

Social worker: Lesley Doorne
Hughes
Registration number: SW51108
Fitness to Practise
Final Hearing

Dates of hearing: 06 November 2023 to 09 November 2023 and
08 July 2024 to 11 July 2024

Hearing venue: Remote hearing

Hearing Outcome: Suspension Order – 12 Months

Interim order: Interim suspension order (18 months)

Introduction and attendees:

1. The hearing was held under Part 5 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) ('the Regulations')
2. Ms Lesley Doorne Hughes, a registered social worker, was not present at the hearing nor was she represented.
3. Social Work England was represented by Ms Tope Adeyemi, case presenter, instructed by Capsticks LLP.

Adjudicators	Role
Claire Cheetham	Lay Chair
Tracey Newson	Social worker adjudicator

Tom Stoker	Hearings officer
Jo Cooper	Hearings support officer
Conor Heaney	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

4. The panel of adjudicators ('the panel') had regard to the documents contained in the final hearing service bundle as follows:
 - a. A copy of the notice of the final hearing dated 2 October 2023 and addressed to Ms Hughes at her registered Social Work England postal and email addresses;
 - b. An extract from the Social Work England Register detailing Ms Hughes' registered postal and email addresses;
 - c. A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that, on 2 October 2023, the following documents were sent to Ms Hughes by next day special delivery and email: Notice of Final Hearing and enclosures; and
 - d. A Royal Mail 'Track and Trace' proof of delivery extract which confirmed that the letter containing the notice of the final hearing sent to Ms Hughes had been delivered on 3 October 2023.
5. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to service of notice.
6. Having had regard to the applicable provisions of Social Work England's Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) ('the Rules') and all of the information before it in

relation to the service of notice, the panel was satisfied that notice of the hearing had been duly served on Ms Hughes in accordance with rules 14, 44 and 45 of the Rules.

Proceeding in the absence of the social worker:

7. Ms Adeyemi applied for the hearing to proceed in Ms Hughes' absence. Ms Adeyemi advised the panel that Ms Hughes had not engaged with her regulatory body in the time leading up to this hearing. The last substantive communication was contained in an email, dated 27 August 2021, sent by Ms Hughes to Social Work England. In that email Ms Hughes stated as follows:

'To be quite honest, I am past caring about the outcome of this investigation or whether I work as a Social Worker again in the future as I have no faith in the profession or it's (sic) governing body and have a life outside of work these days that never existed when I was Social Worker...'

8. Ms Adeyemi invited the panel to find that Ms Hughes had decided to voluntarily absent herself from the proceedings and to proceed with the hearing in her absence.
9. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the factors to take into account when considering whether to proceed in the absence of Ms Hughes. This included reference to the cases of *R v Jones* [2003] UKPC 34 and *General Medical Council v Adeogba* [2016] EWCA Civ 162.
10. The panel was satisfied that Ms Hughes had, by her actions, voluntarily waived her right to attend the hearing. No useful purpose would be served if the hearing was adjourned. The panel was also mindful that the allegations dated back to 2015 and that a number of witnesses had been scheduled to give evidence at the hearing. The panel considered that it was important, given the nature of the allegations, to proceed with the hearing and hear the witness evidence when the recollection of events would be fresher at this hearing, rather than if the hearing was to be adjourned to some date in the future.
11. The panel considered that, in deciding to proceed in her absence, there would be some disadvantage to Ms Hughes. However, the panel was of the view that the extent of any disadvantage could be minimised by attaching such weight, as the panel considered appropriate, to the contemporaneous documentation provided by Ms Hughes to Social Work England in the course of these proceedings.
12. For these reasons, the panel decided that it was fair and appropriate to proceed with the hearing in Ms Hughes' absence.

Allegation:

The allegation arising from the regulatory concerns referred by the Case Examiners on 21 December 2021 is:

- 1) Whilst registered with the Health and Care Professions Council as a social worker and during the course of your employment with North Yorkshire County Council, you:
 - a) Between April 2015 and 14 November 2016, did not update the Assessment and Progress Records for Service User 11.
 - b) Between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017, did not complete case recording in respect of a permanent placement for the following children,:
 - i. Service User 1;
 - ii. Service User 2; and/or
 - iii. Service User 3.
 - c) Did not complete and / or record visits for:
 - i. Service User 4, between 27 October 2016 and 17 March 2017,
 - ii. Service User 5, between 28 April 2016 and 17 March 2017.
 - iii. Service User 6, between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017;
 - iv. Service User 7, between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017; and/or
 - v. Service User 8. between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017.
 - d) Did not complete Personal Education Plans (“PEPs”) for:
 - i. Service User 9, between 9 June 2017 and 28 July 2017, and/or
 - ii. Service User 10, between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017.
 - e) between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017, failed to complete pathway plans for the following:
 - i. Service User 11;
 - ii. Service User 5; and/or
 - iii. Service User 12.
 - f) Between 5 July 2017 and 28 July 2017, failed to complete a Viability Assessment for a private law case involving Service User 6.
 - g) Between 10 February 2017 and 1 July 2017, did not complete a Placement with Parent Report for Service User 4,
 - h) On or around 24 November 2016, did not act appropriately and in a timely manner in respect of safeguarding risks to Service User 8.

The matters set out at allegation 1 amount to misconduct.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.

