Case Examiner Decision
Noreen Sohal – SW122780
FTPS-24961

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The role of the case examiners

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

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

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

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

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

Decision summary

Decision summary	
Preliminary outcome	18 August 2026
	Accepted disposal proposed - suspension order (12 months)
Final outcome	21 September 2026
	Accepted disposal - suspension order (12 months)

Executive summary

The case examiners have reached the following conclusions:

1. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1, 2, and 3 being found proven by the adjudicators.

2. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1, 2, and 3 being found to amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

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

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

As such, the case examiners requested that the social worker was notified of their intention to resolve the case with suspension order of 12 months. The social worker accepted the proposal in full.

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

Anonymity and redaction

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

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

Person A	[redacted]

The complaint and our regulatory concerns

The initial complaint	
The complainant	The complaint was raised by the social worker's former employer, City of Wolverhampton Council.
Date the complaint was received	28 July 2025
Complaint summary	The council raised concerns that between April and May 2025, 2 complaints were received from families that home visits had not been completed as recorded within assessments completed by the social worker.

Regulatory concerns

Whilst registered as a social worker;

1. Between March and April 2025; you failed to undertake home visits to children on your caseload.

2. Between March and April 2025; you recorded misleading and/ or inaccurate information documenting that you had undertaken home visits to children on your caseload.

3. Your conduct at regulatory concern (2) was dishonest.

Grounds of impairment:

The matters outlined in regulatory concerns (1), (2) & (3) amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct.

Preliminary issues

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

The realistic prospect test

Fitness to practise history

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

Decision summary

Is there a realistic prospect of the adjudicators finding the social worker's fitness to practise is impaired?	Yes	☒
	No	☐

The case examiners have determined that there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1, 2, and 3 being found proven, that those concerns could amount to the statutory ground of misconduct, and that the social worker's fitness to practise could be found impaired.

Reasoning

Facts

Whilst registered as a social worker;

1. **Between March and April 2025; you failed to undertake home visits to children on your caseload.**

The case examiners note that as the regulatory concern cites a failure on the part of the social worker, they have looked at what would be expected in the circumstances.

The case examiners have seen the employer's guidance on 'Statutory visits to children subject to Child Protection, Children in Need and Children and Young People in Care'. This guidance explains that at visits children must be seen alone and within the home, wherever possible. Additionally, it advises that, 'where there are exceptional circumstances, the child may be seen in another environment e.g. extended family

member's home or community setting. This arrangement should be agreed by the team manager in order for the visit to count as a statutory visit'.

The case examiners have seen the employer's internal investigation report, in which the employer outlines that they received complaints from two families, Family A and Family B. Both families raised concerns that the social worker within their assessments had recorded seeing and speaking with the children in the family during statutory visits and both families stated that the children had not been seen or spoken to.

Following the complaints being raised by Families A and B, the social worker advised the council that they had undertaken visits via video calls to 4 families in total.

In respect of Family A, the family complained that the children had not been seen in the home. The social worker recorded seeing the children alone in the home during a statutory visit on 14 March 2025.

The social worker at the initial stage of the investigation, stated that they had not seen the children in the home, but had seen them via video call. The case examiners note that later in the employer's investigation, the social worker stated that the visit which recorded the children had been seen at home on 14 March 2025, was in fact only carried out with the mother, and the children were seen with their mother on 25 March 2025 via video call.

The case examiners have seen an email exchange between a family member and the local authority on 30 April 2025, where the family member responded on behalf of the mother, [redacted] The email states that the mother had *'gone through their phone logs and messages to substantiate any contact that has been made. [Mum] herself has spoken to the social worker, via phone call, as already confirmed on 25 March. However,* [redacted] *the children were not present during this call'*.

The case examiners have also seen screenshots of messages between the mother and a family member on 17 April 2025, when the mother has raised concerns that the social worker *'has lied and said met kids and hasn't'*.

