

Social worker: Susan Okpani
Evans

Registration number: SW5859

Fitness to Practise

Final Hearing

Dates of hearing: 06 January to 15 January, 20 January, 17 March and 27 July to 31 July 2026.

Hearing venue: Remote hearing

Hearing outcome:

Fitness to practise impaired, conditions of practice order (12 months)

Interim order:

Interim conditions of practice order (18 months)

Introduction and attendees:

1. This is a hearing held under Part 5 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) (“the regulations”).
2. Ms Evans attended and was represented by Mr Yabbey-Hagan/Ms Honeyman on the initial final hearing dates (06 January to 20 January 2026). Ms Evans did not attend but was represented by Ms Honeyman for the resuming dates (27 July to 31 July 2026).
3. Ms Kaya attended and was not represented on the initial final hearing dates (06 January to 20 January 2026).
4. Social Work England was represented by Mr Edwards from Capsticks LLP.

Adjudicators	Role
Rachel Cook	Chair
Natalie Williams/Stella Elliott	Social worker adjudicator
Jane Dalton	Lay adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Poppy Muffett/Molly-Rose Brown	Hearings officer
Andrew Brown/Chiugo Eze/Liam Dixon/Ellie Roberts	Hearings support officer
Dido Ofei-Kwatia	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

5. The panel was satisfied that service had been complied with in accordance with the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) (“the Rules”).

Preliminary matters:

Day 1

Joinder/Documents

6. The panel confirmed that at a case management hearing that took place on 12 November 2025, the previous panel decided that the cases of Ms Evans and Ms Kaya would be joined and heard together.
7. The panel sought confirmation that pursuant to the agreement of both parties as recorded in the decision of 12 November 2025 at paragraph 28, that cross disclosure had taken place. Both parties confirmed that they were aware of the decision and that cross disclosure had taken place.
8. The panel additionally checked that all parties had the same documents. The panel was initially in receipt of the following documents:
 - Hearing timetable – 5 pages
 - ID Key – 1 page

Bundles for Ms Evans

- Statement of case – 34 pages
- Statements bundle – 27 pages
- Exhibits bundle – 752 pages
- Updated social worker's response bundle (redacted) – 315 pages
- Updated social worker's response bundle (unredacted) – 315 pages
- Service bundle – 76 pages

Bundles for Ms Kaya:

- Statement of case – 27 pages
- Statements bundle – 28 pages
- Exhibits bundle – 761 pages
- Updated social worker response bundle – 201 pages
- Service bundle – 45 pages

9. The panel made provision for the reservice of any documents that could not be easily accessed by Ms Evans' representative.
10. The panel took note that whilst the redacted version of the updated social worker's response bundle for Ms Evans had been disclosed by Ms Evans to Ms Kaya, the panel and Social Work England had been served with the unredacted version of this bundle. The unredacted bundle was not to be disclosed to Ms Kaya as it was deemed to contain sensitive information.

Representation/McKenzie friend

11. The panel had regard to Rule 40 of the Rules and took note that at a hearing a social worker may be represented by a representative from any professional organisation of which the registered social worker is a member or at the discretion of Social Work England or the panel, a member of the registered social worker's family or other suitable person.
12. The panel heard from Mr Yabbey-Hagan who confirmed he is a qualified social worker and a lay representative. He indicated that he had represented Ms Evans in this case throughout. Additionally, he had court room experience from his own professional background. However, Mr Yabbey-Hagan indicated he will not be available for the full 8 days of the hearing, at which point Ms Evans indicated that on those days Ms Honeyman will represent her.

13. Ms Evans explained to the panel that Ms Honeyman is a close friend and not a relative. She is a teacher by profession with experience in special educational needs and has been providing support throughout this process in conjunction with Mr Yabbey-Hagan.
14. Mr Edwards responded that in the absence of an application for a postponement, when Ms Evans' representatives are not available the hearing should still proceed. He stated that the hearing was listed in June 2025 and that no applications for postponement had been received since.
15. Ms Kaya additionally indicated that she had three McKenzie friends (Ms Urger - friend, Ms Pritchard - daughter-in-law and Ms Altuncevahir - sister) who would be alternating their attendance to provide her with support. She also stated that they would not be available for the full 8 days. Ms Kaya confirmed that she was representing herself. Ms Kaya stated that she had taken annual leave from her current employment to enable her to attend for the first week of the hearing (06-09 January 2026). She indicated there may be some flexibility from her employer with regard to her attending the second week of the hearing (12-15 January 2026).
16. The panel enquired as to how information would be appropriately shared between the two proposed representatives, Mr Yabbey-Hagan and Ms Honeyman. Ms Evans assured the panel that Mr Yabbey-Hagan would handover to Ms Honeyman on occasions where there was to be a change of representative.
17. The panel acknowledged that Ms Evans may choose her own representation and was satisfied that Mr Yabbey-Hagan fell with the description at Rule 40(b). It exercised its discretion under Rule 40(c), which relates to representation, and decided that Ms Honeyman is a suitable person by virtue of Ms Evans' request that Ms Honeyman represent her, Ms Honeyman's professional background and Ms Honeyman's continued assistance in this matter.
18. The panel noted that it would do its best to accommodate the availability of Mr Yabbey-Hagan but emphasised that this would not be guaranteed and if instances of difficulty arose, it is open to Ms Evans to make an application for an adjournment.

Hearing structure

19. The panel confirmed that the hearing would follow the structure as set out in the timetable provided in advance and within the bundle.

Day 2

20. Towards the end of day 2 Ms Evans informed the panel that she was currently on holiday in Ireland and had been there since shortly before the start of this hearing. She stated that she was due to travel back to London on the evening of day 3 and as such she would only be available until midday on day 3. Ms Evans added that the hearing needs to finish by midday on day 3 because she had to pack, get ready to leave her accommodation at 3pm and travel to the airport for her scheduled flight at 7pm.

21. The legal adviser explained that the consideration for such a request would have to be made by way of an adjournment application. It was communicated to Ms Evans that whilst these applications are usually in writing the panel had given permission for her to make an oral application. Ms Evans was supplied with the Social Work England 'Postponements and adjournments of fitness to practise hearings' guidance. Ms Evans was given time to consider the guidance and to prepare an oral application.
22. Upon resuming the hearing, Ms Evans indicated she had not been able to read the relevant guidance as she had not been able to take the information 'on board'.
[PRIVATE].

Hearing part of the proceedings in private

23. [PRIVATE].
24. Mr Edwards had no objection to proceeding in private, however he submitted that Ms Kaya should be included in the private session as she is a party to the proceedings and not a person described in Rule 38(d).
25. Neither Ms Evans nor Ms Kaya raised any objections to part of the hearing proceeding in private.
26. The panel heard the advice of the legal adviser. The panel decided that part of the hearing which may relate to Ms Evans' [PRIVATE] should be heard in private. [PRIVATE].
27. By virtue of its powers under Rule 32(c) the panel concluded Ms Kaya ought to be excluded from the parts of the proceedings in which the panel would go into private [PRIVATE]. The panel noted that this approach had been taken prior to the hearing in that the material in Ms Evans' social worker response bundle had been redacted before being disclosed to Ms Kaya. In relation to the adjournment application, the panel concluded that it was fair and proportionate to continue in the same manner. The panel was satisfied that Ms Kaya would not be prejudiced [PRIVATE].
28. The panel was informed by Ms Evans that she anticipated having representation from Ms Honeyman during day 3 of the hearing. Ms Evans understood Ms Honeyman to be available from 9am to midday on day 3 but Ms Honeyman needed to attend a medical appointment at approximately 10am on day 3. The panel therefore decided that the adjournment application would be heard on the morning of day 3 to coincide with Ms Honeyman's availability.
29. Ms Kaya in response stated that she would be prepared to give her evidence before Ms Evans to assist the panel and provide good use of time as Ms Kaya wanted this process concluded as quickly as possible. The panel agreed to consider the request for Ms Kaya to give her evidence next on day 3 when Ms Evans would be represented.

Day 3

Adjournment application

30. At the start of day 3, Ms Honeyman was in attendance, and at the outset she confirmed to the panel that she was not a professional social worker. Ms Honeyman confirmed that she is a teacher and that she is not related to Ms Evans. Ms Honeyman indicated that she has mainly assisted in the completion and filing of the paperwork in the case. Ms Honeyman indicated that Mr Yabbey-Hagan was scheduled to attend the hearing and represent Ms Evans, and that this arrangement was due to Ms Honeyman's limited availability to attend the hearing as a result of her work commitments. Ms Honeyman further stated that prior to the hearing she had communicated that the 8 day schedule for the hearing was excessive and that both she and Mr Yabbey-Hagan work full time and would not be able to take that length of time off work. She further stated that it had been communicated to her on behalf of Social Work England that they would not need to be present at the hearing at all times and that there would be breaks in the proceedings.
31. Ms Honeyman set out the basis of the adjournment application, outlining that Ms Evans needed time to travel back from a business trip in Ireland. Ms Honeyman emphasised that Ms Evans could not proceed as she needed representation and that Mr Yabbey-Hagan was not available until midday on day 4.
32. [PRIVATE].
33. [PRIVATE].
34. [PRIVATE].
35. [PRIVATE].
36. [PRIVATE].
37. [PRIVATE].
38. [PRIVATE].
39. [PRIVATE].
40. [PRIVATE].
41. Ms Kaya returned to the hearing to hear the rest of the adjournment application as made by Ms Honeyman. Ms Honeyman explained that Ms Evans was in Ireland for a business trip that would potentially afford her with an opportunity to move forward with her life as she has retrained in holistic care. Ms Honeyman stated that this was a trip that was scheduled in the full knowledge of the hearing, but one that Ms Evans could not have turned down. Ms Honeyman submitted that Ms Evans had the impression from pre-hearing correspondence that she would not have to be at the hearing at all times and that there would be large gaps in the hearing and as such embarked on the trip. Ms Evans' trip has come to an end and she is scheduled to travel back to London this evening (day 3), and she needs time to organise herself to be able to leave her accommodation at 3pm to make her way to the airport.

42. The panel had sight of an email from Ms Honeyman dated 10 November 2025 addressed to a representative on behalf of Social Work England which stated:

“Regarding the proposed eight-day hearing, I regret to inform you that this duration is impossible for me to accommodate. I am employed full-time as a teacher, and obtaining eight consecutive days off work, especially in term time, is not feasible. Given Susan's lack of representation, my presence and support are crucial, but my professional obligations make this length of hearing a significant barrier.”

43. The panel noted an email in response from a representative on behalf of Social Work England dated 10 November 2025 addressed to Ms Honeyman and Ms Evans which states as follows:

“It may be helpful for you to know that there are various stages to a Final Hearing and attendance is not necessarily required at all stages.”...“I would strongly encourage Ms Evans to attend the Final Hearing wherever possible as it is her opportunity to present her case. However, it is open to Ms Evans and her representatives to attend parts of the Final Hearing only, or not to attend at all.”

44. The panel noted that Ms Honeyman had repeated her concerns about her professional commitments and limited availability in an email addressed to Social Work England dated 12 December 2025.
45. Ms Honeyman told the panel that Ms Evans seeks an adjournment from midday today until midday tomorrow so that she can prepare herself to return to her home from Ireland. Ms Evans reiterated that she does not want to be in the hearing without representation.
46. Ms Kaya acknowledged the plight of Ms Evans but indicated that the process was difficult for her also and she emphasised that she had taken annual leave to attend the hearing. Ms Kaya again offered to assist the panel by giving her evidence before Ms Evans to enable the hearing to proceed.
47. Mr Edwards in response to the application highlighted that the case management questionnaire was sent out on 12 June 2025 and contained a section regarding availability and the hearing window. It had been indicated that the hearing would take place between October 2025 and March 2026. Further, on 04 July 2025 a directions order was made which included the opportunity to object to the hearing arrangements, and Mr Edwards noted that no response was ever received. Mr Edwards stated that the directions were again subsequently amended, but no issues were raised in respect of the hearing dates. Mr Edwards further submitted that a draft timetable was sent to Ms Evans and Ms Kaya on 11 September 2025. Communication then began from 12 December 2025 onwards, after which Ms Evans was encouraged to attend. Within an email from Ms Evans to Social Work England dated 12 December 2025, Ms Evans said *“I decline to attend all the days and will only be attending on the DAY I need to attend.”* Mr Edwards submitted that there was ample opportunity for these matters to have been

raised at an earlier date as they were matters that should have been foreseen. He also indicated that there was no objection to Ms Kaya giving her evidence first.

48. In response to inquiry from the panel, Ms Honeyman raised no objection to the possibility of Ms Kaya giving her evidence first and in Ms Evans' absence. Ms Honeyman asked if a transcript of Ms Kaya's evidence could be made available to Ms Evans. Ms Honeyman indicated that the hearing could proceed in the absence of Ms Evans if needs be and she later indicated the hearing could also proceed even if a transcript could not be obtained. In response to the transcript request, the panel sought confirmation from the hearing support staff as to whether the transcript of any evidence given by Ms Kaya could potentially be made available to Mr Yabbey-Hagan to review before resuming representation on day 4.
49. The panel received legal advice from the legal adviser.
50. [PRIVATE].
51. [PRIVATE].
52. Having considered the [PRIVATE] information that Ms Evans provided and being satisfied that Ms Evans had [PRIVATE] and combined with Ms Evans informing the panel that she requires support in the form of representation, the panel concluded that it would be unfair for the case to proceed without Ms Evans being represented. The panel therefore decided to adjourn the hearing until midday on day 4 which coincided with Ms Evans' representative's availability.
53. In making its decision, the panel took note of the email exchange between Social Work England and Ms Honeyman/Ms Evans dated 10 November 2025 and was of the view that Ms Honeyman had informed Social Work England of her limited availability and was advised that "*attendance is not necessarily required at all stages.*" The panel observed that Ms Evans and Ms Honeyman mistakenly understood this to mean that the hearing could accommodate their limited availability. [PRIVATE].
54. In light of the [PRIVATE] information provided, the panel asked Ms Evans to confirm in writing any reasonable adjustments deemed necessary to facilitate a fair hearing. Ms Evans was referred to Social Work England's [PRIVATE] guidance dated 28 September 2022 and a copy of this guidance was made available to Ms Evans and her representatives.

