

**PRE-PROCEEDINGS LETTER TO PARENTS:  
HOW TO AVOID GOING TO COURT**

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER.

TAKE IT TO A SOLICITOR NOW.

Dear [parent]

**BRADFORD COUNCIL'S CONCERNS ABOUT [CHILD]  
LETTER BEFORE PROCEEDINGS**

I am writing to let you know how concerned Bradford Council is about [child].

I am writing to tell you that Bradford Council are considering whether to start care proceedings in respect of [child]. If we do decide this, we will apply to Court, and [child] could, if the Court decides that this is best for him/her, be taken into care.

We have set out in this letter the concerns that we have about [child] and the things that have been done to try and help your family.

**AN IMPORTANT MEETING ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT**

Please come to a meeting with us to talk about these concerns on [day, date, time] at [venue]. Please contact [Social Worker] to tell us if you will come to the meeting.

At the meeting, we will discuss with you and tell you what you will need to make your child safe. We will also talk to you about how we will support you to do this. We will also make it clear what steps we will take if we continue to be worried about [child].

PLEASE BRING A SOLICITOR TO THE MEETING.

Take this letter to a Solicitor and ask them to come to the meeting with you. The Solicitor will advise you about Legal Aid (free legal advice). We have sent with this letter a list of Solicitors who work with children and families. They are all separate from Children and Young People's Services. You do not have to bring a Solicitor to the meeting, but it would be helpful if you do.

Information that your Solicitor will need is:-

Local Authority Legal contact: [Allocated Solicitor's name].

Address: Department of Corporate Services, Legal Services, Social Care Team, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City hall, Bradford, BD1 1HY.

Tel: 01274 432089.

### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE DO NOTHING**

If you do not attend the meeting or answer this letter, we will still meet and make plans about [child]. These may include going to Court.

### **YOUR WIDER FAMILY**

Our concerns about [child] are very serious. If we do have to go to Court and the Court decides that you cannot care for your child, we will first try and place him/her with one of your relatives, if it is best for your child to do this. At the meeting, we will want to talk to you and your Solicitor about who might look after your child if the Court decides that it is no longer safe for you to do so.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting with your Solicitor on [date]. If you do not understand any part of this letter, please contact your Social Worker. Please tell him/her if you need any help with transport arrangements in order to come to the meeting, and we will try to help.

Yours sincerely

...

Senior Care Manager

cc Social Worker  
Local Authority Social Care Legal Team

Encs List of Law Society Children Panel Solicitors  
List of things we are worried about

**PLEASE SHOW/TAKE THIS TO YOUR SOLICITOR.**

Here are the main things that we are worried about:-

[Outline concern and give examples and dates of when this happened. This document should capture chronic ongoing concerns as well as acute episodes/incidents.]

## **PROBLEMS**

## **WHAT CHILDREN'S SERVICES HAVE DONE TO TRY TO HELP**

[State who has tried to help, what help has been given and when.]

## **WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO SO THAT WE WILL NOT GO TO COURT**

1. Confirm that you will come to a meeting to talk about these concerns. Please try to bring a Solicitor with you.
2. Continue to see and work with your Social Worker and allow him/her to [child].
3. At the meeting, you will be asked to talk about how [child] will be kept safe with our help.