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| In the family court sitting at |
| In the matter of the Children Act 1989 |

**Local authority   
social work evidence template**

**(SWET)**

This document is intended to summarise **not** duplicate other documentation contained within the court bundle and should be succinct, approx. 20 pages in length (excluding appendices), with clear links or references to other sources of more detailed information e.g. an expert report or parenting assessment.

Guidance notes are provided here to assist the author, this text should be removed before submitting the template to the courts.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Local Authority and Social Worker details** | |
| Court case number | TBC |
| Filed by [local authority] | A Local Authority |
| Social work statement number in the proceedings, e.g. 1st, 2nd (**N.B**. A final statement should be completed on the Final Statement Template) | First |
| Social work statement number of this witness e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and date of statement | First |
| This author/witness’s name, qualifications and office address | I, Hermonie Grainger, am registered with Social Work England. I qualified as a Social Worker in July 2023 having graduated with a BA (Hons) in Social Work from Muggletown University. I have been employed by A Local Authority since this time and based in the Children’s Team based at Hogwarts House. |
| This author/witness’s Social Work England registration number | AAA346512 |
| I have been the allocated social worker for [insert name(s)] since [date(s)] | April 2024 |

**The facts in this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief and the opinions set out are my own.**

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| H. Grainger |

Signed:

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| 15th March 2025 |

Date of completion or   
  
most recent update:

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**Accompanying guidance for completing the SWET can be found here:** <https://adcs.org.uk/care/article/SWET>

## **1. Overview of which court order or order/s are being sought**

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| I make this statement in support of the Local Authority’s urgent application to court for an interim care order in respect of Harry Potter born 17th February 2023.  Harry first came to the attention of the Local Authority in April of 2024 when he was 14 months old following an anonymous referral from a member of the public who had concerns for his welfare.  The referral said that Harry was unkempt and living in extremely poor home conditions, that his parents were neglectful, drug users, constantly arguing and that both were well known to have mental health problems.  Harry’s parents are Lily Potter (born 12th March 2003) and James Potter (born 26th August 2000). Harry resides with his parents in their 1 bedroom flat in Hogsmeade.  Acting upon the anonymous referral, a visit was undertaken to the parents address to discuss the concerns raised pertaining to the referral. Both parents were compliant and allowed access into the property. The home conditions were observed to be extremely poor and unsuitable. Harry was also observed to be very unkempt.  The parents were challenged about allegations that they used drugs. Both parents denied this to be a concern but said they ‘dabbled’ with occasional cannabis use at times of stress and strain. They also said that whist they sometimes argued, this was no different to what most couples do and that the referral made must have been made maliciously by a local neighbour, ‘S’, who is jealous of James due to his long-held feelings towards Lily.    The parents were advised that the Local Authority held concerns that Harry’s physical needs were not being met and were asked to engage in a number of services to address the concerns. An initial child protection conference was held on 15th May 2024, at which it was the unanimous position of the professionals present that Harry should be made subject to a Child Protection Plan, which was endorsed by the chair.  Unfortunately, despite the opportunities provided in accordance with the CP plan, the parents failed to engage meaningfully and in August 2024 advice was taken from our legal and PLO procedures were initiated.  The parents’ initial engagement on the PLO was positive with a number of expectations set being met, such as ensuring the property was maintained to a better standard and ensuring that Harry, when seen, was in suitable clean clothing. Both parents also attended ‘Recovery’ to engage with substance misuse work. Both parents also permitted access to their GP records and discussed their mental health difficulties. It was established that Lily has a previous diagnosis of Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder, whilst James struggles with anxiety and depression. It is felt that James’ mood is sometimes exacerbated by his use of cannabis.  Despite the initial positive engagement with the PLO, the situation deteriorated and the parents ceased their initial positive engagement. Two consecutive PLO meeting’s were not attended by both parents and upon workers trying to access the property on two occasions they were told to “get lost” and, on the other occasion, nobody answered the door despite the worker observing a clear twitching of the curtains in the upstairs bedroom, indicating that someone was at home.  Throughout this more recent period of the PLO, anonymous referrals have continued to be made to the Local Authority of hearing loud shouting and screaming at nighttime between the occupants of the address as well as a small child (presumed to be Harry) constantly crying whilst the shouting is ongoing.  The Local Authority are extremely concerned for the welfare of Harry Potter, having not been able to gain access to him now for some weeks to observe his welfare and due to the parents recent u-tun on engagement with the PLO process.  The Local Authority therefore seek an interim care order on the basis that the threshold for separating him from his parents care has been met. The plan will be to place Harry in a suitable foster care placement once one is identified. |

