decisions, case examiners are mindful that Social Work England's primary objective is to protect the public.

Case examiners apply the 'realistic prospect' test. As part of their role, the case examiners will consider whether there is a realistic prospect:

- the facts alleged could be found proven by adjudicators.
- adjudicators could find that one of the statutory grounds for impairment is engaged.
- adjudicators could find the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

If the case examiners find a realistic prospect of impairment, they consider whether there is a public interest in referring the case to a hearing. If there is no public interest in a hearing, the case examiners can propose an outcome to the social worker. We call this accepted disposal and a case can only be resolved in this way if the social worker agrees with the case examiners' proposal.

Case examiners review cases on the papers only. The case examiners are limited, in that, they are unable to hear and test live evidence, and therefore they are unable to make findings of fact.

Decision summary

Decision summary	
Preliminary outcome	20 October 2025 Information requested Submissions requested
2 nd Preliminary outcome	19 December 2025 Accepted disposal proposed – suspension order (3 years)
Final outcome	06 January 2026 Accepted disposal – suspension order (3 years)

Executive summary

The case examiners have reached the following conclusions:

1. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1 (a to d inclusive) and 2 being found proven by the adjudicators.
2. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1 (a to d inclusive) and 2 being found to amount to the statutory grounds of lack of competence or capability.

3. For regulatory concerns 1 (a to d inclusive) and 2 there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators determining that the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

The case examiners did not consider it to be in the public interest for the matter to be referred to a final hearing and that the case could be concluded by way of accepted disposal.

As such, the case examiners requested that the social worker be notified of their intention to resolve the case with a suspension order of 3 years. The case examiners were subsequently informed that the social worker had agreed to this proposal, accepting the terms in full.

Having again reviewed their decision, the case examiners have concluded that an accepted disposal by way of a suspension order of 3 years' duration remains a fair and proportionate disposal, and the minimum necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.

The case examiners have considered all of the documents made available within the evidence bundle. Key evidence is referred to throughout their decision and the case examiners' full reasoning is set out below.

Anonymity and redaction

Elements of this decision have been marked for redaction in line with our Fitness to Practise Publications Policy. Text in **blue** will be redacted only from the published copy of the decision and will therefore be shared with the complainant in their copy. Text in **red** will be redacted from both the complainant's and the published copy of the decision.

In accordance with Social Work England's fitness to practise proceedings and registration appeals publications policy, the case examiners have anonymised the names of individuals to maintain privacy. A schedule of anonymity is provided below for the social worker and complainant and will be redacted if this decision is published.

Colleague A	[REDACTED] - Unqualified social care practitioner
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Professional A	[REDACTED] – Senior Practitioner
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Service user A

Service user B

Service user C

Service user D

The complaint and our regulatory concerns

The initial complaint

The complainant	The complaint was raised by the social worker's former employer.
Date the complaint was received	17 September 2024
Complaint summary	The complainant raised several broad ranging concerns. The specific issues raised by the complainant are captured in the regulatory concerns section.

Regulatory concerns

Regulatory concerns are clearly identified issues that are a concern to the regulator. The regulatory concerns for this case are as follows:

Whilst working as a social worker, between September 2023 and April 2025 you:

1. Failed to recognise and appropriately respond to risks in your practise which left you, a colleague and/or service users at risk of harm by:
 - a. Not appropriately sharing information with colleagues or escalating concerns to managers.
 - b. Disregarding the views of individuals with lived experience of social work and other professionals.
 - c. Disregarding management instructions in your approach to cases and/or not seeking guidance when necessary.
 - d. Not demonstrating professional curiosity.
2. Failed to maintain clear, accurate and up to date case recordings.

Grounds of impairment

The matters outlined in Regulatory Concern (1), (1a), (1b), (1c), (1d) and (2) amount to the statutory ground of [REDACTED] lack of competence or capability.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of [REDACTED] lack of competence or capability.

