



**Case Examiner Decision
Alec John Lacy – SW28883
FTPS-21695**

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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	2 December 2025
	Accepted disposal proposed - conditions of practice order (1 year)
Final outcome	28 January 2026
	Accepted disposal - conditions of practice order (1 year)

Executive summary

The case examiners have reached the following conclusions:

1. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 2 and 3.3 being found proven by the adjudicators. [REDACTED]
2. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 2 and 3.3 being found to amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct.
3. For regulatory concerns 2 and 3.3, 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 conditions of practice order of 1 year. The social worker has accepted this proposal and requested that their comments were recorded, these have been added at the end of this decision. Having revisited the

public interest in the case, the case examiners determined that a conditions of practice order of 1 year remained the most appropriate outcome in this case.

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.

Child A	[REDACTED]
Family B	[REDACTED]
Child C	[REDACTED]
Child D	[REDACTED]

The complaint and our regulatory concerns

The initial complaint

The complainant	The complaint was raised by the social worker's former employer, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Date the complaint was received	24 March 2023
Complaint summary	Concerns were raised on 24 March 2023 by the social worker's previous employer, Cheshire West and Chester Council. They raised concerns stating that the social worker potentially put children that they had case responsibility for at risk of harm. The local authority (LA) provided four case examples where they allege that social worker failed to recognise and/or respond to risk appropriately and failed to manage and/or plan their cases appropriately.

Regulatory concerns

Whilst registered as a social worker:

RC2 On/around/between 27 August 2021 to 16 January 2023, you failed to adequately safeguard [REDACTED] Child A by not reporting and/or escalating one or more missing person episode(s).

RC3 On/around/between 5 May 2021 to 7 March 2023, you failed to adequately safeguard one or more service user(s) by:

3.3 Failing to maintain adequate case records.

The matters outlined in regulatory concerns [REDACTED] and RC2 amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

The matters outlined in regulatory concern RC3 amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct and/or lack of competence or capability.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct and/or lack of competence or capability.

The case examiners have made minor amendments to the regulatory concerns to adhere to the schedule of anonymity.

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"/>

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 2 and 3.3 being found proven, that those concerns could amount to the statutory ground of misconduct, and that the social worker's fitness to practise could be found impaired.

Reasoning

Facts

RC2 On/around/between 27 August 2021 to 16 January 2023, you failed to adequately safeguard Child A by not reporting and/or escalating one or more missing person episode(s).

The case examiners have been provided with case notes regarding Child A for the period set out above. They note that around September 2021 and February 2022 there are incidents of Child A being reported missing by his carers, with no recorded follow up from the social worker. In November and December 2022 Child A appears to be regularly going missing and engaging in behaviour which places both them and others at risk. There are no recorded responses to this from the social worker, other than their usual statutory visits.

The case examiners have considered what action would have been expected of the social worker and have been provided with the Pan Cheshire Joint Protocol for children who go missing. This sets out the expected responses from the police, carers and social workers and notes “*throughout the process in this protocol, residential carers and social workers must keep a full record of all actions taken and messages received and given*”. There are also instructions given to request trigger meetings or strategy meetings when a child is persistently missing, which could have been actioned if the social worker had escalated the concerns to their line manager.

The case examiners note in particular there is evidence from the carers of Child A that they informed the social worker on 7 November 2022 that Child A was missing but the social worker did not record this information. The social worker was absent from work on 8 November, and it was not until the line manager spoke to the carers on 9 November that it became apparent Child A was still missing and no-one at social care had been aware of this, in the absence of the social worker.

