

Social worker: Denise Campion

Registration number: SW90221

Fitness to Practise

Final Hearing

Dates of hearing: 18 June 2026 to 30 June 2026

Hearing venue: Remote hearing

Hearing outcome:
Fitness to practise impaired, removal order

Interim order:
Interim suspension order (18 months)

Introduction and attendees:

1. This is a hearing held under Part 5 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) (“the regulations”).
2. Ms Campion did not attend and was not represented.
3. Social Work England was represented by Mr Adrian Harris, case presenter from Capsticks LLP.
4. The panel of adjudicators conducting this hearing (hereafter “the panel”) and the other people involved in it were as follows:

Adjudicators	Role
Eileen Carr	Chair
David Childs	Social worker adjudicator
John Brookes	Lay adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Lauryn Green	Hearings officer
Nazia Kauser	Hearings support officer
Helen Potts	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

5. The panel was informed by Mr Harris that notice of this hearing (“the Notice”) was sent to Ms Campion by email on 19 May 2026 to an email address provided by her as it appears on the Social Work England register). Mr Harris submitted that the Notice had been duly served.
6. The panel had careful regard to the documents contained in the final hearing service bundle as follows:
 - A copy of the notice of the final hearing dated 19 May 2026 and addressed to Ms Campion at the email address which she had provided to Social Work England;
 - An extract from the Social Work England register as of 19 May 2026 detailing Ms Campion’s email address;
 - A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that on 19 May 2026 the writer sent the Notice and related documents by email to Ms Campion at the email address referred to above.
7. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to service of notice. This included reference to Rules 14, 15, 44 and 45 of Social Work England’s Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) (the “FtP Rules 2019”).

8. Having had regard to Rules 14, 15, 44 and 45 and all of the information before it in relation to the service of the Notice, the panel was satisfied that notice of this hearing had been served on Ms Campion in accordance with the FtP Rules 2019 in that:
- The Notice had been served on Ms Campion by one of the mandatory means of service in Rule 44(a) of the FTP Rules, namely, by being sent to an email address for her which she had provided to Social Work England.
 - Service of the Notice was proved by a statement of service in accordance with Rule 44(b) of the FTP Rules.
 - As, pursuant to Rule 45, a notice served by email is to be treated as being served on the day on which it is sent, Ms Campion had been given more than 28 days' notice of this hearing in accordance with Rule 14 of the FtP Rules.

Proceeding in the absence of the social worker:

9. The panel heard the submissions of Mr Harris on behalf of Social Work England. Mr Harris invited the panel to exercise its discretion to proceed in the absence of Ms Campion under Rule 43 of the FtP Rules. He submitted that:
- The panel has found that the Notice was duly served in accordance with the FtP Rules;
 - There has been no communication from Ms Campion in relation to these proceedings since 18 March 2026 on which date she wrote to Social Work England to say, *"I will not be attending. I really have no interest"*.
 - No application for an adjournment has been made by Ms Campion and there was no confidence that adjourning today's proceedings would secure her attendance.
 - Any disadvantage to Ms Campion arising from her absence was of her own making, resulting from her decision not to attend the hearing. The panel would take account of the written statements which Ms Campion had provided at an earlier stage in which she set out her position. This would enable the panel to put questions to Social Work England's witnesses.
10. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the factors it should take into account when considering this application. This included reference to Rule 43 of the FtP Rules and the cases of *R v Jones [2002] UKHL 5*; *Tait v RCVS [2003] UKPC 24*; and *General Medical Council v Adeogba [2016] EWCA Civ 162*. The panel also took into account Social Work England guidance '*Service of notices and proceeding in the absence of the social worker*'.
11. The panel considered all of the information before it, together with the submissions made by Mr Harris on behalf of Social Work England. The panel noted that Ms Campion had been sent notice of today's hearing in accordance with requirements of the FtP Rules 2019. She had been informed of the date, details and format of the hearing and given the required notice. She had been informed of her right to attend or to provide

written submissions and advised that the hearing could proceed in her absence if she did not attend. The Notice had been sent to the email address which appeared on the extract from the Social Work register. This was also the email address from which Ms Campion had previously corresponded with Social Work England. The panel was satisfied that she was aware or should be aware of today's hearing.

12. The panel noted that emails had been sent to Ms Campion by Social Work England providing her with information about the hearing and asking whether she planned to attend. It noted that the hearing had originally been scheduled for March 2026 but was rescheduled as a result of witness non-availability. The last response from Ms Campion in relation to these proceedings had been on 18 March 2026, following notification of the new hearing dates, at which time she had indicated that she did not intend to attend the hearing. The panel further noted that there were earlier emails from Ms Campion expressing frustration at the speed of Social Work England's processes and indicating that she had moved on with her life and had no interest in taking part in proceedings.
13. The panel concluded that Ms Campion had chosen voluntarily to absent herself. She had not requested an adjournment for any reason nor indicated that she wished to participate. In the circumstances, the panel had no reason to believe that an adjournment would result in Ms Campion's attendance on a future date. Further, Social Work England's witnesses were ready to proceed.
14. Having weighed the interests of Ms Campion with those of Social Work England and the public interest in an expeditious disposal of this hearing, the panel determined to proceed in Ms Campion's absence. In doing so, the panel recognised that when considering the case in Ms Campion's absence, it had a responsibility to ensure that the hearing was as fair as circumstances would permit. It determined that it would consider and raise questions about any points reasonably available on the evidence which might be in Ms Campion's interests.

Preliminary matters:

15. Mr Harris indicated that, in the course of the proceedings, there might be a need to refer to matters which would ordinarily be heard in private. He submitted that, should such matters arise, an application to hear those parts of the evidence in private could be made at that stage. The panel agreed.

Allegations:

16. The allegations arising out of the regulatory concerns referred by the Case Examiners on 11 December 2024 and 7 January 2025 are:

Whilst registered as a social worker:

- 1. Between the approximate dates of 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to maintain professional boundaries with young person A, in that you:*
 - a. Used your own money to purchase one or more personal items for Young Person A on one or more occasions;*
 - b. Facilitated Young Person A carrying out paid work for your daughter's business;*
 - c. Continued your professional relationship with Young Person A as his allocated Adoption Support Team social worker after you had formed and/or indicated your intention to pursue a caring relationship with him.*
- 2. Between the approximate dates of on or around 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to inform any appropriate supervisor or manager, in a timely manner, that:*
 - a. Young Person A had been inside your home address;*
 - b. Young Person A had worked on one or more occasions for your daughter's business;*
 - c. You intended to pursue caring for Young Person A.*
- 3. On 25 December 2022, you failed to safeguard Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, in that you:*
 - a. failed to seek approval before transporting Young Person B*
 - b. transported him out of the county in which he resided;*
 - c. allowed Young Person B to remain overnight at another young person's address without supervision by appropriate care staff.*
- 4. You transported Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, without permission from appropriate care staff, when you were aware that he was subject to a Deprivation of Liberty order and/or contrary to instructions given by the Police, on one or more of the following dates:*
 - a. 26 December 2022;*
 - b. 28 December 2022.*

The matters outlined in paragraphs 1-4 amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.

Admissions:

17. Although Ms Campion had provided several written statements and responses in the course of these proceedings, she had made no formal admissions following receipt of the Notice and Social Work England's Statement of Case. The panel, therefore, proceeded on the basis that the allegations were denied and, in accordance with Rule 32c(i)(a) of the FtP Rules 2019, went on to determine the disputed facts.

