

Case Examiner Decision
Danielle Riley – SW15458
FTPS-21697

Contents

The role of the case examiners	3
Decision summary	4
The complaint and our regulatory concerns.....	6
Preliminary issues	8
The realistic prospect test	12
The public interest.....	25
Accepted disposal	27

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 outcomes	16 January 2024
	Information requested Submissions requested
	10 January 2025
	Proposed warning order – 3 years duration
Final outcome	28 January 2025
	Accepted disposal - warning order (3 years)

Executive summary

The case examiners originally determined to pause their consideration of the case to allow investigators to consider their request for further information, and suggested amendments and additions to the regulatory concerns, and for the social worker to be provided with the opportunity to make further submissions where required.

The case was subsequently returned to the case examiners who have reached the following conclusions:

1. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4) being found proven by the adjudicators. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4) being found to amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct.
3. For regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4), 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 determined 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 warning order of 3 years. This was accepted by the social worker on 27 January 2025.

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.

The complaint and our regulatory concerns

The initial complaint

The complainant	The complaint was raised by Social Work England
Date the complaint was received	16 December 2023
Complaint summary	Social Work England became aware, following information provided by the social worker during the process of renewing their registration, that they had been subject to disciplinary procedures by their employer. The issues subject to the employer's investigation are captured in the regulatory concerns below.

Regulatory concerns

Whilst a registered social worker and working for Salford City Council you:

1. Failed to safeguard service user, in that:

1.1 You failed to make full and timely records.

1.2 You failed to seek management advice following safeguarding concerns.

[REDACTED]

1. 4 You failed to recognise a safeguarding concern potentially leaving service users at risk of harm.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Grounds of impairment

The matters set out at regulatory concern ■ 1 ■ amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct ■ .

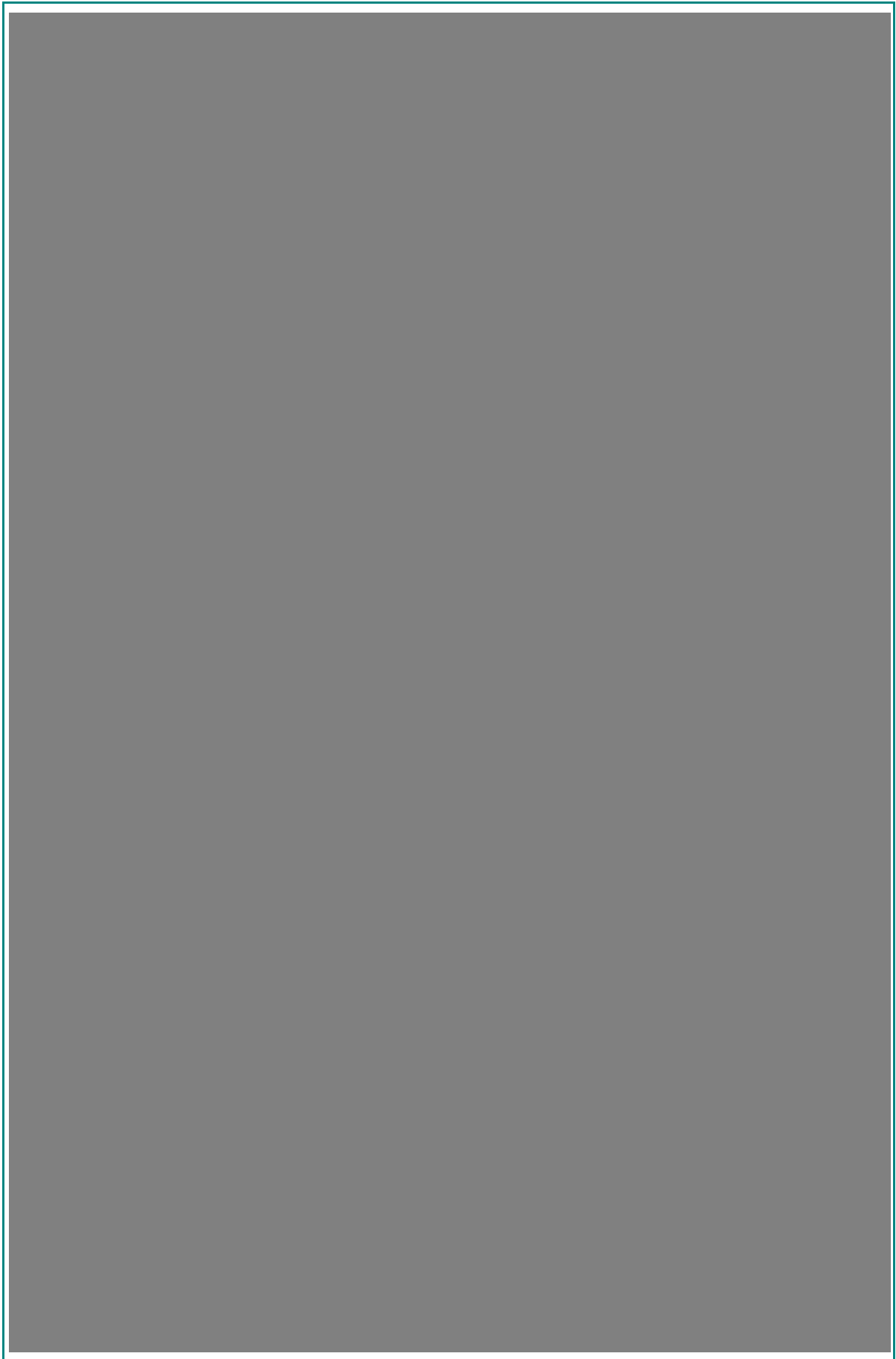
By reason of your misconduct ■ your fitness to practice is impaired.

