

Cleveland and South Durham: Public Law – Case Management Checklist (Aug 2025)

Standard directions on issue	
Have all standard directions been complied with? If not, why not? Has a birth certificate been filed? If not, direct filing. If the parents have not filed a parental response document to include a response to threshold, it is unlikely that the CMH will be effective. Costs consequences may follow.	
Wider Family	
Has a genogram and/or ecomap been prepared? Has a Family Group Conference taken place? If not, why not and when will it be arranged? Are there any issues in respect of paternity? If so: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from mother as to who is/ may be the father. • Consider DNA testing with formal Part 25 to follow. Has any other person with PR been notified of the hearing? Does the Court need to consider HMRC/DWP Order to locate a parent?	
Subject child meeting Judge	
Has consideration been given to whether the child should have the opportunity of meeting the Judge? If a meeting is to take place, liaise with listing to ensure that the final hearing is listed before a full time Judge, with the meeting put in their judicial diary.	
Alternative carers	
Have parents identified alternative carers? If not, direct parents to identify best alternative carers in order or priority. Has the LA undertaken viability assessments pre-proceedings? If not, direct VA within 14 days but limit number in order of identified priority. Ensure that the nature of any full assessment is identified (SGO/connected carer) and timetabled, including as being contingent upon positive VA.	
Assessments	
Has assessment of parent/s been undertaken pre-proceedings? If so, a new assessment will not be directed but an updating assessment may be required (can this be included within final evidence?) If not, WHY NOT? Has the type of assessment been considered (PAMS/Parent Assess) Is Together or Apart assessment (sibling assessment) required? If so, direct.	
International Assessment	
Who is to undertake? Timescales? If appropriate, have relevant permissions been obtained from the foreign authority? Direct LA to liaise with ICACU in respect of proposed assessments, with timescales. Has thought been given to subject of assessment travelling to UK? Can VA be undertaken remotely?	
Part 25 applications	
Is the proposed assessment necessary for a just resolution to the proceedings? Just because it is agreed/unopposed does not mean that it is necessary. If the application is for cognitive/intermediary assessment, has the application included an evidence-based statement in support as to necessity? See here for President's Guidance If a treating clinician is being advanced as expert opinion evidence, have they agreed? If expert medical evidence is being approved from a number of specialities, ensure that there is provision for an experts meeting, with a list of questions produced in advance (timetabled) and chaired by an appropriate individual.	
Disclosure	
Has the LA invoked the relevant protocol? If not, why not? We should be reducing the number of TPDOs against the police if the protocol is being properly followed. If TPDO required, then separate Order with provision for any application to discharge/vary, including on basis of PII, to include permission for any such hearing to be attended remotely. NOTE: is the police disclosure necessary and proportionate to the issues the Court need to resolve the case? If it is, consider the extent of the disclosure required and whether it can be limited.	

<p>Are medical records required? If so, consider TPDO. Do the medical records need to be disclosed to all parties/intervenors?</p> <p>If there are previous proceedings, timetable consideration of index for disclosure of relevant documents into current proceedings. If different parties involved, has permission been obtained?</p> <p>Have other agencies been involved with the family (substance/DA etc). If so, should that evidence be disclosed?</p> <p>NOTE: whatever disclosure is being directed, ensure that it is timetabled and that it is clear to whom the documents will be disclosed to and how it will be collated.</p>	
<p>Threshold</p>	
<p>Is there a <i>Re A</i> compliant schedule of findings? If not, direct within 14 days.</p> <p>Have the LA filed the evidence in support of the findings it seeks? If not, direct.</p> <p>Have the parents responded? If not, direct within 14 days</p> <p>If directing a further schedule, ensure that you include a response to that further schedule.</p> <p>Have findings been made in previous proceedings? Are they sufficient?</p> <p>Is threshold in issue in principle? If not, record on Order that it is not.</p> <p>Direct final schedule of threshold/welfare findings from LA following final evidence (7 days) with responses from parents as part of final evidence. Warning to be included as to consequences of failure of parents to provide responses.</p>	
<p>Evidence</p>	
<p>Has the LA filed any <i>Re N</i> delay statement? If appropriate, direct (14 days).</p> <p>If the case involves allegations of NAI/sexual assault, establish whether any party is putting a positive case against a 3rd party. Consider directions to intervene. Do the parties/intervenors need to file early narrative statements? NOTE: Please consider carefully any suggestion that narrative statements ought to await police disclosure. The earlier the narrative is produced the better the recollection. Awaiting police disclosure may create unnecessary delay.</p> <p>The following timetable should be considered standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA final evidence to be filed (SW statement/Final Care Plans) no later than 14 days after substantive assessments have been directed. • The LA should file any final threshold/welfare findings no later than 7 days thereafter. • The parents should file their final evidence in response no later than 7 days thereafter (14 days after final evidence produced) <p>NOTE: are there issues in respect of translation of documents? That will need to be accounted for within the timetable and funding of translation considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children's Guardian should file 7 days thereafter 	
<p>Placement Directions</p>	
<p>Is the LA considering adoption as a potential outcome? If so, record in the CMO.</p> <p>If so, ensure that placement directions are contained within the Order to accommodate ADM decision making.</p>	
<p>Timetable for proceedings</p>	
<p>Is a separate fact-finding hearing necessary, rather than dealing with disputed facts within a composite hearing?</p> <p>If so, ensure that appropriate directions are given for the filing of relevant evidence. Ensure that a welfare hearing is still listed.</p> <p>List the case for IRH two weeks before the Final Hearing.</p> <p>Direct a proposed case plan and witness template in advance of the IRH (can be included with the case summary)</p> <p>Direct a case summary no later than 4pm on the day before IRH.</p> <p>List the final hearing within 26 weeks. Most hearings can be listed for 2 or 3 days. If a hearing is sought for 5 days or over, consult with DFJ. NOTE1: Do not find a date and timetable backwards. Many cases are suitable to list well <u>within</u> 26 weeks. NOTE2: Given we list to FH within 26 weeks, it becomes difficult to find time if an application is then made late on in the proceedings to extend. The parties should be aware that the expectation is that the FH will be effective and any application to extend will be rigorously scrutinised at a listed hearing.</p>	