The case examiners have seen additional information from a family member of Family A in a call note dated 5 March 2026, [redacted] They state that the mother advised that the children were never seen by the social worker and that the mother had a video call with the social worker, [redacted] on 25 March 2025, but the children were not present. The family member stated that they had spoken to other family members as they are aware that in order for a visit or video call to have been facilitated, one of them would have needed to be present, [redacted]

[redacted]. The family member stated that no-one had facilitated such a call or contact with the children. The family member provided an email dated 24 April 2025, outlining the same information which they sent to the local authority at the time.

A call note with another family member on 11 March 2026, states that [redacted] family members or friends would have needed to facilitate the call or visit and that they have spoken to people and they have confirmed not facilitating a visit.

In respect of Family B, the family complained that the social worker had not visited the family home and had not seen the child. The social worker recorded having seen the child alone at home during a statutory visit on 01 April 2025. The mother, within the employer's investigation, also stated that the information contained within an assessment dated 12 March 2025, which was said to be from the child, was her account of the situation that she had shared with the social worker, and therefore was not from the social worker speaking directly with the child. The social worker confirmed to the council that no face-to-face visit had taken place and instead, a video call had been undertaken. The council advise that the mother disputes that the child was seen in a video call by the social worker.

In respect of Family C, the father raised during a contact session, after the social worker had left the local authority, that the social worker had not been to see the child. The social worker had recorded seeing the child at home alone during a statutory visit on 27 March 2025. The social worker informed the council that they had undertaken a video call to Family C.

In respect of Family D, the council reported that the mother disputed being visited by the social worker and stated that contact only took place via video call. Whilst attempts were made to contact the family by Social Work England, these were not successful. The social worker recorded having seen the child within the home during a statutory visit on 18 March 2025. However, the social worker acknowledged within the employer's investigation and within their submissions to the regulator that they had seen the child via video call.

The case examiners note that in respect of families B, C and D, they have no primary evidence from the families that home visits did not go ahead, however they have the investigation report, in which managers from the local authority spoke with the families. Furthermore, the social worker has acknowledged that they did not conduct visits in the home with the children. The evidence therefore suggests that visits were not carried out in line with the policy for statutory visits, in respect of a number of children on the social worker's caseload.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding this concern proven.

2. **Between March and April 2025; you recorded misleading and/ or inaccurate information documenting that you had undertaken home visits to children on your caseload.**

The case examiners have seen the employer's internal investigation report. Within this the employer outlines that they received complaints from two families, Family A and Family B, after they had received copies of assessments, which had been carried out with the social worker. Both families raised concerns that the social worker within their assessments had stated that they recorded seeing and speaking with the children in the family and both families stated that the children had not been seen or spoken to by the social worker.

Within the investigation, the social worker had admitted that they had seen the children via video call but had not seen them face to face.

The case examiners have seen copies of statutory visit records for Family A and Family B in which the social worker has recorded seeing the children at the home address.

The case examiners note that there is reference to 2 further families, Family C and Family D.

The children in Family C were recorded as being seen by the social worker on 27 March 2025. However, the father of Family C was spoken with as part of the investigation and stated that the social worker had not been to see the child.

Attempts were made to contact Family D as part of the investigation, and within the investigation minutes, it was recorded that a team manager had spoken with the mother of Family D, who had raised concerns about the social worker's practice. However, despite a number of efforts, additional information was unable to be gathered.

The case examiners note that the investigator has spoken with family members of Family A, who have stated that due to the circumstances at the time, they believe that the social worker did not visit the children at the home. Whilst attempts have been made to contact the other families by the investigator, these have not been successful.

However, the social worker within the employer's investigation and within their submissions to the regulator has consistently stated that the records were not accurate as they completed all these visits via video call and not face to face in the home. Therefore, the evidence suggests that the social worker recorded misleading and inaccurate information regarding home visits to the children on their case load.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding this concern proven.

3. Your conduct at regulatory concern (2) was dishonest.

The case examiners have initially considered whether the social worker recorded inaccurate or misleading information that they had undertaken home visits to the children. As outlined in the regulatory concern above, the evidence suggests and the social worker accepts that they did not record accurate information about the home visits to children on their caseload.