Summary of evidence:

13. In November 2017, the Health and Care Professions Council ('HCPC') received a referral regarding Ms Hughes. The referral was made by Ms Hughes' employer, North Yorkshire County Council ('the Council').
14. Ms Hughes had been employed by the Council from 2 February 2010 as a Family Support Worker and then as a Social Worker from 19 October 2010 when she qualified.
15. At the relevant time, Ms Hughes was employed in the Looked After Children and Permanence Team ('the Team'). Ms Hughes joined the Team on 1 March 2012. The Team would usually have cases transferred from the Child Protection Team. Ms Hughes' role involved complying with Court Orders, ensuring statutory visits were completed and generally ensuring the child's best interests and wellbeing was taken into account in any care decision. The role included the requirement to keep accurate records and follow safeguarding procedures.
16. As part of this role, Ms Hughes was expected to update the Assessment and Progress Records for Looked After Children annually; to record case records contemporaneously and at least within 24 hours of the event, as outlined in the Council's Case Recording policy and to undertake LAC visits in accordance with statutory timescales.
17. Ms Hughes had been supported under the developing performance process from February 2012 to July 2012, amongst other things, due to concerns surrounding record keeping, time management and effective organisation.
18. Further concerns were raised about Ms Hughes' practice following a review of her cases on 14 November 2016. The review was completed due to concerns surrounding Ms Hughes' record keeping, time management, communication with professionals and families and progression of cases.
19. On 19 December 2016, a Development Performance Support Plan was put in place for a period of four months to support Ms Hughes.
20. Due to a lack of progress, a Development Performance Meeting was held on 25 April 2017. It was agreed that Ms Hughes would be moved into the Council's Capability Procedure.
21. The first Capability Meeting was held on 4 May 2017 during which aspects of Ms Hughes' work performance were discussed and a Support Plan was put in place. On 1

August 2017, a final Capability Meeting was held and it was decided that Ms Hughes had made insufficient progress. On 20 November 2017, a Capability Hearing was held after which Ms Hughes was dismissed from her position at the Council.

22. At the present hearing, the panel heard evidence from the following witnesses called by Social Work England:
- a. Mrs Gemma Sheader, Team Manager; and
 - b. Ms Petula McLaren, Practice Supervisor.

Mrs Gemma Sheader:

23. Mrs Sheader gave evidence to the panel as to her role and responsibilities, at the material time as the Team Manager. She detailed the concerns which had arisen about Ms Hughes' practice as a Social Worker at the Team. Mrs Sheader set out the steps taken by herself and Ms McLaren to address and remedy those concerns in the form of informal support. Subsequently, as a result of informal support not having brought about sufficient improvement, Mrs Sheader told the panel about the formal capability process to which Ms Hughes was subject. Mrs Sheader told the panel that Ms Hughes left the employment of the Council at the end of the formal capability process. It was Mrs Sheader's view that while she may not have been best suited to the dynamic nature of the Team and the pressured demands which frequently arose as a result of the nature of the Team's work, Ms Hughes had many good qualities as a Social Worker. Mrs Sheader described Ms Hughes as a committed and passionate Social Worker who was kind and worked well as part of a team.
24. Mrs Sheader also gave evidence in relation to those matters which were the subject of the Allegation.

Ms Petula McLaren

25. At the material time, Ms McLaren was a Practice Supervisor at the Team and was Ms Hughes' direct line manager. Ms McLaren explained the nature of her role, together with the structure of the Team and the scope of its work. Ms McLaren stated that, following her appointment as Practice Supervisor in May 2016, it became apparent to her that Ms Hughes was not keeping up to date with case recording; was slow at progressing cases and not meeting case and court deadlines.
26. Ms McLaren, in conjunction with Mrs Sheader, informally assisted Ms Hughes with her functions over a three-month period. Ms McLaren stated that, informal support having not brought about significant improvement, from April 2017 to September 2017, Ms Hughes was placed on a formal three-month capability review. The capability review concentrated on concerns in relation to Ms Hughes' record keeping and the completion of outstanding tasks in relation to her caseload. Ms McLaren held regular supervision meetings with Ms Hughes. Ms Hughes also attended developing performance and capability meetings at which Ms McLaren and Mrs Sheader were present.

27. Notwithstanding the concerns in relation to aspects of Ms Hughes' practice which she described as serious, Ms McLaren stated that Ms Hughes, during her time at the Team, was a well thought of Social Worker who would often go '*above and beyond*' for her colleagues and service users.
28. Ms McLaren also gave evidence in relation to those matters which were the subject of the Allegation.

Finding and reasons on facts:

29. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice.
30. In the course of that advice, the panel was advised as to the burden and standard of proof. The standard of proof was the civil standard, the balance of probabilities. The panel was reminded that it needed to consider the Allegation and each Particular and apply the balance of probabilities to the evidence. Ms Hughes did not have to prove anything.
31. The panel carefully considered the oral and documentary evidence at the fact-finding stage of the proceedings, together with Ms Adeyemi's closing submission.
32. The panel then turned to consider the Allegation.

Panel Reconvened:

33. Having retired to consider the facts of the Allegation, in the course of its deliberations, the panel identified an issue with regard to the wording of Particular 1(c). In order to ensure fairness in the proceedings and to the parties, the panel reconvened in order to place that issue on the record. Ms Adeyemi was in attendance when the panel reconvened.
34. The panel noted that the wording of Particular 1(c), as presently drafted, alleges in general terms that Ms Hughes '*did not complete and/or record visits*' for five service users between certain specified dates. The oral and documentary evidence presented at the hearing in support of Particular 1(c) was not that she had failed in general terms to conduct and/or document visits to service users. Instead, it was submitted that Ms Hughes' failures to carry out and/or document visits was a breach of the mandatory timescales set out in statute for the visiting of children in care by social workers. The panel noted that a significant number of questions had been directed to Ms McLaren during her oral evidence in relation to statutory timescales and relevant policy documents. These mandatory statutory visiting requirements were reflected in the Council's supervision policy which was contained in the exhibits bundle. However, there was no reference to any alleged breach by Ms Hughes in respect of the mandatory statutory visiting requirements in the wording of Particular 1(c).