Background:

FTPS-21365

18. On 30 September 2022, Social Work England received a self-referral from Ms Campion following the conclusion of an investigation and disciplinary process by her employer, Staffordshire County Council ('the council'), into allegations arising from her conduct in relation to Young Person A.
19. Ms Campion had been employed as an Adoption Support Social Worker within the Adoption Support Team at the council. Her role was to support adopted children and their families, including attending school meetings, accessing services to assist families and providing access to the adoption support fund following assessments. Her day-to-day work included home visits and building positive relationships with children and their families.
20. Ms Campion had taken a three-month secondment from this role in order to take on the role of Breathing Space Manager within the council. During her secondment, she retained around seven of the cases allocated to her in her role as an Adoption Support Social Worker, including the case of Young Person A.
21. Ms Campion had worked with Young Person A to try to prevent the breakdown of his adoption. His relationship with his adoptive family ultimately broke down and Young Person A became a 'looked after child' (now termed a 'child in care'). When Young Person A became a looked after child, the role of the Adoption Support Team reduced. Young Person A was approaching age 16 later that year and it was not anticipated that he would return home. Due to Ms Campion's positive relationship with Young Person A and good understanding of his needs, it was agreed that she would continue to be involved with him, working alongside other professionals, including Young Person A's allocated statutory social worker, to provide an adoption perspective whilst she was on secondment.
22. During this period, Samantha Kelsall and later Ian Perry-Griffiths were Young Person A's allocated statutory social workers. On transfer of the role from Ms Kelsall to Mr Perry-Griffiths, a third social worker, Emma Johnson, covered for Mr Perry-Griffiths for a period

of some week. Ms Campion was Young Person A's allocated Adoption Support social worker. Ms Campion's role was distinct from that of the allocated social worker for Young Person A. Statutory responsibility for Young Person A lay with the allocated social worker.

23. Having come into the care of the council in November 2021, Young Person A's first foster placement broke down. On 11 February 2022, he was placed with a second foster carer, Person C, in a connected person's placement. Person C was the mother of Young Person A's support worker. On 8 April 2022, Person C was informed that the outcome of the fostering assessment was likely to be negative. She indicated her intention to withdraw from the process and was invited to sign a withdrawal letter, although a signed withdrawal letter from her was never received by the council.
24. Concerns arose in May 2022 that Ms Campion had purchased personal items for Young Person A using her own money without consultation or funding from appropriate persons within the council; that she had not informed appropriate persons at the council that Young Person A was working for her daughter's business; that she had allowed Young Person A to visit her home address; and that she had not declared a conflict of interest to appropriate persons at the council at the point she had decided she wanted to pursue a caring role with Young Person A. Ms Campion resigned from her position in August 2022 during the council's investigation.

FTPS-21640

25. On 30 December 2022, Social Work England received a referral from PC Shaun Murray of Derbyshire Police, regarding allegations that Ms Campion had transported Young Person B away from his care placement on several occasions, latterly after she had been made aware of a Deprivation of Liberty court order restricting his movements and having been advised by PC Murray not to transport Young Person B again.
26. Social Work England's case examiners referred fitness to practise cases FTPS-21365 and FTPS-21640 to a final hearing on 11 December 2024 and 7 January 2025. At a case management meeting on 5 December 2025, a fitness to practise panel decided to join the cases to allow them to proceed as a single case and reach a single final hearing.

Summary of evidence:

27. The panel heard evidence from the following witnesses on behalf of Social Work England, each of whom had produced a witness statement for these proceedings, exhibiting further documents and/or material. At the hearing, they each confirmed and adopted their written statements as their evidence in chief and opened themselves up to questions from the panel:

- (a) **Lisa Burke (Ms)**, Team Manager in the Adoption Team at the council and Ms Campion's line manager;
- (b) **Ian Perry-Griffiths (Mr)**, Formerly social worker in the Child in Care Team at the council and allocated as Young Person A's social worker from March/April 2022, currently social worker in the Fostering Central Panel and Approval team at the council;
- (c) **Valerie Higgins (Ms)**, Independent Reviewing Officer ('IRO') and Independent Conference Chair at the council, who oversaw care planning for Young Person A;
- (d) **Paula Coxon (Ms)**, Family and Friends Assessing Social Worker for the council, who assessed Person C's suitability to care for Young Person A;
- (e) **Samantha Kelsall (Ms)**, formerly Senior Practitioner for the council within the Assessments and Staying Together Team, and allocated social worker for Young Person A from October 2021 to March/April 2022;
- (f) **Melissa Rushton (Ms)**, Disability Lead for East Staffordshire Children's Centre within the council, who carried out the local investigation into concerns over Ms Campion's conduct;
- (g) **Shaun Murray (Mr)**, Police constable, formerly within the Missing Persons Investigation Unit of Derbyshire Constabulary who dealt with Young Person B when missing, now employed within Safer Neighbourhood Team of Derbyshire Constabulary;
- (h) **Patience Bhebhe-Coleman (Ms)**, Key Worker for Young Person B from September 2021, including the time period of these allegations;
- (i) **Monica Shields (Ms)**, formerly social worker with Worcestershire Children's Services in the Child in Care Team and allocated social worker for Young Person B between February 2022 and March 2023.

28. Following a decision by a Fitness to Practise Panel at a Case Management Meeting on 5 December 2025, the following statements/accounts were admitted into the evidence:

- (a) The evidence of Person C (Young Person A's foster carer) arising in her interview given to the local investigation by the council and any accounts given by Person C to employees of the council in relation to her interactions with Ms Campion and Young Person A;
- (b) The accounts given by Young Person B contemporaneously to care staff during the alleged events within allegations 3-4.

29. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser that this was hearsay evidence which had not been given under oath or affirmation, and that the panel had not had the opportunity to assess the credibility or reliability of the makers of the statements. The panel therefore concluded that it could give it only limited weight. The panel reminded itself that it should review this evidence for any weaknesses, ascertain whether there is evidence which supports the untested evidence, and make a fair assessment of that evidence as part of all the evidence before it.
30. Ms Campion provided no signed witness statement for these proceedings and did not attend to give oral evidence or make oral submissions. As a matter of fairness in her absence, the panel considered her responses to the allegations which she had provided in written statements at earlier stages of the fitness to practise process, as set out in the final social worker's response bundle. These included her 'final submissions' to the Case Investigation Report dated 18 August 2024. In addition, the panel had regard to the record of statements made by Ms Campion during the council's local investigation, produced by Melissa Rushton. The panel bore in mind that Ms Campion's responses were not sworn evidence which had been tested in questioning at the hearing.
31. As Ms Campion was neither present nor represented, Social Work England's witnesses were not cross examined. However, the panel was mindful that, in the absence of Ms Campion it should adopt an inquisitorial approach and explore any apparent weaknesses there might be in Social Work England's case. The panel, therefore, was careful to ensure that Ms Campion's case, in so far as it was set out in responses she had provided to Social Work England was put to the witnesses.

