



Social worker: Natalie Johnson

Registration number: 136372

Fitness to Practise

Final Order Review Meeting

Date of meeting: 2 June 2026

Meeting venue: Remote meeting

Final order being reviewed:

Interim conditions of practice order (expiring 14 July 2026)

Meeting outcome: Revoke the conditions of practice order with immediate effect

Introduction and attendees:

1. This is the first review of a final conditions of practice order originally imposed on 14 January 2025 by the case examiners for a period of 18 months.
2. Ms Johnson did not attend the review and was not represented. She provided written submissions for consideration by the panel of adjudicators.
3. Social Work England was represented by Capsticks LLP and their written submissions are set out within the notice of hearing letter.
4. The panel of adjudicators conducting this review (hereafter “the panel”) and the other people involved in it were as follows:

Adjudicators	Role
Jill Crawford	Chair
Jacqui Smith	Social worker adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Paul Harris	Hearings officer
Cat Conway	Hearings support officer
Rosemary Rollason	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

5. The panel of adjudicators had careful regard to the documents contained in the final order review service bundle as follows:
 - A copy of the notice of the final order review hearing dated 30 April 2026 and addressed to Ms Johnson at the email address which they provided to Social Work England (namely their registered address as it appears on the Social Work England Register);
 - An extract from the Social Work England Register as of 30 April 2026 detailing Ms Johnson’s registered address;
 - A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that on 30 April 2026 the writer sent by email to Ms Johnson at the address referred to above: notice of hearing and related documents.
6. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to service of notice.
7. Having had regard to Rules 16, 44 and 45 and all of the information before it in relation to the service of notice, the panel was satisfied that notice of this hearing had been served on Ms Johnson in accordance with Rules 44 and 45.

Proceeding with the final order review as a meeting:

8. The notice of final order review informed Ms Johnson that the review could take place as a meeting. The notice stated:

“If you would like to attend before the adjudicators in order to make oral submissions, please confirm your intention by no later than 4pm on 15 May 2026. Unless we hear from you to the contrary, we shall assume that you do not want to attend a hearing and Social Work England may decide to deal with the review as a meeting. If Social Work England do hold a meeting, the adjudicators will be provided with a copy of this letter setting out Social Work England’s submissions and a copy of any written submissions you provide.”

9. The panel noted emails from Ms Johnson to Capsticks, on behalf of Social Work England, dated 13 May 2026 and 15 May 2026 in which she stated that she was not able to attend the review on 2 June 2026 and was happy for the review to go ahead as a meeting and to proceed in her absence. With her email of 15 May 2026 Ms Johnson provided written submissions for the review.

10. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser with regard to Rule 16(d) of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) which provides:

“Where the registered social worker makes written submissions and states they do not intend to attend before the regulator, the regulator may direct that the question of whether an order should be made is determined by means of a meeting.”

11. The panel was satisfied it was clear that Ms Johnson did not intend to be present at this review. She responded to the notice of hearing but has not requested an oral hearing. She has confirmed she is in agreement for the review to proceed in her absence as a meeting.

12. The panel concluded that it would be fair and appropriate to conduct the review in the form of a meeting in accordance with Rule 16(d).

Preliminary matters: part private decision

13. The meeting took place in private. However, the panel noted that the written decision may refer to matters relating to Ms Johnson’s private life. The panel was satisfied that it was appropriate and in the interests of justice that any such matters should be redacted from any public version of this decision.

Review of the current order:

14. This final order review hearing is taking place under Paragraph 15(1) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) and Social Work England's Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended).
15. The purpose of this review is to review the current order, which is due to expire on 14 July 2026. The order subject to review is a conditions of practice order, the conditions of which are as follows:

Condition 1.

You must notify Social Work England within 7 days of any professional appointment you accept or are currently undertaking and provide the contact details of your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work services, whether paid or voluntary.

Condition 2.

You must allow Social Work England to exchange information with your employer, agency or any organisation with which you have a contract or arrangement to provide social work or educational services, and any reporter referred to in these conditions.