35. The panel observed that should it find that Ms Hughes had made visits and/or recorded visits in relation to any or all of the service users referred to, it followed that it was open to the panel to find all or part of Particular 1(c) not proved. The panel was mindful of the nature of the proceedings and the primary objective of public protection. In light of this, the panel considered that it was appropriate to afford Ms Adeyemi the opportunity of taking instructions on the question as to whether Social Work England wished to make an application to the panel to amend Particular 1(c). It seemed to the panel that any such amendment application would address the absence of any reference in Particular 1(c), as currently drafted, to the applicable statutory timescales which Social Work England had put forward in its submissions that Ms Hughes had breached.
36. Having adjourned for a period to enable Ms Adeyemi to take instructions, the panel was informed by her, when it reconvened, that Social Work England did not intend to make an application to amend the Allegation. However, Ms Adeyemi indicated that it was Social Work England's position that the panel could make such an amendment of its own motion.
37. If the panel proceeded to amend Particular 1(c), Ms Adeyemi submitted that fairness did not require for there to be an adjournment of the hearing so that Ms Hughes could be put on notice of the panel's decision. Ms Adeyemi made this submission for a number of reasons. First, Ms Adeyemi stated that the amendment did not make the proceedings against Ms Hughes more serious. She submitted that the amendment would do no more than make explicit that which was implicit in the evidence. Second, there was reference in the case statement and the witness statements and, in particular Ms McLaren's witness statement, that the failings alleged by Social Work England as set out in Particular 1(c) related not to a general failure by Ms Hughes to conduct and/or record visits but rather a failure on her part to conduct and/or record them in accordance with mandatory statutory requirements. Ms Hughes had been sent the case statement and the hearing bundle a significant period in advance of the hearing commencing. Ms Hughes had not responded in detail to each Particular. Instead, she had chosen to deny wrongdoing in general terms and highlight what she described as a lack of support from her colleagues at the Team as contributing to her failings in the discharge of her responsibilities.
38. Prior to retiring to consider the matter further the panel sought advice from the legal adviser. He referred the panel to the applicable provisions in the Rules together with referring the panel to Social Work England's guidance document entitled, *'Postponements and adjournments of fitness to practise hearings'* (updated 16 December 2022). The legal adviser also referred the panel to the case of *PSA v HCPC and Doree* [2017] EWCA Civ 319 (*'Doree'*).
39. The panel reminded itself that rule 32(a) of the Rules provided as follows:
- 'Subject to Rule 32(c), the adjudicators ... may regulate their own procedures and must conduct the hearing ... in the manner they consider fair.'*

40. Rule 32(c) is concerned with the structure of the hearing and the matters which ordinarily must be considered at each stage of the proceedings.
41. The panel noted that there was no provision contained within the Rules which dealt with an amendment of the Allegation. Any such application to amend, it seemed to the panel, therefore needed to be considered by reference to the requirement to conduct the hearing fairly as set out in rule 32(a) of the Rules.
42. The panel was mindful as to the stage which had been reached at the hearing. Witnesses had been called by Social Work England and the panel had heard closing submissions from Ms Adeyemi. However, the caselaw and, in particular the case of *Doree*, made clear that, as a matter of principle, a retrospective amendment to the Allegation, even where, as here, the evidence at the fact-finding stage had been considered, was not procedurally unfair. However, when deciding how to proceed, it was of the utmost importance for the panel to consider the question of fairness to the parties.
43. Having considered the matter very carefully, the panel was minded to amend Particular 1(c) in the manner set out below. This was to take account of the issues identified by the panel as set out above at paragraphs 34 and 35 of this decision. Any amendment would alter the basis of Particular 1(c) to make it clear that the alleged failing related to Ms Hughes' breach of statutory timescales and not some generalised failure on her part to conduct and record visits in respect of LAC children for whom she was responsible.
44. The panel considered that, as a matter of fairness, the hearing should be adjourned to enable the parties to be provided with the proposed amendment. The parties would then be invited to make any comments or observations on the proposed amendment by a specified period. Upon the expiry of that period, the panel would reconvene to consider the parties' submissions (if any) in relation to whether it was fair to make the proposed amendment to Particular 1(c). The panel would then decide whether the amendment ought to be made having regard to the parties' submissions (if any) and to the principle of fairness. The panel would also continue with its deliberations in relation to the facts.

Adjournment:

45. In accordance with rule 32(b)(iv) of the Rules, the panel, of its own motion, decided to adjourn its consideration of the Allegation at this hearing.
46. Following its decision to adjourn the hearing, the panel made the following directions:
 - a. The proposed amended Allegation (below) be served on Social Work England and Ms Hughes on or before 16 November 2023;
 - b. Any written submission as to whether it would be unfair to amend the Allegation in the manner proposed by the panel should be lodged on or before 14 December 2023; and

- c. The matter be relisted for hearing as soon as possible on dates after 14 December 2023.

The Proposed Amended Allegation:

47. The proposed amended Allegation is as follows:

The allegation arising from the regulatory concerns referred by the Case Examiners on 21 December 2021 is:

1. Whilst registered with the Health and Care Professions Council as a social worker and during the course of your employment with North Yorkshire County Council, you:

a) Between April 2015 and 14 November 2016, did not update the Assessment and Progress Records for Service User 11.

b) Between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017, did not complete case recording in respect of a permanent placement for the following children,:

i Service User 1;

ii Service User 2; and/or

iii Service User 3.

c) Did not complete and / or record visits in accordance with statutory timescales for:

i Service User 4, between 27 October 2016 and 17 March 2017,

ii Service User 5, between 28 April 2016 and 17 March 2017.

iii Service User 6, between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017;

iv Service User 7, between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017; and/or

v Service User 8. between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017.

d) Did not complete Personal Education Plans (“PEPs”) for:

i Service User 9, between 9 June 2017 and 28 July 2017, and/or

ii Service User 10, between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017.

e) between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017, failed to complete pathway plans for the following:

i Service User 11;

ii Service User 5; and/or

iii Service User 12.

f) Between 5 July 2017 and 28 July 2017, failed to complete a Viability Assessment for a private law case involving Service User 6.

g) Between 10 February 2017 and 1 July 2017, did not complete a Placement with Parent Report for Service User 4,

h) On or around 24 November 2016, did not act appropriately and in a timely manner in respect of safeguarding risks to Service User 8.

The matters set out at allegation 1 amount to misconduct.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.

Re-convened hearing: 8 July 2024:

Service of notice:

48. The panel had regard to the documents contained in the service bundle as follows:

- a. A copy of the notice of resuming final hearing letter, dated 7 December 2023, and addressed to Ms Hughes at her registered Social Work England email address; and
- b. A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that, on 7 December 2023, the following documents were sent to Ms Hughes by email: notice of resuming final hearing letter and enclosures.

49. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to service of notice.

50. Having had regard to the applicable provisions of the Rules and all of the information before it in relation to the service of notice, the panel was satisfied that notice of the resumed final hearing had been duly served on Ms Hughes in accordance with rules 14, 44 and 45 of the Rules.