## **2. Family network composition**

### **2.1 The child/ren – use one per template per family**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name(s)** | **Gender** | **Date of Birth** | **Child’s current placement status** | **Child’s current  legal status** |
| Harry Potter | Male | 17/2/23 | With parents | CP Plan |
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### **2.2 Child/ren’s family network**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Relationship** | **Parental Responsibility** | **DOB** | **Nationality** | **Ethnicity** | **Address (where safe to disclose)** |
| Lily Potter | Mother | Yes | 12/3/2003 | British | White European | 4 Privet Drive |
| James Potter | Father | Yes | 26/8/2000 | British | White European | 4 privet Drive |
| Estelle Potter | Paternal Grandmother | No | 23/9/1972 | British | White European | TBC |
| Jules Snape | Maternal Grandmother | No | 18/8/1970 | British | White European | TBC |

### **2.3 Has anyone listed, above, been identified as an alternative carer(s) for the child/ren?**

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| Both the maternal and paternal grandmother have been approached to ascertain what role they could play with supporting the parents care for Harry, or to see if they wish to be assessed to care.  Jules Snape has been inconsistent with the sharing of her views, on the one hand telling the Local Authority within PLO meetings (which she attends as support for the mother) that she would do anything for Harry and on the other hand not responding to requests for appointments for her to be assessed. At the current time the role she can play appears unclear, but it is known she has fairly frequent contact with her grandson at the parents’ home.  Estelle Potter has a number of previous convictions for historic dishonesty offences and is well known to the police. She has been very vocal in her support for the parents and is not considered likely to be a protective factor for Harry. The Local Authority do not consider she would be a viable carer for Harry Potter in all of the circumstances. |

## **3. Child impact analysis (complete for each individual child)**

### **3.1 Description of the child’s day to day experiences during the period under consideration**

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| Sadly, it has been difficult to get a truly accurate picture of what Harry’s day to day lived experiences are. It appears likely, based on the available evidence and information, that his days are filled with uncertainty due to the unpredictable and sometimes frightening parenting he receives. His home conditions are squalid and he often presents as dirty and unkempt. His primary carers have significant difficulties regulating their moods and emotions and he will have been exposed in some part to substance misuse and domestic conflict. |

### **3.2 The child’s needs. An analysis of the harm they face. Risk and protective factors**

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| Harry has suffered harm and is at a high level of risk, such that immediate separation is required from his parents.  This is because of their failure to adequately engage within the PLO process and their recent disengagement from professionals. Both parents have difficulties with substance misuse, domestic abuse and mental health issues, which is often described as being the ‘toxic trio’.  The Local Authority have taken steps to protect Harry by affording him child protection status and instigating the PLO process, but this has not led to successful outcomes for Harry at this time.  Harry is likely to be experiencing inconsistent care, the frightening experience of being exposed to domestic conflict and unpredictable parenting from parents who are dependant on drugs for mitigating the impact of their mental health difficulties and social isolation.  Whilst it is clear that both parents love and adore Harry, often referring to him as their ‘little wizard’, sadly love is not enough to meet this little boys day-day care needs. It is also unclear what regular support the parents are able to benefit from provided by Jules Snape and Estelle Potter.  Furthermore, the referrals and signposting that has been implemented by the Local Authority has not been effective because parents have refused to consistently engage in the same. |

### **3.3 The child/ren’s wishes and feelings and how these have been identified (please include the child/ren’s own statement, where age appropriate)**

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| Harry Potter is a little boy of just 2 yrs of age. He is not yet capable of voicing his own wishes and feelings in a meaningful way. If he could it is assumed that he would want to be raised in a loving household where his needs were being met on a daily basis and he was able to reach his maximum potential, as he deserves. |

