



2. The application has been referred to Justices' Legal Advisor [ ] and a DJ/HHJ [ ] for allocation and directions upon issue and the court has considered the papers in the absence of the parties or their legal representatives.

THE COURT ORDERS:

3. The case is allocated to the following level: [Magistrates / District Judge / Circuit Judge]. The reason for allocation to this tier is:  
[give reasons]
4. The named allocated Judge for case management may be a different level to the allocation level.
5. The named allocated Judge is [HHJ] / DJ /Legal Advisor  
[[Please ensure that the named Judge's details are entered on the FPL portal.]
6. The case is listed for:
  - a. A contested hearing [attended/remote using MS Teams at West London Family Court / Barnet Family Court / Royal Courts of Justice] on [ ] at [ ] before [ ] with a time estimate of [ ]. Parties and representatives shall attend one hour in advance for discussions and negotiation.  
[Time for service is abridged]
  - b. A CMH at [West London Family Court / Barnet Family Court / Royal Courts of Justice] before [ ] on [ ] (between day 12 and day 18) with a time estimate of [1 hour / 90 minutes] (suggested time estimate for Judges is 1 hour for a CMH, 90 minutes for combined CMH and contested ICO hearing).
  - c. In the event that the hearing is listed as a floating hearing, the parties must ensure that they are available to be called on at any time during the court day.
  - d. The local authority must provide the court with the contact details for all participants by 11am the working day before any remote hearing.
7. The local authority must submit an electronic bundle compliant with the General Guidance on electronic court bundles of 29 November 2021. An up to date bundle must be submitted via the FPL portal by no later than 11am the working day before the next hearing(s).
8. All documents and applications must be submitted to the court via the FPL portal. Documents emailed or sent directly to the court will not be considered.

9. The solicitors for each party must ensure that any barrister or solicitor advocate that they instruct for any hearing has been provided with access to the case on the FPL portal.
10. A Children's Guardian shall be appointed for the child/ren.
11. The local authority shall serve on all parties by noon on the next working day after the date of these directions the Application Form and List of Annex Documents filed with the court.
12. The solicitor for the child/ren shall arrange an Advocates' Meeting no later than 3 working days before the CMH. The following shall apply:
  - a. Any party that intends to make a Part 25 application should have the relevant information (CV, timescales, costs) about their proposed expert(s) available for discussion at the Advocates' Meeting.
  - b. The parents' representatives must provide at the Advocates' Meeting the details of any alternative carers that are being proposed.
13. The local authority shall file and serve its Case Summary in the form directed by the Designated Family Judge by 11.00am two working days prior to the date of the CMH. The Case Summary shall include the following:
  - a. The proposed draft CMO completed on the West London CMO template
  - b. Details of its proposals for assessments of the parent(s) and any nominated carers that have been brought to the local authority's attention
  - c. Confirmation of whether a Family Group Conference has been held. If not, the reasons why and the date when it will take place
  - d. Details of what steps have been made to identify and engage with any putative father(s) and what further steps are proposed, if any
  - e. Details of what steps have been made to identify extended family members who may need to be considered for assessment as alternative carers.
14. The child/ren's solicitor shall file and serve a Case Analysis document prepared by the children's guardian or a detailed position statement for use at the CMH by 11.00am on the working day prior to the date of the CMH.
15. The parents must file and serve by 11am the working day prior to the date of the CMH a position statement including:
  - a. confirmation of the identity and contact details of any family member or friends they seek to be assessed as carers for the child/ren in the short term or the long term;
  - b. whether there is any doubt about paternity in relation to the child/ren;
  - c. their proposals for who should care for the child/ren;
  - d. their proposals for assessment.
16. The parents shall each file and serve a full response to threshold no more than 15 working days from issue. This document shall have a statement of truth and must set out:
  - a. whether they agree to the facts set out in the threshold document

- b. [If inflicted injury is alleged] Whether they accept the child's injuries were inflicted; how they were caused; who they consider was responsible; and a history of their involvement with their child around the time period of the injuries being discovered]

**In the event that a full response to the threshold criteria is not filed as directed, the court may determine that the threshold has been met.**

17. The parents must be present at the CMH. All advocates must attend court with their clients unless permission has been given by the judge/court for remote attendance.

18. If a copy of the birth certificate has not already been filed, the party with possession of the birth certificate must file a copy by 11am on the working day before the CMH.

19. [If the threshold criteria as pleaded is not *Re A* compliant – ]

The Threshold filed by the local authority should be redrafted before the CMH and circulated to the parties to ensure it:

- (a) sets out the facts the Applicant intends to prove, together with bundle references
- (b) explains how these facts prove a child is experiencing or is at risk of significant harm]

20. [If there is a putative father without parental responsibility – ]

In the event that all parties agree and the putative father has solicitors on the record, there is permission for the local authority to send a copy of the papers in the case to that putative father in advance of the CMH.

21. [If there is a jurisdiction issue: -]

There is an issue as to jurisdiction in respect of the child/ren and consideration needs to be given to this issue by the parties as a matter of urgency; and

- (i) The local authority shall liaise with the [*identify country*] Consular authority in England and Wales or other competent authority in that state in relation to the proceedings or make a request to the Central Authority of that country for such information as may be relevant to determine issues of jurisdiction.
- (ii) In the event that the making of such an enquiry may risk the safety of any of the parties to the proceedings or their relatives, then the local authority shall not liaise or make such request but must provide to the court an explanation at the CMH.
- (iii) Unless any concern has been raised in relation to (ii) above, a representative of the Consular Authority is invited to attend court for all future hearings. The local authority shall inform the Consular Authority of this invitation.

22. An interpreter/s will be booked by the CTSC (FPL administration team) to attend court for the CMH and at all future hearings. The language required and party requiring the interpreter is as follows:

- a. [language] for [party]

23. The Governor of HMP [ ] is required to produce in person/for a remote hearing [ name ] prison number [ ] at [ ] on [ ].

24. In the event that the local authority has not already made a police protocol request pre-proceedings, it must make a protocol request for any police disclosure it seeks within 7 days.
25. The representative of any party seeking disclosure from any agency shall inform the other parties and shall obtain any available consent to such disclosure and if necessary shall file and serve an application for disclosure by 11.00am on the working day prior to the date of the CMH.
26. Any party who seeks the instruction of an expert must file and serve an application (C2 and Part 25 Notice) by 11.00am on the working day prior to the date of the CMH.
27. No document other than a document specified in these directions or in accordance with the Rules or the Practice Direction shall be filed by any party without the court's permission.
28. **If this order is not complied with the CMH may be put back or adjourned to ensure compliance and costs orders may be considered**