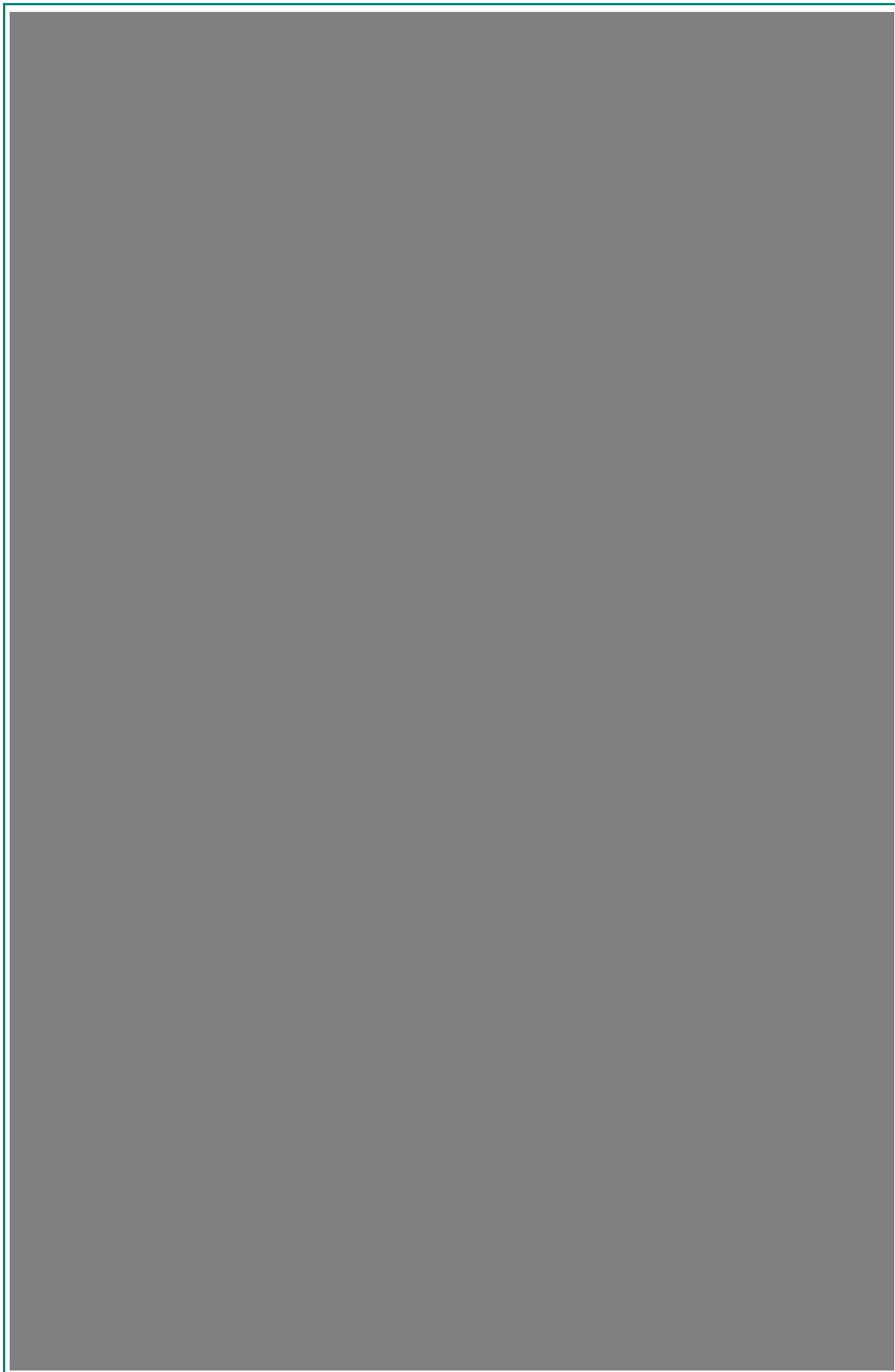
The case examiners have established there appears to have been a failure to take the required action and have then considered whether this represented a failure to

safeguard. The evidence is clear that Child A was at significant risk of harm during the period of November and December 2022 in particular and that an inadequate response to the missing person episodes would constitute a failure to safeguard.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of this regulatory concern being found proven, should the matter go forward to a hearing.

RC3 On/around/between 5 May 2021 to 7 March 2023, you failed to adequately safeguard one or more service user(s) by:







3.3 Failing to maintain adequate case records.

The case examiners have been provided with the recording policy for the local authority which sets out that “*case records must be written up and be recorded on ESCR within 5 working days of the event*”, unless the records relate to a child protection investigation.

The case examiners have been provided with case notes for Child A, C, D and Family B, all of which evidence periods where there appears to be a lack of case recording.

Case records made by other colleagues reference action taken by the social worker but there are not always records of this from the social worker.

The social worker accepts this concern and states this was not unusual within their team, that social workers were behind with recording and so given time to catch up. The social worker submits they had issues with the electronic recording system and planned to catch up on their recording but then made the decision to resign.

The case examiners will consider this mitigation in their consideration of grounds, but they are satisfied there is evidence to support the concern that the social worker failed to maintain adequate records. In considering whether this issue represented a failure to safeguard, the case examiners note that some of the omissions occurred at a time of crisis for the children and family, when various colleagues within the service needed to be fully informed about the circumstances of, and risks to the service users.