Ms Kaya's offer to give her evidence before Ms Evans

55. Having recognised that Ms Evans was not in a position to give evidence until midday on day 4, the panel went on to consider Ms Kaya's offer to give her evidence next. The panel was mindful of its earlier decision that in light of the [PRIVATE] information it was not fair for the hearing to proceed in the absence of Ms Evans' representative.
56. The panel was informed by the hearing support staff that a transcript of any proposed evidence would not be able to be made available by the next working day for Mr Yabbey-Hagan to review.

57. Taking into account the following, the panel adjourned the case until midday on day 4. This is because:

- The panel's decision that it was unfair for the hearing to proceed in the absence of Ms Evans' representative;
- Ms Kaya's original request to give her evidence after Ms Evans;
- a transcript of Ms Kaya's evidence could not be made available in a timely way

Day 4

Reasonable adjustments

58. On this day, Ms Evans was represented by Mr Yabbey-Hagan.

59. A written request for reasonable adjustments was received on behalf of Ms Evans. The email was considered and then served on all parties and appropriately redacted before being made available to Ms Kaya. The email reads as follows;

"...Re: Fitness to Practise Tribunal - Susan Evans

I am writing to request reasonable adjustments for Susan Evans participation in the tribunal hearing where she has to give evidence. Given her [PRIVATE]."

60. The panel made provision for the legal adviser to have a parties' meeting to enable further clarification on some of the requests made. The panel then went on to consider the request in line with the guidance. The panel took particular note of paragraphs 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 14 of the guidance. The panel was satisfied that the guidance refers to all agencies including the panel having an anticipatory duty and it highlighted the fact that as per paragraph 7 of the guidance *"In most instances, we do not need to request any [PRIVATE] in order to make reasonable adjustments. We will liaise with the individual on what adjustments they feel would help them to engage with the service more easily. We will take their feedback into consideration when making a decision regarding reasonable adjustments"*.

61. The panel invited comment on the panel's interpretation of the guidance and none of the parties had any observations to make.

62. The panel then considered Ms Evans' written requests below and provided its response.

Clear, written instructions about the process and expectations:

63. The panel decided Social Work England's guidance about fitness to practise hearings was the most appropriate information for Ms Evans to consider. This information is available in the public domain and the details of which had been supplied to Ms Evans by Social Work England as a part of the relevant pre-hearing reading. However, the panel was satisfied it should be re-sent to Ms Evans, and it arranged for the hearing support staff to email it to her. The panel then encouraged Ms Evans to liaise with her

representative emphasising that it is not able to advise her on how to put her case and as such cannot set out any expectations for her to follow.

A pre-meeting with the tribunal chair to discuss my needs:

64. The panel explained that a meeting with the chair would not be facilitated as to do so at the exclusion of any of the other parties would be unfair, inappropriate and compromise the panel's independence. The panel was satisfied that the legal adviser had met with Ms Evans and her representative in the presence of the other parties to ascertain if there were any further matters for which assistance could be provided and that all issues had been canvassed thoroughly and appropriately.

A support person/advocate to accompany me:

65. The panel granted this reasonable adjustment on day 3.

Extra time to process questions and respond:

66. The panel highlighted that breaks were already taking place hourly for approximately 10 minutes and that this would continue. It added that if any extra breaks were needed Ms Evans or her representative should indicate this. It was also agreed that at times Ms Evans might choose to turn her camera off but would remain on audio.

A quiet, low-stress environment:

67. The panel acknowledged the inherent stress of regulatory proceedings for a registrant and confirmed that it was committed to ensuring the welfare of all parties.

Avoidance of sudden schedule changes:

68. The panel explained that the hearing operates in accordance with the draft timetable as supplied in advance and in the bundle. The panel stated that it was doing its best to follow the timetable and trying to avoid deviance from this schedule. The panel emphasised that it has a duty to respond appropriately when matters arise and that it was not deliberately facilitating sudden changes.

Permission to take breaks as needed:

69. The panel stressed that all parties could request breaks at any point.
70. The panel then proceeded to ask Mr Yabbey-Hagan and Ms Evans for confirmation as to the availability of her representatives for next week. Ms Evans agreed to check their availability and provide feedback.

Day 5

71. Ms Evans was in attendance without a representative and indicated that she wished to proceed unrepresented. Ms Kaya also indicated that she had changed her view and would not give evidence at the fact-finding stage in light of the admissions she has made. In response, Ms Evans indicated that she would go ahead with the hearing but not speak as she had no representative.

72. The panel facilitated a parties' meeting with the legal adviser. The next stage in the proceedings was for Mr Edwards to summarise his case (closing submissions) for Social Work England and there would be an opportunity for Ms Evans' representative would do the same also. It was explained that closing submissions require speaking to the panel. Ms Evans then updated her earlier position and indicated that she would not be able to proceed today as she was not represented. Both Mr Edwards and Ms Kaya acknowledged that the hearing would not be able to proceed without Ms Evans having representation.
73. Ms Kaya addressed the panel and explained that the situation had been very difficult for her, and she has not been able to attend work for a second week. Ms Kaya requested that there be a clear timetable provided for when Ms Evans' representative would be in attendance.
74. Ms Evans indicated that she was liaising with Mr Yabbey-Hagan and waiting for confirmation of his availability. She additionally stated that Ms Honeyman would not be available for the rest of the hearing due to her work commitments. The panel adjourned the hearing until 1pm on day 6 in accordance with Mr Yabbey-Hagan's next availability.
75. In order to facilitate Ms Evans' request for 'clear, written instructions', the panel requested that both Mr Edwards and Ms Evans prepare written closing submissions. It requested that Mr Edwards prepare his written submissions in bullet point format to assist Ms Evans and Mr Yabbey-Hagan. The panel assured Mr Edwards and Mr Yabbey-Hagan that they will have the opportunity to orally expand upon the written bullet points when speaking to the panel.

Day 6

76. The panel received an email from Ms Evans indicating that Mr Yabbey-Hagan is not available today (day 6) but would be available on Wednesday from 10.30am to 01.00pm (day 7) and not available on Thursday (day 8).
77. The panel agreed that in view of the reasonable adjustments that had been granted, the hearing could not proceed today. It noted that whilst Mr Edwards had provided written submissions, Ms Evans had not done so as yet.
78. Ms Kaya raised the question of severing the cases due to the unforeseen delays and that we were no longer in the fact finding stage of the hearing. The panel facilitated a parties' meeting. However, the meeting was unable to proceed due to Ms Evans being unrepresented. As a result, the panel rescheduled the parties meeting to take place at 10.30am tomorrow (day 7) and for Ms Kaya's request for severance of the cases to be considered.

Day 7

Ms Kaya's request to sever proceedings

79. The panel decided, in relation to Ms Kaya's request to sever proceedings that it was not appropriate for it to be considered on day 7 in advance of the panel announcing its decision on facts for the following reasons.
- Ms Kaya told the panel that she was now undecided whether to proceed with her request to sever the cases.
 - Mr Edwards told the panel that this request would be better considered once the panel has announced its decision on facts and that he wanted to take his client's instructions.
 - The panel found itself without sufficient time to consider the request in view of Mr Yabbey-Hagan's availability.
80. Ms Evans indicated that she supported Ms Kaya's request to sever the cases and agreed for the request to be heard on day 8 in the absence of Mr Yabbey-Hagan. Ms Evans also agreed to this on the basis that she would not have to say anything or add to the request. Mr Yabbey-Hagan also confirmed that the request could be heard in his absence.
81. Ms Kaya requested any written guidance that would assist her in preparing for her potential application for the two cases to be severed.

Day 8

Panel's decision on the facts and Ms Kaya's request to sever proceedings

82. The panel confirmed that it had not completed its decision on facts and as such the decision would be handed down administratively by the end of January 2026.
83. The panel also indicated that due to time constraints Ms Kaya's application to sever would not be heard today and instead a provisional listing for a case management hearing on 17 March 2026 was to be considered. The panel stated that if any party decided that they did not want to wish for the cases to sever, then the case management hearing would not proceed. Notification of an intention to apply to sever the cases must be sent to the Social Work England case manager by 3 March 2026.
84. Additionally, the panel explained that the resumed hearing may require another estimated 5 days to accommodate the reasonable adjustments including frequent breaks. The parties were informed that representatives and/or Mackenzie Friends should be available for the full period of the resumed hearing.
85. The panel therefore gave the following directions;
- A written determination for the first stage will be made available to the parties via email by the end of January 2026.
 - A Case Management Meeting has been provisionally listed for 17 March 2026.

- At the Case Management Meeting, any party can make an application for the cases to be severed. If a party wishes to make that application, please do so by 5pm on Tuesday 3 March 2026.
- An application for the cases to be severed should be made via email, in writing, to hearings@socialworkengland.org.uk. Please include the reasons for making the application in your email.
- If no written request is received, the Case Management Meeting will not go ahead.
- If a party wished to be represented or accompanied by a McKenzie Friend at the Case Management Meeting and/or the resumed 5-day final hearing, please ensure the representative or McKenzie Friend is available for the entire duration of the hearing. This will ensure the hearing can go ahead as planned and prevent delay.
- Provisional date has been set for the hearing to resume on 08-12 June 2026.

Day 12

Availability of Ms Honeyman for the reconvened hearing (27 to 31 July 2026)

86. By email dated 23 July 2026 Ms Honeyman stated as follows: *"Monday I will be available all day , Tuesday I understand we are finishing at lunchtime and this works for me . Wednesday I am going to struggle to be available but perhaps after 2 I should be there . Thursday I am available until 3pm. Friday I am available but I would like to finish early as I have family coming."*
87. The contents of the email was noted by the panel. However, on Monday Ms Honeyman became unexpectedly unavailable due to a [PRIVATE]. The panel understood that Mr Yabbey-Hagan was not available throughout the period 27 to 31 July 2026.

Day 13

Change of social work adjudicator

88. [PRIVATE], the social work adjudicator (Ms Williams) initially appointed to the panel became unavailable on 26 July 2026. Ms Williams had been the social work adjudicator on 06 to 15 January, 20 January and 17 March 2026. The panel considered the possibility of continuing the hearing with a new social work adjudicator, Ms Elliott. The panel heard submissions from both parties who agreed to the substitution. Mr Edwards also referenced Rule 14 of the Appointment Rules 2019 (as amended). He submitted that both parties consented to the substitution as there would be no prejudice to either part given the stage that proceedings have reached. Ms Honeyman had no objections to the appointment of a replacement registrant adjudicator to enable the hearing to proceed on schedule.
89. The panel had regard to Rule 14 of the Appointment Rules 2019 (as amended) which reads,

“ (1) This rule applies to panels established under rule 11 where a panellist is unavailable for the whole or part of any proceedings or becomes ineligible to act during the course of any proceedings.

(2) Where rule 14(1) applies the hearing may proceed notwithstanding that:

(a) any panellists present at the start of the hearing are no longer present; or

(b) any panellists present at the continuation of the hearing were not present at the start

(3) Rule 14(2) does not apply where the regulator considers that it is in the interests of justice to convene a freshly constituted panel.

90. The panel decided to proceed with the replacement social work adjudicator as it then formed an acceptable composition with regard to Rule 34. Additionally, the panel was satisfied that it could continue with the hearing as per Rule 14(2) of the Appointment Rules 2019 (as amended). The panel took into account [PRIVATE] and was satisfied that the alternative of an adjournment of this 5 day reconvened hearing was unfavourable in the circumstances, as this would lead to a further period of unspecified delay. The panel concluded it is fair and in the public interests for the hearing to proceed as the social work adjudicator had read the relevant documents of the case.

Ms Honeyman as lay representative in the absence of Ms Evans

91. Ms Honeyman explained that due to [PRIVATE] issues Ms Evans would not be attending the remainder of the hearing. Ms Honeyman sought to continue to appear as Ms Evans' representative in Ms Evans' absence.
92. The panel heard submissions from Mr Edwards who had no objections and indicated that Ms Honeyman did not fall within any of the examples given for withdrawal of approval of a lay representative as specified within Social Work England's guidance entitled "Attendance of people at fitness to practise hearings" dated 29 July 2022.
93. The panel heard the advice of the legal adviser who reminded it that it had already exercised its discretion in accordance with Rule 40(c) and accepted Ms Honeyman as a suitable person to represent Ms Evans. The panel's attention was drawn to the Social Work England's guidance entitled "Attendance of people at fitness to practise hearings". The panel was encouraged to ensure that in any decision it made, that it adhered to the relevant guidance and in particular the requirement to *"balance the interests of the social worker in being represented by a person of their choice, against the need for a hearing to run as efficiently as possible and in line with the hearings timetable"*.
94. Taking into account all relevant matters the panel decided to exercise its discretion and allow Ms Honeyman to continue to represent Ms Evans, without Ms Evans' virtual attendance at the hearing. Ms Honeyman confirmed that she was in receipt of Ms Evans' instructions and the panel reminded Ms Honeyman that she was able to request

a break in order to speak to Ms Evans to ensure that Ms Honeyman's representations accurately reflected Ms Evans' instructions.