Condition 3.

a. At any time you are providing social work services, which require you to be registered with Social Work England, you must agree to the appointment of a reporter nominated by you and approved by Social Work England. The reporter must be on Social Work England's register.

b. You must not start or continue to work until these arrangements have been approved by Social Work England.

Condition 4.

You must provide reports from your reporter to Social Work England every 3 months and at least 14 days prior to any review.

Condition 5.

You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any formal disciplinary proceedings taken against you from the date these conditions take effect.

Condition 6.

You must inform Social Work England within 7 days of receiving notice of any investigations or complaints made against you from the date these conditions take effect.

Condition 7.

You must inform Social Work England if you apply for social work employment / self-employment (paid or voluntary) outside England within 7 days of the date of application.

Condition 8.

You must inform Social Work England if you are registered or subsequently apply for registration with any other UK regulator, overseas regulator or relevant authority within 7 days of the date of application [for future registration] or 7 days from the date these conditions take effect [for existing registration].

Condition 9.

You must work with your reporter to formulate a personal development plan, specifically designed to address the shortfalls in the following areas of your practice:

- The understanding and maintenance of professional boundaries.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Adherence to social media policies / guidance.

Condition 10.

You must provide a copy of your personal development plan to Social Work England within 4 weeks from the date these conditions take effect and an updated copy 4 weeks prior to any review.

Condition 11.

You must read Social Work England's Professional Standards (2019) and provide a written reflection 4 months after these conditions take effect, focusing on how your conduct in respect of professional boundaries and maintaining confidentiality was below the accepted standard of a social worker, and what you should have done differently.

Condition 12.

You must provide a written copy of your conditions, within 7 days from the date these conditions take effect, to the following parties confirming that your registration is subject to the conditions listed at 1 to 11, above:

- Any organisation or person employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary.

- Any locum, agency or out-of-hours service you are registered with or apply to be registered with in order to secure employment or contracts to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary (at the time of application).
- Any prospective employer who would be employing or contracting with you to undertake social work services whether paid or voluntary (at the time of application).
- Any organisation, agency or employer where you are using your social work qualification/ knowledge/ skills in a non-qualified social work role, whether paid or voluntary.
- You must forward written evidence of your compliance with this condition to Social Work England within 14 days from the date these conditions take effect.

Condition 13.

You must permit Social Work England to disclose the above conditions, 1 to 12, to any person requesting information about your registration status.

The regulatory concerns which resulted in the imposition of the final order were as follows:

16. As recorded in a final decision dated 14 January 2025, case examiners appointed by Social Work England determined that there was a realistic prospect that adjudicators would determine that Ms Johnson’s fitness to practise was impaired on the statutory ground of misconduct on the basis of the following the regulatory concerns:

RC1

You failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with young people between 2021 and 2023.

RC2

You shared confidential information on social media between 2021 and 2023.

17. The complaint was referred to Social Work England by Ms Johnson’s former employer, London Borough of Haringey, on 26th January 2024. The complainant alleged that Ms Johnson used a personal Instagram account which was open to the public and which was felt to compromise her role as a social worker.
18. Ms Johnson initially denied RC1 but admitted RC2.
19. The case examiners determined that it was not in the public interest to refer the case to a final hearing and proposed to dispose of the case by making a conditions of practice order for a period of 18 months.

20. Having admitted the key facts set out in RC1 and RC2 and accepted that her fitness to practise was impaired, Ms Johnson consented to the proposed disposal on 6 January 2025.
21. The Case Examiners determined to accept Ms Johnson's response. The Case Examiners remained satisfied that an accepted disposal by way of a conditions of practice order for 18 months was a fair and proportionate disposal and was the minimum necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.

The case examiners on 14 January 2025 determined the following with regard to impairment:

In their decision the case examiners stated the following:

“Personal element

With regards to the concerns before the regulator, the case examiners have given thought to their guidance, and they note that they should give consideration to whether the matters before the regulator are easily remediable, and whether the social worker has demonstrated insight and/or conducted remediation to the effect that the risk of repetition is highly unlikely.