Preliminary issues

Investigation	
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has been notified of the grounds for investigation?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has had reasonable opportunity to make written representations to the investigators?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the case examiners satisfied that they have all relevant evidence available to them, or that adequate attempts have been made to obtain evidence that is not available?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the case examiners satisfied that it was not proportionate or necessary to offer the complainant the opportunity to provide final written representations; or that they were provided a reasonable opportunity to do so where required.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Requests for further information or submissions, or any other preliminary issues that have arisen
<p><u>20 October 2025</u></p> <p>The case examiners have made the following amendments to the regulatory concerns:</p> <p>Whilst working as a social worker, between September 2023 and April 2025 you:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Failed to recognise and appropriately respond to risks in your practise which left you, a colleague and/or service users at risk of harm by:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Not appropriately sharing information with colleagues or escalating concerns to managers.

- b. Disregarding the views of individuals with lived experience of social work and other professionals.
- c. Disregarding management instructions in your approach to cases and/or not seeking guidance when necessary.
- d. Not demonstrating professional curiosity.

2. Failed to maintain clear, accurate and up to date case recordings.

Grounds of impairment

The matters outlined in Regulatory Concern (1), (1a), (1b), (1c), (1d) and (2) amount to the statutory ground of **lack of competence or capability**.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of **lack of competence or capability**.

The case examiners are mindful of their guidance (paragraph 95), which states that:

“Lack of competence or capability is a separate and distinct category of impairment from misconduct. Lack of competence or capability suggests a standard of professional performance which is unacceptably low. It means a social worker has demonstrated that they may lack the knowledge and skills to do their work in a safe and effective manner. This must usually be demonstrated over a fair sample of a social worker’s work. There is no set definition of ‘fair sample’, but it suggests a sample sufficient to show the social worker’s usual standard of work over a period of time.”

The case examiners consider that both the broad ranging and specific nature of the regulatory concerns and the time period to which they relate may indicate that the social worker in this case, who was a newly qualified social worker on an ASYE programme, and subject to performance reviews, could lack the knowledge and skills to do their work in a safe and effective manner.

The case examiners consider the amendments made to be material, and they are therefore referring the case back to investigators so that the social worker may be offered opportunity to make submissions.

12 December 2025

The case examiners resumed their consideration of the case.

The realistic prospect test

Fitness to practise history

The case examiners have been informed that there is no previous fitness to practise history.

Decision summary

Is there a realistic prospect of the adjudicators finding the social worker's fitness to practise is impaired?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

The case examiners have determined that there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1 (a to d inclusive) and 2 being found proven, that those concerns could amount to the statutory grounds of a lack of competence or capability, and that the social worker's fitness to practise could be found impaired.

Reasoning

Facts

Regulatory concern 1

It is alleged that between September 2023 and April 2025 the social worker failed to recognise and appropriately respond to risks in their practise which left them, a colleague and/or service users at risk of harm by:

- a. Not appropriately sharing information with colleagues or escalating concerns to managers.
- b. Disregarding the views of individuals with lived experience of social work and other professionals.
- c. Disregarding management instructions in your approach to cases and/or not seeking guidance when necessary.

d. Not demonstrating professional curiosity.

The case examiners have been provided with evidence that includes the following:

- An email from the complainant to Social Work England (dated 02 April 2025), stating that the social worker:
 - Twice visited a service user without informing their supervisor that the service presented with paranoid ideations.
 - Was given advice not to visit the aforementioned service user without being accompanied with a more experienced social worker, but visited them without being accompanied, regardless of the advice. Subsequently, the social worker contacted a colleague to say the service user was not allowing them to leave the property.
- A cover letter for the evidence relating to service user A (provided by the complainant), stating that the social worker:
 - Had been advised by their previous Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) assessor to request a nursing assessment and to consider a care placement due to the concerns around service user A's needs. The social worker was aware that the service user was requesting to go into a placement and that the care provider was struggling to meet their needs. However, despite ongoing conversations, the social worker failed to properly assess or support the client and had their own narrative that their needs could be met at home.
 - Did not complete an assessment despite being asked to do so and instead completed a review and amended the support plan, stating that service user A did not have care needs that warranted 24-hour care support. This was despite the care provider supplying the local authority with details of the intensity of the support required and nurses' concerns. Due to the social worker not adhering to the assessment process and not adequately considering information from other professionals or listening to service user A, service user A's assessment and move was delayed, resulting in a deterioration of their physical health and emotional wellbeing.