95. The panel also confirmed Ms Honeyman's availability as per the email referenced above dated 23 July 2026.
96. Prior to both parties submitting on the next stage of the proceedings (statutory ground and impairment), the panel facilitated a break to enable Ms Honeyman to revisit the relevant Social Work England guidance on impairment and to ask any questions of the legal adviser if she wished to do so.

Day 14

Email handing down of the panel's stage 2 (statutory grounds and impairment) decision

97. The panel handed its stage 2 decision down via email. An email copy of its decision was sent to both Ms Honeyman and Mr Edwards at approximately 05.00pm on 29 July 2026.
98. The panel handed down its decision in relation to the statutory ground and impairment via email as the written decision was not finalised until 05.00pm on day The panel had been informed that Ms Honeyman was unavailable to join the hearing room however both parties agreed to a virtual hand down of the decision. In these circumstances, the panel considered it appropriate to hand down its decision via email at the first available opportunity, namely 05.00pm on 29 July 2026.

Ms Honeyman and Mr Edwards were notified that the hearing would proceed at 09.20am on day 15.

Day 15

Ms Honeyman's email

The panel were made aware of an email from Ms Honeyman dated 30 July 2026 sent at 09.12am. The content reads as follows;

"Good morning

I am unsure how to proceed with this case and I feel I am not helping Susan. I have read the decision notes and I am bewildered by them, I am not a barrister so some reasonings seem completely incomprehensible. Comments such as the people who wrote the testimonials seem to not understand the gravity of the situation (I was one of them) are making me think I am making things worse for her. This is not my intention. I will log in but I may not continue after this morning because I am out of my depth , as I stated I'm not a lawyer a barrister or a social worker . SWE have a barrister and a social worker in court it feels unfair and to be honest rather pointless any of us being there.

Kind regards

Anita”

99. In response to the email, Ms Honeyman was given the opportunity to meet with the legal adviser and Mr Edwards. She accepted this and indicated that she would be available at 11.45am to partake in the meeting. The meeting went ahead as agreed and subsequently Ms Honeyman was given a recess to consider her position. This period included time for Ms Honeyman to consider Mr Edwards’ written submissions on behalf of Social Work England, in relation to sanction. Ms Honeyman confirmed receipt of the submissions that had been sent at 11.25am.
100. After receiving confirmation that Ms Honeyman was able to proceed the panel reconvened at approximately 03.15pm and began by formally reading its decision on statutory grounds and impairment into the record. With Ms Honeyman’s permission, the legal adviser informed the panel of the following; [PRIVATE]. The panel acknowledged the information it had received and noted that this was the first time it had been made aware of the serious and ongoing nature of the family emergency that Ms Honeyman had experienced on Monday 27 July 2026. The panel proceeded with the hearing having established that Ms Honeyman will be available until 04:30pm on day 15.

Background:

101. On 5 October 2020, Social Work England received a referral from Haringey Council (“the council”) regarding Ms Evans who registered as a social worker in August 2011. Ms Evans joined Haringey Council as an agency social worker in April 2019 and was allocated to the case of Family A in April 2019. Ms Kaya was Ms Evans’ Team Manager.
102. Family A includes the mother, Child 1 and Child 2. Child 1 has a disability and at the time of the concerns did not live with the mother and Child 2, as significant adaptations were being undertaken to the family home, for Child 1.
103. In July 2018, prior to Ms Evans’ allocation to the case, concerns were raised that the mother was in a relationship with Person A, a registered sex offender. Person A had been convicted of two matters of sexual assault of a female child under 13 years and one matter of possession of an indecent photograph of a child [PRIVATE]. It is understood that Person A will be on the sex offenders register [PRIVATE]. At the time the mother and Person A met, Person A had been released on licence, having served the custodial term of a prison sentence. It is further understood that Person A was recalled back to prison for having breached his licence conditions by not informing his probation officer of the relationship with the mother. In August 2018, Person A was released from prison, but his probation officer raised concerns that the relationship with the mother was ongoing.
104. The mother informed the council that she was not aware of Person A’s conviction when she entered into the relationship with Person A and had subsequently severed all contact. On 17 October 2018, the mother signed a written agreement that she must notify the council if her relationship with Person A is to progress and to ensure that

Person A does not have contact with the children. The mother signed a similar further agreement on 30 November 2018.

105. Following this, further reports were made to the council that the mother and Person A continued to be in a relationship and that, on 29 March 2019, the Police attended the mother's home and found Person A upstairs. The mother claimed again that she had severed all contact with Person A.
106. On 5 April 2019 Ms Evans visited Child 2 at school within her role as duty social worker. It is recorded that Ms Evans asked Child 2 about Person A and Child 2 responded that they have not met him but had seen him at a community centre.
107. On 18 April 2019, Ms Evans was allocated to the case and was tasked with completing a Child and Family ("C&F") assessment. Ms Evans completed the C&F assessment on 6 June 2019 and recommended that three-weekly visits (announced and unannounced) should be conducted and that a further written agreement should be signed by the mother. Concerns were raised that Ms Evans did not undertake visits within the 3 weekly timescales nor did she produce a further written agreement for the mother to sign.
108. In December 2019 it was reported by another social worker that the mother and Person A were seen in a McDonalds restaurant together. It is alleged that Ms Evans did not take appropriate steps to share information or address the risk in relation to the safeguarding concern regarding Family A.
109. As part of care proceedings issued by the council in respect of Family A, Ms Evans attended the Family Court and gave evidence in March 2020. During the hearing Ms Evans was asked about the visits carried out to Family A and is said to have provided incorrect information to the Judge regarding the timescales in which announced and unannounced visits were completed. The Judge in the family proceedings was highly critical of Ms Evans, and the council more generally.

Allegation:

110. The allegation arising out of the regulatory concerns referred by the Social Work England Case Examiners on 22 February 2022 is:

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you:

1. *Did not carry out appropriate risk assessments into the Mother of Family A and Person A's relationship, in particular following:*
 - a. *Information shared by Child 2 on 5 April 2019;*
 - b. *Information received from a social worker in the team on 19 December 2019*
2. *Did not work in cooperation with and/or appropriately engage in a timely manner the following parties in relation to Family A's care:*

- a. *Family A's Guardian*
 - b. *The Father of Family A*
3. *Did not carry out keep safe work with Child 2 until October 2019*
 4. *Did not initiate a Section 47 investigation regarding Family A in April 2019*
 5. *Did not carry out announced and/or unannounced visits to Family A within timescales agreed on 7 June 2019*
 6. *Did not produce a written agreement signed by the Mother of Family A as agreed on 7 June 2019*
 7. *By your conduct at paragraphs 1-6 above you failed to safeguard Child 1 and/or Child 2.*
 8. *Provided inaccurate information at a Court hearing on 11 March 2020 regarding the frequency of your visits to Family A*

Admissions:

111. Rule 32c(i)(aa) Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) states:
Where facts have been admitted by the social worker, the adjudicators or regulator shall find those facts proved.
112. Ms Evans informed the panel that she admitted allegations 1a, 1b, 2a, 5 and 6.
113. The panel therefore found allegations 1a, 1b, 2a, 5 and 6 proved by way of Ms Evans' admissions.
114. The panel noted that Ms Evans denied allegations 2b, 3, 4, 7 and 8.
115. In line with Rule 32c(i)(a) of the Rules, the panel then went on to determine the disputed facts.

Summary of evidence:

Social Work England

116. Mr Edwards opened the case on behalf of Social Work England by summarising the statement of case that had been prepared. Mr Edwards called two witnesses on behalf of Social Work England;
 - Ms Hughes, the allocated Children's Guardian for Child 1 and Child 2, employed by the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service.
 - Mr Scotland, the Service Manager within the council with line management responsibilities for Ms Evans and Ms Kaya at the time of the allegations.

Ms Hughes

117. Ms Hughes confirmed the content of her witness statement dated 3 September 2025 and answered additional questions. She confirmed that she had no knowledge of any agreement that the case was to be kept as a child in need case and not to be escalated.
118. In response to cross examination from Mr Yabbey-Hagan, Ms Hughes confirmed that she attended some meetings in relation to Family A. Ms Hughes confirmed that the professional relationship between her and Ms Evans became difficult after the Looked after Child Review meeting. This was when Ms Hughes stated that she had tried to raise safeguarding concerns with Ms Evans but Ms Evans had different views to Ms Hughes. Ms Hughes felt Ms Evans' response to safeguarding was lacking because she was more focused on the mother and that the mother's needs took precedence over the needs of the child.
119. Ms Kaya had no questions for Ms Hughes.
120. In response to questions from the panel about allegation 2b Ms Hughes acknowledged the father of Family A could at times be very confrontational. However, she added that this was not the case with her as she had a very good relationship with him. Ms Hughes also accepted that if Mr Scotland had indicated that Mr Scotland was to be the only person to liaise with the father due to the father's difficult behaviour, then she would not have expected Ms Evans to interact with the father.
121. In response to questions from the panel about allegation 3, Ms Hughes was not able to state when the 'keep safe' work was to be completed. She also stated that could not recall when or how it was first raised that 'keep safe' work needed to be completed. When asked when it was supposed to have been initiated, Ms Hughes said that the local authority should have done that when they became aware of an unsafe adult in the network. Ms Hughes stated that no explanation had been given as to why it had not been done at the appropriate time. By October 2019 Ms Hughes said 'keep safe' work was urgent, but Ms Hughes could not recall when it was first raised with Ms Evans.
122. Ms Hughes confirmed that her role with the family first began in wardship proceedings which then became public law care proceedings as concerns arose around the mother's new relationship with Person A. Ms Hughes confirmed that she had been a guardian since 2004 and never had an instance in which a wardship case moved to public law care proceedings.
123. Ms Hughes stated that it was incumbent on Local Authorities and social work teams to initiate a section 47 investigation. She also explained that she had experience with social workers saying that they need to speak to their managers in relation to initiating a section 47. Ms Hughes said an allocated social worker cannot proceed with a section 47 without the agreement of their manager.
124. When asked what she understood safeguarding to mean, Ms Hughes responded by saying that safeguarding is about child protection, risk management, risk minimisation

and conducting risk assessments to keep the child safe. She stated that it was about how to protect actual and potential victims. It was also about looking at how professionals can support and protect families and how the families can do this for themselves.

125. Ms Hughes stated that she was critical of a number of professionals: Mr Scotland, Ms Evans' predecessor and Ms Evans. She added that she was uncomfortable that there were only two professionals before the panel as there had been a systemic failure.
126. Finally, Ms Hughes acknowledged that if a social worker is experiencing blocks from management, then they are in a difficult position. She went on to explain that the social worker could contact the independent reviewing officer and the guardian for a debate, but she said it would be a very invidious position to be in.

Mr Scotland

127. Mr Scotland started his employment with the council in April 2019. Mr Scotland confirmed his witness statement and answered additional questions. He confirmed that he was the main person that would deal with the father of Family A's emails, however invariably Ms Evans would have contact with him as she was the children's allocated social worker.
128. In response to how the father of Family A would have been notified of the mother of Family A's relationship with Person A, Mr Scotland stated that this would have been the management team; that is him and Ms Kaya who would have made a decision on how to notify the father with advice. They would have informed the father in writing or arranged an in person meeting with him. However, Mr Scotland indicated that he was not aware that he had been notified, nor of the need to notify the father about the relationship between the mother and Person A.
129. Mr Scotland said that he held responsibility for the lack of 'keep safe' work. He stated that he was the team manager at the time and should have emphasised the need for it. He stated that it would be wrong to attribute responsibility for that to one person. Mr Scotland said it was fair to say that Ms Evans ought to have begun 'keep safe' work by April 2019. He said he did not recall a decision for the case to remain a child in need case and not to be escalated.
130. Mr Scotland stated that in practice a team manager would speak to him about a section 47 investigation. However, he explained that generally speaking a team manager would make a section 47 investigation decision and that this would come from both the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub referral information and the team manager's experience and knowledge of the case. He confirmed that a social worker does not have the authority to raise a section 47 investigation.
131. In response to questions on behalf of Ms Evans, Mr Scotland was asked about his witness statement. He explained that he had discussed with Ms Kaya about Ms Evans' capability to handle the Family A case and that they should have given her more safeguarding training. He added that they really should have taken the case from Ms

Evans. Mr Scotland agreed that the case could have been co-worked and that Ms Evans could have been placed with a more experienced social worker.