Whether the conduct can be easily remedied

The case examiners are satisfied that although the alleged conduct in this case is serious, it could nevertheless be remedied, for example, via a demonstration of significant reflection and insight.

Insight and remediation

In this instance, the social worker admits the key facts in respect of regulatory concern 2, and they state that:

“I had not prior to suspension read the social media at work policy as this was not something that was ever discussed. I thought that by not posting any names, ages or faces that I was retaining the anonymity of the YP I worked with. I would never intentionally cause harm to the YP or anyone I worked with. There has been a growing platform on social media for social workers and I felt I had built a community. I also had some colleagues on my page and nobody had suggested I had done anything wrong. I honestly did not see this as a concern until it was brought to my attention at suspension, at which point I deleted all the posts and they remain deleted. I have since familiarised myself with BASW social media guidance and I am also booked onto ‘Think before you post- digital professionalism’ webinar with SWE 18/03/24 as part of social work week”.

Consequently, the case examiners are satisfied that the social worker understands what led to the events which are the subject of the concern, what went wrong, and what they should have done differently. In addition, the case examiners are satisfied that the social worker has demonstrated genuine remorse, and that they have provided evidence of remediation.

The case examiners note that in respect of regulatory concern 1, the social worker denies the concern. They state that:

“This is the concern that I struggled more with as I had never had this raised in the 4 years I was with Haringey, as a student NQSW or post ASYE...I do acknowledge that I was going above and beyond this was something I had been given an award for December ‘22. I care deeply about people and it now appears this to be at the detriment. I did not meet my Yp as a friend on weekends, my phone would be off, but at times I would meet them after 5pm but this would be to complete visits, pathway plans, well-being checks and I would always log these or inform my team as we had a shared WhatsApp for check ins.”

The case examiners note the social worker’s comments, but as shown above in respect of facts, the social worker referred to a “sneaky visit”; there is evidence that the social worker spoke to a young person about an Ofsted visit; and there is evidence that the social worker communicated with young people late at night and had a “favourite” young person. The case examiners also note that the social worker consistently refers to young people as “my young people”, which the case examiners believe indicates a degree of overfamiliarity.

Furthermore, there is evidence that the social worker was aware of issues relating to professional boundaries ([#ThisIsWhyMyManagerSaysINeedToWorkOnMyBoundaries](#)), which undermines the social worker’s assertion that “I had never had this raised in the 4 years I was with Haringey, as a student NQSW or post ASYE”.

Consequently, the case examiners are not satisfied that the social worker understands what led to the events which are the subject of the concern, what went wrong, and what they should have done differently. In addition, the case examiners have not been provided with any evidence of remediation in respect of regulatory concern 1.

Risk of repetition

Having reviewed the evidence provided to them, including the social worker’s submissions, the case examiners have concluded that the insight demonstrated by the social worker is partial, and that remediation is incomplete. As such, the case examiners cannot conclude that the risk of repetition is low.

Public element

The case examiners have next considered whether the social worker's actions have the potential to undermine public confidence in the social work profession, or the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

The case examiners have outlined their view that the alleged conduct in this case is serious, and that the regulatory concerns could amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct. Furthermore, the case examiners consider that adjudicators may find that public confidence would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made.

Accordingly, there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding the social worker's fitness to practise to be currently impaired.

The case examiners have determined that accepted disposal is the appropriate outcome in this case.