Finding and reasons on facts:

32. The panel took into account all the evidence it had read and heard. It accepted the advice of the legal adviser. The legal adviser advised that the burden of proof was on Social Work England and the standard of proof required was the civil standard, namely whether it was more likely than not that the alleged facts occurred. The panel is entitled to make collateral findings of fact provided that they do not enlarge or change the scope or seriousness of individual charges or the Allegation as a whole. Such findings should be ones that are required to be made to underpin a substantive finding of fact.
33. The legal adviser advised the panel on its approach to the evidence. The panel was advised to navigate evidence from any contemporaneous documents as the starting point. In relation to credibility and reliability, she referred the panel to the cases of *R (on the application of Dutta) v GMC* [2020] EWHC 1974 (Admin), *Khan v GMC* [2021] EWHC 374 (Admin) and *Hindle v NMC* [2025] EWHC 373 (Admin). She reminded the panel that it must form its own judgement about the credibility of witnesses, and which evidence is reliable, and which is not. She advised that the panel was entitled to draw inferences from the evidence but it must not speculate. She advised the panel in relation to hearsay evidence and the careful consideration to be given to the weight it considers appropriate to attach to such evidence. The panel accepted that it must provide reasons for any decisions it makes.

34. The panel also had regard to Mr Harris' detailed submissions on behalf of Social Work England and to Ms Campion's responses, as set out in her written statements provided at earlier stages of the fitness to practise process and during the local investigation. It considered each of the disputed paragraphs of the Allegation in turn.

Paragraph 1

Between the approximate dates of 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to maintain professional boundaries with young person A, in that you:

- a. Used your own money to purchase one or more personal items for Young Person A on one or more occasions;***

35. The panel decided that it would first determine whether, as a matter of fact, Ms Campion had used her own money to purchase items for Young Person A, as alleged. If it found that she had done so, it would then go on to consider whether this amounted to a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Young Person A as alleged in the stem of Paragraph 1 of the Allegation.
36. The panel acknowledged that the evidence to support paragraph 1 of the Allegation is hearsay evidence which originates from Person C and Young Person A, neither of whom has prepared a statement for these proceedings and neither of whom has attended to have their accounts tested. However, the panel noted that Ms Campion does not dispute that she purchased personal items for Young Person A and she has provided her reasons for doing so.
37. Person C, when interviewed as part of the council's investigation on 6 June 2022, described how Ms Campion would take Young Person A out most weekends while he was residing with her. This is recorded in the (non-verbatim) note of that meeting taken by Ms Rushton, as follows,
- "...she would take him out on a Friday, this always involved a McDonald's, they would be gone for hours, he would nearly always come back with stuff. Clothes, Men's perfume (Paco Robel), they would either go shopping or on the swings."*
38. Person C described how Ms Campion had ordered a pair of 'Jordans' trainers which Young Person A had wanted. Person C said that she and Ms Campion had agreed that Person C would give Young Person A an advance of his pocket money of £90 toward them. Person C stated that she was subsequently told by Young Person A that Ms Campion had bought him a second pair of 'Jordans' trainers online from America at a cost of around £250. Person C reported that she was unhappy about this; she did not

think that he needed them. She reported that Young Person A had stated that Ms Champion did not want reimbursement for these.

39. Person C reported further purchases, again as recorded by Ms Rushton in a note of the meeting on 6 June 2022:

“There was a designer jacket which cost around £170; I was aware of the cost because [Young Person A] showed me online. He returned from session with Men’s Perfume Paco Roban, which I understand was expensive. [Ms Champion] also brought him some ‘Lush’ concealer; a small pot was expensive, around £25. Before he went on residential trip, I had brought him a bag of toiletries from Aldi/ Lidl and she turned up with a large pot of this concealer, which must have been very expensive. She brought him a black hoodie which was not as expensive but was still Nike/Adidas brand so around £40/50.”

40. Other employees of the council also reported being told by Person C and/or Young Person A that Ms Champion had bought items of clothing and toiletries for Young Person A. Paula Coxon, who met with Person C in the context of assessing her suitability to be a foster carer for Young Person A, stated in her evidence for these proceedings that she recalled being told by Person C that Ms Champion was “*sorting out trainers*” for Young Person A.
41. Ian Perry-Griffiths, who was Young Person A’s statutory allocated social worker at the time when the concern came to light, when interviewed at the time of the council’s investigation, reported being told by Person C during a statutory visit that Ms Champion had bought Young Person A one pair of trainers costing £90 and a second pair from America costing £200. Mr Perry-Griffiths further reported that on 1 June 2022, upon commenting to Young Person A that he smelled nice, Young Person A had responded that he was using Paco Raban which had been bought for him by Ms Champion as a cost of £70. In his evidence for these proceedings, Mr Perry-Griffiths described Person C informing him that Ms Champion had purchased aftershave, designer clothes and trainers.
42. Ms Kelsall, who was Young Person A’s statutory allocated social worker before Mr Perry-Griffiths told the panel that Ms Champion had referred to getting Young Person A some air pods and trainers but that she had understood that these were being purchased through the adoption and support fund; she was not aware of anything that Ms Champion “*was buying personally*”.
43. Ms Champion’s account, as set out in written responses provided during these proceedings and during the local investigation is that she had been told by Person C that Young Person A had no clothes which fitted him. Person C had told her that she was struggling financially. She had been given £100 as Section 17 money but this had been spent on his school uniform. Ms Champion stated that when she asked Person C to talk to her supervising social worker about finances, Person C refused because when she had raised it previously she had felt judged and humiliated. Ms Champion had also

assisted Person C to apply for disability living allowance and a discount on her water bill.

44. Ms Campion stated that she knew through working with Young Person A that his appearance was very important to him and to his identity. He was struggling with his confidence and self-esteem related to his appearance. She described in her self-referral to Social Work England that she “*bought Young Person A things to support him with finding his identity and belonging and to feel more confidence in himself and to evidence that someone listens, understands and values him.*” The panel noted that this description of Young Person A was consistent with records of discussions during the looked after child review on 8 March 2022 where there was a discussion around Young Person A liking to look nice and being particular about his clothes.
45. Ms Campion provided further details of the items purchased when interviewed by Ms Rushton on 21 June 2022 as part of the council’s local investigation. The panel noted that Ms Campion had taken the opportunity to provide her own amendments to the record produced by Ms Rushton and that an agreed record had then been produced which had been signed by Ms Campion on 30 June 2022; this was confirmed by Ms Rushton in her oral evidence. The panel considered that it could, therefore, give this report some weight as a signed and agreed record of the interview.
46. At the interview on 21 June 2022, Ms Campion told Ms Rushton that she had purchased face wash at a cost of around £10 and two pairs of trainers. Young Person A had paid her around £100 for one pair of the trainers from money he had saved or been given; he was saving for the next pair which had cost £160. Ms Campion stated that she had asked Young Person A to pay her back and she had confirmed with Person C that Young Person A had told her this, as she had requested that he do. Ms Campion further stated that she had bought aftershave on one occasion for Young Person A as had his sessional worker. This had cost around £50 and Ms Campion stated that she did not discuss the purchase with Person C before making it. Ms Campion stated that Young Person A had bought himself a hoodie from the money he had earned working with her and that she had bought him another jacket for £45.
47. In her ‘final statement’ to Social Work England in response to the Case Investigation Report dated 18 August 2024, Ms Campion again accepted purchasing trainers for Young Person A but stated that the face cream she had given him was a free sample. She highlighted the importance of trainers “*in a society where what you wear on your feet is often to fit in the strength of peer pressure*”.
48. The panel acknowledged that there were inconsistencies within the evidence of Social Work England’s witnesses and between the evidence of those witnesses and that of Ms Campion as to exactly what items were purchased, the value of those items, and the extent to which Young Person A was expected to pay Ms Campion back. However, on Ms Campion’s own account, as set out in the signed record of the interview on 21 June 2022, she had purchased face wash, two pairs of trainers, aftershave and a jacket for Young Person A totalling over £350. The panel considered that it was self-evident from

the nature of the items purchased and the reasons why Ms Campion states they were purchased (for Young Person A's self-esteem) that these were "*personal items*" for Young Person A. On that basis, the panel did not consider that it needed to resolve the inconsistencies within the evidence.