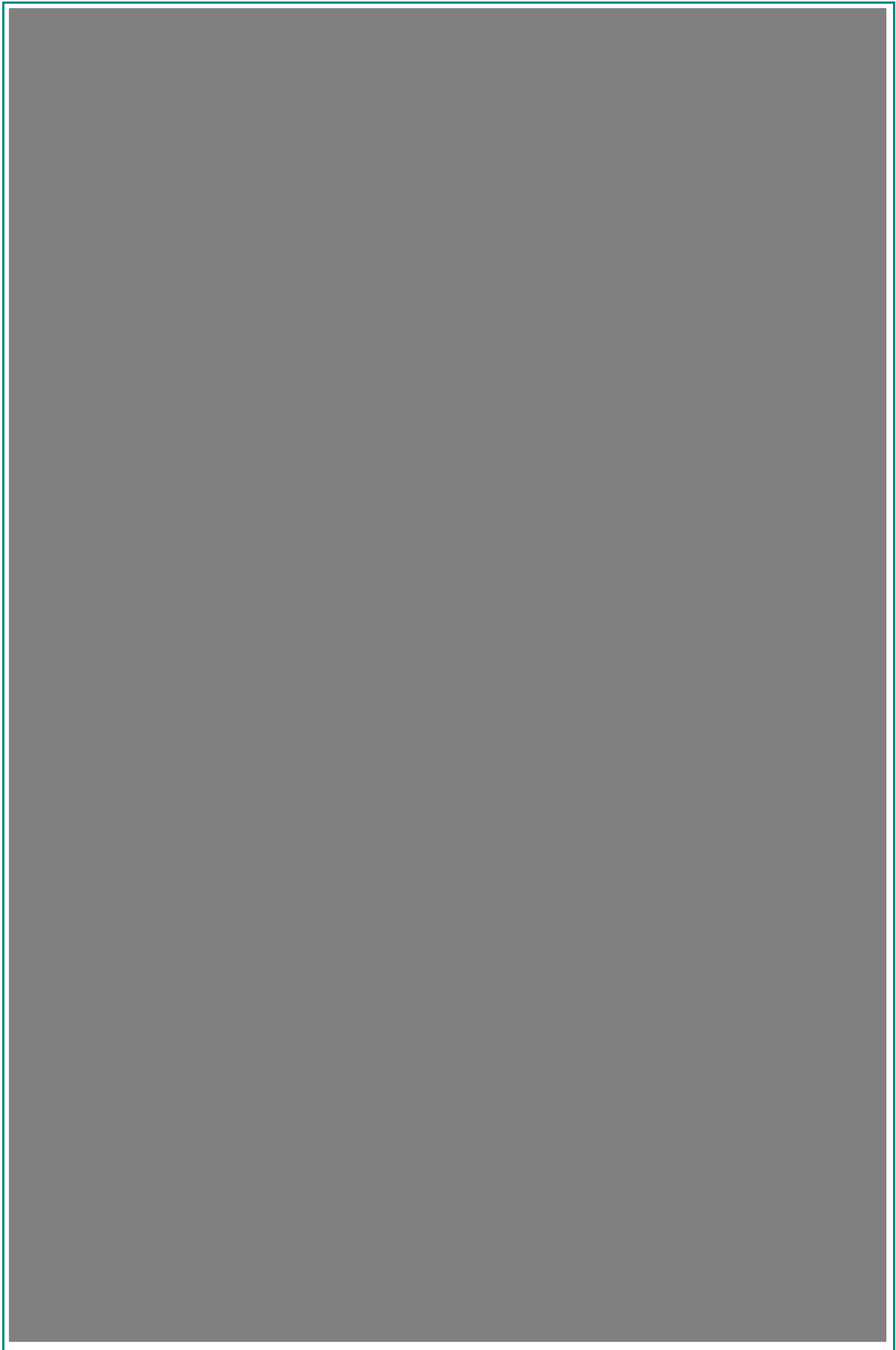


Preliminary issues

Investigation		
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has been notified of the grounds for investigation?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has had reasonable opportunity to make written representations to the investigators?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
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	☒
	No	☐
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	☒
	No	☐

Requests for further information or submissions, or any other preliminary issues that have arisen







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



No



The case examiners have determined that there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4) being found proven, that those concerns could amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct, and that the social worker's fitness to practise could be found impaired.

Reasoning

Facts

Whilst a registered social worker and working for Salford City Council you:

1. Failed to safeguard service users, in that:

1.1 You failed to make full and timely records.

Having carefully reviewed all of the evidence presented to them, the case examiners particularly note the following:

- Case records/copy of the social worker's electronic diary which indicate a planned visit to a family on 12 July 2022.
- Supervision notes which indicate a visit undertaken on 12 July 2022.
- A list of telephone calls/text messages from the social worker to the parent of the family as taken from their work mobile phone.

- Case records which do not show corresponding entries to the date of the visit planned for 12 July 2022 or some of the contact with the parent.

The social worker in their submissions accepts that they did not record their earlier (12 July 2022) visit to the family. While the case examiners note that the social worker did not record a subsequent visit of the 22 July 2022 until approximately 9pm that evening, the case examiners are of the view that this was not unreasonable. The evidence suggests the social worker's manager was aware of the reasons for this recording delay on that day and had contacted the out of hours duty team in the interim.

The case examiners are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence the social worker failed to make full and timely records. They are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding part 1.1 of the concern proven.

1.2 You failed to seek management advice following safeguarding concerns.

The case examiners note from the evidence that the social worker attended a child protection conference for the family on 6 July 2022, shortly after becoming their allocated worker. The minutes suggest the parent caring for five children was alcohol dependent and was struggling with their caring responsibilities.

The social worker stated they undertook an 'introductory' visit to the family on 12 July 2022, although as noted above, the visit was not recorded. There is evidence that a planned visit on 15 July 2022 did not go ahead.

The information presented to the case examiners indicates that on 22 July 2022, the social worker made an unannounced visit to the family at approximately 12pm. The parent was seen along with a 14-year-old child (child M). Case records completed by the social worker indicate the parent had consumed alcohol that morning, having consumed approximately five cans of lager, breaking their abstinence from alcohol. The social worker states the parent did not appear intoxicated and appeared to demonstrate remorse. The social worker completed a safety plan with child M present including contacting a relative; however, wider evidence suggests child M had reported concerns that the relative was 'as bad' as the parent, suggesting they consumed alcohol either with or in the presence of the parent, although this does not appear to be recorded in the case notes. This matter is addressed further below.