The case examiners have gone on to consider whether the alleged conduct was dishonest. In considering this, the case examiners have applied the test for dishonesty, which consists of two parts – the subjective test and the objective test.

The subjective test

The subjective test requires the case examiners to assess the evidence to ascertain the social worker's actual knowledge or belief as to the facts. The question is not whether the social worker's beliefs are reasonable, but whether they were genuinely held at that time.

The case examiners have therefore considered whether the evidence suggests that the social worker knew that when they recorded that home visits occurred, that they had in fact not happened as recorded. The case examiners note screenshots that have been provided by the social worker of text exchanges between themselves and Person A.

The exchange appears to be about the social worker discussing the investigation with Person A. Within this, Person A states, *'I don't know the only thing standing out to me is that [sic] fact you lied in your paperwork'*. The social worker responded, *'yeah'*. Person A said, *'I don't understand why you lied in your paperwork* [redacted] . The social worker further in the exchange states, *'But I was being dishonest that's what's worrying me'*. Person A responds, *'Did you lie in your paperwork saying you visited in person'*. The social worker replied, *'Yeah'*. When asked by Person A, *'Why did you do that* [redacted]*'*, the social worker responded, *'I do t [sic] no'*. *Person A* stated, *'That's the number one rule'*. The social worker replied, *'Exactly, but I've always visited children, it's just in that time* [redacted].

The exchange continues with Person A asking if video calls are not allowed. The social worker has replied stating, '*well you can as long as u let manager know, everyone did it in Covid times'*, *'I don't think I've committed a crime'* and *'I still spoke to the children'*.

The evidence suggests that the social worker was aware of the need to record accurate records and that they did not do so. The case examiners are of the view that if the previous regulatory concern is found proven, then the social worker will have known that the records they made were not accurate.

The objective test

The objective test requires the case examiners to consider whether the social worker's alleged conduct may be considered dishonest by the objective standards of ordinary decent people. There is no requirement for the social worker to appreciate that their conduct is, by the objective standards of ordinary decent people, dishonest.

The case examiners are satisfied that ordinary, decent people would consider it dishonest for a social worker to record inaccurate records, thereby misrepresenting whether and how the visits had taken place.

The case examiners are satisfied that there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding this concern proven.

Grounds

Misconduct

The case examiners are aware that there is no legal definition of misconduct, but it generally would consist of serious acts or omissions, which suggest a significant departure from what would be expected of the social worker in the circumstances. This can include conduct that takes place in the exercise of professional practice, and also conduct which occurs outside the exercise of professional practice but calls into question the suitability of the person to work as a social worker.

To help them decide if the evidence suggests a significant departure from what would be expected in the circumstances, the case examiners have considered the following standards, which were applicable at the time of the concerns, namely Social Work England professional standards (2019).

As a social worker I will:

2.1 Be open, honest, reliable and fair.

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

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

As a social worker I will not:

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

5.3 Falsify records or condone this by others.

The case examiners are aware that falling short of the standards may not always amount to misconduct. However, adjudicators in this instance may consider the alleged conduct to be a significant departure from the expected standards. The case examiners note the adjudicators may be concerned that the social worker is alleged to have failed to undertake home visits, and recorded misleading and inaccurate information within case records, and by doing so acted dishonestly.

Record keeping is a key tenet of the social work profession. It is vital that any actions are recorded accurately in order for risks to be minimised. It is important that colleagues and other professionals are aware, through accurate records, of whether any such risks have been minimised. By recording that visits have taken place, this means that other professionals are of the view that the risks have been regularly assessed.

Furthermore, the case examiners note that by not conducting home visits to the children and speaking with them alone, this meant that risk was not appropriately assessed, children's views were not obtained, and any support or risk management plans that may have been required, were not implemented.

Dishonest conduct is also seen as extremely serious. Social workers are expected to act honestly at all times. The sanctions guidance suggests that dishonesty within professional practice, such as falsifying visits or documents is seen as the most serious conduct. By inaccurately recording that visits have been undertaken, colleagues cannot be confident that appropriate action has been taken to safeguard people and therefore there is the potential for the risk of harm to be generated as a result.