Proceeding in the absence of the social worker:

51. Ms Adeyemi applied for the resumed hearing to proceed in Ms Hughes' absence. She told the panel that, since the hearing adjourned part-heard in November 2023, Social Work England had heard nothing further from Ms Hughes. Ms Adeyemi invited the panel to conclude that Ms Hughes had decided to voluntarily absent herself from the

resumed hearing. She also submitted that, given the seriousness of the allegations – some of which dated back to April 2015 – that the public interest was strongly engaged in proceeding in Ms Hughes’ absence.

Decision on Proposed Amended Allegation:

52. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the factors to take into account when considering whether to proceed in the absence of Ms Hughes. This included reference to the cases of *R v Jones* [2003] UKPC 34 and *General Medical Council v Adeogba* [2016] EWCA Civ 162.
53. The panel was satisfied that Ms Hughes had, by her actions, voluntarily waived her right to attend the resumed hearing. Ms Hughes had been contacted by Social Work England following the adjournment of the hearing in November 2023. She had not taken up the opportunity, in the intervening period, to engage with her regulatory body. The panel, in these circumstances, could see no useful purpose in further adjourning the proceedings. The panel considered that it was important, given the nature and age of the allegations, to proceed with the hearing in Ms Hughes’ absence and in the public interest.
54. The panel considered that, in deciding to proceed in her absence, there would be some disadvantage to Ms Hughes. However, the panel was of the view that the extent of any disadvantage could be minimised by attaching such weight, as the panel considered appropriate, to the contemporaneous documentation provided by Ms Hughes to Social Work England in the course of these proceedings.
55. For these reasons, the panel decided that it was fair and appropriate to proceed with the resumed hearing in Ms Hughes’ absence.

Decision:

56. The panel noted that, following its decision to adjourn the hearing in November 2023, Social Work England, in an email dated 15 November 2023, had enclosed upon Ms Hughes the Proposed Amended Allegation and invited her written submission on it on or before 14 December 2023. In addition, by way of email to Ms Hughes dated 22 November 2023, Social Work England had enclosed the hearing transcripts and highlighted those portions of the transcripts in respect of which the Proposed Amended Allegation were relevant. Ms Hughes was again invited to respond by 14 December 2023.
57. There had been no reply to the correspondence by Ms Hughes.
58. Ms Adeyemi, at the resumed hearing, had no further submissions to make on behalf of Social Work England in respect of the proposed amendment to Particular 1(c).

59. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser and, in particular had regard to rule 32(a) of the Rules and the guidance set out by the court in *Doree*.
60. Ms Hughes had been on written notice since November 2023 and had, since 22 November 2023, been sent the rationale for the proposed amendment by Social Work England. Ms Hughes, for her own reasons, had chosen not to engage further with her regulatory body.
61. The panel had adopted a careful and methodical approach in order to provide Ms Hughes with a proper opportunity to consider the proposed amendment and make submissions – either in agreement with the proposal or in opposition to it – well in advance of this resumed hearing. There had been no response from Ms Hughes. Having adopted this approach, the panel could identify no unfairness or injustice to Ms Hughes in deciding to make an amendment to Particular 1(c).
62. Having carefully considered the matter, the panel decided to amend the Allegation in the manner set out in the Proposed Amended Allegation. It did so for the following reasons. First, in its view, the proposed amendment would align Particular 1(c) with the other Particulars which set Ms Hughes’ alleged misconduct in the context of failing to adhere to statutory guidance. Secondly, the panel decided that a failure to amend the Allegation in the manner proposed might result in an under-charging in the proceedings.
63. The panel therefore decided to amend the Allegation in the manner proposed and set out in the Proposed Amended Allegation.
64. The panel then turned to consider the Allegation as amended.

1. Whilst registered with the Health and Care Professions Council as a social worker and during the course of your employment with North Yorkshire County Council, you:

a) Between April 2015 and 14 November 2016, did not update the Assessment and Progress Records for Service User 11.

65. Ms McLaren’s evidence was that at a review on 14 November 2016, it was noted that the Assessment and Progress Records for Service User 11 had not been updated since April 2015. It was also her evidence that such records should be updated annually. At supervisions on 21 June 2016, 23 August 2016 and 28 August 2016, the Assessment and Progress Records were noted as out of date and in need of completion.
66. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence, which included the Assessment and Progress Record dated 27 April 2015, found Particular 1(a) proved.

b) Between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017, did not complete case recording in respect of a permanent placement for the following children,:

i Service User 1;

67. Ms McLaren's evidence was that Service User 1, Service User 2 and Service User 3 were siblings whose records needed to be completed by Ms Hughes before the cases could be transferred to Permanence Selby.
68. In respect of Service User 1, the requirement for the case records to be updated before the transfer could take place was raised at performance reviews on 17 March 2017, 1 July 2017 and 28 July 2017.
69. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence, including the relevant case notes, found Particular 1(b)(i) proved.

ii Service User 2; and/or

70. In respect of Service User 2, the requirement for the case records to be updated before the transfer could take place was raised at performance reviews on 17 March 2017, 1 July 2017 and 28 July 2017.
71. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence, including the relevant case notes, found Particular 1(b)(ii) proved.

iii Service User 3.

72. In respect of Service User 3, the requirement for the case records to be updated before the transfer could take place was raised at performance reviews on 17 March 2017, 1 July 2017 and 28 July 2017.
73. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence, including the relevant case notes, found Particular 1(b)(iii) proved.

c) Did not complete and / or record visits in accordance with statutory timescales for:

i Service User 4, between 27 October 2016 and 17 March 2017,

74. In its approach to the consideration of statutory timescales, the panel had regard to the evidence of Ms McLaren and the documentary evidence. Ms McLaren's evidence was that statutory visits to Looked After Children were undertaken at least every 6 weeks. Ms McLaren stated that it was important for these visits to be recorded as they provided a record for the child in question and a record of their care over time. Ms McLaren's evidence was echoed in the Council's Supervision Policy which stated that, following placement, the Looked After Child must be visited by their social worker, at a minimum, no more than every 6 weeks in the first year of placement. The evidence before the panel was that the Supervision Policy, in turn, was based on the applicable statutory regime as set out in the Children Act 1989.
75. With regard to Service User 4, Ms McLaren's evidence was that, when she was reviewing Service User 4's case in March 2017, she noted that, between 27 October 2017 and the date of the March 2017 review, there had been one statutory visit recorded on 14 February 2017. However, the panel noted that a case note for Service User 4, dated 19 December 2016, recorded a further visit on 8 December 2016. This visit was not picked up at the March 2017 review. In any event, despite the panel

identifying the case note on the further visit not identified in the review, the panel was satisfied that, with regard to Service User 4, statutory visits had not been completed and/or recorded by Ms Hughes in accordance with statutory timescales.

76. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(c)(i) proved.

ii Service User 5, between 28 April 2016 and 17 March 2017.

77. Ms McLaren's evidence was that, at the review in March 2017, Service User 5 had only received two LAC visits recorded on 7 November 2016 and 23 January 2017 and that there continued to be gaps in the recording of visits identified in her review of 1 July 2017 and 28 July 2017. The case notes for Service User 5 were not before the panel at the hearing. Therefore the only primary evidence upon which the panel could place reliance was the contents of Ms McLaren's three reviews which were conducted between March and July 2017. The panel was of the view that it would not be proper to rely solely on Ms McLaren's review of the case notes in terms of accuracy. The panel could not discount the possibility that the case notes, if produced, could have provided evidence of visits conducted by Ms Hughes in accordance with statutory timescales.
78. Accordingly, the panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(c)(ii) not proved.

iii Service User 6, between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017;

79. Ms McLaren's evidence was that her July 2017 review noted that the last recorded statutory visit for Service User 6 took place on 10 May 2017. In addition, the panel identified a case note confirming that Ms Hughes conducted a further statutory visit on 12 July 2017. There was no evidence of any further statutory visits having been undertaken in the intervening period.
80. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(c)(iii) proved.

iv Service User 7, between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017; and/or

v Service User 8. between 10 May 2017 and 28 July 2017.

81. The was that Service User 7 and Service User 8 were siblings. The evidence was such as to satisfy the panel that Service User 7 and Service User 8 were Looked After Children in the care of the Council. The panel considered that, as the evidence for both was identical, it was appropriate to consider Particular 1(c)(iv) and Particular 1(c)(v) together.
82. Ms McLaren's evidence was that, at the review in July 2017, the last recorded statutory visit undertaken by Ms Hughes to Service User 7 and Service User 8 was on 11 May 2017. At supervision, on 9 June 2017, it is recorded that a statutory visit took place on 26 May 2017 but that Service User 7 and Service User 8 were not seen on their own. The case notes record that statutory visits took place on 1 July 2017 and 3 July 2017. The

Council's Supervision Policy does not require statutory visits to take place between the social worker and the Looked After Child on their own. Accordingly, the panel concluded on the evidence that between May and July 2017, statutory visits which were recorded had taken place in accordance with statutory timescales.

83. The panel noted that, at supervision on 9 June 2017, it was agreed that Ms Hughes would undertake weekly visits to Service User 7 and Service User 8. On the evidence, these did not take place. It was noted by the panel, in that regard, that Ms Hughes was not alleged to have failed to undertake statutory visits in accordance with her employer's instructions.
84. Accordingly, the panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(c)(iv) and Particular 1(c)(v) not proved.

d) Did not complete Personal Education Plans ("PEPs") for:

i Service User 9, between 9 June 2017 and 28 July 2017, and/or

85. Ms McLaren's evidence was that the PEP for Service User 9 should have been completed following her third birthday in May 2017. At a performance review on 28 July 2017, it was recorded: *'PEP not completed following [Service User 9's] [sic] 3rd birthday in May, this was requested in supervision on 9th June 2017.'*
86. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(d)(i) proved.

ii Service User 10, between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017.

87. In her written responses, Ms Hughes stated that she was not the Social Worker appointed to Service User 10's case.
88. At supervision on 15 July 2016 between Ms McLaren, Ms Hughes and another named Social Worker, it was recorded that the next PEP needed to be arranged when further information was to hand in September 2016 as to where Service User 10 was living.
89. Ms McLaren's evidence was that at a performance review on 17 March 2017, it was noted that the last PEP had been completed on 22 April 2016 and that another PEP needed to be arranged. At a statutory visit on 15 June 2017, Ms Hughes recorded that she still needed to arrange a PEP in respect of Service User 10. At a further review on 28 July 2017, there had still not been a further PEP carried out.
90. The panel noted that a number of other named Social Workers, in addition to Ms Hughes, had been referred to in Service User 10's case notes. When questioned about the identity of the allocated Social Worker, both Mrs Sheader and Ms McLaren were clear that Ms Hughes was the allocated Social Worker at the material time.
91. On the issue of the identity of the allocated Social Worker, the panel preferred the evidence of Mrs Sheader and Ms McLaren.

92. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(d)(ii) proved.

e) between 17 March 2017 and 28 July 2017, failed to complete pathway plans for the following:

i Service User 11;

93. Ms McLaren's evidence was that a pathway plan was an important document in relation to planning for a child moving away from a care setting and putting in place the necessary supports to foster independent living as an adult. Ms McLaren stated that when a child turns 15 and a half years of age, the computer system alerts the social worker that the pathway plan needs to be completed. Service User 11 was born in March 2000 and therefore the computer system would have sent a prompt that the pathway plan needed to be completed in September 2015.
94. The performance review on 17 March 2017 in relation to Service User 11's case recorded that the pathway plan had not been completed. The entry on the Council's Liquid Logic System ('LCS') dated 31 May 2017 recorded that a pathway plan for Service User 11 be completed within 4 weeks. At the performance review on 28 July 2017, it was recorded that that the pathway plan had '*commenced recently*'.
95. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(e)(i) proved.

ii Service User 5; and/or

96. Ms McLaren's evidence was that at a review in relation to Service User 5 on 7 December 2016, it was noted that Service User 5's pathway plan was to be completed within one month. In a review of Service User 5's case on 31 May 2017, it was noted that the pathway plan was overdue and had not been completed. It was further noted that the pathway plan had been started and that Ms Hughes would complete it within two weeks. In addition, a performance review conducted on 28 July 2017 recorded that Service User 5's pathway plan '*continues to be outstanding*.' The panel also noted a supervision record, dated 15 August 2017, which stated, in relation to Service User 5: '*The case will need to transfer to Leaving Care team. Lesley will need to get all outstanding tasks completed so the case can transfer in a timely manner.*'
97. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence, found Particular 1(e)(ii) proved.

iii Service User 12.