### **3.4 The child/ren’s participation in the court case.**

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| Within these care proceedings, Harry will have the benefit of a Children’s Guardian and a solicitor who will advocate on his behalf. |

## **4. Analysis of the evidence of parenting capability**

### **4.1 Summary of work previously undertaken with child/ren and the family that has led to these proceedings e.g. pre-proceedings or convening a family group conference (or similar).**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Organisation** | **Description of assessment/intervention** | **Outcome and effectiveness** |
| 15/5/24 | A Local Authority | Child Protection Plan | Ineffective |
| August 2024 | A Local Authority | PLO procedure | Ineffective |
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| **Mother** |
| Lily James is a young mother of 22 years of age. Harry is her first child. Mrs Potter was a child in care herself having been volunteered into care under s.20 by her own mother when she was 14 due to her difficult and challenging behaviour, which often caused her to be beyond parental control.  Mrs Potter has had very poor role models in her life having seen domestic abuse between her parents in her younger years, before her mother fled seeking refuge. Her own experience of being parented is one of considerable turmoil, unpredictability and a lack of consistency.  Unfortunately due to her unwillingness to fully open up about her childhood it is difficult to capture a full understanding of her own lived experiences beyond this.  At the age of 18, Mrs Potter was diagnosed with having an emotionally unstable personality disorder due to frequent outbursts within her foster care placement, education setting and within social situations and inter-personal relationships, which had been a feature of her life for some years prior to this diagnosis being made.  Lily Potter is often said to be someone who can go from 0-100 in a matter of moments and her change in mood can often come without forewarning. This is not something that Mrs Potter currently receives any medication or therapeutic support for and is likely to significantly impact her day-day functioning.  In 2021 Mrs Lily Potter met Mr James Potter and the couple were engaged and married within just 4 months of knowing each other. Lily Potter describes James as being perfect for her as he calms her down, understands her and that it was ‘love at first sight’.  A frustration for the Local Authority has been that it has been difficult to gain a true understanding of her parenting capacity due to her disengagement and the impact this has had on completing a parenting assessment prior to the issue of these proceedings. However, based on the Local Authority’s observations to date, Ms Potter’s diagnosis, her maintenance of an unhealthy relationship, her failure to address substance misuse and her poor engagement, it is very unlikely that she has the capacity to consistently meet Harry’s needs, particularly as he grows and develops through ages and stages.  The Local Authority has tried to assist Mrs Potter by referring her to Recovery to address substance misuse issues, by offering her and Mr Potter direct work on Healthy Relationships and by trying to engage her in a better understanding of her mental health difficulties. However, the support provided has not been accessed or followed through on and this has left the Local Authority gravely concerned for Harry’s day-day welfare such that it cannot support Harry continuing to remain in parental care at this time. |
| **Father** |
| James Potter is 25 years of age and Harry is his first child. Mr Potter was not known to the Local Authority prior to the initial referral that started our involvement with Harry.  Mr Potter can present as rude and arrogant towards professionals and his mood can be interchangeable. At rare times he can appear pleasant and engaging but more often he presents as quite hostile.  Mr Potter accepts that he suffers with anxiety and depression, and has done ever since the sad loss of his father when he was just 16. This is not, however, something that he receives medication or talking therapies for.  Mr Potter minimises the conflict in the parents’ relationship, often stating that all couples argue and denies that the anonymous reports of loud shouting/screaming whilst Harry is heard crying are accurate.  Mr Potter has been referred to Recovery and advised that he needs to address his use of substances due to the potential impact this could have on his mental health and moods but has not consistently accessed this support. He has also refused to engage in direct work on what it means to be in a healthy relationship.  Mr Potter describes himself as a ‘hands on’ father given neither he nor Mrs Potter work and that he is always around at home to help with Harry’s day to day cares. He does not, however, accept that Harry has been seen to present in ill-fitting and unsuitable clothing nor that he has been observed to be grubby.  As with Mrs Potter, the Local Authority have found it difficult to engage Mr Potter in meaningful assessment or discussion and, as asserted above his recent decline in engagement with the allocated worker has left social care extremely concerned for Harry’s immediate welfare. |
| **Other members of the household and/or person(s) with parental responsibility** |
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## **5. Analysis of the evidence of wider family and friends’ capability as alternative carers for the child/ren**