Where a social worker has not completed visits to vulnerable children on their caseload, this would not align with standard 3.8.

Where a social worker has not recorded accurate, clear case notes and has falsified records, this would not align with standards 2.1, 3.11, 5.2 and 5.3.

Where a social worker is alleged to have acted dishonestly, this would not align with standards 2.1 and 5.2.

If the matters were to be found proven, the case examiners conclude the conduct described is likely to suggest a significant departure from the professional standards detailed above.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding the conduct outlined in regulatory concerns 1, 2 and 3 would engage the statutory ground of misconduct.

Impairment

Assessment of impairment consists of two elements:

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

Personal element

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

The case examiners note that the alleged conduct may be difficult to remediate as dishonesty is likely to be considered an attitudinal issue. The case examiners note that in particular, the alleged conduct was not isolated and happened on a number of occasions, as there was a number of false records created.

The social worker has engaged with the regulator, and has provided submissions to the regulator in respect of these concerns.

The social worker accepts that their record keeping was not of the required standard and that they did not conduct home visits, however they maintain that they conducted video calls with the children, and as such created inaccurate records. However, they deny that their conduct was dishonest and that *'the inaccuracies in my recording arose from poor judgement, lack of clarity and a failure to adequately review and check records during a period of significant personal stress, rather than any deliberate attempt to deceive'*. They accept *'inaccurate recording, regardless of intent, is serious*

and undermines confidence in social work practice. I accept responsibility for the impact of this failing, while maintaining that it was not driven by dishonesty'.

The case examiners, however, note that the social worker has also provided, as part of their submissions, screenshots of a number of text messages, as outlined at regulatory concern 3. Within this, the evidence suggests that they were aware and admitted dishonest conduct, but they have provided no reflections upon this within their submissions.

The case examiners consider that the social worker does not appear to have provided sufficient insight in relation to conducting video calls rather than home visits. Whilst the social worker accepts that this did not meet the expected standard of practice, they have not reflected on the impact, of not conducting home visits and speaking with the children alone, may have had on the children.

The case examiners consider the social worker has provided some limited insight into the importance of accurate record keeping. The social worker states that their personal circumstances at the time impacted upon their practice. Whilst the case examiners consider that the social worker's personal circumstances may have impacted upon their practice, they do not consider that this can explain such conduct. Furthermore, the social worker has not considered how they may act now if faced with a similar set of personal circumstances.

The social worker has provided a reflective piece, which considers some of the practice standards and some generic thoughts on how they fell short of these. They state, *'I understand that accurate recording is essential within social work as records are relied upon by professionals and agencies when making safeguarding decisions and assessing risk'*. However, the social worker has not provided consideration of the impact of their alleged conduct on colleagues, neither have they provided any specifics of any learning from the practice that they consider was below the expected standard and how they may act differently in the future. They have highlighted that no concerns have been raised since.

The case examiners note they have not been provided with any evidence of remediation.

The case examiners note that the social worker has continued to practise since this time and no concerns have been raised in respect of their practice. The case examiners have been provided with an email from the social worker's current employer, dated 26 January 2026. The employer stated that there were no concerns with the social worker's practice.

However, given the lack of insight, particularly in respect of the dishonest conduct and the impact of their alleged conduct on the families, and lack of evidence of remediation, the case examiners consider a risk of repetition remains.

Public element of impairment

The case examiners next considered whether the social worker's actions have the potential to undermine public confidence in social workers and whether this is a case where adjudicators may determine that the public interest requires a finding of impairment. Public interest includes the need to uphold proper standards of conduct and behaviour and the need to maintain the public's trust and confidence in the profession.

The case examiners have reminded themselves that the public interest includes responding proportionately to regulatory concerns. However, they consider that a member of the public would be extremely concerned that a social worker is alleged to have not completed statutory visits to children, recorded visits that did not happen and created inaccurate records.

