

Guidance for Assessment of Contact / Family Time Arrangements

Parents/Visiting Adults Factors

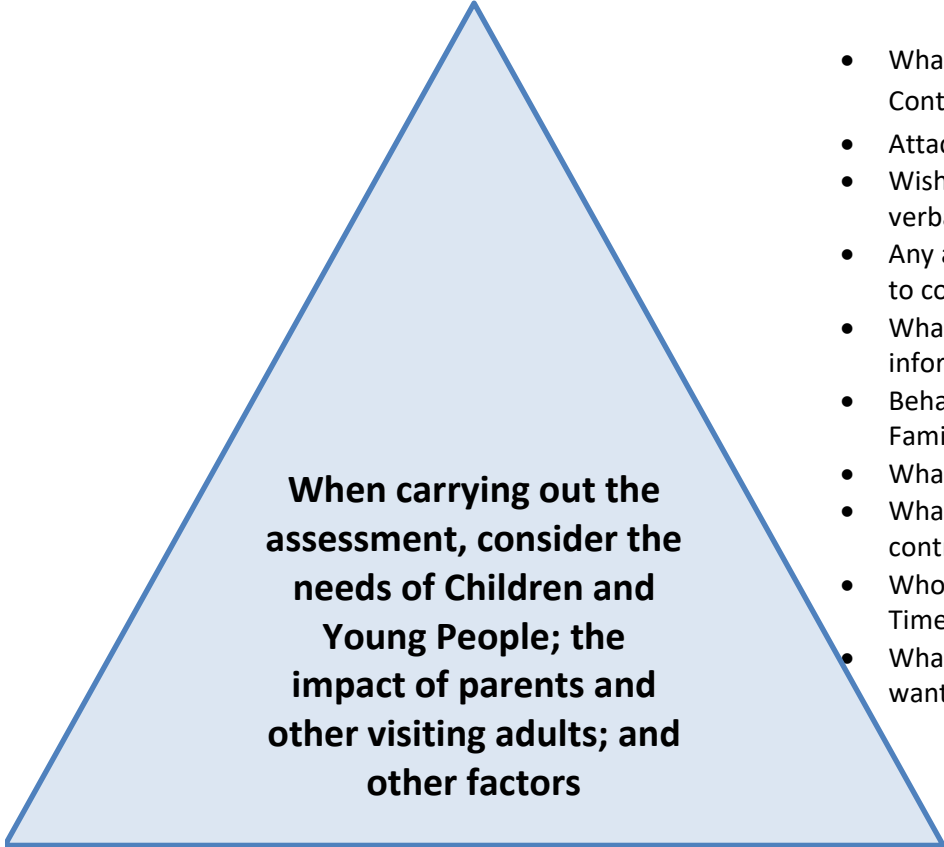
- Have the parents or adults made any positive or negative changes since the children have been removed? (*e.g. ending a relationship*)
- What is the parents 'or adults' understanding of concerns and attitude to children being looked after; have they used supervised sessions to discuss these with the child (inappropriately or appropriately)?

Risk assessment and effects on parenting towards these or any other child:

- Risk of physical, sexual, neglect and emotional abuse (including domestic violence)
- Any mental health issues or disabilities
- History of alcohol or drug misuse (including presentation when seeing the children)
- Risk of abduction
- Is there a history of violent or aggressive behaviour? Is a supervisor at risk?
- Parent's ability to prioritise the children's needs above their own?
- Parents' understanding of concerns and any engagement history

Children/Young People

- What does the child enjoy doing in Contact / Family Time and where?
- Attachment history
- Wishes and feelings (non-verbal and verbal communication)
- Any additional health needs or disabilities to consider?
- What does the research base say to inform the assessment of contact?
- Behaviour before and after any contact / Family time that has taken place
- What is the care plan for the child(ren)
- What can a Family Group Conference contribute to the plan?
- Who does the child want Contact / Family Time with?
- What does the child or young person want to call Contact / Family Time?



When carrying out the assessment, consider the needs of Children and Young People; the impact of parents and other visiting adults; and other factors

Other Factors

- What is an appropriate venue for Contact / Family Time? Carer's home?
- Is a ringing in or early system required?(timekeeping & reliability)
- Can sessions be supervised by a Carer, have the carers been appropriately trained?
- Can sessions be supervised by a family member?
- Can sessions be 'facilitated' within a contact centre? (e.g. part-supported)
- What needs to be included in an agreement?
- If there is insufficient confidence to move immediately to fully unsupervised, set out what the concerns are and share these with the parents / adults.
- What would need to happen for sessions to be unsupervised and what are the timescales for this?
- What is the role of the supervisor within supervised sessions?

Adapted from Contact in Adoption Assessment

In addition to the factors considered in the assessment triangle above, once contact has taken place, any further assessment and analysis should also include what has been learnt from the contact:

- Provide a summary of the key points from the recording of supervised Contact / Family Time to include:
- Impact on the child or young person;
- Parental or adult behaviour and engagement;
- Suitability of the location;
- Was the frequency and the duration right for the child or young person;
- Was the agreement kept to by the parents / adults;
- Did the arrangements work well?

The proposal for contact arrangements should cover the following:

- Frequency and duration
- Who the child or young person will have contact with
- Location
- Suggested activity
- Whether the sessions should be supervised, facilitated and by whom, or unsupervised
- What needs to be included in an agreement
- How frequently the arrangements should be reviewed