132. When asked about his witness statement, Mr Scotland explained that it was not a question of visits not having actually taken place, it was more the frequency of announced versus unannounced visits could not be demonstrated in Court. Mr Scotland indicated that he did not recall this being raised with him at the time, and that Ms Evans was an agency worker at the time and so the disciplinary process would have been less rigorous. He confirmed that visits are not tasked to the team managers to authorise, however from the information on the system the team manager would have been aware that visits were not taking place.
133. Whilst Mr Scotland reiterated that he did not remember the issue being raised with him, he explained that the lack of visits became the big issue. Mr Scotland agreed that Ms Evans should have been given more training and support, seeing as areas of concern had been raised earlier by Ms Kaya. He said that instead the focus was on whether the social worker should be changed in the midst of a quite complex High Court case where *“we were taking a lot of flak from the Court”*. Mr Scotland stated that he wished he had added a senior worker. He also stated that he wished Ms Evans had *“banged her hand on the table”* and insisted that she needed more support. He then said, *“but I do agree we should have supported her more”*.
134. In response to questions from Ms Kaya, Mr Scotland agreed that a conversation had not arisen to do a section 47 investigation. He agreed that a section 47 could have happened in late May 2019 and also agreed that it could have happened earlier given how the case proceeded. Mr Scotland agreed with Ms Kaya’s recounting of events that on 31 March 2019 she could not speak to a service manager as it was a Friday, and the service manager did not work Friday’s. On 1 April 2019 Ms Kaya found out the service manager had been moved to another team, and that Mr Scotland had been made acting service manager.
135. When asked by Ms Kaya, Mr Scotland confirmed the following:
- Ms Kaya had raised with him Ms Evans’ lack of court experience.
 - Ms Kaya did not want to manage the Family A case as another team manager had held it before.
 - It was a difficult case due to it being a wardship case.
 - Mr Scotland had reassured Ms Kaya that he had court experience and would support.
136. Mr Scotland agreed that he had attended court on more than three occasions. He also agreed it might have been good to use the Guardian to develop a relationship with the father or for the relationship with the local authority had with the father to be reviewed. He said he was surprised when he became aware of how well engaged the father was with the Guardian at the last court hearing.

137. Mr Scotland stated that on reflection Ms Kaya had brought concerns to him and that he regretted not taking the case away from or giving Ms Evans additional support.
138. In re-examination Mr Scotland agreed that his witness statement was incorrect and there should have been three section 47 investigations; the first being in March 2019. He said that second should have been in May 2019, but he took the decision not to progress it after a meeting with mother as she presented as contrite and agreed to work together to keep the children safe. The third was when it actually took place in January 2020.
139. Mr Scotland was clear that if there is *‘any attributing to a section 47 not taking place in April or May’*, it was his responsibility. He said the decision would have been made as a result of the meeting he had with the mother and her McKenzie friend, which he now recalls. He confirmed that his witness statement was correct as decision making and initiation of a section 47 are two different things.
140. In response to questions from the panel, Mr Scotland addressed his witness statement and the evidence he had given today indicating that it was just written communication with the father of Family A that he had. Mr Scotland clarified that it was both written and verbal communication with the father that he was responsible for.
141. Mr Scotland stood by his witness statement where he said that *“Susan did act in line with the Council’s Practice Standards”*. He added that Ms Evans was an honest, good, hard working social worker and that he was satisfied that standards were compiled with in terms of her performance.
142. Mr Scotland stated that Ms Evans should have identified that ‘keep safe’ work was to have been completed in 2019. The panel asked when in 2019 this should have been identified, to which Mr Scotland stated that it was around May 2019 when the section 47 investigation was being discussed, as the mother may have been in a relationship with Person A and there was a need for clarity in regard to the safety and wellbeing of the children. Mr Scotland explained that ‘keep safe’ was a term coined in court and that the local authority had not been able to confirm to the court that this work had been specifically undertaken. However, Mr Scotland confirmed that Ms Evans was interacting with the child and had a relationship in which Child 2 was able to talk to Ms Evans.
143. In response to allegation 3 being read to him, Mr Scotland commented that ‘keep safe’ work should have taken place some months earlier than October 2019. He recalled the March 2019 incident, when Person A was found upstairs in the mother’s home, but noted that Ms Evans was not the allocated social worker at that point. In terms of the April 2019 disclosure, Mr Scotland acknowledged that he gave no specific advice to Ms Evans for her to do ‘keep safe’ work. Additionally, Mr Scotland stated that from the community centre disclosure everyone involved should have been cautious about ‘keep safe’ work. He said that ‘keep safe’ should have been continuous and pronounced from that point on. Mr Scotland emphasised that the work should have

been carried out from May 2019, when it became apparent that Person A was believed to be in contact with the mother.

144. Mr Scotland told the panel that he could not recall how Ms Evans had been allocated the case. He stated that although there was a safeguarding team at the council, the matters of concern that arose in the case did not affect the case staying within the children in need team.
145. When asked to explain his view on the difference between 'keep safe' and direct work, Mr Scotland said that direct work allows for the child to express themselves in their general environment. He indicated that 'keep safe' work is specific and often court directed to ensure issues of safety and welfare are captured and recoded with the court in mind. Mr Scotland added that 'keep safe' issues arose when it changed from being a wardship case and moved to a safeguarding case.
146. Mr Scotland said that his overall reflection is that this case is regrettable, because they were all in it together. He said they were a close knit team and that they were faced with a very challenging case of Family A. Mr Scotland said that everything could have been done better and that Ms Evans was placed in a situation in which her skill set was challenged.
147. Mr Scotland indicated that he had never fully appreciated that Ms Kaya had been acting up as a team manager. He said that this then raises questions as to the exposure she experienced.
148. Mr Scotland added that the Disabled Children's Team was a very busy team, and the only team that accepts all of the categories of cases and so this in turn places lots of pressure on the team. Mr Scotland said that Ms Kaya worked very hard, long hours, was well liked and a dedicated social worker. He stated that the case had exposed them all.
149. Mr Scotland admitted that the supervisions he had with Ms Kaya were informal and that he made notes with the intention of recording those notes, but that he never managed to do so. Mr Scotland said that he had regular informal discussions with Ms Kaya.
150. When asked, Mr Scotland confirmed that he would be the person responsible for breaking sensitive news to the father such as a concern that the mother was in a relationship with Person A. He said he would have been the person responsible because of the likely response and repercussions from the father in receiving the information.

Ms Evans

151. Mr Scotland's witness statement was put, by Mr Yabbey-Hagan, to Ms Evans for comment; that Ms Evans had not always adopted a safeguarding approach with the mother and tended to adopt a more empowerment one, which became less effective as safeguarding concerns increased. Ms Evans explained that her general approach to practice was very holistic. She stated that she involved the entire family and empowered the mother to do the right thing.

152. Ms Evans stated that at the time she thought she was on same page as the Guardian. However, Ms Evans said that when she was trying to diffuse the difficulties between the mother and the Guardian, the Guardian took Ms Evans' actions the wrong way.
153. Ms Evans said that she did not raise her lack of experience in the case of Family A that she was allocated. Ms Evans said that she saw it is an opportunity. Ms Evans went on to say that in hindsight she should have asked for the case to be reallocated. When asked, Ms Evans said that she would have expected more preparation around court, the Guardian's role, report writing skills and 'mocking' before court attendance. She said that she thought she would have been given support.
154. Ms Evans explained that the case was a child in need case and that it required statutory visits every 3 weeks and these visits had to be a combination of announced and unannounced visits. Ms Evans said that there were no difficulties with the visits and the majority of them were announced. She admitted that she did not do enough unannounced visits and that some of the visits might have been out of time. Ms Evans stated that she did not raise in supervision why the visits had not taken place and that she was more focused on meeting with the child.
155. Ms Evans recalled that she had little involvement with the father as she had been told he was abusive, and as a result, management would deal with him. She recounted how she met him on one occasion and although he was polite, she could sense a change in his demeanour once she introduced herself.
156. Ms Evans explained that Mr Scotland was to be the only person to have contact with the father. Additionally, it was in place that if a face to face meeting was needed, Mr Scotland would also have to be present. Ms Evans added that the allegation that she failed to update the father was not correct as she did not have access to him.
157. When presented with Ms Hughes' view that Ms Evans was colluding with the mother to continue the relationship with Person A, Ms Evans responded by saying that she would never have done such a thing. She said she would not have encouraged the mother to have a relationship with someone who was causing harm to the family. Ms Evans stated that she wanted to work in partnership with the mother, so that the mother could do the right thing. Ms Evans said she was also open and transparent in her communication with the mother as she wanted her to see and understand the concerns that social services had. Ms Evans stated that she was not the friend of the mother, but that she was the child's social worker.
158. Additionally, in response to Ms Hughes' view that there was a lack of information sharing, Ms Evans stated child in need meetings with professionals took place every 4-6 weeks to make sure information was shared.
159. Ms Evans said that she was not adequately prepared prior to the court hearing. She did not have her notes with her and does not remember having a pre-hearing meeting with Counsel. Ms Evans explained that she was not able to give the court any detail about

the dates that visits had occurred to the children of Family A, and that as a result she came across as being untruthful.

160. Ms Evans stated that performance wise she does not remember being prompted to undertake visits and that this was not the only case that she had been allocated at the time. She said that she has a lot going on during that period. Ms Evans said that in her view it was a child in need case so she was always doing announced visits. She found herself planning to do the unannounced visits but they were not always carried out.
161. When asked if she had remediated her practice with regard to visits, Ms Evans said that she has and that in 2021 she worked with Brent Council in for 1 year. She stated that whilst working there her caseload included complex cases and that she kept in touch with management and completed visits. Ms Evans explained that it was a tight knit team with regular supervision that made sure her cases were managed.
162. Ms Evans said that in respect of section 47 investigations, management would have initiated it and her involvement would have been to complete the assessment and arrange a strategy meeting.
163. Ms Evans said that upon reflection she should not have had the confrontation with the Guardian in front of the mother of Family A and that she should have worked more closely with the Guardian. Ms Evans stated that she did not feel she was supported during this case and adequate training was not provided.
164. In response to cross examination from Mr Edwards, Ms Evans confirmed that she denied allegation 2b because staff were not allowed to speak to the father of Family A. She said that Mr Scotland was safeguarding his staff against the abusive father of Family A. Ms Evans accepted there were failings in relation to the relationship she had with the Guardian. Ms Evans said that she appreciated the need for the father of Family A to have been updated about the mother of Family A's relationship with Person A. Ms Evans stated that she was following management direction not to contact him and so he was eventually informed by management in June 2019. Ms Evans confirmed that there was no evidence of her instructing management or the legal department to inform the father of Family A, and that this was because it was not in her remit to do so. Ms Evans restated that she was following management direction.
165. Ms Evans accepted that there were safeguarding concerns in relation to the mother of Family A prior to October 2019, as she was suspected of being in a relationship with Person A prior to this and it was a child in need case. Ms Evans explained that she was doing direct work with the family and that this was safeguarding work. Ms Evans then accepted 'keep safe' work was not done at that time, but safeguarding work was continuous. Ms Evans stated that she did not carry out 'keep safe' work with the child as it was not in her 'structure' and she was not given guidance to do it. Ms Evans accepted it should have been done.
166. Ms Evans said that a section 47 referral was not initiated as the case was allocated to her as a child in need case. Further, management confirmed that a section 47 should

not be made as a result of the meeting with the mother of Family A. In hindsight Ms Evans accepted that a section 47 should have taken place in April 2019 but it was not her place to initiate it. Ms Evans explained that she was following management direction, she said that she was new at the time and an agency worker. Ms Evans said that she did not see any concerns that she had to raise at the time and that the case was a 'tight' child in need case.

167. In response to allegation 7, Ms Evans stated that she did safeguard Family A admitted but did not fully safeguard as she was not given the appropriate support.
168. In response to allegation 8, Ms Evans stated that the accurate information to be given to the court would have been a list of dates that the visits to Family A took place. Ms Evans explained that this did not happen as she did not have the information to hand. Ms Evans said she had no experience of court work but admitted that she did not raise it with her line manager or ask for training.
169. In response to questions from Ms Kaya, Ms Evans confirmed that she did not remember being told that Mr Scotland would be in charge of the court work as he was experienced. Ms Evans confirmed, when asked, that Ms Kaya was available in the office and could have been called if needed.
170. Ms Evans stated that she understood why Ms Kaya asked for three-weekly announced and unannounced visits, because it was a 'tight' child in need case. Ms Evans stated that she recalled that she and Ms Kaya had formal supervision but stated that it was not as thorough as she would have liked it be.
171. In response to questions from the panel, Ms Evans confirmed that it was Mr Scotland who had all contact, both written and verbal with the father of Family A.
172. Ms Evans explained that in her understanding safeguarding is when concerns are raised that children are kept safe. Additionally, she said that it was important that visits, including unannounced ones, are carried out and plans put in place with information shared. At the centre of all of this is the child's voice.
173. Ms Evans confirmed that the last time she practiced as a social worker was April 2021 and that she would not be returning to practise as a social worker. She indicated that she has kept her skills up to date. Ms Evans said that she had improved on herself, and undertaken training in safeguarding, leadership, team building training and coaching practice.

Ms Kaya

174. Ms Kaya chose not to give evidence at this stage in light of her admissions.
175. Both Mr Edwards and Mr Yabbey-Hagan made closing submissions in line with their written submissions as provided.

Findings and reasons of facts:

176. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser, who reminded the panel that where facts have been admitted they are to be found proved and where facts are in dispute the panel is required to go on to decide those facts. The burden to prove each allegation rests with Social Work England and the panel must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities.
177. In reaching its decision the panel considered all of the evidence before it and the evidence from the live witnesses.

Particular 1a

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: did not carry out appropriate risk assessments into the Mother of Family A and Person A's relationship, in particular following: Information shared by Child 2 on 5 April 2019.