49. The panel noted that both Person C and Ms Campion have stated that there was some expectation that Young Person A would pay back some of the cost of at least one of the pairs of trainers. The panel carefully considered whether it could properly be said in relation to those items where reimbursement was expected that Ms Campion had "*used [her] own money*" to purchase them. The panel was satisfied that whether or not there was an expectation that some or all of the purchase price was repaid by Young Person A, the fact remained that Ms Campion had used her own money to make the initial purchase.

50. The panel further found that the items had been purchased using Ms Campion's own money in the sense that she had not sought reimbursement from the council for these items. Ms Burke, as Ms Campion's line manager on the Adoption Support Team, and Mr Perry-Griffiths, as the allocated social worker for Young Person A at the time the concerns arose, confirmed that there was no record that Ms Campion had sought reimbursement from the council for any of the purchases or that she had discussed the matter with either of them prior to making the purchases. Ms Campion accepted in her response to Social Work England to the regulatory concerns against her on 24 January 2023 that:

"I did not approach the LA for any reimbursement as this would not have been agreed and I knew the limitations of budgets."

51. Having determined that Ms Campion had used her own money to purchase personal items for Young Person A, the panel went on to consider whether to do so amounted to a failure to maintain a professional boundary with Young Person A.

52. Ms Coxon, Ms Burke, Mr Perry-Griffiths and Ms Kelsall all gave evidence as to the processes which existed at the council to enable purchases to be made by social workers for young people using council funds. Ms Burke in her supplementary witness statement dated 14 November 2025 stated that Section 17 of the Financial Assistance Guidance assists staff in their approach to expenditure on service users and exhibited this to her statement. The guidance outlines that financial assistance, in terms of goods or services, or in exceptional circumstances, cash can be provided to a child, parent or carer under Section 17(6) Children Act (1989), to address identified needs to safeguard and promote a child's welfare where there is no other legitimate source of financial assistance.

53. Paula Coxon, in her witness statement and oral evidence, explained that funding for personal items could come from either the children's team or the fostering team. Person C was receiving foster carer payments out of which the council would expect Person C to fund Young Person A's clothes, food and expenses. However, at the time of initial placement, it was acknowledged that there may be additional costs, such as a

new school uniform, for which the carer would have been able to put money aside. This could be provided by the children's team with the approval of management. The children's team have access to Section 17 funds. This is a pot of money that can be used at the manager's discretion and with justifiable reasons could provide additional items of clothing or equipment for a child. However, if funding were provided in this way, Ms Coxon said that it would be made clear to the foster carer that this was "*just for now*" and that going forward Person C would be expected to buy clothes from the funds provided to her.

54. Ms Coxon told the panel that a social worker from the children's team could also purchase an item for the child with a manager's permission; this might include a bed, wardrobe or chest of drawers. In extreme circumstances, a social worker could also buy an item and claim it back through expenses by prior arrangement with their manager.

55. Ms Burke gave evidence that Ms Campion would also have been able to access the adoption fund for therapy for Young Person A, which she had done. In relation to other items, Ms Burke said that it was not unusual for social workers to purchase items for young people, but that this was "*mostly food or drink*". She stated that anything purchased should be submitted to the council and reported on the file as an expense claim. Ms Burke stated that the items purchased by Ms Campion were personal items and that it was not "normal" for a social worker to make such purchases. Additionally, "*there is no budget for social workers to purchase a looked after child these kinds of personal items*". In her witness statement, Ms Burke explained:

"If the Social Worker wanted to purchase Young Person A clothing she should have discussed this with me or the statutory social worker prior to purchasing the items. Managers need to be aware of such decisions and then come to a conclusion as to whether purchasing items for a LAC would be the correct way forward. However, this did not happen and I never authorised the purchases, nor were they recorded on the system. As the Social Worker was supporting Young Person A in a non-statutory capacity through the Adoptive Team, it was not within her remit to purchase items. Any necessary purchases for Young Person A should have been made by the statutory social worker, as appropriate."

56. Mr Perry-Griffiths stated:

"Purchasing personalised gifts for Young Person A is not normal practice. If social workers buy something for a child that is urgently needed then the social worker would firstly get permission from their manager, record this on a case note and give the receipt to the Council for reimbursement. However, the Social Worker did not provide the Council with any receipts, therefore, it is unlikely the Council were aware at the time. I subsequently spoke to my manager about the purchases as it was not normal practice."

57. In his oral evidence, Mr Perry-Griffiths described how usual practice would be to seek a manager's permission to purchase an item if it were needed. For incidentals, such as a milkshake with a young person at McDonalds, this could be bought and a receipt put in to claim it back. Anything beyond this would require explicit permission from a manager prior to purchase.

58. In answer to panel questions, Mr Perry-Griffiths said that Ms Campion's conduct was a challenge to his role as allocated social worker. He said:

"She was seeing him six times a week; taking him out and buying him gifts. I don't have the time to do that, or to pay £200 for trainers and that is not something I would do as that is not what a child needs. If you have one person doing that and another saying I can't take you out, and you have a child who has been through trauma with numerous challenges, who are you going to connect with? It would not be me."

59. The panel noted that, common to the evidence of each of these witnesses, was that it was highly unusual for a social worker to purchase the type of personal items which Ms Campion had purchased for Young Person A. These were high value items and there was no funding available for such purchases through normal council funding processes. Normal process was for the foster carer to pay for Young Person A's clothing with additional monies being available through the children's team at the discretion of a manager.

60. The panel considered that the nature and value of the items purchased by Ms Campion gave rise to a blurring of professional boundaries. These were not items which would normally be purchased by a social worker for a young person. Of note, Paula Coxon gave evidence that Person C had been annoyed and felt undermined by Ms Campion purchasing these items for Young Person A as she had been trying to encourage Young Person A to save up for items. The panel considered that this highlighted Ms Campion's breach of professional boundaries. Person C was required to act in her role as Young Person A's foster carer with support from the social worker. However, the actions taken by Ms Campion undermined Person C's role and frustrated collaborative professional relationships.

61. The panel noted Ms Campion's position that these were items which she considered Young Person A needed for reasons of self-confidence and self-esteem. However, that was not a decision for her, as his adoption social worker, to make unilaterally without oversight from managers and input from his allocated social worker. The panel concluded that Ms Campion's actions could have given rise to confusion for Young Person A as to what her role was and could cloud the working relationship between them. The panel was satisfied that her actions amounted to a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Young Person A.

62. Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 1a. of the Allegation Proved.

