**The Life Story Book**

**of**

**Name of Child**

Most recent photo of child

or child’s favourite photo

**Section 1:**

**Introduction**

This is your story book. You are ? years old when this book is being written.

You are a very happy, active and adventurous little girl.

You have big blue eyes, long blonde hair and you are slim but quite tall for your age. You like your hair tied up in bunches with pink bobbles.

Your favourite colours are pink and purple.

Your favourite foods are yogurt and banana.

Your favourite hobbies are running, swimming, singing, dancing and playing with your friends. You like going to the park and playing on the swing and the climbing frame.

**Section 2:**

**What Does Being A**

**“Looked After Child” Mean?**

Being a “Looked After Child” means that you are not able to live with your birth family and you live with foster carers instead.

There are many different reasons why you, and lots of other children, are not able to live with their birth family. For example, some parents became too ill or have died. Some parents have personal issues which affect their ability to care for their children and keep them safe.

Some parents are unable or unwilling to change their lifestyles to meet the needs of their children. Some parents are unable to learn better ways of looking after their children in order to keep them safe.

The reasons why you became a Looked After Child will be explained in Section 5.

Social workers become involved when there are worries about children’s safety and how they are being cared for by their own family. Social workers and other professionals do everything they can to help the family to get better. The birth family is given a lot of help to learn to look after their children and keep their children safe.

Social workers will carry out assessments. This means that they will talk to parents, family members and other professionals like teachers and doctors to find out about how the children are being cared for at home. Some of these assessments also help social workers to decide whether the birth family are willing to learn better ways to look after the children and what progress they have made to keep the children safe.

If the result of the assessments show that the birth family cannot keep the children safe, social workers will make plans for the children to be looked after by someone else.

Social workers always ask birth parents if there are any family or friends who could look after the children in the first place. If there is no family or no friends who are suitable to look after the child, then the child will be placed in foster care.

Usually, when a child is placed in a foster placement and being looked after by foster carers, he/she becomes a Looked After Child.

**Section 3:**

**The Beginning**

Photo of the hospital where the child was born

Photo of the child when born

You were born on date at time at name of the hospital.

You weighed?

You were born at gestational weeks by normal delivery/ caesarean section (delete as appropriate).

Name was the first person to hold you.

This was birth mum’s name’s first pregnancy? gave you your first feed when you were about ? hours old. You were bottle/breast (delete as appropriate) fed.

You were born on date of the week and the weather was sunny/raining/cold/ snowing (delete as appropriate) when you were born.

Child’s name. Who chose it? Any specific meaning of it? You can find out more information from [www.babynames.co.uk](http://www.babynames.co.uk) or www.babynamesworld.parentsconnect.com

Who registered the child’s birth? (you can find this at the bottom of the birth certificate)

**Your Birth Certificate**

Insert copy of the birth certificate

**Section 4:**

**Your Birth Family & Significant People in Your Life**

Photo of birth mother

You birth mum is called mum’s name. She was born on date of mum’s birth. She was age of mum years old when she gave birth to you.

Describe mum’s physical appearance.

Describe mum’s personalities, likes and dislikes and favourite hobbies.

A brief personal history of mum i.e. childhood, school, achievements, employment and health etc.

Photo of birth father

You birth dad is called dad’s name. He was born on date of dad’s birth. He was age of dad years old when you were born.

Describe dad’s physical appearance.

Describe dad’s personalities, likes and dislikes and favourite hobbies.

A brief personal history of dad’s i.e. childhood, school, achievements, employment and health etc.

Your Parents’ Story

Describe how the parents met, what they like about each other, and their relationship etc.

Your Sibling(s):

Photo of

Siblings

1. Names and Date of birth of all full siblings, half-siblings, and step-siblings.
2. How did they get on with the child i.e. close relationship etc
3. Where these siblings are and contact arrangements

Your Extended Families:

Using the genogram, help the child to know his/ her extended families. i.e. names of extended families and relationship with the child. Did they come forward to look after the child? For examples, grandma, granddad, uncles, aunties, cousins etc.

Significant people in your life when you lived with your birth parent(s):

Help the child to remember all the significant people in the child’s life e.g. names of favourite teachers, close neighbours, favourite contact worker, social workers, teaching assistants, foster carers etc.

If possible, try to quote these people and the good things they say about the child.