178. The panel found this allegation proved under Rule 32 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) by virtue of Ms Evans' admission that she did not carry out appropriate risk assessments following information shared by Child 2.

Particular 1b

179. *While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: did not carry out appropriate risk assessments into the Mother of Family A and Person A's relationship, in particular following: Information received from a social worker in the team on 19 December 2019.*
180. The panel found this allegation proved under Rule 32 of the Rules by virtue of Ms Evans' admission that she did not carry out appropriate risk assessments following information shared by a social worker in the team on 19 December 2019.

Particular 2a

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: did not work in cooperation with and/or appropriately engage in a timely manner with the following parties in relation to Family A's care: Family A's Guardian.

181. The panel found this allegation proved under Rule 32 of the Rules by virtue of Ms Evans' admission that she did not work in cooperation with and/or appropriately engage in a timely manner with Family A's Guardian.

Particular 2b

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: Did not work in cooperation with and/or appropriately engage in a timely manner the following parties in relation to Family A's care: The Father of Family A.

182. The panel did not find this allegation proved.
183. The panel considered Mr Scotland's witness statement in which he said *"When I first joined the Council, the case of Family A was drawing a lot of attention so I had some involvement with it as I was the Service Manager. Family A consists of two children who I will refer to as "Child 1" and "Child 2", their Mother "the Mother" and their Father "the Father". The Father of Family A made complaints a lot and caused trouble for staff in the team. He was verbally abusive to staff and we had to find a strategy to manage him effectively. It was therefore decided that I would be the only person to speak to him. The social worker allocated to the case was Susan. Susan conducted visits to the family as the children were on her caseload but calls and emails with the Father were left to me to deal with. Susan's main role was to see the children."*
184. The panel noted Mr Scotland's oral evidence in which he initially said that he was not sure of the instruction he gave Ms Evans for communication with the father of Family A as it was going back sometime. Mr Scotland said that he was the person to respond to the father of Family A's daily rafts of emails and complaints. He added that invariably Ms Evans would have something to do with the father of Family A as she was the allocated worker for his two children.
185. In response to questions from the panel, Mr Scotland confirmed that information regarding the risk posed by the mother of Family A's relationship with Person A would have only been shared by him to the father of Family A. This was due to the seriousness of the information, the father's likely reaction and the propensity of the father of Family A to make complaints.
186. The panel noted that within the transcript of Ms Evans' evidence to the Family Court in March 2020, in relation to Ms Evans contacting the father, she stated *'I was instructed not to make contact'*. Ms Evans also referred to the need for a *'management direction'* before making contact with the father of Family A.
187. Further, within Ms Evans' Social Work England response form dated 9 November 2025, she stated: *"I was told by Dennis Scotland that I was not to approach the Father as he was a danger. Dennis was the only person that spoke to the Father."*
188. In oral evidence Ms Evans explained that she was not allowed to speak to the father of Family A as he was a threat, so Mr Scotland was safeguarding his staff members. In response to panel's questions, Ms Evans stated that she had met the father of Family A on one occasion and that it was an unplanned encounter.

Panel's analysis:

189. The panel noted that it is accepted by Ms Evans that she did not communicate with the father of Family A during the relevant period. The panel further noted that it appears to be accepted that the father of Family A could present in a challenging manner. The judgment from the Family Court case dated 11 May 2020 states as follows: *"There are many occasions when the Father's irritations have been ventilated trenchantly and*

unambiguously to members of the Local Authority staff and in email correspondence.”

Ms Hughes also confirmed in oral evidence that the father of Family A could be difficult and confrontational with the Local Authority.

190. The panel went on to consider the stem of the allegation: ‘Did not work in cooperation with and/or appropriately engage in a timely manner....with the father of Family A’. The panel concluded that the phrases ‘work in cooperation’ and ‘appropriately engage’ required evaluation by the panel within the context of the evidence presented.
191. The panel concluded that the important context and key safeguarding concern in this case was the risk that Person A posed to the family. In response to questions from the panel, Mr Scotland was clear that it would have been his responsibility to share information about Person A with the father of Family A. The panel considered this account to be consistent with Ms Evans’ evidence to the family court in March 2020, Ms Evans’ written response form and Ms Evans’ oral evidence to the panel.
192. The panel noted the clear and consistent evidence that has been given by Ms Evans since 2020 and maintained to date. The panel additionally considered Ms Evans’ account to the family court in March 2020 to be relatively contemporaneous to the events of 2019.
193. The panel preferred the evidence of Ms Evans over that of Mr Scotland who gave inconsistent accounts in relation to his expectations as to how Ms Evans was to work in cooperation with and/or appropriately engage in a timely manner with the father of Family A. He initially stated that he could not recall the instruction and was then unable to elaborate upon what he meant by *‘Ms Evans would invariably have something to do with the Father’*.
194. Taking into account the panel’s view that Mr Scotland was clear that it was his responsibility to share information about Person A with the father of Family A, the panel considered that Ms Evans was unable to ‘work in cooperation’ and ‘appropriately engage’ with the father.
195. The panel therefore did not find allegation 2b proved.

Particular 3

196. *While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: did not carry out keep safe work with Child 2 until October 2019.*
197. The panel did not find this allegation proved.
198. The panel considered Ms Hughes’ witness statement which stated *“Keep safe work is work done with the child to help them gain an understanding of how to keep themselves safe and assist them with understanding what is appropriate and inappropriate in terms of adults’ behaviour around them. This was done jointly between myself and the Social Worker. As the Council had not done it so I offered to do it as I was so concerned that it had not been done. They did not want that to happen so it was agreed it would be done*

as a joint piece of work. It would normally just be the social worker who undertakes this work on their own. I cannot recall when or how I first raised that this work needed to be completed. I was of the view that it needed to be done as the Mother had brought an unsafe adult into her network. I am not aware of any formal policy or statute in regards to this work being undertaken but I do not know of and do not work with the Council policies. The work was completed in October 2019”.

199. The panel also noted that it was factually correct that ‘keep safe’ work was not completed until October 2019. The panel was satisfied that this position was confirmed within the Court order dated 8 October 2019 and by the Court transcript of evidence given by Ms Evans to the Family Court in March 2020.
200. The panel took note of Ms Evans’ oral evidence in which she initially explained that she was providing sufficient safeguarding of the children by undertaking direct work. The panel noted however, that Ms Evans confirmed that she did not carry out ‘keep safe’ work with the child as it was not in her ‘structure’ and she was not given the guidance to do it.
201. The panel evaluated ‘did not’ in the context of the case and decided that ‘did not’ indicated that the work was not carried out and that it should have been carried out prior to October 2019.
202. The panel then considered when, prior to October 2019, Ms Evans should have completed this ‘keep safe’ work.
203. The panel considered the evidence of Mr Scotland who indicated that ‘keep safe’ work should have been completed when safeguarding issues arose. The panel noted that the first such instance would have been 29 March 2019 when Person A was found upstairs in the home of Family A. However, the panel was satisfied that Ms Evans was not the allocated social worker at this time. The second safeguarding incident arose following the disclosure by Child 2 at the community centre. Mr Scotland confirmed that there was no specific reference within his witness statement to ‘keep safe’ work, and that his only advice to Ms Evans at this time was to share information with the Child 2’s school. The panel noted that the next safeguarding concern arose at McDonalds in December 2019 and this was after the material date in the allegation of October 2019. The panel therefore concluded that Mr Scotland never instructed nor advised Ms Evans to complete ‘keep safe’ work.
204. The panel also noted the evidence of Ms Hughes who, in relation to the need for ‘keep safe’ work, stated that she could not ‘recall when or how I first raised that this work needed to be completed.’

Panel’s analysis

205. The panel noted that Ms Hughes stated that there was no policy on ‘keep safe’ work and that this position was confirmed by Mr Scotland. The panel was satisfied that within the

council's practice standards relied upon by Social Work England, there was also no mention of 'keep safe' work.

206. The panel took the view that Ms Evans in accepting in her evidence that 'keep safe' work should have been completed prior to October 2019, did so with hindsight. The panel was satisfied of this by virtue of Ms Evans' own admission that she had limited experience of this type of work and she had explained that 'keep safe' work was not within her 'structure'. Ms Evans also stated that she was not given guidance to undertake 'keep safe' work, and in the panel's view, this was confirmed by Mr Scotland who said that Ms Evans was not given an instruction to undertake 'keep safe' work.
207. The panel accepted the evidence of Mr Scotland who clearly stated that he held responsibility for the lack of 'keep safe' work, and that he should have emphasised the need for it. Mr Scotland said in evidence that it would be wrong to attribute responsibility for that to one person.
208. The panel concluded that Social Work England had not proved to the required standard that Ms Evans should have completed 'keep safe' work prior to October 2019.
209. The panel therefore found allegation 3 not proved.

Particular 4

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: did not initiate a Section 47 investigation regarding Family A in April 2019.

210. The panel did not find this allegation proved.
211. The panel considered Mr Scotland's witness statement that said *"It is the responsibility of the Team Manager to initiate a Section 47 enquiry (which may just be agreeing with the Social Worker that one is needed) and the social worker will then need to put the fact that a Section 47 is being initiated into the system. This is an administrative job which needs to be done but the social worker must have initial Team Manager approval to do this."*
212. The panel noted that Ms Hughes in her oral evidence confirmed that an allocated social worker cannot proceed with a section 47 investigation without the agreement of their manager.
213. The panel also noted the evidence contained within the London Safeguarding Children Procedures document which stated that "Local authority social workers have a statutory duty to lead section 47 enquiries".

Panel's analysis

214. The panel was satisfied and accepted the evidence of Mr Scotland and Ms Hughes that it was not Ms Evans' responsibility to initiate a section 47 investigation.

215. The panel considered that the London Safeguarding Children Procedures document was clear that social workers have a statutory duty to lead section 47 enquiries but not initiate a section 47 investigation. This position was supported by the evidence of Mr Scotland who said that a social worker does not have the authority to initiate a section 47 investigation.
216. The panel also took into account the evidence of Mr Scotland that he made the decision not to progress with a section 47 investigation in May 2019 after a meeting which he chaired with the mother of Family A, as she presented as contrite and agreed to work together to keep the children safe.
217. The panel noted the written closing submissions on behalf of Social Work England, in which it accepts its own position is weakened by Mr Scotland's evidence.
218. The panel found allegation 4 not proved.

Particular 5

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: did not carry out announced and/or unannounced visits to Family A within timescales agreed on 7 June 2019.

219. The panel found this allegation proved under Rule 32 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) by virtue of Ms Evans' admission that she did not carry out announced and/or unannounced visits to Family A within the timescales agreed on 7 June 2019.

Particular 6

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: Did not produce a written agreement signed by the Mother of Family A as agreed on 7 June 2019

220. The panel found this allegation proved under Rule 32 of the Rules by virtue of Ms Evans' admission that she did not produce a written agreement signed by the mother of Family A as agreed on 7 June 2019.

Particular 7

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: by your conduct at paragraphs 1-6 above you failed to safeguard Child 1 and/or Child 2.

221. The panel considered that the reference to paragraphs 1-6 above, referred to particulars 1-6 of the allegation.
222. The panel found this allegation proved.

223. The panel identified that the conduct in question that had been found proved was failing to carry out the appropriate risk assessments, failing to work in cooperation with/or appropriately engage with Family A's Guardian, not carrying out announced or unannounced visits within agreed timescales and not producing a written agreement signed by the mother of Family A as agreed on 7 June 2019.
224. The panel took into account Ms Hughes' definition of safeguarding as given in her oral evidence. Ms Hughes, explained that safeguarding is about child protection, risk management, risk minimisation and conducting risk assessments to keep the child safe. She also stated that it was about how to protect actual and potential victims. It was also about looking at how professionals can support and protect families and how the families can do this for themselves.
225. The panel also noted the oral evidence of Ms Evans who explained that safeguarding is when concerns are raised that children are kept safe. She added that visits, including unannounced ones are carried out and plans put in place, information is shared and at the centre of all of this is the child's voice.
226. The panel also considered the Children and Young Peoples Service job description within the bundle, which states that the main role and responsibilities include assessing and identifying levels of risk to children. The panel was satisfied that the knowledge/skills required by a social worker supported the safeguarding descriptions as provided by both Ms Hughes and Ms Evans.

Panel's analysis

227. The panel accepted Ms Hughes definition of safeguarding and noted her experience as the court-appointed Guardian of the children of Family A, and who was formerly a social worker that qualified in 2004.
228. The panel also accepted the oral evidence of Ms Evans in which in response to allegation 7 she admitted that she did not fully safeguard as she was not given the appropriate support.
229. The panel concluded that in failing to complete the matters identified, Ms Evans had fallen short of the expectation/requirement to safeguard Child 1 and/or Child 2. The panel was satisfied that safeguarding could not be carried out partially, as anything less than fully safeguarding a child would potentially expose them to risk. The panel therefore found allegation 7 proved.

Particular 8

While registered as a social worker, between April 2019 and March 2020, whilst employed at Haringey Council as a social worker, you: provided inaccurate information at a Court hearing on 11 March 2020 regarding the frequency of your visits to Family A.