The case examiners on 14 January 2025 determined the following with regard to sanction:

“Conditions of practice

The case examiners then considered a conditions of practice order. The case examiners have consulted their guidance, which states conditions of practice may be appropriate in cases where (all of the following):

- *The social worker has demonstrated insight.*
- *The failure or deficiency in practice is capable of being remedied.*
- *Appropriate, proportionate, and workable conditions can be put in place*
- *Decision makers are confident the social worker can and will comply with the conditions.*
- *The social worker does not pose a risk of harm to the public by being in restricted practice.*

Whilst the social worker has not demonstrated full insight, the case examiners note that they have shown some reflection into the circumstances of the case, and that this could offer an opportunity to develop further insight and remediation. The case examiners are of the view that workable conditions can be formulated that would support the social worker to develop the requisite insight and remediate their practice. Additionally, the order is subject to review, which can be extended or replaced with a different order if necessary.

The case examiners consider that 18 months would allow the social worker sufficient time to demonstrate strengthened practice within a full appraisal cycle. They consider

that any longer period, given that some insight and remediation has already been demonstrated, would be unnecessary and punitive.”

Social Work England submissions:

22. The panel considered the written submissions on behalf of Social Work England which were set out in the notice of this review hearing as follows:

“Social Work England invite the Panel to consider whether the Social Worker's fitness to practise remains impaired. The case examiners were satisfied that the Social Worker had demonstrated some insight and had begun the process of remediation. Since the imposition of the Conditions of Practice order the Social Worker has not worked as a social worker and so it has been difficult to test compliance with the conditions. However, Social Work England draw the Panel's attention to other considerations that may assist them in making their decision. These include the Social Worker has engaged positively with the regulatory process and has:

- Accepted the regulatory concerns to a large degree*
- Expressed remorse at her actions*
- Evidenced some insight and remediation prior to the imposition of the conditions of practice order*
- Provided a reflective piece dated 15 May 2025 pursuant to condition 11 which it is submitted demonstrates further development of insight and remediation*
- Undertaken CPD and learning in relevant areas*
- Attended conferences and events in social work related areas*
- Undertaken study (albeit it is not clear what her studies have been in).*

The Social Worker was invited to submit evidence for the forthcoming review but has not at the time of writing submitted any information or documentation evidencing further learning or development she has undertaken. While the condition of a PDP was not engaged given that the Social Worker was not working she was invited by her Case Review Officer to consider completing one - she has not done so. It is submitted that these are opportunities that have been available to the Social Worker to demonstrate further development of insight and remediation but have not to date being taken by the Social Worker

If the Panel is persuaded that the Social Worker has demonstrated insight and remediation such that she is no longer impaired the Panel will be invited to revoke the order with immediate effect.

In the event that the Panel remain concerned that there is insufficient development of insight and remediation the Panel shall be invited to conclude that the Social Worker's fitness to practise remains impaired and to extend the order for a further

six months. In those circumstances Social Work England will invite the Panel to consider making recommendations with regard to information that the Social Worker could provide that may assist a future reviewing Panel.

Social worker submissions:

23. Ms Johnson has provided written submissions dated 14 May 2026 for this review hearing in which she states, in summary, the following:

- She is not currently practising as a social worker and has focused on academic professional development during the period of the conditions of practise. She is currently undertaking a PhD focused on the sexual abuse and exploitation of black and Asian children in care;

- **[PRIVATE]**

- She has continued to engage with developments in the social work profession by attending conferences and reading professional publications;

- Following the findings in her case, she has spent significant time reflecting on the concerns raised regarding professional boundaries and fully recognises their seriousness and the importance of maintaining clear professional boundaries, confidentiality and public confidence in the profession at all times;

- She acknowledges that regardless of her personal difficulties at the time, she remained professionally responsible for maintaining appropriate boundaries, judgement and conduct;

- **[PRIVATE]**

- Since the proceedings, on occasions when she has encountered young people she previously worked within the community, she has ensured that her interactions remain appropriate and professionally bounded and where personal or safeguarding related information was disclosed to her, she appropriately shared this with the relevant agencies rather than attempting to manage this independently. She submitted this demonstrates insight and learning which she has developed;

- No further concerns have been raised during the period of the order and she believes she has used this time constructively to continue her professional and personal development and has developed meaningful insight, remediation and a commitment to maintaining the standards expected within the profession.