The case examiners are therefore satisfied there is a realistic prospect of this regulatory concern being found proven, should the matter go forward to a hearing.



To conclude, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding regulatory concerns 2 and 3.3 proven.

Grounds

Regulatory concern 3.3 has been presented on the grounds of misconduct and/or a lack of competence or capability. The case examiners' guidance encourages them to (where possible) identify the appropriate statutory ground to proceed on, as this

provides clarity as to the basis of Social Work England's case against the social worker.

Lack of 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.

The case examiners are of the view that while they have been provided with concerns which span a lengthy period, the concerns relate to four children/families and the social worker was generally allocated to around 20 children at any one time.

Therefore, they are of the view that the test for a fair sample is not met. Additionally, the evidence suggests that the social worker was capable of maintaining adequate case records and the case examiners have been provided with good quality case notes, written by the social worker. It appears that in general the social worker knew what was expected but did not consistently complete their work.

The case examiners are not satisfied there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concern 3.3 being found to amount to the statutory ground of lack of competence or capability.

Misconduct

The case examiners have next considered whether regulatory concerns 2 and 3.3 could amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

The case examiners are aware that there is no legal definition of misconduct, but it generally would consist of serious acts or omissions, which suggest a significant departure from what would be expected of the social worker in the circumstances.

To help them decide if the evidence suggests a significant departure, the case examiners have considered the following standards, which were applicable at the time of the concerns.

As a social worker, I will:

3.1 Work within legal and ethical frameworks, using my professional authority and judgement appropriately.

3.8 Clarify where the accountability lies for delegated work and fulfil that responsibility when it lies with me.

3.9 Make sure that relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about identified risks and the outcomes and implications of assessments and decisions I make.

3.11 Maintain clear, accurate, legible and up to date records, documenting how I arrive at my decisions.

3.12 Use my assessment skills to respond quickly to dangerous situations and take any necessary protective action.

The case examiners acknowledge that a referral was made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who concluded that the concerns were unsubstantiated, as “*there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove harm to a child based on the delay in [the social worker] completing tasks to the required standard, this is a practice issue*”.

The case examiners note that the social worker has referenced this decision in their submissions, and they advise that the case examiners consideration is distinct to the LADO process in that they do not only consider harm caused but potential harm and whether professional standards have been maintained.

Regulatory concern 2

The case examiners have set out in their consideration of facts the evidence that Child A was at significant risk due to going missing regularly and a robust and structured response was necessary. The social worker submits they were not aware of the policy or protocol in relation to missing young people. The case examiners are of the view that whilst this may be sufficient mitigation for an isolated incident, in response to persistent missing episodes, it would be reasonable for the social worker to have sought advice or guidance, either by seeking out the relevant policy or escalating to their line manager. The case notes contain evidence of a duty worker responding to one of the missing episodes by visiting Child A and discussing the risks

with them, so it appears there were colleagues within the team who understood the procedure.

The case examiners acknowledge that the social worker submits they did not receive sufficient supervision and the evidence provided supports this. It appears that the social worker did not receive formal supervision from August 2022 to January 2023. However, whilst the case examiners fully appreciate the importance of reflective and good quality supervision, there was evidence that Child A was at significant risk of harm and there is no evidence provided to suggest that the social worker asked for urgent supervision or management discussion and was denied.

The case examiners consider that regulatory concern 2 relates to a pattern of alleged negligence that points to a significant departure from what would have been expected in the circumstances, the consequences of which could have been serious. Therefore, they are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of this being found to amount to misconduct.

Regulatory concern 3.3

The case examiners are of the view that the alleged omissions in case recording are serious. They relate to several service users and appear to occur at various times over the period of concern. Whilst the case examiners note the social worker's submission that all colleagues were struggling, the evidence provided to the case examiners suggest that various colleagues were able to record the work carried out, whilst on duty or supporting the social worker. The case examiners also note that the social worker appears to have been offered sessions with a senior practitioner to learn about the electronic recording system but did not take this offer up.

The case examiners acknowledge that there is evidence to suggest the social worker had a complex and demanding caseload, including a high percentage of Placement with Parents (PWP) which tend to be more time intensive and a group of complex teenagers who were demanding more of the social worker's time. This was recognised within supervision, and the case examiners understand the complexities in managing this caseload.