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| As aforementioned, both Jules Snape, Maternal Grandmother and Estelle Potter,  Paternal grandmother have been approached to see if they are able to offer long  term care to Harry.  Jules Snape has been inconsistent with the sharing of her views, on the one hand telling the Local Authority within PLO meetings (which she attends as support for the mother) that she would do anything for Harry and on the other hand not responding to requests for appointments for her to be assessed. At the current time the role she can play appears unclear.  Estelle Potter has a number of previous convictions for historic dishonesty offences and is well known to the police. She has been vocal in her support for the parents and is not considered likely to be a protective factor for Harry. The Local Authority do not consider she would be a viable carer for Harry Potter in all of the circumstances. |

## **6. The proposed S31A interim care plan – the ‘realistic options’ analysis**

### **6.1 Options considered for the placement. Please have regard to the following:**

**Realistic options**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Long-term placement options explored** | **Is this option realistic and viable or has it been discounted?** | **Reason(s) why it is viable or why it has been discounted?** |
| Remain with parents | This option has been discounted. | This option has been discounted for the reasons set out within this statement. Should Harry remain in parental care he will experience inconsistent and unpredictable care which will cause him to suffer neglect and to be at risk of physical and emotional harm. |
| Placement with a family member | This option has been discounted. | This option has been discounted as there are no family members willing and positively assessed to care for Harry. Both of Harry’s grandmothers are local to where he lives and neither have stepped up to safeguard him from the risks identified by the Local Authority and neither have they be consistent in expressing a wish to care for him and be assessed to do so. The Local Authority is aware that Ms Potter has convictions for dishonesty offences and is unlikely to be a suitable carer in all of the circumstances. |
| Placement in a residential unit. | This option has been considered and discounted. | This option is not considered suitable as proving a realistic setting in which to asses the parents capabilities. Thus type of assessment would not provide the Local Authority and the court with the type of meaningful assessment required to establish if parents can address the concerns within the community. |
| Placement in foster care | This option is realistic and viable subject to identifying an available placement | This option would secure Harry’s immediate safety and provide him with stability, nature and meet his day-day needs whilst plans are made for his long term future. This is considered the best and safest option for Harry at this time pending further assessment. |
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### **6.2 The preferred and proposed placement option for the child or each individual child if part of a sibling group**

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| The Local Authority’s preferred option is for Harry to be placed in foster care.  This placement would ensure he is provided with stability and safety whilst further assessment is undertaken of his parents.  It is felt necessary to place Harry in a place of safety at this time because of the risks posed by the parents. A continued placement with parents would mean the Local Authority still failing to be able to access Harry to ensure his welfare needs are being met due to parents’ non-engagement with services. Their inability to work openly and honestly with professionals remains a significant concern at this time and it is unclear as to what else may be going on in the household that we are unaware of given the poor engagement of late.  A placement with any other family member is not a viable option at this stage either and therefore sadly the only realistic viable option left is that of foster care at this time whilst parallel planning is undertaken for his future.  Given the likely standard of parenting Harry has received in short life thus far it is probably the case that he will experience only positive benefits from being removed from his parents so that his day-day needs can be adequately met and he can be safe.  Harry will continue to have regular contact with parents to ensure their relationship is maintained. |

### **6.3 Summary of diversity and cultural considerations**

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| Harry is a white British child who has lived with his parents for all of his short life.  Harry’s parents are not known to follow any particular faith and he has not been raised in any particular faith.  The Local Authority will continue searching for a culturally appropriate foster care placement. |

### **6.4 Summary of any health, wellbeing and educational considerations**

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| Harry does not attend any nursery provision and remains with is parents on a full-time basis.  Once a placement has been secured it is planned that he will be enrolled in a local suitable nursery to ensure his needs for socialisation and stimulation are met. |

## **7. Family time/ the plan for contact**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Child** | **Who contact is with and relationship to the child** | **Frequency and duration** | **Level of support/ supervision required** | **Brief rationale for the level of contact proposed** |
| Harry Potter | Both parents | X2 per week for 90 minutes | Supervised within a contact centre | This level of contact will ensure Harry’s needs to maintain a relationship with his parents are met. |
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## **8. The range of views of parties and significant others**