The evidence then suggests at approximately 4pm the same day, social services became aware the parent had attended their children's school significantly intoxicated, and due to their presentation, an ambulance was called. The social

worker's manager contacted the social worker to enquire if they were aware of this. The evidence suggests that it was at this point the social worker notified their manager they had attended the family home earlier that day. The social worker subsequently stated that they had planned to discuss the parent's alcohol consumption with their manager, but later, after they had completed their visits that day. The evidence suggests the social worker discussed the father's alcohol consumption in a call with another professional involved with the family, who understood the social worker was going to discuss it with their manager soon after their call.

In an interview with the employer, the social worker's manager states they would have expected the social worker to contact them inform them that having arrived at the house, they had found the parent to have been drinking. The case examiners are of the view that as the social worker was aware the parent was a 'binge drinker' and had broken their abstinence from alcohol by consuming what appeared to be around 5 cans of lager during a morning, that the social worker should have taken immediate actions to ensure that the children the parent was due to collect from school later that day, were not at risk of harm. This could have included, for example, alerting their manager so that a contingency plan for the children could be considered.

Interview minutes dated 15 September 2022, indicate the social worker advised the professional they spoke with in a call on 22 July 2022, that they would need to get further direction from their manager. The social worker in their submissions accepts that they should have spoken to their manager earlier after their visit.

The case examiners are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence the social worker failed to seek management advice following safeguarding concerns. They are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding part 1.2 of the concern proven.





1.4 You failed to recognise a safeguarding concern potentially leaving service users at risk of harm.

Having reviewed the evidence, the case examiners consider there to be a number of safeguarding concerns in this case; including that of the parent consuming alcohol the morning of an unannounced visit and that of a relative, part of the children's safety plan, also consuming alcohol. The case examiners have already addressed the issue of the social worker not seeking management advice regarding the father being under the influence of alcohol above and will now address the concern regarding the relative.

As highlighted above, the evidence suggests that during the unannounced visit on the 22 July child M told the social worker the relative was 'as bad' as their parent, who had known alcohol issues. The evidence indicates the social worker confirmed they had already received an email of the 18 July 2022, in which a professional working with the parent raised concerns that a relative drank alcohol in the parent's home and was encouraging the parent to consume alcohol. The relative in question was a

key part of the children's safety plan i.e. they could care for the children if the parent could not.

The evidence would suggest to the case examiners that the social worker had information which appeared to be corroborated by child M and a professional of a potential safeguarding concern, in that the relative may consume alcohol whilst caring for the children, which could put them at risk of harm. However, it appears that despite this when concerns were raised on 22 July 2022 that the parent was intoxicated and could not care for the children, the social worker contacted the relative and asked them to care for the children over the weekend.

In interview, the social worker suggests that they were drawing on information from when the children were under services in a previous authority; *"I suppose there has been a similar situation to this one with a previous authority, [the relative] did step up in the same situation...I knew that he cared for the children before and there were no concerns raised in that time."*