- A case note in respect of service user A, detailing that their current care provision included up to 2 carers, numerous visits and several hours of care being provided each day.
- A supervision record (dated 22/01/24), stating that service user A is requesting longer term care and wants to go into care – the social worker to ensure assessment and support for long term care.
- A case note (dated 08/02/24) stating that service user A had informed nurses that his care needs were not being met.
- A case note (transfer summary dated 26/02/24) in which the social worker states that service user A's needs are being met by in-house carers and that they do not require 24/7 support and are happy with the care package that is in place – the social worker concludes that service user A's needs are being met.
- A case note (dated 11/04/24) detailing that District nurses were again informed that service user A is still saying they want to move and has always maintained this.
- A case note (dated 30/04/24), indicating that service user A and the community nurse feel that service user A would benefit from moving to a care home where there are activities.
- A cover letter for the evidence relating to service user B (provided by the complainant), stating that:
 - College wanted to make a safeguarding referral for service user B due to mental health concerns. These concerns followed comments having allegedly been made by service user B about wanting to harm people and animals [REDACTED] [REDACTED]; however, the social worker told the senior practitioner the safeguarding referral was in respect of threats made (no details given) and concerns that service user B had nothing to do outside of college.
 - The social worker was asked to gather more information, and in the meantime, professionals contacted the service to say the social worker was not listening to them or acting on the concerns.
 - When questioned, the social worker could not answer why they had not shared all the relevant information with the advanced practitioner.

- Consequently, other professionals lost confidence in the social worker and excluded them from discussions and bypassed them in favour of the advanced practitioner.
 - The social worker continued to believe service user B should have a voluntary placement with animals, even though they had reported wanting to kill them.
- A cover letter for the evidence relating to service user C (provided by the complainant), stating that:
 - There was evidence in supervision notes that the social worker was told not to visit Service User C alone and asked what the purpose was of 2 previous home visits as no concerns had been raised with a senior practitioner. The document states that it was clear in the case notes that there were red flags and the social worker failed to recognise the escalation in Service User C's presentation.
 - The social worker hadn't read the full case history on the MOSAIC recording system, or the referral that had been made.
 - The social worker's failure to recognise Service User C's paranoid behaviour led to a negative outcome, exacerbated the situation and caused emotional harm to Service User C.
- A cover letter for the evidence relating to service user D (provided by the complainant), stating that:
 - The social worker disregarded management instruction and remained in the property when the police left an incident involving service user D. The incident left colleague A feeling traumatised and anxious about going out on visits with other newly qualified social workers.
- A statement from colleague A, confirming the above, as well as case notes (dated 15/01/24), which also confirm the above.

In their final submissions (dated 04/11/25), the social worker states that they accept the concerns, but:

"If I had a better placement, I feel maybe I would not be in this position. On reflection I also feel I should have worked in housing, as I have experience which I could have better used and seek new knowledge and experience."

Having reviewed all the evidence provided to them, the case examiners are satisfied that the social worker failed to recognise and appropriately respond to risks in their practise which left them, a colleague and/or service users at risk of harm by not appropriately sharing information with colleagues or escalating concerns to managers; disregarding the views of individuals with lived experience of social work and other professionals; disregarding management instructions in their approach to cases and/or not seeking guidance when necessary; and not demonstrating professional curiosity.

The case examiners have therefore concluded there is a realistic prospect that regulatory concern 1 (a to d inclusive) would be found proven by adjudicators.

Regulatory concern 2

It is alleged that between September 2023 and April 2025 the social worker failed to maintain clear, accurate and up to date case recordings.