98. Ms McLaren's evidence was that at a review in relation to Service User 12 on 7 December 2016, it was noted that Service User 12's pathway plan had not been completed and was to be completed within two weeks. At a LAC review on 20 January 2017, it was recorded that the pathway plan was to be completed by Ms Hughes within two weeks. At a further LAC review on 3 April 2017, it was recorded that Service User 12's pathway plan had still not been completed and that its completion '*had been a*

decision at the last review.’ At the performance review, which was held on 28 July 2017, it was recorded that the pathway plan *‘remains outstanding’*.

99. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(e)(iii) proved.

f) Between 5 July 2017 and 28 July 2017, failed to complete a Viability Assessment for a private law case involving Service User 6.

100. The evidence was that at a court hearing on 25 May 2017, it was agreed that the viability assessment in respect of Service User 6 would be completed and filed with the court by 6 July 2017. At a performance review on 5 July 2017, it was noted that the viability assessment had not been completed and needed to be completed and sent to Ms McLaren as soon as possible. At a performance review on 28 July 2017, it was recorded in respect of Service User 6, *‘Court documents have not been completed in accordance with dates agreed in supervision. This led to Viability Assessments being filed late ...’*

101. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(f) proved.

g) Between 10 February 2017 and 1 July 2017, did not complete a Placement with Parent Report for Service User 4,

102. Ms McLaren’s evidence was that on reviewing Service User 4’s case on 17 March 2017 it was noted that Service User 4’s Placement with Parent Report needed to be completed. It was further recorded that at supervision on 19 January 2017 with Mrs Sheader, it was agreed that the report would have been completed by 10 February 2017. At a further performance review on 1 July 2017, it was noted that Service User 4’s Placement with Parent Report had not been completed.

103. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(g) proved.

h) On or around 24 November 2016, did not act appropriately and in a timely manner in respect of safeguarding risks to Service User 8.

104. Mrs Sheader’s evidence was that, on 25 November 2016, she was leaving the office for the day when she was approached by Ms Hughes. Ms Hughes told Mrs Sheader that the previous day, 24 November 2016, the father of a service user, Service User 8, had visited the children’s services offices to speak to Ms Hughes. He told Ms Hughes that Service User 8 and his other children had stayed with him the previous weekend and the father had left them for a short time. When he returned, the father saw that Service User 8 had his trousers down. His bottom was in the air and the dog in the house was licking Service User 8’s testicles. Mrs Sheader stated that the case was one which had a significant history of sexual abuse.

105. Ms McLaren also gave evidence about the incident concerning Service User 8. She also confirmed that there was a significant history of sexual abuse. She stated that previous safeguarding concerns had been raised in relation to the dog being left in the presence

of the children. Ms McLaren stated that the Council had an ‘open door’ policy in relation to reporting safeguarding concerns. If a Team manager was unavailable, there were managers in the three other departments situated in the same building to whom members of the Team could report a safeguarding concern.

106. Ms Hughes, in response to this Particular, gave two slightly different accounts of her actions. In the first response she stated: *‘Unfortunately, for some reason, I did not report this matter to a manager until the following afternoon which I sincerely regret and can only think that I was preoccupied by the care proceedings/five day hearing which was taking place the following day.’* In another response, Ms Hughes stated: *‘this was an end of the day visit by a parent which extended to after hours and my recollection is that when I went to seek a manager to share these concerns there wasn’t one.’*
107. The panel also noted that at a case discussion held between Mrs Sheader and Ms Hughes on 25 November 2016, under the heading ‘Agreed’, it was recorded: *‘a strategy should have been considered yesterday and the boys seen earlier.’*
108. The panel was satisfied, on the basis of the oral and documentary evidence, that the report made to Ms Hughes on 25 November 2017, and particularly in light of the family history, amounted to a safeguarding issue. In response, it was clear to the panel that prompt and effective action was required to manage the risks which arose. Mrs Sheader’s evidence was that the Council’s LCS had a link to all applicable policies. It was the expectation that all Social Workers trained and employed by the Council would have been aware of the seriousness of the concern which arose in Service User 8’s case and the need to escalate a report of the incident to management as soon as possible. In determining whether Ms Hughes had acted appropriately and in a timely manner in relation to the report received about Service User 8, the panel preferred the evidence given by Mrs Sheader and Ms McLaren at the hearing to the responses given by Ms Hughes. The panel also considered that the oral evidence given by Mrs Sheader and Ms McLaren was supported by the documentary evidence and, in particular, the case discussion note dated 25 November 2016 whereby Ms Hughes and Mrs Sheader agreed that the matter ought to have been brought to the attention of managers at the Team in a more timely fashion.
109. The panel, having considered the oral and documentary evidence found Particular 1(h) proved.

Finding and reasons on grounds

110. Ms Adeyemi submitted that, by her actions as found proved, Ms Hughes had acted in a manner which amounted to misconduct which was serious. Further, by reason of her misconduct, Ms Adeyemi invited the panel to make a finding that Ms Hughes’ fitness to practise was currently impaired. Such a finding was justified, in Ms Adeyemi’s submission, to protect the public and to uphold the public interest.