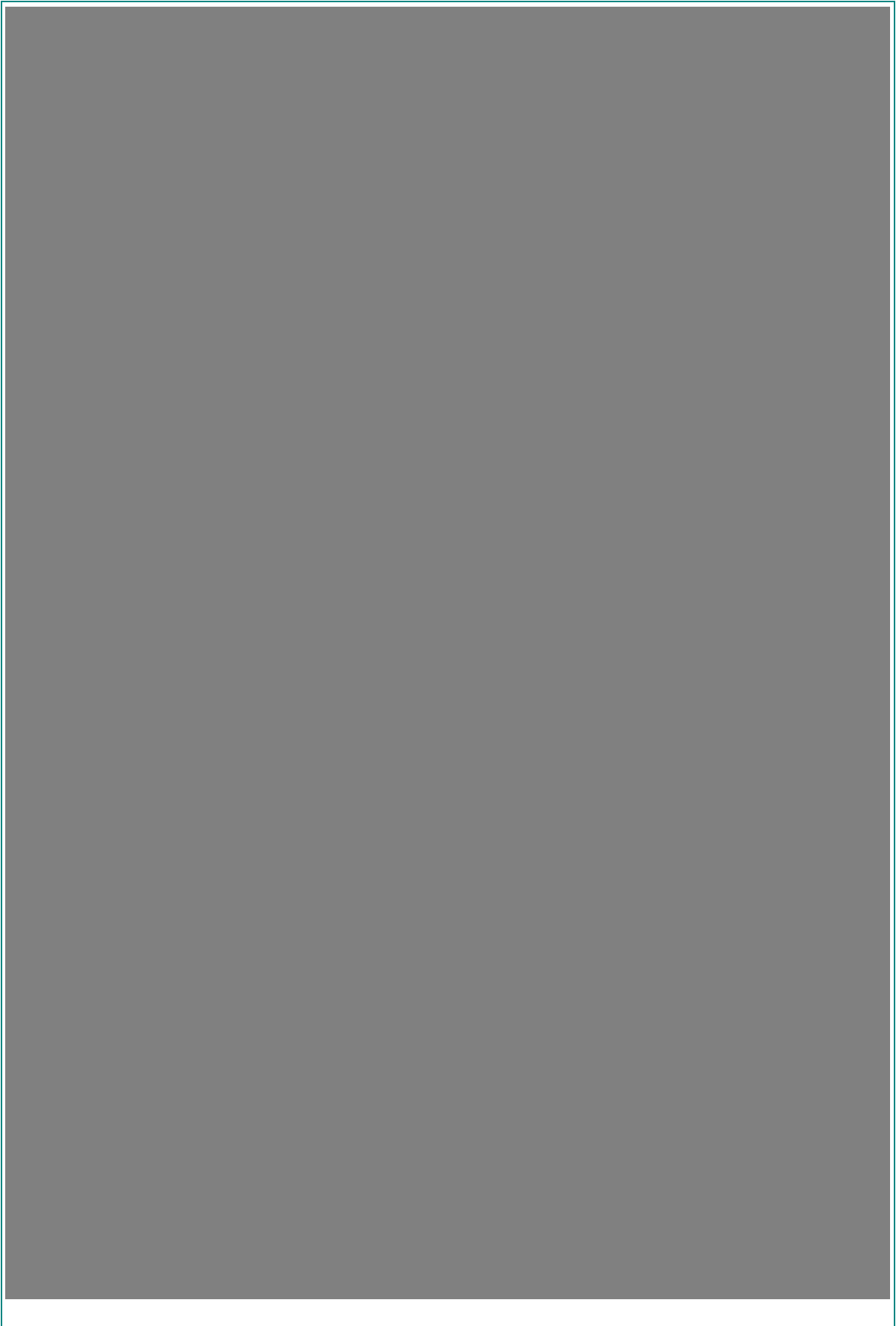
The case examiners note however, that the social worker appeared to be in possession of additional information regarding the relative. In interview when asked about information from child M, the social worker is noted to have said; *"I don't recall the full conversation with child M, but there was no elaboration...The information from [child M], I guess I would have just wanted some additional information to form a better idea."*

The social worker in their submissions appears to accept this part of the concern. While they say the plan was put in place jointly (with their manager), they accept there were things they could and should have done differently.

The case examiners are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence the social worker failed to recognise a safeguarding concern potentially leaving service users at risk of harm. They are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding this part 1.4 of the concern proven.



To conclude, the case examiners have found there to be a realistic prospect of parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 being found proven by the adjudicators. They are satisfied there is therefore a realistic prospect of regulatory concern 1 being found proven overall, in that the social worker failed to safeguard service users.





Grounds

This case has been presented on the grounds of misconduct 





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. This can include conduct that takes place in the exercise of professional practice and also conduct which occurs outside the exercise of professional practice but calls into question the suitability of the person to work as a social worker.

To help them decide if the evidence suggests a significant departure from what would be expected in the circumstances, the case examiners have considered the following Social Work England professional standards, which were applicable at the time of the concerns.

As a social worker, I will:

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.

As a social worker, I will not:

5.2 Behave in a way that would bring into question my suitability to work as a social worker whilst at work, or outside of work.

In this case it is alleged that the social worker failed to safeguard service users in failing to make full and timely records, failing to seek management advice following safeguarding concerns and failing to recognise a safeguarding concern potentially leaving service users at risk of harm.

Safeguarding is a fundamental tenet of social work. Social workers have a responsibility to stay alert to and investigate suspected harm, neglect or abuse and,

where risk has been identified, agree plans to address it urgently (professional standards guidance, 2020).