Paragraph 1

Between the approximate dates of 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to maintain professional boundaries with young person A, in that you:

b. Facilitated Young Person A carrying out paid work for your daughter's business;

63. As it had done in relation to Paragraph 1a. of the Allegation, the panel determined that that it would first determine whether, as a matter of fact, Ms Campion had facilitated Young Person A carrying out paid work for her daughter, as alleged. If it found that she had done so, it would then go on to consider whether this amounted to a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Young Person A as alleged in the stem of Paragraph 1 of the Allegation.
64. Social Work England's case is that Young Person A worked for Ms Campion's daughter's business putting up tents and that he was paid to do so. Person C, in interview for the local investigation is recorded as reporting that she was aware that Young Person A had worked for Ms Campion's daughter and that she had thought that this had occurred four times during the Saturdays that Ms Campion had taken him out. She understood that he earned money for this work and reported that he had come home with £20 on one occasion.
65. The matter was investigated by Melissa Rushton as part of the council's local investigation.
66. Ms Campion accepted in her initial self-referral to Social Work England on 30 September 2022 that Young Person A had helped her on two weekends with her daughter's business putting up bell tents 'for a couple of hours' for which he was paid. Ms Campion stated that she did not know at the time who Young Person A's allocated social worker was but that she informed Young Person A's parents and Ms Higgins, Independent Reviewing Officer, of the matter. Ms Higgins, in her evidence, confirmed that she recalled receiving an email from Ms Campion on return from a period of leave in mid-May in which Ms Campion had referred to Young Person A working for her daughter's business but that she had been unable to locate that email.
67. Mr Perry-Griffiths, as Young Person A's allocated social worker states that he later became aware of Ms Campion facilitating Young Person A with employment in her daughter's business through conversations with Person C and an email from Ms Campion. It was Mr Perry-Griffiths' understanding that this had begun prior to his taking over the role of allocated social worker for Young Person A.

68. Paula Coxon noted that she had received a flyer about Ms Campion's daughter's business at some stage but that she was unaware that Young Person A was working for her until 13 May 2022 when other concerns came to light and she was asked to contact Person C to advise that Ms Campion would not be supporting her over the weekend.
69. Ms Campion's position, as set out in her responses to Social Work England is that she had identified that Young Person A was spending most of his time in his room and that his use of social media had been identified as a risk in relation to exploitation. She had offered him the opportunity to work for her daughter's business *"to get out of his room and away from his phone and to have the opportunity to experience team working and gain confidence in his relationships with others. He was paid a small wage for his help. [Young Person A] only worked with me as my daughter whose business it was away at the time"*. Ms Campion reported that Young Person A enjoyed the work and the small amount of money it gave him to buy things for himself. Ms Campion also got Young Person A involved in Thai boxing and American football. Ms Campion states that she felt that these things were in Young Person A's best interests.
70. The panel was satisfied on the evidence before it that Ms Campion had facilitated Young Person A working for her daughter's business.
71. The panel went on to consider whether this amounted to a failure by Ms Campion to maintain professional boundaries. The panel had regard to the evidence of Lisa Burke who was Ms Campion's line manager in the Adoption Team at the council. Ms Burke stated in both her written statement and oral evidence to the panel that the employment put Ms Campion personally and professionally at risk. She highlighted that this gave rise to a conflict of interest for example if there were a falling out or a dispute over payment or health and safety at work. There was also the risk that the employment could impact their professional relationship. Ms Burke noted that Young Person A was vulnerable. It was Ms Campion's role to advocate for him and the employment gave rise to the potential for a divided loyalty and conflict.
72. The panel accepted Ms Burke's evidence that the situation gave rise to a conflict of interest. Young Person A was a vulnerable looked after child. In her professional capacity as Young Person A's adoption social worker, it was her role to advocate for Young Person A, and her ability to do so effectively could have been compromised should there have been a dispute about his employment terms or health and safety at work. The role should have been risk assessed to ensure that it was safe and that it was legal for Young Person A, who was under 16, to undertake the role.
73. The panel further noted that the employment arose during a period when Ms Campion should have professionally been withdrawing her support for Young Person A as he transitioned to a new team. However, she was instead spending a significant amount of time with him during weekends, including facilitating his work for her daughter's business. The panel considered that this further blurred the boundaries between her professional and personal involvement with him.
74. **Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 1b. of the Allegation proved. Paragraph 1**

Paragraph 1

Between the approximate dates of 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to maintain professional boundaries with young person A, in that you:

c. Continued your professional relationship with Young Person A as his allocated Adoption Support Team social worker after you had formed and/or indicated your intention to pursue a caring relationship with him.

75. As it had done in relation to Paragraph 1b. and 1c., the panel again decided that that it would first determine the facts alleged in 1c. are proved before going on to consider whether this amounted to a failure to maintain professional boundaries with Young Person A as alleged in the stem of Paragraph 1 of the Allegation.
76. It was not in dispute that by April 2022, Ms Champion had formed an intention to pursue a caring relationship for Young Person A and that she had continued her professional relationship after doing so. Ms Champion, in responses to SWE, disputes however that so doing amounted to a failure to maintain professional boundaries.
77. On 10 April 2022, Ms Champion wrote to Ms Higgins, IRO, to inform her that having *“thought long and hard about it”* and having consulted with friends and family, *“Young Person A would have the option to come and live with me if that were something he would like to do.”* A copy of that email was in the evidence before the panel. In her email, Ms Champion indicated that she would need a year to make preparations at her end to introduce him to the change. In her email, Ms Champion acknowledges that there would be a conflict of interest given her role for the council and that she would resign when required. She went on to say, *“I am not sure what the process is now but please feel free to give me a call.”*
78. The panel noted the context of Ms Champion’s email. At the time of her email, Person C had been informed two days earlier, on 8 April 2022, by Ms Coxon and acting social worker Emma Johnson, that a negative outcome to the fostering assessment was likely. Ms Champion, in her email to Ms Higgins, wrote that Person C had told her that she had been informed [by Ms Coxon and Ms Johnson] that Young Person A would be going into specialist residential care.
79. Person C, in interview as part of the council’s local investigation, noted that it was following the negative assessment that Ms Champion had suggested that she could *“have him and give up her job”*. Person C told Ms Rushton that Ms Champion had said that *“when he is 16 he can choose where he wants to live”*.
80. Ms Higgins was on leave at the time of Ms Champion’s email and responded on 25 or 26 April 2022. They then spoke together on Microsoft Teams.