The case examiners have been provided with evidence that includes the following:

- A case note (dated 01/08/23) in the form of an email from 1 of service user A's adult children. The email indicates there was previous communication between the social worker and service user A's adult child in respect of service user A's wishes and feelings.
- A case note (dated 25/08/23) in respect of a home visit. The case note refers to a previous visit, 2 weeks earlier, but there is no record of that visit.
- Case notes that show any actions or contact made by the social worker when they were allocated the case of service user C. The first case note details a phone call that was made to service user C by the social worker, dated 19/12/24. The second note entered by the social worker, dated 31/01/25, details a home visit that the social worker completed; however, the note only details what the social worker and the Service User C discussed and appears to be nothing to do with the referral. Then, 5 days later, the social worker added notes to show what was discussed in relation to social care involvement.
- The next case note is dated 14/02/25 and shows what the social worker discussed with service user C. This is the same with the note dated the 05/03/25, which was the home visit that the social worker completed, after they were told not to visit. The next note is dated 28/03/25 and details a phone call that service user C had with the service manager in relation to the incident

that occurred when the social worker completed a home visit. There is no record of the visit when the incident occurred.

- Case notes from January 2025 that show any actions or contact made by the social worker when they were allocated the case. The only case notes that have been provided were entered by colleague A and professional A and detail the incident that occurred on the 03/01/25. There are no case notes entered by the social worker.
- Multiple case notes that lack a coherent narrative, clarity, and analysis, to help the reader understand the service user's needs.

In their final submissions (dated 04/11/25), the social worker states that they accept the concerns, but as noted above, they feel that they would not be in this position had they had a better / more suitable placement.

Having reviewed all the evidence provided to them, the case examiners are satisfied that between September 2023 and April 2025 the social worker failed to maintain clear, accurate and up to date case recordings.

The case examiners have therefore concluded there is a realistic prospect that regulatory concern 2 would be found proven by adjudicators.

Grounds



Competence or Capability

The case examiners' guidance explains that lack of competence or capability suggests a standard of professional performance which is unacceptably low. It means a social worker has demonstrated that they may lack the knowledge and skills to do their work in a safe and effective manner. This must usually be demonstrated over a fair sample of a social worker's work. There is no set definition of 'fair sample', but it suggests a sample sufficient to show the social worker's usual standard of work over a period of time.

The guidance also explains that single episodes or incidents do not normally suggest a social worker lacks the knowledge or skills to be competent. However, in exceptional circumstances, a single episode or incident could happen because of a lack of knowledge or competence in a fundamental principle of social work. This may raise concerns for public safety.

In this instance, the case examiners are not satisfied that the social worker has demonstrated that they have the knowledge and skills to do their work in a safe and effective manner, and that the period in which the concerns relate to (between September 2023 and April 2025) does represent a fair sample. This is because the social worker was newly qualified at the time of the concerns (being first registered in July 2023), and therefore the concerns span almost the entirety of their career as a qualified social worker.

Having concluded that the appropriate statutory ground on which to proceed is a lack of competence or capability, the case examiners went on to consider whether the evidence suggests the social worker's conduct represents a significant departure from these statutory grounds.

In light of evidence of the social worker's actions/omissions that the case examiners have outlined during their consideration of the facts, the case examiners are satisfied

that there this evidence may suggest that the social worker may have lacked sufficient knowledge and skills to complete all the required aspects of their work safely and effectively at the time the concerns arose. For example, the allegations indicate that the social worker failed to recognise and appropriately respond to risks in their practise which left them, a colleague and/or service users at risk of harm; and failed to maintain clear, accurate and up to date case recordings, which could have adversely impacted the safeguarding of service users, as well as other professionals.

Impairment

Assessment of impairment consists of 2 elements:

1. The personal element, established via an assessment of the risk of repetition.
2. The public element, established through consideration of whether a finding of impairment might be required to maintain public confidence in the social work profession, or in the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

Personal element

With regards to the concerns before the regulator, the case examiners have given thought to their guidance, and they note that they should give consideration to whether the matters before the regulator are easily remediable, and whether the social worker has demonstrated insight and/or conducted remediation to the effect that the risk of repetition is highly unlikely.

Whether the conduct can be easily remedied

The case examiners are satisfied that although the alleged conduct in this case is serious, it could nevertheless be remedied. This could be achieved, for example, via a demonstration of significant reflection and wider insight, along with engagement with relevant training, and evidence of performance improvements.