**Family Tree**

**Insert text boxes and type in the names**

**(Click Insert – Click Text Box – Click Draw Text Box – Drag + to where you want the text box to be – Start drawing)**

**Section 5:**

**The Day When You Came Into Care**

Please refer to the Guidance and Notes: A Life Story Book 2015 p.3-p.14 for details and examples.

**Section 6:**

**Your life in foster care**

Help the child to remember their life in foster care. If a child had more than one placement, it’s very important not to make the child feels that they or their behaviours are the only reasons why they had to be moved. We must try to give a more balanced view.

(Try to include contact arrangements as appropriate)

**Section 7: Your Health, Wellbeing and Identity**

For health, tell the child about their health in general. To make it more interesting, you can include appointments for hospital, GPs and dentists, pictures of new glasses, braces, a plaster cast. You can include allergies and medications taken and any special diet requirements.

For wellbeing, record some of the conversation you had with the child i.e. how they see themselves, their ideas of being in care, what do they want now or what they want to achieve in the future and ideas about who can help the child to achieve.

You can include the child’s religious belief in their section also. You can include a picture of the church or mosque the child attends, or the child’s favourite prayer etc

You can also include the child’s sexuality or disability if appropriate.**Section 8: Your Education**

Which playgroups, nurseries, schools, colleges and universities the child/young person went to?

What were their favourite subjects?

Who were their favourite persons?

What were their favourite activities?

Any special memories?

Any special achievements?

Photos if possible**Section 9:**

**Special Places for You**

To include any places that hold special memories for the children including their family home.

It can be holiday destinations, playgrounds, family and friends’ home, McDonald’s, a church, Children’s Centre, leisure centre, swimming pool etc.

**Section 10:**

**Special Occasions**

You can tell the child about birthdays, school plays, sleepovers, holidays, weddings, awards ceremony, concerts etc **Section 11:**

**Professionals involved in your life**

**(Delete worker as appropriate)**

**Childcare Social Worker:**

It is your childcare social worker’s job to make sure you are safe, happy and well cared for. Your social worker visits you at least once a month either at your family home, your foster carer’s home, at school or other places that are suitable.



Photo no……

SW Photo

Your childcare social worker was called name of the child’s social worker. He/She worked for name of the council/agency.

He/She described you as add description from the worker

Add a photo of the social worker

**Fostering Social Worker:**

A fostering social worker’s job is to make sure that your foster carers are looking after you and meeting your needs. Like your childcare social worker, your fostering social worker may ask to see you and speak to you to find out if you are happy in your foster placement and if you need any help.

Name of the fostering social worker was your foster carers’ social worker. Name of worker described you as description from the worker about the child.



Photo no……

FSW Photo

Add a photo of the fostering social worker

**Adoption Social Worker:**

It is an Adoption Social Worker’s job to find the best parents for you. He/She looks at information about lots of people who wanted to be adoptive parents for you. He/She worked with your childcare social worker; they tried really hard to choose the people they thought would look after you, love you, meet your needs and support you throughout your life.



Photo no……

ASW Photo

Name of the adoption social worker is your adoption social worker. Name of worker describes you as description from the worker about the child.



Photo no……

FSW Photo

Photo of Adoption Social Worker

**Children’s Guardian:**

The Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) appointed a guardian for you. CAFCASS do not work for the council and your guardian’s job was to tell the Judge what you wanted to happen. He/She met you and all the people who look after you including your birth parents, your social workers and your foster carers. He/She then told the Judge what he/she thought was best for you.

Name of the Guardian was your Guardian. Name of worker described you as description from the worker about the child.



Photo no……

FSW Photo

Photo of Guardian

**Children’s Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer (CISRO):**

All Looked After Children have their own CISRO. A CISRO is a very knowledgeable and experienced social worker who chairs Looked After Children Reviews every 6 months. Usually, a Looked After Child has the same CISRO throughout their time in care. A CISRO reads the care plan that your childcare social worker has written for you. He/She makes sure that all professionals including your foster carers work towards your care plan. A part of a CISRO’s job is to visit you and listen to you. He/She can disagree with a childcare social worker’s care plan for a child.



Photo no……

1. CISR

O Photo

Name of the CISRO was your CISRO. Name of worker described you as description from the worker about the child.



Photo no……

FSW Photo

Photo of CISRO

**Contact Worker:**

A contact worker is a person who supervises contacts between children and their birth families while a Judge is deciding the future of the child. A contact worker’s job is to make sure that children are safe during contacts.