The evidence suggests the social worker did not discuss concerns with their manager that the parent they had visited at approximately 12pm on 22 July 2022 had consumed alcohol that morning. The parent was recorded as being alcohol dependent, a binge drinker and had broken their abstinence which they had undertaken against medical advice. They were sole carer for five children between the ages of five and fourteen. The evidence suggests that during the visit the social worker discussed a safety plan with the fourteen-year-old who was present in the home. The case examiners are of the view it could be considered inappropriate to have placed the responsibility for a safety plan on child M in these circumstances.

At 4pm the same day, the parent attended the younger children's school intoxicated to such a degree that an ambulance was called, and they were taken to hospital. The evidence suggests the social worker planned to discuss the parent's alcohol consumption with their manager, but not until later, after they had undertaken other visits due to upcoming leave. This alleged failure to seek prompt management advice is, in the opinion of the case examiners, compounded by the social worker failing to recognise a safeguarding concern regarding a relative who formed part of the children's safety plan. This concern was raised by both child M and another professional involved and related to the relative's own alcohol use. Nonetheless, the relative was called by the social worker and asked to care for the children when the parent was taken to hospital.

While the evidence suggests the social worker requested other agencies to check on the children over the weekend, records indicate that two children were assaulted by the relative, with the youngest child sustaining an injury resulting in visible bruising. The children were subsequently taken into care following police intervention.

The case examiners are mindful that the evidence indicates the social worker had recently returned to work following an extended period of leave, [REDACTED], and their employer has acknowledged there were gaps in the support provided to the social worker following their return to work. Additionally, the evidence also suggests the previous local authority may not have provided the full circumstances of the family to the new authority.

However, the case examiners are satisfied that the evidence suggests the social worker was aware of what they needed to do in the circumstances of this case but failed to do so. There appears to have been a clear risk of harm to the children, and the evidence suggests the children were harmed, one sustaining an injury with bruising. The case examiners are also of the view that all the children are likely to

have suffered emotional distress, and that child M may have felt their voice was not heard by the social worker.

The case examiners have considered the mitigating factors in this case. However, the case examiners are satisfied the evidence suggests the social worker's conduct has significantly fallen short of what would be expected in the circumstances. As such, the case examiners consider there is a realistic prospect of the adjudicators finding regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4) amounts to misconduct.

Impairment

Assessment of impairment consists of two elements:

- The personal element, established via an assessment of the risk of repetition.
- 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 consider the conduct in relation the allegation is remediable, in that the social worker could demonstrate their understanding of what has gone wrong and what steps they could take to ensure this does not happen again, for example, by completing relevant associated training and/or a critical reflection addressing the concern raised.

Insight and remediation

The case examiners are mindful that there are different aspects to insight, and a social worker can demonstrate no, partial or full insight.

The case examiners have considered whether the social worker understands what led to the events which are the subject of the concern, and if they recognise what went wrong. The social worker in their submissions accepts that there are things they should have done differently, and states; "*it is painful knowing children suffered.*" The

social worker does not however, address why keeping up to date records is important and does not appear to acknowledge their role in the decision to keep the relative as part of the children's safety plan, or why the public might be concerned by their alleged conduct.

The social worker has given some examples of how they might act or react differently if the same circumstances were to happen again (to avoid reoccurrence of similar concerns). These include discussions with their manager *"if any type of uncertain situation arises or if there is a safeguarding issues (sic). I ensure I do this straight away, without delay. Management oversight is always put on and remind (sic) my manager if this isn't on."* This appears to be confirmed by the social worker's current manager in an email of June 2023. The social worker also reports they always carry out risk assessments, checks and ensure that no family members care for children unless there has been an assessment.

By way of remediation the social worker refers to a support plan that was in place for 12 months, attending peer reflection sessions and undertaking 'a range of training' although the case examiners have not been provided with evidence of these.

The case examiners are mindful that testimonials which provide up to date, credible information about the social worker's current practice can be relevant when exploring current impairment. The last testimony regarding the social worker's practise appears to be from June 2023. The social worker's manager at the time notes that the social worker's action plan had been reviewed and there had been issues raised in terms of the social worker recording minutes of meetings timely. This was noted to have been addressed with the social worker in supervision, a recent improvement had been seen and would continue to be reviewed. Further, it appears the social worker had not recorded visits and would continue to be monitored weekly. The case examiners note that these recording issues were raised a year after the concerns alleged in this case. The evidence presented to the case examiners also suggests the social worker had been on two action plans previously due to issues with recording. While the case examiners have not had sight of these, they are of the view it is reasonable to take this into account as it could suggest a pattern of behaviour.