However, the case examiners return again to the lack of case records from the social worker during times of crisis and high risk for some service users, where there were various professionals using the recording system, including the emergency duty team. The professional standards guidance states that "*documenting decisions and actions provides a clear record of work with people. These records are open to scrutiny and help to provide a continuity of support if people are transferred between social workers. They can help to protect people and social workers*". It appears that

the social worker's approach to case recording was a significant departure from what was expected.

Due to repeated concerns about case recording and the potential risk of harm, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of this regulatory concern being found to amount to misconduct.

Impairment

Assessment of impairment consists of two 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 of the view that this conduct can be easily remedied, the social worker was an experienced practitioner with no previous history of concerns. Through demonstrating insight into what went wrong and what they would do differently in the future, alongside additional training, the social worker could evidence remediation and satisfy the case examiners that the risk of repetition is low.

Insight and remediation

The case examiners have been provided with the social worker's submissions to the regulator and comments to their former employer. The social worker demonstrates broad insight into how they struggled with the demands of their caseload and feeling unable to manage all that was expected of them. [REDACTED]

However, the social worker denies the regulatory concerns and provides an alternative account of why the difficulties arose, including the context referred to

above. Given that the concern is disputed by the social worker, but the case examiners have found a realistic prospect of the facts being found proven, the focus on insight is lessened because essentially the matters are denied.

Similarly, it is possible for social workers to evidence remediation whilst denying concerns, but as the social worker has not practised as a social worker since the time of concern, the case examiners have not been provided with any evidence of this and recognise that the social worker submits there is nothing to remediate.

Risk of repetition

The case examiners recognise that there is evidence to suggest the social worker was capable of good practice and it was recognised that they prioritised seeing the children they were allocated to. Whilst it may be that in a different team with a less demanding caseload that the social worker would be safe to practise without restriction, in the absence of insight and evidence of positive current practice, the case examiners cannot be assured of this.

Given that the regulatory concerns relate to several issues over an extended period of time, the case examiners are of the view that there is a risk of repetition.

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.

Regulatory concerns around safeguarding go to the heart of public confidence in the social work profession. They have the potential to undermine the public's trust in social workers. As such, if the matters are found proven, it is likely the public would expect that a finding of current impairment is made by adjudicators to maintain public confidence in the regulation of the profession.

Having considered both the personal and public elements, the case examiners have concluded there is a realistic prospect that adjudicators would find the social worker 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input 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

The case examiners have concluded that the public interest in this case is engaged. However, they are satisfied that this interest may be appropriately fulfilled by virtue of the accepted disposal process.

Whilst the matter is serious, the case examiners are not of the view that it is so serious that a hearing might be necessary to maintain public confidence in the social work profession, or in Social Work England's maintenance of the standards expected of social workers.

The case examiners have noted that the social worker has indicated to the regulator that they do not consider their fitness to practise to be currently impaired. Where a social worker does not accept impairment, case examiner guidance suggests that a referral to a hearing may be necessary in the public interest.

However, the case examiners note that the guidance states the social worker must accept the matter of impairment at the point of *concluding* the case and are of the view that this does not prevent them offering accepted disposal prior to this. The

case examiners consider that it is reasonable to offer accepted disposal in this case because:

- Whilst the social worker denies the concerns, they were presented with a broad and complex investigation, it may assist the social worker to consider the rationale of the case examiners' decision in relation to facts and grounds and how they have considered these alongside the mitigation put forward.
- The case examiners recognise that not all professionals will have an innate understanding of how and when the public interest may be engaged, or how exactly this might impact upon findings concerning current fitness to practise.
- The accepted disposal process will provide to the social worker an opportunity to review the case examiners' reasoning on impairment and reflect on whether they are able to accept a finding of impairment. It is open to the social worker to reject any accepted disposal proposal and request a hearing if they wish to explore the question of impairment in more detail.

The case examiners are also of the view that the public would be satisfied to see the regulator take prompt, firm action in this case, with the publication of an accepted disposal decision providing a steer to the public and the profession on the importance of adhering to the professional standards expected of social workers in England.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Suspension order <input type="checkbox"/>
	Removal order <input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed duration	Conditions of practice order - 1 year

Reasoning

The case examiners have identified the following mitigating and aggravating factors in this case;

Mitigating

- The social worker appears to have been allocated a complex and demanding caseload and often dealing with crisis during the period of concern.
- There is evidence that the social worker did not receive consistent supervision and went long periods without it.
- There is no history of fitness to practise concerns, and the social worker was capable of good, child focussed practice.