Pho to no……

Contact Supervisor Photo

Name of the contact worker was your contact worker. Name of worker described you as description from the worker about the child.



Photo no……

FSW Photo

Photo of Contact worker

**Judge:**

The person who made the final decision about your care plan is called a Judge. He/She reads all reports written by different professionals. He/She listened to everybody including your birth families, your social worker, your Guardian before he/she made a decision for your future.

The Judge in your case is called name of judge. After reading all the reports and speaking to all the professionals, the Judge decided that you should (delete as appropriate)

**Return home.**

The Judge agreed that your parents had made enough changes to their lives to keep you safe and look after you. The Judge decided that you should return home to live with your parents on date of the hearing. He discharged all Care Orders on you. You returned home to live with your parents on date.

**Return home under a Care Order.**

The Judge agreed that your parents had made some changes to their lives to keep you safe and look after you. The Judge wanted to keep your family together and decided that you should return home to live with your parents under some conditions.

These conditions are a brief description of the conditions. You remain in care and your social worker will continue to visit you and work with your parents to keep you safe.

**Remain in the care of the local authority.**

The Judge decided that in order to keep you safe, you should not return to live with your parents. The Judge granted a Care Order for you to remain in the care of the local authority. You will continue to live in foster care.

**Be granted a Special Guardianship Order/ Child Arrangement Order (delete as appropriate)**

The Judge decided that in order to keep you safe, you should not return to live with your parents. The Judge granted a Special Guardianship Order/ Child Arrangement Order for you to live with name of carers. You went to/ continue to live with name of carers on date.

**Be granted of a Placement Order**

The Judge decided that in order to keep you safe, you should not return to live with your parents. The Judge agreed with the professionals that you should have a new family to love you and care for you. The Judge granted you a Placement Order.

Photo of Judge

**Section 12:**

You need to tell the child what the Judge said. Please choose from the following options. Please try to explain to the child what happened after the Judge’s decision i.e. who did what, when and how?

**Returning Home**

**Or**

**Returning Home Under a Care Order**

**Or**

**Remaining in Care**

**Or**

**Special Guardianship/ Residence Order/ Child Arrangement Order**

**Or**

**A Placement Order and Your Adoption Journey**

**Section 12: Placement Order and Your Adoption Journey**

Your childcare social worker and your adoption social worker read reports and talked together to make the right decision about who should be your adoptive family.

(Adoption social worker to add details of how the match was made).

They agreed that names of adopters would be the best parents for you. They know that children need lots of love and cuddles, good food, a warm house, clean clothes, lots of fun, games and play times and just the right number of rules to make them feel loved and safe.

Name of adopters learned all about you. They talked to your social workers and found out all the things you liked to do and also the things you did not like. They had made list of all things that the adopters had prepared about themselves which they gave to the social workers to show to you so that you would know all about them before you met. They also gave you photos of themselves.

When you first met your mummy and daddy, they came to visit you at names foster carers house on date of first meeting. Mummy and daddy stayed with you for how long. You all describe what they did.

Here is the first picture taken when you first met mummy and daddy.

(Add pictures of their first meeting)

In the next few days, you spent a lot of time with mummy and daddy getting to know each other. A brief description of what they did during introduction.

You moved in with your mummy and daddy on date of move. A brief description of how the move went.

Family photo

A brief description of how the child’s life has been since the adoption placement e.g. feelings, health, school, friends etc.

An Adoption Order is the final legal part of your adoption journey. After you have lived with your mummy and daddy for a period of time, they told their adoption social worker, your adoption social worker and your childcare social worker that they wanted to be your parents legally. They applied for an Adoption Order for you.

Your mummy and daddy’s adoption social worker and your childcare social worker both wrote a report to the Judge to support your mummy and daddy’s application for an Adoption Order for you.

After the Judge received their report, he/she wrote to your birth parents and told them about the application. Your birth parents had been given an opportunity to tell the Judge what they wanted to happen to you.

In your case, tell the child what the birth parents did i.e. support, contest etc.

After reading all the reports and listening to all the professionals and your birth parents, the Judge granted an Adoption Order for you on date of the Order.

A celebration hearing was held on date at place. Who attended?

Celebration Hearing photo

This life story book was completed on

Date

By

whom

Your Life Story goes on.