### **8.1 Mother’s views**

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| Mrs Lily Potter would like Harry to remain in her care and strongly disagrees that he should be removed into foster care. Mrs Potter states that with some support she and James can care for Harry and becomes very irate and hostile when the subject of removal is discussed with her.  In the alternative, Mrs Potter would like Harry to be placed into the care of either Estelle Potter or Jules Snape or to share care with them. She has also said she would enter into any other form of placement such as a mother and baby placement and would abide by any orders made to keep him. |

### **8.2 Father’s views**

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| Mr James Potter supports the views and feelings hatred by Mrs Potter. He says he would also abide by any orders and undergo any assessments/engage with any services required, albeit this has not been the case to date. Mr Potter would also support either if Harry’s grandmother’s as either carers or support/live in support for him and mother. |

### **8.3 Views of anyone else holding parental responsibility or wider family members**

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| --- |
| N/A |

### **8.4 Views of other parties or significant others**

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| Harry’s IRO is Draco Malfoy.  Mr Malfoy has expressed the view at a recent meeting that he is making a recommendation for care proceedings to be initiated due to the lack of engagement and the concerns. He is in full support of the Local Authority’s application due to the concerns raised regarding parental care.  Child Protection chair, Dolores Umbridge has said on 10th March 2025 that she is concerned at the lack of meaningful engagement of the parents throughout the PLO process and that no sustained change has been achieved. |

## **9. Case management issues and proposals**

### **9.1 Record case management issues here alongside details of any further proposed assessments**

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| A full viability of both maternal and paternal grandmother needs to be urgently undertaken.  A full parenting assessment will be undertaken of both parents. This is likely to be using PAMS type tools due to the concerns around the cognitive functioning of both parents  A psychological assessment may be needed of Lily Potter given her diagnosis and presentation. |

### **9.2 Significant events happening in the near future which are relevant for the child**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Event e.g. transitioning from primary to secondary school** | **Source of evidence/document reference** | **Significance** |
| None known of |  |  |  |
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## **10. Statement of procedural fairness**

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| The Local Authority’s concerns have been fully communicated with both parents throughout the PLO process. Both parents have appeared to understand what those concerns have been when they have engaged, albeit they have not always agreed with them.  Both parents have been verbally notified that this application is being made on an urgent basis and have been advised to seek legal advice. |

## **11.** **The welfare checklist in full for reference**

The full Children Act checklist, to be used in care and supervision proceedings is found at section 1(3) (a) – (g) and requires the court to have regard to the following matters:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a) | The ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child/children concerned (considered in the light of their age and understanding); |
| b) | Their physical, emotional and educational needs; |
| c) | The likely effect on them of any change in his/her/their circumstances; |
| d) | Their age, sex, background and any characteristics of his/hers/theirs which the court considers relevant; |
| e) | Any harm which they have suffered or are at risk of suffering; |
| f) | How capable each of their parents, and any other person in relation to whom the court considers the question to be relevant, is of meeting his/her/their needs; |
| g) | The range of powers available to the court under this Act (Children Act 1989) in the proceedings in question. |

25. The full Adoption and Children Act welfare checklist, to be used in care proceedings where the plan is for adoption and in placement proceedings, is found in section 1 (4) (a) – (f) and requires the court and the adoption agency to have regard to the following matters (among others):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a) | the child’s ascertainable wishes and feelings regarding the decision (considered in the light of the child’s age and understanding); |
| b) | the child’s particular needs; |
| c) | the likely effect on the child (throughout theirlife) of having ceased to be a member of the original family and become an adopted person; |
| d) | the child’s age, sex, background and any of the child’s characteristics which the court or agency considers relevant; |
| e) | any harm (within the meaning of the Children Act 1989 (c. 41)) which the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering; |
| f) | the relationship which the child has with relatives, and with any other person in relation to whom the court or agency considers the relationship to be relevant, including:   1. the likelihood of any such relationship continuing and the value of the child of its doing so, 2. the ability and willingness of any of the child’s relatives, or of any such person, to provide the child with a secure environment in which the child can develop, and otherwise to meet the child’s needs, 3. the wishes and feelings of any of the child’s relatives, or of any such person, regarding the child. |