While the case examiners do not have further testimony, they note that the social worker has remained in post with their employer whose most recent contact with Social Work England was in October 2024, and no further concerns appear to have been raised.

Risk of repetition

Taking the above into account, the case examiners are of the view that the evidence suggests the social worker has demonstrated partial insight and is developing their understanding of what went wrong. The social worker has not directly addressed why the public would be concerned by such allegations, and while there is reference to remediation, the case examiners have not had sight of evidence of this. The evidence also suggests there has been some repeat of failings regarding the social worker's recording. As such, the case examiners cannot say with confidence that the risk of repetition would be highly unlikely.

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 are of the view that a member of the public would be extremely concerned about an allegation that a social worker failed to safeguard services users, and that this failure may have contributed to circumstances in which a child or children sustained actual harm. The case examiners consider the allegation relates to fundamental tenets of social work including protecting vulnerable people from harm or abuse.

An allegation of failing to keep accurate records and to safeguard a child is serious, and the case examiners are of the view that, public trust and confidence in the profession is likely to be undermined if these concerns were found proven, and that the public would expect a finding of impairment.

The case examiners consider there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding the social worker currently impaired.

The public interest

Decision summary

Is there a public interest in referring the case to a hearing?	Yes	☐
	No	☒

Referral criteria

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

Additional reasoning

With reference to case examiner guidance (2022) the case examiners have carefully considered whether there is a public interest in these matters proceeding to a hearing.

Whilst the case examiners have determined there is a realistic prospect that adjudicators would find the public interest is engaged in this case, they are of the view that the public interest can be satisfied by their decision, and the reasons for that decision, being published on Social Work England's public register which can be found on its website. The publication of this decision will provide the social worker with an opportunity to reflect on and gain further insight into the circumstances of this case.

The case examiners note there is no conflict in the evidence in this case and the social worker does not dispute any of the key facts in regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4).

Further, while the social worker has indicated that they do not accept their fitness to practise is currently impaired, 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 the social worker with 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.

Lastly, public interest also entails the need for proportionate decision-making. The case examiners consider it is in the public interest to bring this matter to a prompt conclusion, whilst also ensuring the public remains adequately protected.

For the reasons stated, the case examiners have decided it is not in the public interest to refer this matter to adjudicators; rather they will write to the social worker and ask them to agree to dispose of this case without the need for a hearing.

Accepted disposal

Case outcome		
Proposed outcome	No further action	☐
	Advice	☐
	Warning order	☒
	Conditions of practice order	☐
	Suspension order	☐
	Removal order	☐
Proposed duration	3 years	

Reasoning

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concern 1 (parts 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4) being found proven by adjudicators. Furthermore, they have found a realistic prospect that the concern, if proven, would amount to the statutory ground of misconduct. The case examiners have also found a realistic prospect that adjudicators would find the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired. The case examiners have decided however, that it is not in the public interest to refer this matter to a final hearing.

In considering the appropriate outcome in this case, the case examiners have had regard to Social Work England's sanctions guidance (2022) and reminded themselves that the purpose of sanctions is not to punish the social worker but to protect the public and the wider public interest. Furthermore, the guidance requires that decision makers select the least severe sanction necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest. In determining the most appropriate and proportionate outcome in this case, the case examiners considered the available sanctions in ascending order of seriousness.

Firstly, the case examiners considered taking no further action but concluded this would not be appropriate in this instance as it would be insufficient to address the seriousness of the concern which relates to a fundamental tenet of social work, that of safeguarding.

Next, the case examiners considered whether offering advice would be sufficient. An advice order will normally set out the steps a social worker should take to address the behaviour that led to the regulatory proceedings. The case examiners are of the view that issuing advice is not sufficient to mark the seriousness with which they view the social worker's alleged conduct.