Aggravating

- There was a pattern of omissions over a significant period.
- It appears the social worker did not make full use of the support offered to address these concerns.
- The social worker has not demonstrated a good level of insight or remediation.

In considering the appropriate outcome in this case, the case examiners had regard to Social Work England's sanctions guidance (December 2022) and reminded

themselves that the purpose of a sanction is not to punish the social worker, but to protect the public.

The case examiners have decided that it is not in the public interest to refer this matter to a final hearing and have chosen the least restrictive sanction necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest. They have started at the lowest possible sanction and worked up, testing the appropriateness of each sanction and the next sanction above it to confirm their decision is proportionate.

The case examiners have already determined that there is a realistic prospect that the social worker's fitness to practise would be found impaired. The sanctions guidance advises that if the personal element of impairment is found, "*a sanction restricting or removing a social worker's registration will normally be necessary to protect the public*". The case examiners are therefore led to consider sanctions which restrict the social worker's practice. They note that the guidance suggests it may therefore "*be reasonable to move beyond the lower sanctions (no action, advice or a warning) on this basis alone*". The case examiners have already determined that they do not consider that the social worker has demonstrated sufficient insight and therefore a risk of repetition remains. Therefore, the sanctions of no further action, advice or a warning are considered inappropriate on the basis that these outcomes will not restrict practice and therefore not sufficiently protect the public.

In order to provide the necessary oversight and protection, the case examiners have decided to suggest a conditions of practice order to the social worker that they must comply with. This will afford the social worker further opportunity to evidence any reflection and insight they may have gained, even if they do not return to social work practice in the near future, so the regulator can be assured that the risk of repetition is reduced. If the social worker does return to practice, a conditions of practice order will provide structure and support to enable them to evidence that they can practise safely.

The case examiners have considered whether the concerns before them require a sanction of suspension, and are of the view that this would be disproportionate given the developing insight demonstrated and the mitigating factors identified.

The case examiners consider the appropriate duration of the conditions of practice order to be a period of one year. By putting in place a timescale of one year, this provides sufficient time for the social worker to reflect adequately, particularly given that the social worker has not evidenced sufficient insight in the intervening three years since their alleged conduct occurred. The case examiners have also born in mind, in setting this time period, the serious nature of the concerns raised, and their role in upholding professional standards and sending a message to the profession as

a whole. Given that the case examiners have identified that there is some developing insight, they are of the view that a longer period of conditions is unnecessary and would be disproportionate.

The case examiners have decided to propose to the social worker a conditions of practice order of one year 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.

Content of the conditions of practice

Conditions 1-13 (inclusive) should be in place for a 1-year period. In accordance with paragraph 15 of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018, the regulator must review the conditions of practice order before its expiry. The social worker and/or Social Work England can seek early review if new evidence becomes available to suggest the current order needs to varied, replaced or removed.

1. You must notify Social Work England within 7 days of any professional appointment you accept or are currently undertaking and provide the contact details of your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work services, whether paid or voluntary.
2. You must allow Social Work England to exchange information with your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work or educational services, and any reporter or workplace supervisor referred to in these conditions.
- 3.(a) At any time, you are providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England, you must agree to the appointment of a reporter nominated by you and approved by Social Work England. The reporter must be on Social Work England's register.
(b) You must not start or continue to work until these arrangements have been approved by Social Work England.
4. You must provide reports from your reporter to Social Work England every 4 months and at least 14 days prior to any review and Social Work England will make

these reports available to any workplace supervisor referred to in these conditions on request.

5. You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any formal disciplinary proceedings taken against you from the date these conditions take effect.
6. You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any investigations or complaints made against you from the date these conditions take effect.
7. You must inform Social Work England if you apply for social work employment / self-employment (paid or voluntary) outside England within 7 days of the date of application.
8. You must inform Social Work England if you are registered or subsequently apply for registration with any other UK regulator, overseas regulator or relevant authority within 7 days of the date of application [for future registration] or 7 days from the date these conditions take effect [for existing registration].
9. You must read Social Work England's 'Professional Standards' (July 2019), and provide a written reflection 6 months after these conditions take effect, focusing on how your conduct, for key matters relating to this case i.e. responding to children who are persistently missing and not keeping accurate records, was below the accepted standard of a social worker, considering the impact of your actions and outlining what you should have done differently.
10. a. You must undertake 10 hours of CPD in relation to safeguarding and record keeping.
b. You must provide evidence of CPD undertaken to Social Work England within 9 months of these conditions taking effect.
- 11a. You must make arrangements for an audit to be carried out by your reporter in relation to case recording. The audit must be signed by your reporter.
b. You must provide a copy of this audit to Social Work England every 4 months and at least 14 days prior to any review or, alternatively, confirm that there have been no work/cases to record.
12. You must provide a written copy of your conditions, within 7 days from the date these conditions take effect, the following parties that your registration is subject to the conditions listed at 1-11, above:

- Any organisation or person employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary.
- Any locum, agency or out-of-hours service you are registered with or apply to be registered with in order to secure employment or contracts to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary (at the time of application).
- Any prospective employer who would be employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary (at the time of application).
- Any organisation, agency or employer where you are using your social work qualification/knowledge/skills in a non-qualified social work role, whether paid or voluntary.

You must forward written evidence of your compliance with this condition to Social Work England within 14 days from the date these conditions take effect.

13. You must permit Social Work England to disclose the above conditions, 1-12, to any person requesting information about your registration status.

Response from the social worker

On 15 January 2026 the social worker returned their completed accepted disposal response form, confirming the following:

“I have read the case examiners’ decision and the accepted disposal guide. I admit the key facts set out in the case examiner decision, and that my fitness to practise is impaired. I understand the terms of the proposed disposal of my fitness to practise case and accept them in full”.

The social worker made the following comments about the regulatory concerns and the context in which they occurred, which the case examiners considered it appropriate to record.

The social worker states that their previous employer’s “policies on supervision highlight that I should have received monthly supervision at a minimum. I think given the complexity and urgency of many of my cases, then one would have expected a higher frequency than that to be more appropriate. Your report states that from August 2022 to January 2023 I received no supervision at all. I will also highlight that

the supervision in January was not high quality, reflective supervision, it was a checklist exercise.

Those parameters reflect normal circumstances; however, I had been put on a capability plan that said I should receive a reduction in cases/complexity and receive weekly support/supervision. This was stated to me verbally, in writing and via a meeting with management and HR. This plan was directed by my senior manager [] and she was responsible to oversee its implementation by my then line manager []. This plan was initiated yet not implemented.

My case load was not reduced, I did not receive the proposed weekly support, and I was given several different complex cases instead that were in a specialist area (Adoption) and were all in need of urgent attention. This period of time is from October/November 2022 onwards.

I was assessed by my senior manager as needing significant support, weekly supervision and a reduction in workload. I have never received an explanation as to why I was not supported as per agreed plans”.

The social worker concluded;

“I am not seeking to dispute the overall decision; I accept the sanction and timeframe. I am seeking some accountability from the Local Authority that had responsibilities to me which I do not believe they upheld”.

Case examiners' response and final decision

The case examiners have reviewed their decision, paying particular regard to the overarching objectives of Social Work England:

- The protection of the public
- Maintaining confidence in the social work profession
- The maintenance of professional standards.

Whilst the case examiners, in the interests of transparency felt it necessary to record the social worker's response, having closely assessed this they are satisfied that the social worker is not disputing the key facts nor the matter of impairment.

However, the case examiners acknowledge that the comments above may suggest that the social worker does not accept that they were responsible for the failure to carry out certain tasks, their comments appear to suggest that they consider the regulatory concerns relate to a lack of competence and/or support from their former employer.

The case examiners have therefore considered whether, if the social worker's position about the lack of appropriate support was evidenced, would that change the case examiners' assessment of impairment? They are of the view that whilst the social worker may have felt overwhelmed and not received sufficient formal supervision, the support set out in the social worker's comments would be unlikely to be considered necessary for an experienced social worker to have escalated concerns appropriately or asked for necessary guidance in dealing with children at significant risk of harm. This was central to the case examiners' rationale in respect of the statutory ground of misconduct, and the subsequent finding of impairment, having a realistic prospect of being found.

The social worker, in receiving the accepted disposal proposal, has had the opportunity to decline the case examiners' decision and request that their case is considered at a hearing. They are clear at the end of their response that they wish to accept the proposal and sanction.

The case examiners therefore remain satisfied that an accepted disposal of conditions of practice order of 1 year is a fair and proportionate way to conclude this matter, and is the minimum sanction required to protect the public and the wider public interest.