230. The panel found this allegation proved.

231. The panel considered the witness statement of Mr Scotland in which he confirmed that following Ms Evans' completion of a "Child and Family ("CAF") assessment on 6 June 2019 in regards to Family A...*The conclusions and recommendations contained within the CAF assessment are reasonable and it picks up on key themes. As the Team Manager, Arzu signed off the CAF assessment and Arzu's analysis on the assessment can be seen at the end. ...The actions identified in the CAF assessment were that visits were to be conducted by Susan every three weeks which would be both announced and unannounced visits to the Mother's home. This requirement would have become effective straight away from the moment the manager signed off the assessment. I do not recall the specificity as to what number of visits would be announced and unannounced but it is obvious that the visits were to be a combination of announced and unannounced. The key issue is the purpose of the announced and unannounced visits, since it had been proven that Mother was meeting with Person A clandestinely, the idea would be not to give her any regularity of visits so that she did not know when to expect the social worker and likely be caught again; or discourage her from taking the risk... Susan would have known the visits needed to be conducted to Child 2 as she had knowledge of the case and knew this is where the risk was. However, if she was unsure she should have conducted visits to both children. As far as I was aware, these visits were being carried out.*" The panel additionally noted that this was supported by the C&F assessment notes within the bundle.

232. The panel noted that the transcript of Ms Evans' evidence at the Family Court hearing demonstrates that the judge questioned Ms Evans on why three weekly visits were not conducted from June 2019 as per the C&F assessment. Ms Evans responded that the visits to the mother's home were completed every four weeks. Ms Evans was asked to provide evidence that the visits had been taking place as per the C&F assessment but she was unable to do so.

233. The panel took note of an email sent by Ms Evans to management on 09 October 2019, in which Ms Evans states that she visited Child 2 on the following dates. Within the square brackets below the panel noted the interval in weeks between each visit and understood 'I' to be one of the children from Family A.

- 05 April 2019 (at school following information about Person A being in the family home);
- 16 May 2019 (whilst visiting Child 1) [6 weeks]
- 27 June 2019 (seen at home) [6 weeks]
- 05 August 2019 (whilst visiting Child 1) [6 weeks]
- 02 October 2019 (seen at home) [6 weeks]

234. In addition, the panel noted the following visits to Family A are referred to within Ms Evans' social worker response bundle. These visits are stated to have taken place prior to the court hearing on 11 March 2020.

- 29 September 2019 – saw Child 1 – did not see Child 2 [7 weeks]

- 06 November 2019 – unannounced. No one was home and mother sent her apologies as she was in the internet café and did not hear her phone as preparing for interview with Go Ahead Group (bus driver post) on 07 November 2019. The child was with his father in the community [5 weeks]
- 09 December 2019 – unannounced. Mother said both were home but asleep [5 weeks]
- 14 January 2020 – unannounced. Mother was just leaving the house as taking I to GP as too many pumps. Instructed not to discuss until we had a firm confirmation of [5 weeks]
- 23 January 2020 – unannounced to see I at home. Child home alone and mother delayed on journey home. Mother was challenged given the current circumstances did she think that was wise. She was defensive in her response and I had to remind her that this was my duty to carry safeguarding and would [1 week]
- 30 January 2020 - Strategy Meeting took place, mother was called into the office and I went to see the child at school. I spoke to but by now he was very guarded and did not share much. [1 week]

235. The panel considered Ms Evans' response bundle in which she stated *"I did not intentionally mislead the court. I would not lie in court and did not do so on this occasion – I was underprepared for the appearance and did not have the facts available to me. When pressured by the Judge I became more flustered and unable to recall the truth. It was not deliberate deceit on my part, although I accept that I initially got some of the facts wrong. It was my first court appearance and did not know what to expect, I hadn't had any formal training or instruction."*

236. Additionally, the panel noted that Ms Evans in her response form denied the allegation but said *"This was due to never having been to court before, no court training, I was very nervous and it was not my intention to mislead, I was out of my depth and scared."*

Panel's analysis

237. The panel accepted the oral evidence of Ms Evans who said that the accurate information that should have been given to the court would have been a list of dates that the visits took place. However, she explained that this did not happen as she did not have the information to hand.

238. The panel was satisfied that Ms Evans had provided incorrect information to the court because within the family court transcripts she states that she completed visits every four weeks. With the exception of January 2020, the gaps in visits ranged between 5 and 8 weeks; there is no evidence that the visits were completed every four weeks.

239. The panel found this allegation proved.

Case management meeting of 30 March 2026

240. At a case management meeting held on 30 March 2026, in response to an application from Ms Kaya to sever the proceedings, the panel decided that having made its decision on facts dated 17 March 2026, its findings were such that the cases of Ms Kaya and Ms Evans had now become two separate cases. The panel was of the view each case now had discreet individual facts found proved, that could be considered separately and no longer necessitated the cases being joined.
241. The panel concluded that the outstanding issues of impairment and sanction, can fairly be considered independently of one another as they are specific with no identified overlap. The panel determined that it was in the interests of justice for the cases to be severed.
242. Ms Evans' case reconvened on 27 to 31 July 2026 (5 days).

Findings and reasons on grounds:

243. In order to facilitate Ms Evans' earlier request for 'clear, written instructions', Mr Edwards prepared written closing submissions on the statutory ground and impairment (7 pages) in advance of 27 July 2026. During his oral submissions Mr Edwards referred to these written submissions and addressed the panel on the relevant professional standards in place at the time that Social Work England believed Ms Evans had breached. The panel was invited to find Ms Evans' conduct was serious in nature and as such amounted to the statutory ground of misconduct. Mr Edwards accepted that the panel had not found allegation 2b proven.
244. Ms Honeyman also prepared written submissions on Ms Evans' behalf which stated as follows;

"Impairment

Madam Chair and members of the Panel, I make these submissions on behalf of Ms Susan Okpani Evans. Ms Evans recognises the seriousness of the proceedings and respects the findings already made by the Panel. However, there remain issues where Social Work England has not established the allegations relied upon, and those matters should be considered carefully when determining whether her fitness to practise is currently impaired.

Engagement with the Family Guardian

Social Work England submits that Ms Evans failed to work cooperatively with and engage with Family A's Guardian in a timely manner. Ms Evans respectfully disputes that this reflects the reality of the case management arrangements. This was a complex safeguarding matter involving multiple professionals and significant management involvement. Ms Evans was not managing this case independently. The evidence before the Panel demonstrates that decisions were made within a wider management structure. The Panel heard evidence from Mr Dennis Lawson, Ms Evans' manager, who expressed regret that she was not provided with additional support and acknowledged that the complexity of the

case warranted additional staffing support. This evidence is relevant because it demonstrates that the difficulties arising in this case must be viewed in the context of the wider management arrangements and not solely as the actions of an individual practitioner. Ms Evans' position is that she did not fail to cooperate with the Guardian. Any difficulties in communication must be considered against the background of a complex case, competing demands and the management structure within which the case was being handled. The Panel is therefore respectfully invited to find that this allegation has not been established.

Information Provided to the Court on 11 March 2020

Social Work England submits that Ms Evans misled the court regarding the frequency of her visits to Family A. Ms Evans accepts that the information provided was inaccurate. However, she respectfully disputes that she deliberately misled the court. There is an important distinction between providing inaccurate information and intentionally misleading a court. The evidence does not establish that Ms Evans intended to deceive the judge or provide false information. Ms Evans' explanation has consistently been that she was overwhelmed at the time, did not have her records immediately available and attempted to recall information from memory while under significant pressure. The Panel is invited to consider the circumstances in which the evidence was given. Ms Evans had not received formal court training before attending the hearing. In addition, she was managing an exceptionally complex safeguarding case and was, at that time, unaware that she was [PRIVATE]. It is not advanced as an excuse, but it assists the Panel in understanding why she struggled to process information and accurately recall dates under pressure. Ms Evans has been consistent in accepting that the information given was not accurate and has expressed regret. That response is inconsistent with an intention to mislead. The Panel is therefore invited to distinguish between an error in recall and deliberate dishonesty, and to find that the allegation of misleading the court has not been established.

Current Impairment

If the Panel considers the remaining findings alongside the full context of the case, it is respectfully submitted that there is insufficient evidence to establish that Ms Evans' fitness to practise remains impaired. Ms Evans has demonstrated insight into her shortcomings. She accepts that she should have sought additional support earlier, recognised when the workload was becoming unmanageable and ensured she was better prepared for court proceedings. The evidence from Mr Dennis Lawson, the subsequent diagnosis and Ms Evans' reflection demonstrate that the circumstances contributing to these events are now understood. She has developed strategies to manage pressure, recognise when assistance is needed and practise more safely. The purpose of impairment proceedings is not to punish past mistakes but to assess whether there is a current risk. The Panel is invited to consider that Ms Evans has insight, has

reflected honestly on her practice and has taken steps to reduce the likelihood of repetition. For those reasons, Ms Evans respectfully invites the Panel to conclude that the remaining allegations have not been established and, alternatively, that her current fitness to practise is not impaired”.

245. In response to questions from the panel Ms Honeyman confirmed that Ms Evans had not worked in social work since April 2021. She also confirmed that Mr Yabbey-Hagan knew Ms Evans from his role at Brent Council. She said that after Ms Evans left Brent Council in 2021 the two had no professional involvement outside of Mr Yabbey-Hagan representing her at this hearing in January 2026.
246. Ms Honeyman stated that for a considerable period of time Ms Evans no longer wished to be a social worker. Ms Evans, at present, wants to be able to see this matter through and clear her name. Whilst Ms Evans has stated she does not wish to be a social worker again, her friends do not believe that she should not make any such decision at present but rather wait until this process is over and she can think more clearly.
247. [PRIVATE].
248. [PRIVATE].
249. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in line with the case of Roylance v General Medical Council (No 2) 2000 1 AC 311 that, “misconduct is a word of general effect involving some act or omission which falls short of what would be proper in the circumstances. The standard of propriety may often be found by reference to the rules and standards ordinarily required to be followed by a...practitioner in the particular circumstances”. It was also advised to decide for itself the professional standards it believes have been breached. Further, the panel was reminded that a breach of standards is not necessarily determinative of the issue, but that the conduct must be serious for the panel to conclude it amounts to misconduct.
250. In respect of conduct that took prior to 02 December 2019, the panel decided that Ms Evans had breached the following HCPC standards;

HCPC Standards of Proficiency for Social Workers (2017)

1.1 know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional

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

1.4 be able to recognise and respond appropriately to unexpected situations and manage uncertainty

2.3 understand the need to protect, safeguard, promote and prioritise the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults;

2.4 understand, and be able to address, practices which present a risk to or from service users and carers, or others.

4.1 be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with it

4.4 be able to make informed judgements on complex issues using the information available

4.5 be able to work effectively whilst holding alternative competing explanations in mind

8.2 be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues, service users and carers

8.4 understand how communication skills affect the assessment of and engagement with service users and carers

8.9 be able to engage in inter-professional and inter-agency communication

251. In respect of conduct that took place post 02 December 2019 the panel decided that Ms Evans had breached the following Social Work England Professional Standards (2019):

As a social worker, I will:

2.3 Maintain professional relationships with people and ensure that they understand the role of a social worker in their lives

2.4 Practise in ways that demonstrate empathy, perseverance, authority, professional confidence and capability, working with people to enable full participation in discussions and decision making

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.

3.5 Hold different explanations in mind and use evidence to inform my decisions.

3.6 Draw on the knowledge and skills of workers from my own and other professions and work in collaboration, particularly in integrated teams, holding onto and promoting my social work identity.

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

3.15 Recognise and respond to behaviour that may indicate resistance to change, ambivalent or selective cooperation with services, and recognise when there is a need for immediate action.

252. The panel decided that Ms Evans' conduct relating to the facts found proved both individually and collectively was so serious that it called into question her recognition and observance of fundamental tenets of social work.
253. As per its findings of fact, the panel was satisfied that Ms Evans failed to; carry out the appropriate risk assessments, work in cooperation with/or appropriately engage with Family A's Guardian, carry out announced or unannounced visits within agreed timescales, produce a written agreement signed by the mother of Family A, safeguard Family A and provide accurate information to the family court. The panel considered that the conduct was made more serious by the fact that it continued over an extended period of time from April 2019 and March 2020. In addition, Person A had been convicted of two matters of sexual assault of a female child under 13 years and one matter of possession of an indecent photograph of a child [PRIVATE]. It is understood that Person A will be on the sex offenders register [PRIVATE]. It is further understood that Person A was recalled back to prison for having breached his licence conditions by not informing his probation officer of the relationship with the mother and, in August 2018, Person A was released from prison but his probation officer raised concerns that the relationship with the mother was ongoing. Consequently, the panel considered that Family A was placed at risk due to the presence of Person A in their lives and the potential that the mother was not offering adequate protection to the children. The panel concluded Ms Evans' conduct as proven was so serious it amounts to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Finding and reasons on current impairment:

254. On the question of impairment, Mr Edwards added to his written submissions and submitted that Ms Evans' fitness to practise is currently impaired on both the personal and public grounds. He then outlined the serious conduct in question. Mr Edwards stated that there is insufficient evidence of fully developed insight and that there is a risk of repetition of the concerns. He submitted the risk of repetition puts service users at risk and undermines public confidence in the profession. The panel was asked to find that Ms Evans' fitness to practise is currently impaired.
255. Ms Honeyman relied on the written submissions recorded on behalf of Ms Evans in relation to impairment.
256. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser, who referenced Council for Healthcare and Regulatory Excellence v NMC and Grant [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin) the panel was reminded to consider the following questions: a) If Ms Evans has in the past acted and/or is liable in the future to act so as to put a service user at unwarranted risk of harm; and/or b) has in the past and/or is she liable in the future to bring the

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 profession. Further, the case of *Cohen v GMC [2008] EWHC 581 (Admin)* in that it should consider if the conduct in question is easily remediable, has already been remediated, and that it is highly unlikely to be repeated. The panel was also reminded of Social Work England's Impairment and Sanctions Guidance ("the guidance").