24. Ms Johnson asked that the review panel should revoke the conditions of practice on the basis that her fitness to practise is no longer impaired. She stated that she believes there is no ongoing risk to the public as she is not currently practising. As such, she submitted that to continue restrictions would no longer be necessary or proportionate. Ms Johnson submitted that the concerns identified by the case examiners have been sufficiently addressed by her reflection, insight, remediation, ongoing professional development and engagement with appropriate support.

Panel decision and reasons on current impairment:

25. In considering the question of current impairment, the panel undertook a comprehensive review of the current conditions of practice order in light of the current circumstances. It took into account the previous accepted disposal decision of the case examiners. However, the panel exercised its own judgement in relation to the question of whether Ms Johnson's fitness to practise is currently impaired today.
26. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser and reminded itself of its powers under Paragraph 15 of schedule 2, part 5 of the Social Worker Regulations 2018. The panel referred to the Impairment and sanctions guidance (updated 23 April 2026).
27. The panel reminded itself of the importance of a review hearing, and it followed the sequence of decision making set out by Blake J in *Abrahaem v General Medical Council [2008] EWHC 183*:
- Address whether the fitness to practise is impaired before considering the appropriate sanction.
 - Whether all the concerns raised in the original finding of impairment have been sufficiently addressed to the panel's satisfaction.
28. In practical terms there is a persuasive burden on the practitioner at a review to demonstrate that he or she has fully acknowledged why past professional performance was deficient and through insight, application, education, supervision, or other achievement sufficiently addressed the past impairments.
29. The panel had regard to the over-arching objective of protecting the public which involves the pursuit of the following objectives:

- To protect, promote and maintain the health, safety, and well-being of the public.
- To promote and maintain public confidence in the profession.
- To promote and maintain proper professional standards of conduct for members of the profession.

30. The panel also bore in mind that in considering fitness to practise impairment it should follow the approach of Dame Janet Smith endorsed by the High Court in *CHRE v NMC and P Grant [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin)*.

31. The panel considered whether Ms Johnson's fitness to practise remains impaired. It kept in mind that there has already been a finding of impairment and the panel's task is to consider whether Ms Johnson has demonstrated that she has taken sufficient steps to allay the concerns of the case examiners in their decision of January 2025.

32. The panel considered the submissions of Ms Johnson and Social Work England. Social Work England's submissions were that, depending on the panel's conclusions about the sufficiency of Ms Johnson's insight and remediation, the panel may decide either to extend the conditions of practice order for a further six months or to revoke it with immediate effect.

33. The panel acknowledged that during the period of the conditions of practice order Ms Johnson has continued to engage with Social Work England. In accordance with condition 11, she provided written reflections after 4 months. She has communicated with Social Work England about this review and has provided written submissions for the review. The panel carefully considered both of these.

34. The panel bore in mind paragraph 219 of the Impairment and sanctions guidance which states that the review process should not undermine the original decision made by the case examiners but should look at what has happened since the order was put in place.

35. The panel noted that, at the time of their decision and finding of impairment of fitness to practise, the case examiners' concern was that Ms Johnson showed only partial reflection and insight, but they considered that the concerns were capable of being remedied. At that time, the case examiners were not satisfied that the risk of repetition of the previous conduct was low. The case examiners also concluded that public confidence was engaged in the light of the regulatory concerns.

36. In terms of developments since the conditions of practice were imposed, having reviewed all the information before it, the panel was satisfied that

- Ms Johnson has engaged positively with the Social Work England and the regulatory process;
- She has now accepted the regulatory concerns;
- She has expressed remorse for her past actions;

- She provided written reflections dated 15 May 2025, in accordance with condition 11, and recent submissions dated 14 May 2026 for this review;
- She has undertaken CPD and learning in relevant areas;
- She has attended conferences and events in social work-related areas
- She has undertaken studies, namely a PhD focused on the sexual abuse and exploitation of black and Asian children in care which, although not directly related to practise as a social worker, would appear to the panel to be relevant to social work practice.