81. Ms Higgins, in oral evidence, confirmed that she had been positive about Ms Campion's suggestion for Young Person A as *"residential care is always the last option"*. She had told Ms Campion that it was *"an admirable thing to do"*.
82. Ms Higgins reported that she advised Ms Campion that she needed to *"speak to the relevant people about her plans"*. In her oral evidence, Ms Higgins said that by *"relevant people"* she had meant Ms Campion's manager as their view would have been needed and a connected person's assessment would need to be completed. Ms Higgins said in answer to panel questions:
- "It would not be for me to guide her on her proposed plan, albeit admirable. All I could advise her to do was to direct her to their own manager or those who would do an assessment."*
83. Ms Higgins said that she had *"made it very clear"* that there would be a conflict of interest and that Ms Campion *"needed to find out what that would look like."* Ms Higgins reported that Ms Campion *"made clear that she would hand her notice in and resign from the local authority. It was something that she wanted to do in the future, not now"*.
84. Ms Burke gave evidence that Ms Campion had first informed her of her plan to care for Young Person A on 12 May 2022 when she had come into the office to pick up a mobile phone. It was not a planned meeting but she had shared her intention to care for Young Person A. Ms Burke described it as *"an ad hoc conversation in the office"*. She said *"It was more around the fact that she was considering it and was making those enquiries. She asked me about financial aspects of it."* In answer to panel questions, Ms Burke said that she had not given Ms Campion advice about who to inform and had not taken any follow up action herself; she had *"left it with her"*. Shortly after this, Ms Burke was notified of the wider concerns about Ms Campion's relationship with Young Person A.
85. Mr Perry-Griffiths gave evidence that Ms Campion had told him during a Teams call, followed by email correspondence on 11 May 2022 of her intention to care for Young Person A. She had shared a proposal to convert a garage into a supported living space for Young Person A which would cost around £18,000. Mr Perry-Griffiths told the panel that he had understood that Ms Campion thought this would be paid for by the council. He said that the council had historically provided extensions for foster carers but that this was no longer the practice although interest-free loans could be provided. Mr Perry-Griffiths said that he had thought that the proposal to care for Young Person A was *"very unusual"* and that Ms Campion was going *"above and beyond"* in giving her life to a child. He described it as *"very excessive"* but that, in his opinion *"it was not done to harm him but because she truly really cared for him and wanted the best for him"*.
86. Ms Campion's position as set out in her responses to Social Work England and during the council's investigation, appears to be that, at the time of her email to Ms Higgins on 10 April 2022, she had been *"mulling over and reflecting on the idea"* for a while. She had spoken with Samantha Kelsall on 8 April 2022 who had suggested that she contact the IRO. She was concerned that, following the negative assessment of Person C,

Young Person A would be placed in residential care and that this was not the right answer for him.

87. Ms Champion stated that she had told Ms Higgins that the timeline was 12 months in order to prepare and allow Young Person A *“to build up time with me and my family in a time frame that suited him.”* This would be after Young Person A turned 16 but she could offer him support post-18 too. She had recognised in her email that her intention to care for Young Person A created a conflict of interest with her role as his adoption support social worker and that she would resign from her role at the council.

88. Ms Champion, in responses to SWE, stated that nobody had suggested to her that she should not continue to work with Young Person A as all conversations were informal. She stated. *“It was only a suggested option at this point. Nobody got back to me and gave any advice and guidance”*. She stated that she had not had supervision with Ms Burke during this period. She had had her last supervision with Ms Burke in March 2022 and Ms Burke had not felt that an April supervision was required despite still having families open to her.

89. Ms Champion noted that she had also told the allocated social worker of her intention but that it had been difficult to understand who this was. The panel noted that, Young Person A had had three allocated social workers within a short period of time. Ms Kelsall appears to have been in the role until at least 22 March 2022 although she told the panel that she continued to show as the allocated social worker *“on the system”* into April. Mr Perry-Griffiths was inconsistent across his statements as to when he started the role but accepted that there was period when Emma Johnson had undertaken the role as he had a lot of court work. The panel noted that it was Ms Johnson who had attended the meeting with Person C on 8 April 2022 to inform her of the likely outcome of the assessment. Further, an entry in Young Person A’s case notes for that date, stated that Ms Johnson was acting as temporary social worker for Young Person A until Mr Perry-Griffiths *“completes his court work in approx. 4 weeks.”* Ms Kelsall described the situation as *“chaotic”* and the panel accepted Ms Champion’s position as set out in her statements that it had been difficult to understand who the allocated social worker was.

90. Ms Champion has stated that she also advised the placement team of her intention when she was asked to complete a new placement referral on behalf of the children in care team following Person C’s negative connected person assessment as she *“knew him best ”* and there was a lack of team capacity at the time. She wrote that they advised they were going to have a discussion with team managers. Ms Champion states that she advised Young Person A’s newly allocated social worker [Mr Perry-Griffiths] when she was made aware of who that was; she also advised a temporary social worker [Emma Johnson] and the adoption support team manager [Ms Burke].

91. The panel was satisfied on the basis of all the evidence that, by 10 April 2022, Ms Champion had formed an intention to care for Young Person A. While Ms Champion told Ms Higgins that she had been mulling it over for some time, the panel considered that it

was more likely than not that the negative assessment of Person C two days earlier had been the catalyst for the crystallisation of her intention. She had then contacted Ms Higgins to inform her of this on 10 April 2022, although she had not heard back from her until 26 April. By 11 May 2022, she had informed Young Person A's allocated social worker. By 12 May 2022 she had informed her line manager in the adoption support team.

92. The panel carefully considered whether, having formed an intention as to her future plan and/or having notified it to Ms Higgins, Ms Burke, and Mr Perry-Griffiths, there was a requirement for Ms Campion immediately to cease her professional relationship with Young Person A. It noted that at the time Ms Campion formed and communicated her intention, her professional role with Young Person A was coming to a natural end. Further, the panel accepted the evidence of Ms Higgins and Ms Burke that whilst both of them had acknowledged the potential conflict of interest neither of them, on being told of Ms Campion's intention, had suggested that she needed to end her professional relationship with him immediately.
93. The panel noted that Ms Higgins, Ms Burke, and Mr Perry-Griffiths had all suggested that, at the time they had been notified of Ms Campion's intention, there was no imminent plan to implement it. Ms Campion was contemplating a 12-month transition period and changes to her property would need to take place first.
94. The panel considered that at the time Ms Campion contacted the IRO and then the allocated social worker and her line manager her plans were still at a very early stage and she was still exploring its feasibility as an option. She had acknowledged, and indeed raised, that this would be a conflict and had indicated that she would resign from her role at the council when appropriate. She had not been informed that she needed to do so by Lisa Burke who, although not her line manager now that Ms Campion was in the Breathing Spaces Team, was the line manager in relation to her role with Young Person A. The panel further noted that these events had taken place within a short period of time between 8 April 2022, when in the view of the panel Ms Campion had formed an intention to care for Young Person A, and 13 May 2022 when she was suspended from the role.
95. The panel considered that, in those circumstances, it was not a failure for Ms Campion to continue in her role with Young Person A having formed an intention to care for him.
96. **Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 1c. of the Allegation Not Proved.**

Paragraph 2

Between the approximate dates of on or around 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to inform any appropriate supervisor or manager, in a timely manner, that:

- a. Young Person A had been inside your home address;***

97. Paragraph 2 of the Allegation alleges failures by Ms Campion to notify any appropriate supervisor or manager, in a timely manner, about three specific issues. The first of these is that Young Person A had been inside her home. The panel decided that it would first determine whether Young Person A had been inside Ms Campion's home address, as alleged. It would then go on to consider whether she was under a duty to inform an appropriate supervisor or manager of this; who constituted an appropriate supervisor or manager; and the time frame in which such action should have been taken.

98. In the course of the council's local investigation, Person C disclosed that Young Person A had said he had been to Ms Campion's house and had stated the area where the property is located.

99. Ms Campion, in her interview during the local investigation and her self-referral to Social Work England described an occasion in May 2022 when, having walked the dog together, Young Person A followed her into the house to wash his hands. Nobody else had been there and they had then left. In her subsequent responses to Social Work England, she described what happened as follows:

"The relationship with his support worker with whom he also had a strong relationship also broke down and he was no longer supporting him so I would take him out to run off excess energy which was important to his well being.

During one of these sessions we took my dog to a private field and the young person ran around and played with the dog. I dropped the dog off at my home before returning the young person back, He followed me into the house to wash his hands he would not use hand sanitiser as he has sensory needs and doesn't like things on his hands and the alcohol smell of hand sanitiser so he needed to wash his hands with soap and water to avoid distress."