111. Prior to retiring to consider its decision on grounds and current impairment, the panel received advice from the legal adviser. In the course of that advice, the legal adviser referred to a number of authorities which included *GMC v Meadow* [2006] EWCA 1316 Civ, *Cohen v GMC* [2008] EWHC 581 (Admin) and *CHRE v NMC and Grant* [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin) ('Grant'). The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice.
112. By her actions, the panel was satisfied that Ms Hughes had breached the following applicable Standards:

HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (2016)

- 6.1 - You must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to service users, carers and colleagues as far as possible*
- 10.1 - You must keep full, clear, and accurate records for everyone you care for, treat, provide other services to*
- 10.2 - You must complete all records promptly and as soon as possible after providing care, treatment or other services*

113. Further, the panel was satisfied that, by her actions, Ms Hughes had breached the following applicable Standards of Proficiency:

HCPC Standards of Proficiency (2017)

- 1.2 - recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively and be able to practise accordingly*
- 1.3 - be able to undertake assessments of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately*
- 1.5 - be able to recognise signs of harm, abuse and neglect and know how to respond appropriately, including recognising situations which require immediate action*
- 2.3 - understand the need to protect, safeguard, promote and prioritise the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults*
- 10.1 - be able to keep accurate, comprehensive and comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines*
- 10.2 - recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines*
- 12.1 - be able to use supervision to support and enhance the quality of their social work practice*
- 14.3 - be able to prepare, implement, review, evaluate, revise and conclude plans to meet needs and circumstances in conjunction with service users and carers*

114. Ms Hughes had been found by the panel not to have complied, either adequately or at all, with basic record keeping in relation to Looked After Children for whom she had a statutory responsibility. Deficiencies in Ms Hughes' record keeping and her performance generally did not improve appreciably in spite of efforts made by the Council to support her. In respect of Ms Hughes' actions, it was Ms Sheader's evidence that while, *'[t]here was no direct harm, ... there was indirect harm as there was significant drift in cases and the looked after children remained in care for longer than needed. When the looked after children are older and want to access records, they may be incomplete. There is also a chance that those children may not have received letters from adoptive siblings and there is the risk of emotional harm.'*
115. The panel considered that Ms Hughes' actions, which were serious, fell significantly below the standard to be expected of a registered social worker in the circumstances.

Finding and reasons on current impairment

116. In determining the issue as to current impairment of fitness to practise, the panel had regard to the following matters:
- a. The extent to which Ms Hughes had the skills, knowledge and character to practise her profession safely and effectively without restriction; and
 - b. The wider public interest, which included the need to promote and maintain public confidence in social workers in England and the need to promote and maintain proper professional standards for these social workers.
117. At the outset, the panel considered the extent to which Ms Hughes' misconduct was capable of remedy. As a matter of principle, the panel was of the view that, with full insight and appropriate evidence demonstrating remediation, such misconduct was capable of remedy.
118. The panel considered whether Ms Hughes' misconduct had, in fact, been remedied. The panel first of all addressed the issue as to whether there was evidence that Ms Hughes was insightful into the seriousness of her misconduct. Ms Hughes had chosen not to engage in the hearing. The panel had no evidence from Ms Hughes reflecting on her actions, the potential for harm to others and any evidence of learning which would reduce the risk that Ms Hughes would repeat her misconduct in the future. In her last communication with Social Work England, in an email dated 27 August 2021, Ms Hughes stated:
- 'To be quite honest, I am past caring about the outcome of this investigation or whether I work as a Social Worker again in the future as I have no faith in the profession or it's governing body and have a life outside of work these days that never existed when I was a Social Worker working for [the Council].'*

119. The panel was satisfied that, in the absence of evidence of insight and remediation, there remained a risk that Ms Hughes would repeat her misconduct in future. Accordingly, the panel concluded that a finding of current impairment of Ms Hughes' fitness to practise was necessary to protect the public.
120. The panel next considered whether it was appropriate to make a finding of current impairment of Ms Hughes' fitness to practise on public interest grounds, namely, the need to promote and maintain public confidence in social workers in England and the need to promote and maintain proper professional standards for these social workers.
121. Having carefully considered the matter, and the nature of the misconduct established in this case, the panel was satisfied that a finding of current impairment of Ms Hughes' fitness to practise was required on public interest grounds. Not to make such a finding, in the panel's view, would seriously undermine the public's trust and confidence in the social work profession in England and would fail to promote and maintain proper professional standards.
122. The panel had regard to the formulation provided by Dame Janet Smith in her Fifth Report to the Shipman Inquiry, which was cited with approval by Cox J in *Grant*:
- 'Do our findings of fact in respect of the [the Social Worker's] misconduct, ... show that her fitness to practise is impaired in the sense that she:*
- a. Has in the past acted and/or is liable in the future to act so as to put a [service user] or [service users] at unwarranted risk of harm; and/or*
 - b. Has in the past brought and/or is liable in the future to bring the [social work] profession into disrepute; and/or*
 - c. Has in the past breached and/or is liable in the future to breach one of the fundamental tenets of the [social work] profession; and/or*
 - d. [...].'*
123. The panel was satisfied that, looking backwards, all of the above applicable limbs of the formulation in *Grant* were engaged. The panel was also satisfied that all of the limbs were engaged in respect of its assessment of Ms Hughes' likely actions in the future.
124. Accordingly, the panel has decided, on public protection and public interest grounds, that Ms Hughes' fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her misconduct.

Decision on sanction

125. Ms Adeyemi made a submission to the panel as to what, if any, sanction should be imposed. She submitted that a Suspension Order for a period of between 6 and 12

months would be the appropriate and proportionate sanction for the panel to impose in light of its findings.

126. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice on the approach to be adopted on the question of sanction and had regard to the Sanctions Guidance (updated 19 December 2022) ('the Guidance'), published by Social Work England. The panel also had careful regard to the documentary and oral evidence that had been presented at the hearing. The panel considered Ms Adeyemi's oral submission which it heard at the sanction stage of the proceedings.
127. At the outset, the panel considered the aggravating and mitigating factors.
128. The panel identified the following mitigating factors:
 - a. No previous regulatory findings;
 - b. Positive evidence from witnesses about some aspects of Ms Hughes' practice as a social worker;
 - c. Some limited evidence that Ms Hughes' had issues with her health at the material time although no basis to find that her health had been a factor in Ms Hughes' misconduct;
 - d. With the exception of the Final Hearing, Ms Hughes had engaged to some degree in the regulatory proceedings.
129. The panel identified the following aggravating factors:
 - a. Misconduct was wide ranging and prolonged;
 - b. Lack of insight/remorse;
 - c. Lack of remediation; and
 - d. Risk of harm to a vulnerable service user group – Looked After Children.

The panel then considered, in turn, the range of available sanctions, starting with the least restrictive.