Insight and remediation

In this instance, the social worker has admitted the regulatory concerns and that their fitness to practice is impaired. However, the case examiners have not been provided with any evidence of further insight or remediation, with the social worker indicating only that they “would *like* to improve this (*being currently impaired*)” and *would like* advice on how they should go about this”.

Risk of repetition

Having concluded that the social worker's insight is limited to an admission of the concerns and that they have not provided any evidence of remediation, the case examiners have concluded that the risk of repetition is high.

Public element

The case examiners have next considered whether the social worker's actions have the potential to undermine public confidence in the social work profession, or the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

The case examiners have outlined their view that the alleged conduct in this case is serious, that the regulatory concerns could amount to the statutory grounds of a lack of competence or capability, and that as a result of the social worker's actions and/or omissions, both service users and colleagues were placed at risk of and/or suffered actual harm. As a result, the case examiners consider that adjudicators may find that public confidence would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made.

Accordingly, there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding the social worker's fitness to practise to be currently impaired.

The public interest

Decision summary

Is there a public interest in referring the case to a hearing?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Referral criteria

Is there a conflict in the evidence that must be resolved at a hearing?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the social worker dispute any or all of the key facts of the case?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is a hearing necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession, and/or to uphold the professional standards of social workers?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Additional reasoning

Case examiner guidance states that if the case examiners have found there is no public interest in the case being referred to a hearing, they may then consider whether an accepted disposal may be appropriate (paragraph 181).

The guidance goes on to state that for a case to be concluded through accepted disposal, the social worker must accept the key facts and that that their fitness to practise is currently impaired. In this instance:

- There is no conflict in the evidence that requires resolving at a hearing.
- The social worker accepts the key facts.
- The social worker accepts that they are currently impaired.

Consequently, the case examiners have determined that accepted disposal is the appropriate outcome in this case.

Interim order



Accepted disposal

Case outcome	
Proposed outcome	No further action <input type="checkbox"/>
	Advice <input type="checkbox"/>
	Warning order <input type="checkbox"/>
	Conditions of practice order <input type="checkbox"/>
	Suspension order <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Removal order <input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed duration	3 years

Reasoning

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of the regulatory concerns being found proven by adjudicators. Furthermore, they found a realistic prospect that the concerns, if proven, could amount to the statutory ground of lack of competence and capability.

The case examiners have also found a realistic prospect that adjudicators could find the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

In considering the appropriate outcome in this case, the case examiners had regard to Social Work England's Sanctions Guidance (2022) and reminded themselves that the purpose of sanction is not to punish the social worker, but to protect the public and the wider public interest.

In determining the most appropriate and proportionate outcome in this case, the case examiners considered mitigating and aggravating factors and then went on to consider the available options in ascending order of seriousness.

Mitigating factors

- No previous adverse fitness to practise.
- Some evidence of a lack of adequate training and preparation to undertake a statutory social work role.

Aggravating factors

- Limited evidence of insight.
- Lack of evidence of remediation.
- There was harm / a risk of harm to the public.

Outcomes

No further action

The case examiners considered taking no further action. However, the case examiners considered that this would not be appropriate in this instance because they are not satisfied that a finding of impairment alone would protect the wider public interest.

Advice or Warning

The case examiners next considered whether offering advice or a warning would be sufficient.

Advice will normally set out the steps a social worker should take to address the behaviour that led to the regulatory proceedings. The case examiners believe that issuing advice is not sufficient to mark the seriousness with which they view the alleged misconduct, and again it would not adequately protect the public.

A warning order implies a clearer expression of disapproval of the social worker's conduct than an advice order. However, the case examiners are not satisfied that a warning order would send a strong enough message to the social worker, and particularly, the wider social work profession. Furthermore, a warning order would again not adequately protect the public.

Conditions of practice

The case examiners next considered a conditions of practice order.

The case examiners have consulted their guidance, which states conditions of practice may be appropriate in cases where (all of the following):

- The social worker has demonstrated insight.
- The failure or deficiency in practice is capable of being remedied.