257. The panel considered Ms Evans' current fitness to practise firstly from the personal perspective and then from the wider public perspective. The panel also had regard to whether the conduct in this case is easily remediable, whether it has been remedied and whether it was likely to be repeated.
258. In deciding current impairment, the panel considered the following questions from the case law of *Grant* whether:
- a) Ms Evans has in the past and/or is liable in the future to place service users at unwarranted risk of harm.
 - b) Ms Evans has in the past brought and/or is liable in the future to bring the profession into disrepute.
 - c) Ms Evans has in the past breached and/or is liable in the future to breach one of the fundamental tenets of the profession.
259. The panel took note of the guidance and reminded itself that an action that has not caused harm may still represent an unacceptable risk of serious harm if repeated. It concluded that Ms Evans' actions caused an unacceptable risk of serious harm to the children of Family A because of the known risk that Person A presented to Family A. Further, the panel was satisfied that Ms Evans should have foreseen the risk of harm in failing to safeguard the children of Family A because of the information available to her. The panel concluded that in failing to safeguard through the absence of appropriate risk assessments, not conducting announced and/or unannounced visits, not producing a written agreement with the mother of Family A and failing to share information with Family A's guardian, the children of Family A have in the past been placed at unwarranted risk of harm.
260. Further, the conduct found proved which included not assessing risk, not safeguarding, failing to work in cooperation with the children's guardian and providing inaccurate information to the family court the panel was satisfied that Ms Evans had brought the profession into disrepute and breached fundamental tenets of the profession. The panel concluded that it is a public expectation of the profession that a social worker acts appropriately by observing and maintaining professional standards and obligations.
261. The panel was satisfied that the first 3 questions of *Grant* were engaged.
262. In deciding the question of Ms Evans' current fitness to practise, the panel then considered the personal element of impairment. The panel considered the extent to

which the misconduct in this case can be, and has been remediated by Ms Evans, and whether it is likely to be repeated.

263. The panel found that the misconduct reflected serious errors of judgement on the part of Ms Evans. It also decided that there were elements of the conduct that were attitudinal in nature, due to Ms Evans' stated desire to ensure that the needs of the mother of Family A were fully recognised and that the mother was 'treated like a human being'. This meant the risks to the children in the family were not fully assessed nor made paramount. Notwithstanding the attitudinal element, the panel considered that the misconduct in question is remediable because it could be achieved through relevant training and specific experience.
264. The panel took note of Ms Evans' lack of experience and reminded itself of the evidence from Mr Scotland who confirmed: Ms Kaya had raised with him Ms Evans' lack of court experience; Ms Kaya did not want to manage the Family A case as another team manager had held it before; It was a difficult case due to it being a wardship case; Mr Scotland had reassured Ms Kaya that he had court experience and would support. The panel also had regard to Ms Evans' position that this was the first case she had held that had live court proceedings which required her to give evidence.
265. It also took note of Ms Evans' insight as stated within her 'reflective diary' dated 22 July 2024 in which she stated as follows *"I am accountable for cases in my tray. In the future, if at any time I feel I am working under unsafe practices I will make sure management are aware of my thoughts and feelings and either leave the post or suggest a case be allocated to a worker with the skills needs to take the case to final stage—especially court experience. Or the case could be jointly worked to reduce the pressure. Or if the case is allocated to me state that I have little court experience and request for tighter supervision on more complex cases to ensure that all actions are covered...I should have challenged management decision and differing professional decisions and argued the safeguarding concerns..."**"I am able to understand as a visual learner without my lists or notes I was unprepared and nervous, and my thoughts were not clear. I am aware that when I am under pressure, I am unable to focus or concentrate clearly. Additionally, this was my first court appearance with very little preparation and felt overwhelmed. I was terrified duck out of water!..."*.
266. However, the panel observed the deterioration in Ms Evans' insight in that Ms Evans, in her most recent statement of 13 January 2025, states under the heading 'Reflections' on allegations *"...I believe these allegations highlight broader systemic issues rather than solely individual failings. During my time with the local authority, I was transparent about my limited court reporting experience and lack of formal court training. And accepted I should have asked for further support for court preparation. The case involving Family A presented considerable challenges and complexities...I feel that the entire case has positioned me as the 'main culprit,'"*.
267. The panel was satisfied that Ms Evans had developed limited insight into her responsibilities as an autonomous experienced social worker and the impact of her

misconduct on others. Instead, Ms Evans has been focused upon what she perceives as the fault of others and the impact on herself.

268. The panel then went on to consider remediation and whether Ms Evans has put right any deficiencies or shortfalls in the behaviour that led to the concerns. The guidance reminds the panel that *“remediation is best shown by objective evidence: successful completion of education or training courses; satisfactory performance appraisals and/or other positive feedback in relation to their professional practice... Remediation can include steps the social worker has taken to make things right, such as apologising.”*
269. The panel noted that Ms Evans has undertaken the following relevant training; ‘Working with complex abuse’ July 2021 and ‘Care proceedings; preparing good evidence’ 23 March 2021. Whilst Ms Evans has undertaken other training since 2021, including Social Pedagogical leadership, the panel did not consider that this addresses the misconduct found. The panel was mindful that Ms Evans had not provided any evidence as to how she has kept her social work skills up to date since 2021.
270. Whilst the panel acknowledged that Ms Evans is not currently working as a social worker, the panel considered that it was open to her to seek to demonstrate improved awareness, attitude, judgement and behaviours in roles outside of paid work as a social worker – for example, paid work in another field, or voluntary work. However, no such evidence had been provided and as such the panel is not satisfied that the misconduct has been remediated.
271. The panel acknowledged the following testimonials from,
- Mr Smith of 4Recruitment services dated 14 January 2021
 - Ms Burrows - Team manager Brent Council social services 18 January 2021
 - Mr Yabbey-Hagan - Practice consultant (and confirmed that Ms Evans joined the team on 6 March 2020) The panel understands that Ms Evans was a locum social worker at Brent Council from March 2020 to April 2021
272. From these employment testimonials the panel could deduce that Ms Evans was a competent professional, and that there were no issues with her practise in 2021. However, in considering Ms Evans’ testimonial evidence the panel took note of the guidance which reads;

“Testimonials

52. Testimonials that provide up to date, credible information about the social worker’s current practice can be relevant when exploring current impairment. The social worker will have an opportunity to provide any testimonials when responding to the regulatory concerns. Testimonials can be submitted by anyone. However, they are most helpful when they come from people with knowledge of the social worker’s practice or character.

53. Testimonials should include (all of the following):

- *what the author knows of the concerns that have been raised*
- *an explanation of the author's relationship to the social worker*
- *any declarations of conflict of interest*
- *whether the author is willing to give evidence in-person in support of the testimonial*

54. Decision makers should give little weight to testimonials from persons not aware of the fitness to practise proceedings or the actions behind them”.

273. The panel had no evidence to suggest that the authors of the testimonials knew the details of the concerns raised against Ms Evans and none of them gave evidence. Additionally, these testimonials were produced over 5 years ago, and the panel had received no further updates. As such, the panel determined the testimonials were of limited evidential value.
274. The panel noted Ms Evans' expression of remorse and reflections in her reflective diary dated 22 July 2024 in which she said *“I sincerely apologise if I have placed any child in danger as this was not my intention – an oversight in practice. What I am putting in place moving forwards to make sure that I do not overstep anything when others are involved. Cross the T and dot the i. And this ensures my integrity is in tack and this creates workability everywhere”*. However, the panel decided that an apology in itself did not equate to complete insight and the panel remained concerned by Ms Evans' focus upon what she perceives as the fault of others and the impact on herself.
275. Considering the nature and gravity of the misconduct, which was serious, together with the evidence indicating that insight is limited coupled with the lack of evidence demonstrating practical steps towards remediation, the panel decided that there remained a risk of repetition of the misconduct.
276. The panel concluded that Ms Evans' fitness to practise is currently impaired from a personal perspective.
277. The panel also considered that a finding of impairment was required in relation to the public element of impairment. The panel reminded itself of its findings of fact, that Ms Evans failed to; carry out the appropriate risk assessments, work in cooperation with/or appropriately engage with Family A's Guardian, carry out announced or unannounced visits within agreed timescales, produce a written agreement signed by the mother of Family A, safeguard Family A and provide accurate information to the family court. Given the nature and seriousness of the misconduct in this case and the risk of repetition of the misconduct, the panel found that a reasonable member of the public would expect the regulator to take action to mark its disapproval of this misconduct in order to uphold proper professional standards and maintain public confidence in the social work profession.

Decision and reasons on sanction:

278. Mr Edwards referred to his written submissions on sanction and asked the panel to refer to the guidance when coming to its decision. He said that Social Work England seeks a conditions of practice order. He stated that the panel has made a finding of personal impairment and therefore a sanction restricting or removing Ms Evans' registration will normally be necessary to protect the public whilst she address the issues that led to the concern or until their fitness to practise is no longer impaired. Mr Edwards submitted appropriate and workable conditions can be formulated (proposed conditions were put forward for the panel's consideration) and a 12 month order would allow Ms Evans to engage and seek a social work role. The panel was also invited to consider a suspension order in the event it accepted that Ms Evans has no intention of returning to the profession. As such, this position would make a conditions of practice order unworkable and inappropriate and so a suspension order would then be the minimum order necessary. These are the most appropriate sanctions to protect the public and to maintain confidence in the profession and ensure professional standards are upheld.
279. Ms Honeyman submitted that Ms Evans accepts the panel's finding that her fitness to practise is currently impaired and accepts that a sanction is needed. She said that Ms Evans would be grateful for the least restrictive option that will protect the public and be fair to her. Ms Evans accepts, agrees to and will follow the conditions proposed by Social Work England that relate to safeguarding, risk assessment, information sharing, visits and working collaboratively with others. The conditions are clear and can be checked by Social Work England and the employer, also the conditions will help Ms Evans with her personal development plan, targeted training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Ms Honeyman said that Ms Evans "*really liked*" the personal development plan, as this was something that she did not ask for in the past and should have, also the fact it is written down will help her practise safely and effectively and this will reduce the risk of this happening again. Ms Honeyman said that if a job came up and they accept the conditions of practice order then Ms Evans would return to work. Ms Honeyman expressed concerns and referred to a worry as to how Ms Evans would find a job with no agency work. However, Ms Honeyman invited the panel to make a conditions of practice order and said that Ms Evans will work hard to meet the conditions. She added that Ms Evans has completed additional training over the last 5 years and has developed overlapping skills.
280. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser who reminded it that the purpose of a sanction was not to punish Ms Evans but to protect the public and the wider public interest. The panel was reminded of the sanctions available and of the need to consider any aggravating and mitigating factors it sees fit. The panel was also asked to ensure that when considering sanctions, it begins with the lowest sanction and moves through all the available sanctions in ascending order of seriousness, before identifying the sanction it agrees is sufficient to protect the public and maintain confidence in the profession and uphold professional standards. Additionally, it was reminded that any

sanction imposed must be proportionate, balancing the interests of the social worker with the interests of the social work profession and the public interest. The panel carefully considered the guidance.

281. The panel identified the following mitigation;

- Early admissions of some facts
- Apologies to anyone affected
- The successful completion of education or training courses in 2021
- Other positive feedback in relation to their professional practice dated 2021
- [PRIVATE]
- Absence of previous fitness to practise history
- Evidence of good character in the form of testimonials including from Ms Honeyman
- Contextual factors

282. In relation to the absence of previous fitness to practise history, the panel noted Ms Evans' stated that she has been a qualified social worker since 2011 and, according to Ms Evans' curriculum vitae provided within her bundle, she has been employed in social work since 2014. Ms Evans had practised without issue until these concerns were raised.

283. In relation to contextual factors, the panel noted that the guidance refers to the level of support the social worker received (such as training and/or supervision at work) and evidence of wider or systematic issues in the workplace. The panel reminded itself of the context of the misconduct and the evidence of Ms Hughes, the Guardian, who stated that she was critical of a number of professionals: Mr Scotland (service manager), Ms Evans' predecessor and Ms Evans. Ms Hughes said she was uncomfortable that there were only two professionals before the panel as there had been a systemic failure. Additionally, the evidence of Mr Scotland who said that his overall reflection is that this case is regrettable, because they were all in it together. He said they were a close knit team and that they were faced with a very challenging case of Family A. Mr Scotland said that everything could have been done better and that Ms Evans was placed in a situation in which her skill set was challenged. The panel further acknowledged Ms Evans' [PRIVATE].

284. The panel identified the following aggravating factors;

- Repetition of conduct occurring between April 2019 to March 2020
- Limited insight
- Lack of recent/up to date remediation
- Risk of harm to people who use social work services

285. The panel reminded itself of its findings of fact that Ms Evans failed to; carry out the appropriate risk assessments, work in cooperation with/or appropriately engage with Family A's Guardian, carry out announced or unannounced visits within agreed

timescales, produce a written agreement signed by the mother of Family A, safeguard Family A and provide accurate information to the family court.