The case examiners then considered a warning order. A warning order implies a clearer expression of disapproval of the social worker's conduct than an advice order. The case examiners note that warning orders are likely to be appropriate where (all of the following):

- the fitness to practise issue is isolated or limited
- there is a low risk of repetition
- the social worker has demonstrated insight

The case examiners consider the fitness to practise issue to be an isolated matter in an otherwise unblemished career. The case examiners also consider the social worker has demonstrated sufficient insight which could be developed further. While they have determined there may be some risk of repetition, this appears to be largely contained to issues of recording.

As a further consideration, the case examiners turned their minds to the next two sanctions, conditions of practice and suspension. They note that conditions of practice orders are commonly applied in cases of lack of competence or ill health and, therefore, the case examiners have concluded conditions were not suitable for this case. Further, the social worker continues to remain with their employer, who have they have been employed by for several years and are aware of concerns, and there have been no further concerns raised with the regulator regarding the social worker's practise.

Finally, the case examiners considered suspension. While they are of the view the concern represents a serious breach of the professional standards, they are of the view the social worker has demonstrated sufficient insight and remediation and therefore, suspension from the register would be a disproportionate and punitive outcome in this case.

The case examiners have considered the length of time for the published warning and consider 3 years to be proportionate in this case. In coming to this determination, they have taken into account the guidance which states:

- 1 year may be appropriate for an isolated incident of relatively low seriousness. In these cases, the primary objective of the warning is to highlight the professional standards expected of social workers. While an isolated incident, the case examiners did not consider it to be of relatively low seriousness given the safeguarding nature of the concern is a key tenet of the profession.
- 3 years may be appropriate for more serious concerns. This helps to maintain public confidence and highlight the professional standards. The period also allows more time for the social worker to show that they have addressed any risk of repetition. The case examiners have noted the social worker's partial insight and seriousness of the concern.
- 5 years may be appropriate for serious cases that have fallen only marginally short of requiring restriction of practice. This helps to maintain public confidence and highlight the professional standards. The social worker should ensure there is no risk of repetition throughout this extended period. The case examiners considered this to be an isolated incident, and while serious, not one that only marginally fell short of requiring a restrictive sanction.

The case examiners have therefore, decided to propose to the social worker a warning 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 14 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 warning

In accordance with Social Work England's professional standards guidance (2020) social workers have a responsibility to stay alert to and investigate suspected harm, neglect or abuse and, where risk has been identified, agree plans to address it urgently. Social workers need to cooperate closely with relevant colleagues and

agencies to consider options for action. They will maintain a focus on the person or persons at risk, whatever other demands or issues come to light.

This is a case where the social worker failed to promptly safeguard service users, a result of which children were placed at risk of and suffered harm. Safeguarding is a fundamental tenet of social work, and such conduct is a breach of a social worker's professional standards.

The social worker must therefore ensure they comply with the following Social Work England Professional Standards:

As a social worker, I will:

3.2 Use information from a range of appropriate sources, including supervision, to inform assessments, to analyse risk, and to make a professional decision.

3.4 Recognise the risk indicators of different forms of abuse and neglect and their impact on people, their families and their support networks.

The case examiners warn the social worker that the conduct alleged in this case should not be repeated. Any further matters of similar conduct brought to the attention of the case examiners will be viewed dimly and will likely result in a more serious outcome.

Response from the social worker

The case examiners have had sight of the social worker's response dated 27 January 2025.

The social worker has signed to confirm they have read the case examiners' decision and the accepted disposal guide. They admit the key facts set out in the case examiner decision, and that their fitness to practise is impaired. The social worker also confirms that they understand the terms of the proposed disposal of their fitness to practise case and accept them in full.

Case examiners' response and final decision

The case examiners note that the social worker has accepted the proposed disposal as outlined by them. The case examiners then proceeded to further consider whether accepted disposal (a three-year warning order) remains the most appropriate means of disposal for these matters.

The case examiners have reviewed their decision, paying particular regard to the overarching objectives of Social Work England, i.e., protection of the public, the maintenance of public confidence in the social work profession, and the maintenance of proper standards. The case examiners are of the view they have not been presented with any new evidence that might change their previous assessment. The case examiners remain satisfied that an accepted disposal by way of a warning order of three years' duration, is a fair and proportionate disposal and is the minimum necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.