37. The panel was satisfied that Ms Johnson's written reflections and submissions demonstrate that she has reflected deeply on her previous actions and has further developed her understanding of the need for professional boundaries. She has shown that she has gained understanding of why she acted as she did and the impact of her actions. She has indicated how she will manage any similar situation she may find herself in in the future and indicated strategies she has in place. In her submissions, Ms Johnson provided an example of how she dealt with circumstances when she encountered in the community young people she had previously worked with and how she ensured she maintained appropriate professional boundaries in that situation.

38. Considering the factors set out at paragraph 219 of the Impairment and sanctions guidance, taking all of the information into account, the panel was satisfied that Ms Johnson has met the burden upon her to satisfy the panel that she has developed sufficient remediation, insight and remorse and has sufficiently addressed the concerns raised in the original finding of impairment. Her remediation and insight have developed since the case examiners concluded that they were partial and not sufficient.

39. The panel concluded in the light of the remediation and insight she has developed during this regulatory process, Ms Johnson does not present a risk to the public. The panel was satisfied that the risk of repetition of similar conduct in the future is low. The panel has therefore concluded that Ms Johnson's fitness to practise is no longer impaired in respect of the personal element of current impairment, public protection.

40. The panel was mindful that it must also consider the public impairment element of fitness to practise, namely whether a finding of impairment is necessary to uphold the public's confidence in the social work profession. The panel was satisfied that the confidence of members of the public would not be undermined, given the evidence before this panel of the remediation and insight which Ms Johnson has provided since the conditions were imposed, and would concur that Ms Johnson is no longer impaired and is safe to return to practice as a social worker without restriction. It therefore considered that the public element of impairment, namely the need to uphold public confidence and maintain professional standards, has been adequately met by the imposition of the initial eighteen months Conditions of Practice Order.

41. The panel has therefore concluded that Ms Johnson’s fitness to practise is no longer impaired in respect of either the personal or public elements of current impairment of fitness to practise.

Decision and reasons:

Revoke the conditions of practice order with effect immediately

42. The panel concluded that the conditions of practice order should be revoked as Ms Johnson’s fitness to practise is no longer impaired.

Right of appeal:

43. Under Paragraph 16(1)(b) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended), the social worker may appeal to the High Court against:

a. the decision of adjudicators:

- i. to make an interim order, other than an interim order made at the same time as a final order under paragraph 11(1)(b),
- ii. not to revoke or vary such an order,
- iii. to make a final order,

b. the decision of the regulator on review of an interim order, or a final order, other than a decision to revoke the order.

44. Under Paragraph 16(2) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) an appeal must be filed before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day after the day on which the social worker is notified of the decision complained of.

45. Under Paragraph 15(1A) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended), where a social worker appeals against a decision made under sub-paragraph (1), the decision being appealed takes effect from the date specified in that sub-paragraph notwithstanding any appeal against that decision.

46. This notice is served in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended).

Review of final orders:

47. Under regulation 15(1), 15(2) and 15(3) of Schedule 2 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended):

- 15(1) The regulator must review a suspension order, or a conditions of practice order, before its expiry.
- 15(2) The regulator may review a final order where new evidence relevant to the order has become available after the making of the order, or when requested to do so by the social worker.
- 15(3) A request by the social worker under sub-paragraph (2) must be made within such period as the regulator determines in rules made under Regulation 25(5).

48. Under Rule 16(aa) of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended), a social worker requesting a review of a final order under paragraph 15 of Schedule 2 must make the request within 28 days of the day on which they are notified of the order.

The Professional Standards Authority

49. Please note that in accordance with section 29 of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, a review decision made by Social Work England's panel of adjudicators can be referred by the Professional Standards Authority ("the PSA") to the High Court. The PSA can refer this decision to the High Court if it considers that the decision is not sufficient for the protection of the public. Further information about PSA appeals can be found on their website at:

<https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-with-regulators/decisions-about-practitioners>