286. The panel has assessed the misconduct in this case to be serious. Although a number of mitigating factors have been identified, the panel was mindful that the misconduct involved serious breaches of fundamental tenets of social work practice and that there were a number of aggravating factors present.

No action, advice or warning

287. As per its findings the panel concluded that Ms Evans' fitness to practise is currently impaired on both the personal and public grounds and that there remains a risk of repetition which poses a current risk to service users and the public. Having considered the guidance, the panel decided to exercise its discretion and move beyond the lower sanctions of no action, advice or a warning based on its assessment of risk. The panel was satisfied that none of these outcomes would be sufficient to address the risks as identified, as they would not restrict Ms Evans' ability to practise. It would also send the wrong message about the seriousness of this misconduct and therefore not be in the public interest nor to maintain public confidence in the profession.

Conditions of practice

288. With reference to the guidance the panel noted that a conditions of practice order may be appropriate in cases where all of the following are engaged;

- *the social worker has demonstrated insight*
- *the failure or deficiency in practice is capable of being remedied*
- *appropriate, proportionate, and workable conditions can be put in place*
- *decision makers are confident the social worker can and will comply with the conditions*
- *the social worker does not pose a risk of harm to the public by being in restricted practice.*

289. Further the panel reminded itself of the following paragraph from the guidance which states;

“When considering public protection, decision makers must fully assess insight and the social workers past engagement with the regulator and any employer. This should help to determine whether the social worker can comply with conditions of practice.

290. The panel also took note of the following paragraph from the guidance which reads;

“118. Conditions of practice are less likely to be appropriate in cases of character, attitude or behavioural failings. They may also not be appropriate in cases raising wider public interest issues”

291. The panel noted its findings that Ms Evans had developed limited insight and that there were elements of the misconduct that were attitudinal in nature, due to Ms Evans' stated desire to ensure that the needs of the mother of family A were fully recognised and that the mother was 'treated like a human being'. This meant the risks to the children in the family were not fully assessed nor made paramount. However, the panel considered that that in these circumstances, notwithstanding the attitudinal element, Ms Evans' misconduct is remediable because it can be achieved through relevant training and experience. The panel considered that appropriate training would enable Ms Evans to appropriately safeguard whilst treating others with respect.
292. The panel decided that Ms Evans' conduct can be managed by a conditions of practice order as appropriate, proportionate and workable conditions can be formulated to address and remediate her misconduct. Such conditions would be sufficient to protect service users and the wider public interest.
293. The panel was satisfied that Ms Evans had expressed a settled position that she now intends to return to social work practice and will seek employment. The panel considered that Ms Honeyman's representations that Ms Evans welcomes the opportunity to prepare a development plan and be subject to supervision, as a clear indicator that Ms Evans will comply with a conditions of practice order. The panel concluded that within such a structured framework as provided by the conditions of practice order, Ms Evans would not pose a risk of harm to the public as she will be appropriately managed and supervised.
294. Further, the panel noted the public interest as per the guidance, 'in supporting a trained and skilled social worker to return to practice safely', and was satisfied that this could be facilitated appropriately by the imposition of a conditions of practice order. Ms Evans has practised as a social worker between 2014 to 2021 with evidence of effective professional practice. The panel decided that a conditions of practice order will manage the identified risks through its restrictions, whilst also giving Ms Evans the opportunity to practise, improve and gain experience. The conditions of practice order will be subject to review.
295. The panel noted that Social Work England seek a 12 month conditions of practice order. The panel considered the guidance and decided that a 12 month order is most appropriate as it may take time to identify a suitable role and commence work. Additionally, the panel was mindful that Social Work England will conduct a review prior to the expiry of the conditions of practice order. The panel was also satisfied that Ms Evans is not a newly qualified social worker and has demonstrated good practise historically as per her testimonials. The panel concluded that a 12 month conditions of practice order will enable Ms Evans to demonstrate the necessary remediation to ensure that she has the skills, knowledge and character to practise safely and effectively. The panel therefore imposed the following conditions:

Conditions of the conditions of practice order

- **Condition 1**

You must notify Social Work England at any time you are employed in a role, or providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England and provide the contact details of your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work services, whether paid or voluntary.

- **Condition 2**

You must allow Social Work England to exchange information with your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work or social work educational services, and any reporter or workplace supervisor referred to in these conditions.

- **Condition 3**

a. At any time you are employed in a role, or providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England, you must agree to the appointment of a reporter nominated by you and approved by Social Work England. The reporter must be on Social Work England's register (and can be the same person as the workplace supervisor).

b. You must not start or continue to work until these arrangements have been approved by Social Work England.

- **Condition 4**

You must provide reports from your reporter to Social Work England every 4 months and at least 14 days prior to any review and Social Work England will make these reports available to any workplace supervisor referred to in these conditions on request.

- **Condition 5**

You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any formal disciplinary proceedings taken against you from the date these conditions take effect.

- **Condition 6**

You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any investigations or complaints made against you from the date these conditions take effect.

- **Condition 7**

You must inform Social Work England if you apply for social work employment/ self-employment (paid or voluntary) outside England within 7 days of the date of application.

- **Condition 8**

You must inform Social Work England if you are registered or subsequently apply for registration with any other UK regulator, overseas regulator or relevant authority within 7 days of the date of application for future registration or 7 days from the date these conditions take effect for existing registration.

- **Condition 9**

At any time you are employed in a role, or providing social worker services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England, you must formulate a personal development plan, specifically designed to address the shortfalls in the following areas of your practice:

- Safeguarding
- Risk assessment
- Information sharing
- Completing visits to service users
- Working collaboratively with other professionals
- Court skills

- **Condition 10**

Your personal development plan must be signed off by your employer

- **Condition 11**

You must provide a copy of your personal development plan to Social Work England within 6 weeks from the date you are employed in a role or providing social worker services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England and provide an updated copy 14 days prior to any review.

- **Condition 12**

At any time you are employed, or providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England; you must place yourself and remain under the direct supervision of a workplace supervisor nominated by you, and approved by Social Work England. The workplace supervisor must be on Social Work England's register (and can be the same person as the reporter).

- **Condition 13**

You must not start or continue to work until these arrangements have been approved by Social Work England.

- **Condition 14**

You must provide reports from your workplace supervisor to Social Work England every 4 months and at least 14 days prior to any review, and Social Work England will make these reports available to any reporter referred to in these conditions on request.

- **Condition 15**

You must not be responsible for the work of any other social worker or student social worker.

- **Condition 16**

You must not work as an independent social worker and must only work as a social worker at an establishment where other social workers are employed

- **Condition 17**

You must not undertake any out-of-hours or on-call duties.

- **Condition 18**

You must not undertake any agency or locum posts of less than 6 months duration

- **Condition 19**

You must read Social Work England's 'Professional Standards' (July 2019), and provide a written reflection to Social Work England 4 months after these conditions take effect, focusing on how your conduct, for matters relating to this case; safeguarding, risk assessment, information sharing, completing visits to service users, working collaboratively with other professionals and court skills, was below the accepted standard of a social worker and outlining what you should have done differently. The reflective piece should be approximately 1000 words.

- **Condition 20**

You must undertake 12 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to safeguarding, risk assessment, information sharing, completing visits to service users, working collaboratively with other professionals and court skills.

- **Condition 21**

You must provide evidence of CPD undertaken to Social Work England within 6 months of these conditions taking effect.

- **Condition 22**

You must provide a written copy of your conditions, within 14 days from the date these conditions take effect, to the following parties confirming that your registration is subject to the conditions listed at 1 to 21, above:

Any organisation or person employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary.

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

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

Suspension order

296. The panel thought it prudent to go on to consider the suitability of a suspension order. In the first instance, as reasoned above the panel was satisfied that a conditions of practice order is an alternative to suspension that will be enough to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession and maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England.

297. The panel noted paragraphs 136 to 138 of the guidance which says;

“136. Suspension is appropriate where (both of the following apply):

- *the decision makers cannot formulate workable conditions to protect the public or the wider public interest*
- *the case falls short of requiring removal from the register (or where removal is not an option)*

137. Suspension may be appropriate where (all of the following):

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

138. Suspension is likely to be unsuitable in circumstances where (both of the following):

- *the social worker has not demonstrated any insight and remediation*
- *there is limited evidence to suggest they are willing (or able) to resolve or remediate their failings”*

298. The panel was satisfied that Ms Evans’ circumstances falls outside of paragraph 136 of the guidance and it has been able to formulate workable conditions to protect the public or the wider public interest. Also, it was satisfied that this is not a case that requires removal from the social work register.

299. The panel acknowledged that Ms Evans’ misconduct fell short of meeting the criteria of paragraph 137 as although the concerns represent a serious breach of the professional

standards, Ms Evans has demonstrated limited insight and the panel is satisfied with her submissions that she is willing and able to remediate her failings. As such, the panel concluded, with reference to paragraph 138 of the guidance, that a suspension order is unsuitable in the circumstances.

300. Given the reasons set out above, the panel decided that a suspension order was not the necessary and proportionate sanction in the circumstances and that protection of the public, maintaining public confidence in the profession and upholding professional standards could be met with the lesser sanction of a 12 month conditions of practice order.

Recommendations to assist the review panel

301. There will be an mandatory review before the expiry of the 12 month period of the conditions of practice order, at which the review panel will see an improvement. In order to demonstrate that improvement, the panel recommends that Ms Evans providing the following:
- a. An updated reflective statement, showing that Ms Evans has accepted the findings of the panel and understands the impact that the misconduct would have had on the children of family A, her social work colleagues, the wider social work profession, and the public confidence in the social work profession;
 - b. Up to date references from employment or voluntary work undertaken and/or character testimonials, commenting on Ms Evans' awareness, attitude, behaviour and judgement.

Interim order:

302. The panel next considered an application by Mr Edwards to first revoke the current interim suspension order that Ms Evans is subject to. He submitted that whilst this usually requires notice to be given, the social worker can waive the notice period at the hearing.
303. Mr Edwards also applied for an 18 month interim conditions of practice order to cover the appeal period before the final order becomes effective. He submitted that the interim conditions of practice order is necessary for the protection of the public, in light of the panel's findings at the impairment and sanctions stages.
304. Ms Honeyman indicated that Ms Evans has waived her right to notice in regard to revoking the current interim suspension order. Additionally, she indicated that Ms Evans agrees to the interim conditions of practice order.
305. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser who drew its attention to paragraphs 203 to 204, 206 to 208 and 211 to 214 of the guidance. The panel was reminded that Ms Evans had waived notice in relation to revoking the current interim suspension order. It was also emphasised that any order must be necessary for the protection of the public or in the best interests of Ms Evans. The panel was also reminded of the need for it to

have regard to its findings at the impairment and sanction stages, and any risks it had identified. The panel was reminded that it must apply the principle of proportionality and impose the least severe restriction necessary to address the risks as identified.

306. The panel considered the guidance and decided to revoke the existing interim suspension order.
307. The panel was mindful that it had found a risk of repetition of misconduct, impaired fitness to practise and concluded that a final order of conditions of practice was the appropriate and proportionate sanction in this case. Since the panel's final order of conditions of practice would not come into effect until the expiry of the 28 day appeal period, or until any appeal is dealt with, it considered that an interim order was necessary to protect the public.
308. The panel referred to paragraph 207 of the guidance which highlighted that "*an interim order may be necessary where the adjudicators have decided that a final order is required, which restricts or removes the ability for the social worker to practise...without an interim order, the social worker will be able to practise unrestricted until the order takes effect. This goes against our overarching objective of public protection*".
309. The panel reminded itself that appropriate and workable conditions had been formulated to address the risks in this case. The panel was mindful that given the risks Ms Evans cannot practise safely without restriction at present. The panel therefore decided an interim conditions of practice order would be the only appropriate and proportionate type of interim order to impose at this stage.
310. Accordingly, the panel concluded that an 18 month interim conditions of practice order will allow sufficient time for any appeal that might be lodged to be dealt with. When the appeal period expires, this interim order will come to an end unless an appeal has been filed with the High Court. If there is no appeal, the final order of condition of practice shall take effect when the appeal period expires.

Right of appeal

311. Under Paragraph 16(1)(a) of Schedule 2 of the regulations, the social worker may appeal to the High Court against the decision of adjudicators:
- a. 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.
 - b. the decision of the regulator on review of an interim order, or a final order, other than a decision to revoke the order.

312. Under Paragraph 16(2) of Schedule 2 of the regulations an appeal must be filed before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day after the day on which the social worker is notified of the decision complained of.
313. Under Regulation 9(4) of the regulations this order may not be recorded until the expiry of the period within which an appeal against the order could be made, or where an appeal against the order has been made, before the appeal is withdrawn or otherwise finally disposed of.
314. This notice is served in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the Social Work England Fitness to Practice Rules 2019 (as amended).

Review of final orders:

315. Under Paragraph 15(1), 15(2) and 15(3) of Schedule 2 of the regulations:
- 15(1) The regulator must review a suspension order or a conditions of practice order, before its expiry
 - 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
316. Under Rule 16(aa) of the rules a 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.

The Professional Standards Authority:

317. Please note that in accordance with section 29 of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, a final decision made by Social Work England's panel of adjudicators can be referred by the Professional Standards Authority ("the PSA") to the High Court. The PSA can refer this decision to the High Court if it considers that the decision is not sufficient for the protection of the public. Further information about PSA appeals can be found on their website at:
- <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-with-regulators/decisions-about-practitioners>.