No Further Action/ Advice

130. Having regard to its findings, the panel was of the view that concluding the case by taking no further action or issuing Ms Hughes with advice as to her future conduct would be contrary to its findings and insufficient to protect the public and uphold the public interest.

Warning

131. The panel noted that imposing a Warning on Ms Hughes' registration would not restrict her ability to practise as a social worker. The panel carefully considered the circumstances in respect of which it would be appropriate to impose a Warning. The panel's judgement was that Ms Hughes' misconduct was too serious and decided that

a Warning would be contrary to its findings and insufficient to protect the public and uphold the public interest.

Conditions of Practice Order

132. The panel noted that the primary purpose of a Conditions of Practice Order was to protect the public while the social worker took any necessary steps to remediate their fitness to practise. The panel considered that in a case like this, which addressed practice concerns, a Conditions of Practice Order might be appropriate and proportionate. Set against this, however, was Ms Hughes' clear indication, as set out in her email dated 27 August 2021, that she had no intention of returning to social work and had since disengaged with her regulator. Ms Hughes had not worked in social work practice since November 2017. During her time with the Council, the evidence was that, even with a great deal of support, there had not been a sustained improvement in her practice. As a result, in these circumstances, the panel concluded that a Conditions of Practice Order would not be practicable nor workable.
133. In addition, given the serious nature of its findings and the assessment of the risk of harm created to service users as a result of Ms Hughes' actions, the panel concluded that a Conditions of Practice Order would be contrary to its findings and insufficient to protect to protect the public and uphold the public interest.

Suspension Order

134. The panel noted that a Suspension Order was appropriate where no workable conditions could be devised which would uphold the public interest, but where the case fell short of requiring removal from the Register or where removal was not an option.
135. The panel noted its findings in relation to the aggravating and mitigating factors, referred to above, and reminded itself that a Suspension Order is appropriate in cases where a registrant's misconduct, while serious, was not such as to be fundamentally incompatible with remaining on the Register.
136. The panel had in mind the evidence of Ms McLaren and Ms Sheader. It was plain to the panel that although there were many aspects of Ms Hughes' practice which gave her employer serious and justified cause for concern, there were other aspects of Ms Hughes' practice which were more positive. Ms McLaren, in that regard, noted Ms Hughes, *'was very good at building relationships with her foster families, children and other stakeholders.'* For her part, Ms Sheader stated that Ms Hughes was a *'kind and committed social worker who wanted to do her best for the children she worked with.'*
137. On balance, the panel considered that a period of temporary removal from the Register by way of a Suspension Order was appropriate and proportionate. A Suspension Order would be sufficient to protect the public and uphold the public interest while, at the same time, would afford Ms Hughes an opportunity, if she chose to take it up, to provide Social Work England with evidence of insight and remediation.

138. This panel considered that, at the mandatory review of this Order, a future reviewing panel would be assisted by the following:
1. Ms Hughes' attendance at the review;
 2. A reflective piece from Ms Hughes setting out evidence of her insight and remediation. Such a piece could include but was not limited to: Ms Hughes' current understanding of how things went wrong in her practice; the impact which her misconduct had on service users and colleagues and evidence of current training to strengthen her practice; and
 3. References/testimonials from employers in any paid or unpaid roles.
139. The panel considered that a Suspension Order for a period of 12 months was appropriate and sufficient to enable Ms Hughes to reflect on the panel's findings and collate evidence of insight and remediation.
140. The panel recognised the impact which a Suspension Order would have on Ms Hughes and took this into account. However, it considered the need to protect the public and uphold the public interest outweighed Ms Hughes' interests.

Removal Order

141. The panel considered whether a Removal Order was the only appropriate response to its findings. The panel concluded that, in light of its reasons for the making of a Suspension Order, a Removal Order would be a disproportionate step to take at this stage.

Interim order:

142. Ms Adeyemi applied for an interim suspension order to cover the appeal period before the substantive order takes effect or, if an appeal is lodged, the period during which that appeal is disposed of, by hearing or otherwise.
143. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice.
144. In light of its findings, the panel was satisfied that an interim order was necessary to protect the public and for wider public interest reasons, namely, to promote and maintain the public's confidence in social workers in England and also to promote and maintain proper professional standards for these social workers.
145. The panel concluded that an interim conditions of practice order would be incompatible with its findings and the reasons given by the panel for considering that a substantive Conditions of Practice Order was inappropriate in the circumstances of this case.
146. The panel therefore decided that an interim suspension order for a period of 18 months should be imposed on Ms Hughes' registration to cover the appeal period before the

substantive order takes effect or, if an appeal is lodged, the period during which that appeal is disposed of, by hearing or otherwise.

Right of Appeal

1. Under paragraph 16 (1) (a) of schedule 2, part 5 of the Social Workers Regulations 2018, the Social Worker may appeal to the High Court against the decision of adjudicators:
 - (i) to make an interim order, other than an interim order made at the same time as a final order under paragraph 11(1)(b),
 - (ii) not to revoke or vary such an order,
 - (iii) to make a final order.
2. Under paragraph 16 (2) schedule 2, part 5 of the Social Workers Regulations 2018 an appeal must be made within 28 days of the day on which the social worker is notified of the decision complained of.
3. Under regulation 9(4), part 3 (Registration of social workers) of the Social Workers Regulations 2018, this order can only be recorded on the register 28 days after the Social Worker was informed of the decision or, if the social worker appeals within 28 days, when that appeal is exhausted.
4. This notice is served in accordance with rules 44 and 45 of the Social Work England Fitness to Practise Rules 2019.

Review of final orders

5. Under paragraph 15 (2) and 15 (3) of schedule 2, part 4 of the Social Workers Regulations 2018:
 - 15 (2) – The regulator may review a final order where new evidence relevant to the order has become available after the making of the order, or when requested to do so by the social worker.
 - 15 (3) A request by the social worker under sub-paragraph (2) must be made within such period as the regulator determines in rules made under regulation 25(5), and a final order does not have effect until after the expiry of that period.

6. Under rule 16 (aa) of Social Work England's fitness to practise rules, a registered social worker requesting a review of a final order under paragraph 15 of Schedule 2 must make the request within 28 days of the day on which they are notified of the order.