Dishonest conduct goes to the heart of public confidence and a social worker alleged to have acted in this manner has the potential to seriously undermine public trust in social workers and to damage the reputation of the profession.

The case examiners are of the view that in these circumstances, members of the public would expect a finding of impairment.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators making a finding of current impairment.

The public interest

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

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

Additional reasoning

The case examiners have carefully considered whether a referral to a hearing may be necessary in the public interest. They note whilst the social worker has stated that they deny they deliberately acted dishonestly, they accept that they failed to undertake home visits and that the records they completed were not accurate and they have provided evidence to the regulator in which they have acknowledged that they acted dishonestly in doing so.

The case examiners are therefore of the view that the social worker broadly accepts the key facts; however, the social worker does not comment on whether they accept that they are currently impaired.

Where a social worker does not accept impairment, the case examiner guidance suggests that a referral to a hearing may be necessary in the public interest. However, the case examiners note that the guidance states the social worker must accept the matter of impairment at the point of *concluding* the case and are of the view that this does not prevent them offering accepted disposal prior to this.

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

- There is no conflict in evidence in this case, and the social worker broadly accepts the facts.

- The social worker is clear that they accept that their conduct fell short of the standards expected of them. In their submissions to the regulator, the social worker stated, *'I fully recognise that I remained professionally responsible for ensuring accurate recording, and safe practice at all times.'*

- The case examiners recognise that not all professionals will have an innate understanding of how and when impairment may be engaged, or how exactly this might impact upon findings concerning current fitness to practise.

- The accepted disposal process will provide the social worker an opportunity to review the case examiners reasoning on impairment and reflect on whether they are able to accept a finding of impairment. It is open to the social worker to reject any accepted disposal proposal and request a hearing if they wish to explore the question of impairment in more detail.

- The case examiners have a number of sanctions available to them in order to satisfy the public interest.

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

The case examiners are aware that a case cannot be concluded through an accepted disposal process where a social worker does not agree that they are currently impaired. At this stage, the case examiners' proposal of an accepted disposal does not mark the conclusion of the case, as that would require a response from the social worker for the case examiners' consideration and is also subject to a final review of the case by the case examiners, who may determine to send the matter to a hearing following any response received.

Accepted disposal

Case outcome		
Proposed outcome	No further action	☐
	Advice	☐
	Warning order	☐
	Conditions of practice order	☐
	Suspension order	☒
	Removal order	☐
Proposed duration	12 months	

Reasoning

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

In determining the most appropriate and proportionate outcome in this case, the case examiners considered the available options in ascending order of seriousness.

First, they have considered the aggravating and mitigating factors.

Aggravating factors:

- The social worker is alleged to have acted dishonestly within professional practice and falsely recorded a number of visits.
- The social worker potentially left children at risk of harm by not visiting them alone at home.
- The social worker has not presented any evidence of remediation to the regulator.

Mitigating factors:

- The social worker has demonstrated some insight into their alleged conduct and a willingness to engage with the regulator.

- The alleged conduct was limited to a small timeframe.
- The social worker was experiencing some difficult personal circumstances at the time of the alleged conduct.

No further action, advice, or warning:

With reference to the regulator's sanctions guidance (December 2022), the case examiners noted that in cases where a risk of repetition remains, the outcomes of no further action, advice or warning are not appropriate as they will not restrict the social worker's practice. The case examiners assessed that a risk of repetition remains, and due to the seriousness of the alleged conduct in this case, the case examiners are satisfied that such outcomes are inappropriate.

Conditions of practice order:

The case examiners next considered a conditions of practice order. The case examiners considered paragraph 114 of the guidance which states:

Conditions of practice may be appropriate in cases where (all of the following):

• the social worker has demonstrated insight.

• the failure or deficiency in practice is capable of being remedied.

• appropriate, proportionate, and workable conditions can be put in place.

• decision makers are confident the social worker can and will comply with the conditions.

• the social worker does not pose a risk of harm to the public by being in restricted practice.