- Appropriate, proportionate, and workable conditions can be put in place.
- Decision makers are confident the social worker can and will comply with the conditions.
- The social worker does not pose a risk of harm to the public by being in restricted practice.

In this instance, the case examiners have determined that the failures or deficiencies in practice are capable of being remedied. However, they note that the social worker has demonstrated limited insight.

The case examiners are also not satisfied that appropriate, proportionate and workable conditions, that the social worker can and will comply with, can be put in place. This is because the regulatory concerns highlight a failure to follow management instructions, and as noted, the social worker has demonstrated limited insight. Further, the social worker has indicated that they do not have any current plans to return to social work [REDACTED].

Finally, the case examiners have concluded that a conditions of practice order would not adequately protect the public.

Suspension order

The case examiners went on to consider whether a suspension order might be an appropriate sanction.

The case examiners have considered the guidance, which states that suspension may be appropriate where (all of the following):

- The concerns represent a serious breach of the professional standards.
- The social worker has demonstrated some insight.
- There is evidence to suggest the social worker is willing and able to resolve or remediate their failings.

In this instance, the case examiners have concluded that the social worker's alleged actions suggest that they may have lacked sufficient knowledge and skills to complete all the required aspects of their work safely and effectively at the time the concerns arose, and that the social worker has demonstrated only limited insight. The social worker's responses suggest that they remain unsure what steps to take to

improve their practice, bringing into question any improvements in their competence or capability during the course of the investigation.

As such, the case examiners consider that a suspension order would be appropriate in this instance.

Having concluded that a suspension order is the appropriate outcome in this case, the case examiners went on to consider the length of time for the order.

The case examiners consider that 3 years would allow the social worker sufficient time to develop further insight, and demonstrate further remediation, for example, by completing training and seeking relevant and appropriate employment opportunities to develop their practice and confidence.

The case examiners consider that given the nature and seriousness of the concerns, any shorter period would not sufficiently allow the social worker to fully remediate; nor would it adequately protect the public.

Removal order

The case examiners are aware from their guidance that removal orders are not available in cases where the statutory grounds under consideration are a lack of competence or capability.

To conclude, the case examiners have decided to propose to the social worker a suspension order of 3 years duration. They will now notify the social worker of their intention and seek the social worker's agreement to dispose of the matter accordingly.

The social worker will be offered 28 days to respond.

If the social worker does not agree, or if the case examiners revise their decision regarding the public interest in this case, the matter will proceed to a final hearing.

Recommendations for the social worker

Before any review of the proposed suspension order, the case examiners suggest that it may be helpful for the social worker if they could provide evidence that they had undertaken steps that would facilitate a safe and effective return to the register without restriction.

The steps may include:

- Preparing a detailed reflective piece in respect of the concerns in this case, including what they have learned.
- Providing evidence of relevant training and other professional development, along with their reflections on what they have learned, and how their performance has improved.
- Providing any available testimonies of their performance in a post aligned to social work, or where similar skills are employed.

Response from the social worker

On 06 January 2026 the social worker accepted the proposed disposal, confirming that they:

- Had read the case examiners' decision and the accepted disposal guide.
- Admitted the key facts set out in the case examiner decision, and that their fitness to practise is impaired.
- Understood the terms of the proposed disposal of their fitness to practise case and accepted them in full.

Case examiners' response and final decision

In light of the social worker's acceptance of the suspension order, the case examiners have considered again whether there would be a public interest in referring this matter to a public hearing. They remain of the view that this is unnecessary for the reasons set out earlier in the decision.

Having been advised of the social worker's response, the case examiners have again turned their minds as to whether a suspension order remains the most appropriate means of disposal for this case. They have reviewed their decision, paying particular regard to the overarching objectives of Social Work England, i.e., the protection of the public, the maintenance of public confidence in the social work profession, and the

maintenance of proper standards. Having done so, they remain of the view that an accepted disposal by way of a suspension order of 3 years' duration is a fair and proportionate disposal and is the minimum necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.