The case examiners consider that whilst some of the alleged conduct may be addressed through conditions of practice, they consider that the dishonest element is more difficult to remediate. They note the paragraph 176 of the sanctions guidance which states, 'Concerns that raise questions of character, such as dishonesty, may be harder to remediate. This is because it is more difficult to produce objective evidence of reformed character. Evidence of professional competence cannot mitigate serious or persistent dishonesty. Dishonest conduct is highly damaging to public confidence in social work. Therefore, it is likely to warrant a finding of impairment and a more serious sanction of suspension or removal'.

The case examiners consider that the social worker's insight at this time is very limited and they consider that a conditions of practice order would be insufficient to mark the

seriousness of how they view the alleged conduct and would not provide the level of restriction necessary to protect the public.

Suspension order:

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

The case examiners have considered the guidance, which states:

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.

The case examiners have concluded that the concerns are very serious and that the social worker has demonstrated some insight, although this is still developing.

The case examiners note that the social worker has indicated that they are willing to work with the regulator and that with support, they may be able to resolve or remediate their failings.

The case examiners therefore consider a period of suspension would allow the social worker the opportunity to demonstrate insight into their alleged conduct and allow them time to demonstrate that they have taken steps to remediate in order to return to safe practice.

Removal order:

In order to test their reasoning, the case examiners went on to consider whether a removal order was appropriate in this instance. They considered that whilst there was evidence of alleged dishonesty, this was limited to 4 visits in a short time frame. Further, there is evidence that the social worker was experiencing difficult personal circumstances at the time which may have impacted upon their decision making, and they have shown willingness to work with the regulator. The case examiners consider that this is a case that falls short of the need to remove the social worker from the register.

Length of suspension order:

In terms of the period of suspension, the case examiners note that the social worker has demonstrated very limited insight. The case examiners consider that the social

worker may need sufficient time for this to develop, in order for them to reflect and demonstrate that they have taken steps to address the alleged shortfalls in their practice.

The case examiners therefore consider a period of 12 months to be the minimum necessary to allow the social worker time to undertake remedial work. They are satisfied that a period of 12 months will also help to maintain confidence in the profession. The case examiners consider a longer period would be disproportionate and would mean that the social worker was away from the workplace longer than necessary, and could risk them becoming de-skilled.

To conclude, the case examiners have decided to propose to the social worker a suspension order of 12 months. They will now notify the social worker of their intention and seek the social worker's agreement to dispose of the matter accordingly. The social worker will be offered 28 days to respond. If the social worker does not agree, or if the case examiners revise their decision regarding the public interest in this case, the matter will proceed to a final hearing.

Recommendations for the social worker

Prior to any future attendance at a review panel, the case examiners recommend that the social worker may wish to provide evidence to show they have undertaken steps that would facilitate a safe and effective return to the register without restriction.

A future panel may be assisted by any evidence of remediation, reflection and insight.

The social worker may wish to provide:

- A reflective account of this period and how their conduct fell short of the standards expected of them, specifically concentrating on their alleged dishonesty and how this may impact on public confidence in them as a social worker. They may also wish to consider the impact on the children and families of not conducting visits and creating false records.
- Evidence of any training courses, learning and any associated reflections, on the importance of accurate record keeping, safeguarding and ethics in social work.
- Any testimonials as to any employment the social worker may undertake in a non-social work role.

Response from the social worker

The social worker responded on 15 September 2026 and confirmed ‘I have read the case examiners’ decision and the accepted disposal guide. I admit the key facts set out in the case examiner decision, and that my fitness to practise is impaired. I understand the terms of the proposed disposal of my fitness to practise case and accept them in full.’

Case examiners’ response and final decision

The case examiners concluded that the social worker’s fitness to practise was likely to be found impaired but that the public interest could be met through a published decision and suspension, rather than through a public hearing. They proposed a suspension order with a duration of 12 months and the social worker accepted this proposal. In light of the social worker’s acceptance of the suspension order, the case examiners have considered again whether there would be a public interest in referring this matter to a public hearing. They remain of the view that this is unnecessary for the reasons set out earlier in the decision.