100. The panel was satisfied that Ms Campion in statements provided earlier in these proceedings has accepted that Young Person A was inside her address in the circumstances described by her.

101. The panel went on to consider whether Ms Campion was under an obligation to notify an appropriate manager or supervisor of this fact. The panel noted that it was not Social Work England's case that allowing Young Person A into her home in the circumstances described by her was wrong in itself but rather that, following it happening, it was a matter which Ms Campion should have reported to her manager.

102. Ms Burke told the panel that if a social worker allowed a young person into their home, this would be considered a significant safeguarding and professional issue and that there would have been an expectation that Ms Campion immediately contact her line manager. Although there was no specific policy governing a social worker reporting that a service user had been in their home, general practice standards and policies would apply, such as the Council Social Work Practice Standards, Children's Social Care

Supervision Policy and Supported Accommodation Safeguarding Policy, which Ms Burke exhibited to her statement.

103. It was Ms Burke's evidence to the panel that Ms Campion had not reported the matter to her and Ms Burke had learned of it from another team manager, Kathryn White, on 12 May 2022. Ms Burke had then told the Head of Service, Nicola Hope the following day on 13 May 2022. The panel accepted that, as Ms Campion's manager in relation to her role with Young Person A, Ms Burke would have been an appropriate manager or supervisor for Ms Campion to report that matter to, notwithstanding that Ms Campion was now being line managed through the Breathing Spaces Team. There was no evidence that Ms Campion had told any other manager that Young Person A had been in her home and she has not positively asserted that she did so.
104. Ms Campion in her responses accepted that this was an *"error of judgement at the time but it happened unexpectedly and I had to make a call of what was in his best interests at the time."* Ms Campion further accepted that she did not record the matters and that due to the number of roles she was performing at the time, her *"recording was not as it should be"*. Ms Campion in her responses further stated that as she had been working from home for so long, the lines had become increasingly blurred.
105. The panel carefully considered whether Ms Campion was under an obligation to report the matter to an appropriate supervisor or manager. The panel considered that while there was no specific policy covering a child or young person coming into a social worker's home, this was a significant safeguarding and professional issue. It accepted Ms Burke's evidence in this regard. The panel considered that for Ms Campion to have Young Person A in her home put both her and Young Person A in a position of risk and vulnerability. It noted that, upon learning of the issue from a third party, Ms Burke had considered it sufficiently serious as to escalate it to the Head of Service the following day which, in the view of the panel, provided a measure of the seriousness of the issue. Whilst recognising that her recording *"was not as it should be"* Ms Campion did not, in the view of the panel, appear to acknowledge the seriousness of the situation itself and the risk of allegations which could arise in such circumstances.
106. The panel concluded that, Young Person A having attend Ms Campion's home, whether incidentally or by design, Ms Campion should have immediately notified an appropriate manager of the matter.
107. The panel was satisfied on the evidence before it that she had not done so.
108. **Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 2a. of the Allegation Proved.**

Paragraph 2

Between the approximate dates of on or around 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to inform any appropriate supervisor or manager, in a timely manner, that:

b. *Young Person A had worked on one or more occasions for your daughter's business;*

109. The panel has found at paragraph 1b. of the Allegation, above, that Ms Campion failed to maintain professional boundaries with Young Person A when she facilitated his carrying out paid work for her daughter's business. It found that the situation created a conflict between Ms Campion's professional responsibility to advocate on behalf of Person A and her personal relationship with her daughter.
110. Paragraph 2c. alleges that she also failed to inform an appropriate supervisor or manager, in a timely manner, of the fact that Young Person A had worked for her daughter. SWE's case is that, given the obvious conflict of interest and risks created by the situation, this should have been reported to Ms Campion's manager so that it could be discussed and a management decision could be made.
111. Ms Burke, as Ms Campion's line manager on the adoption support team gave evidence that she was not aware of the details of the employment until told of it by Kathryn White, Team Manager in the Family and Friends Team. This information had come from Paula Coxon, who in turn had been told it by Person C.
112. Ms Campion's position in her responses to SWE is that she had told Person C and Young Person A's parents (who still held parental responsibility) that Young Person A was working for her daughter. She had also told the IRO, Ms Higgins, by email. Ms Higgins accepted she had read the email but was unable to produce it.
113. In her responses to SWE, Ms Campion also stated that she told the manager of the adoption support team and that no-one had raised it as an issue. She noted that Young Person A had continued to work for her daughter whilst she was suspended because it was considered to be in his best interests and he wanted to do this.
114. The panel found that there was a direct conflict in the evidence as to whether Ms Campion had informed Ms Burke that Young Person A had worked for her daughter. There was no contemporaneous record to support a conversation between Ms Burke and Ms Campion about the matter. Ms Campion's account that she had done so lacked specificity and there is no context to that disclosure.
115. The panel accepted that Ms Campion had not made a secret of the fact that Young Person A had worked for her daughter. However, it also noted that in the period when this appears to have been going on, she had no supervision meetings with Ms Burke. Her final supervision session with Ms Burke took place on 17 March 2022. There is no reference within the notes of that session that Ms Campion disclosed that Young Person A was working for her daughter's business at that time although, on the evidence before it, the panel concluded that Young Person A had not yet started to work for Ms Campion's daughter's business by that point.
116. Ms Campion further stated that she did not know, at the relevant time, who Young Person A's allocated social worker was in order to notify them. She subsequently

notified Mr Perry-Griffiths, as confirmed by him in his statement, on 11 May 2022. The panel has found at paragraph 89 that Young Person A had had three allocated social workers within a short period of time and accepted that it may have been difficult for Ms Campion to understand who was in the role without further enquiry.

117. The panel carefully considered whether there was a duty on Ms Campion to inform a manager or supervisor, in addition to those colleagues whom she had informed of the fact that Young Person A was working for her daughter. The panel considered that there was a requirement for Ms Campion to inform a manager of the matter because of the conflict in Ms Campion's role. It was not a one-off situation and, therefore, it was important that there was proper management oversight.
118. The panel considered that a manager should have been consulted about the appropriateness of the situation. The issue was not simply whether it was appropriate and in Young Person A's best interests to undertake the role, but rather whether it was appropriate for Ms Campion to facilitate the role. This required a discussion with someone who had some form of managerial responsibility, whether direct or indirect, for Ms Campion.
119. The panel noted that whilst Ms Burke had managed Ms Campion in relation to her adoption social worker role, she was no longer her line manager following Ms Campion's move to the Breathing Spaces team. The panel considered that Ms Burke would nonetheless have been an appropriate manager to whom Ms Campion could have spoken. Ms Campion could also have contacted her own line manager (or in their absence their line manager) of the situation because of the conflict of interest to which it gave rise and the safeguarding risks involved. However, there was no evidence to support that she had contacted any manager who had any form of managerial oversight over her actions.
120. The panel was satisfied that Ms Campion was under a duty to inform a manager of Young Person A's work for her daughter's business and that not doing so amounted to a culpable failure.
121. **Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 2b of the Allegation Proved.**

Paragraph 2

Between the approximate dates of on or around 1 November 2021 and 31 May 2022, you failed to inform any appropriate supervisor or manager, in a timely manner, that:

- c. You intended to pursue caring for Young Person A.***

122. The panel found not proved in relation to Paragraph 1c. of the Allegation that Ms Campion had failed to maintain professional boundaries with Young Person A by continuing to work with him having formed the intention to take on a caring relationship for him. In reaching that decision, it found that her professional role with him was coming to an end and when she had notified Ms Burke and Ms Higgins of her intentions, neither had suggested that she should immediately cease her professional role with Young Person A.
123. Paragraph 2c. of the Allegation is a separate allegation about the timeliness of communication with an appropriate supervisor or manager.
124. The panel reminded itself that it had found in relation to Paragraph 1c. that the catalyst for Ms Campion pursuing the possibility of taking on a caring role for Young Person A had been the negative assessment of Person C on 8 April 2022. She had then contacted Ms Higgins to inform her of this on 10 April 2022, although she had not heard back from her until 26 April. By 11 May 2022, she had informed Young Person A's allocated social worker. By 12 May 2022 she had informed her line manager in the adoption support team, Ms Burke.
125. There was no suggestion, therefore, that Ms Campion was keeping her intentions a secret. She had made disclosures to Ms Higgins within two days of her intention to care for Young Person A having crystallised. However, whilst Ms Higgins may have been able to provide guidance, she had no managerial responsibility for Ms Campion.
126. The panel accepted that by the time Ms Campion spoke to Ms Burke on 12 May 2022, she was no longer Ms Campion's line manager; Ms Campion now had a line manager within the Breathing Spaces team. However, the panel concluded that Ms Burke was nonetheless an "*appropriate supervisor or manager*" for the purposes of Paragraph 2c who could advise Ms Campion on how to progress any application to care for Young Person A. This did not obviate the need for Ms Campion to speak with her own line manager in supervision, to explore the impact of her intentions on her current role within the council, but it would have sufficed for the purposes of Paragraph 2c. as drafted.
127. Having reached that decision, the sole question for the panel was whether, having formed an intention to care for Young Person A on or around 8 April 2022, then informing Ms Burke some five weeks later on 12 May 2022 amounted to a failure to inform her "in a timely manner".
128. In considering this Paragraph of the Allegation, the panel again reminded itself that having sought the IRO's advice, Ms Higgins did not respond until 26 April 2022. Ms Campion had not had a supervision session with Ms Burke in April 2022 which might have provided an opportunity for such discussion. Ms Burke told the panel that one had been due at around that time. Ms Campion has suggested that, following the March 2022 supervision session, Ms Burke had said that an April session was not required.

129. The panel carefully considered, against that backdrop, when the obligation to inform Ms Burke or any other appropriate manager arose. The panel had regard to Ms Burke's oral evidence on the timeliness of the disclosure to her by Ms Campion. Ms Burke's evidence was that she would have expected Ms Campion to raise it at her next supervision meeting
130. The panel considered that there was a failure by Ms Campion to update those with managerial responsibility for her at the time that events were developing. While she had not made a secret of her intentions, she had again not told anyone with managerial responsibility for her of her intentions. There was, therefore, no oversight of the appropriateness of her actions or of the scope for a conflict of interest. The panel noted that Ms Campion had raised the possibility of a conflict of interest in her email of 10 April 2022 to Ms Higgins. On that basis, in the view of the panel, she should have notified her own line manager immediately so that there was proper oversight of her professional relationship with Young Person A and any conflict could be managed.
131. The panel accepted that Ms Campion was at an early stage in exploring the option of caring for Young Person A, however, the conflict of interest arose at the point when she first started to explore the matter which the panel has found was on 8 April 2022. The panel found that to wait five weeks before telling a manager of her intentions lacked the urgency which the matter required and that to not do so earlier was a culpable failure.
132. **Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 2c. of the Allegation Proved.**

Paragraph 3

On 25 December 2022, you failed to safeguard Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, in that you:

- (a) failed to seek approval before transporting Young Person B***
(b) transported him out of the county in which he resided;
(c) allowed Young Person B to remain overnight at another young person's address without supervision by appropriate care staff.

133. The context to Paragraph 3 of the Allegation, is that following her resignation from the council and subsequent self-referral to Social Work England, Ms Campion continued to support Young Person A, who was living independently. She has stated that this was done with the council's full knowledge. She was not practising as a social worker at the time but was still on the register.
134. Young Person B was a friend of Person A. Young Person B was a looked after child who resided in a care placement. Because of Young Person B's issues and vulnerabilities, a Deprivation of Liberty Order (DOLs Order) was obtained, and came into force on 5 October 2022. He was initially subject to strict restrictions but by December 2022 he

had been given increased freedom to leave the care setting unrestricted provided he returned by his nighttime curfew.

135. Patience Bhebhe-Coleman was Young Person B's key worker for around 18 months from September 2021. Monica Shields was a Social Worker for Worcestershire Children's Services in late 2022, within the Child in Care team; she was allocated to Young Person B. PC Shaun Murray worked at the time in the Missing Persons Unit for Derbyshire Constabulary and, because Young Person B frequently absconded from his placement, became involved in trying to locate him. SWE relies on the evidence of these three witnesses in relation to Paragraph 3 and 4 of the Allegation. The evidence from their statements is summarised below.
136. On 25 December 2022, Young Person A visited Young Person B at his care placement at around 17:46. The two of them then spent time together and at 20:52 Ms Bhebhe-Coleman saw them leave in a car with Ms Campion. Ms Bhebhe-Coleman was able to identify Ms Campion through conversations she had had with Young Person B two days earlier.
137. On 23 December 2022, at around 13.00, Young Person B had told staff that he and a friend (not Young Person A) were expecting to be picked up by Ms Campion. His friend lived at another care home. When Ms Bhebhe-Coleman and her colleagues queried Ms Campion's identity, Young Person B said that she had previously been a carer for his friend Young Person A. Young Person B said that his friend had not received his Young Person's allowance and Ms Campion was taking them out to eat. Young Person B had not returned to his placement by his curfew and was therefore reported missing. On 24 December 2022, police attended the care placement and Ms Bhebhe-Coleman provided details of both young people as well as the social worker.
138. On 25 December 2022, on leaving the care placement, Young Person B had said that he intended to return that night. However, he did not return as expected and was again reported missing. He called the placement at around 23:00 explaining that he was going to sleep at a friend's house. When reminded of his DOLs Order he said he did not care.
139. Ms Bhebhe-Coleman first spoke to Ms Campion on 26 December 2022.
140. On 26 December 2022, PC Murray was asked to locate Young Person B following his disappearance the previous evening. PC Murray was aware of the DOLs Order and that Ms Campion was alleged to have taken Young Person B to an address in Burton, Staffordshire.
141. PC Murray confirmed with staff at the care placement that they had not given permission to Ms Campion to take Young Person B away. He then spoke to Ms Campion at around 10.30 on 26 December 2022, during which call he reported that Ms Campion confirmed she had collected Young Person B on the evening of 25 December 2022 from an address in Derby and had taken him to Young Person A's address. When PC Murray asked about permission, he stated that Ms Campion responded that no permission had

been granted and confirmed that she had not communicated with Monica Shields, Young Person B's social worker.

142. PC Murray told the Social Worker that Young Person B was subject to a DOLs Order, which prohibited her from taking Young Person B anywhere without prior consent from the staff at the Care Placement. Ms Campion said she was not aware of the DOLs Order. PC Murray told Ms Campion that Staffordshire Police would transport Young Person B back to the Care Placement.
143. Social Work England alleges that when Ms Campion transported Young Person B from the care placement at 20:52 on 25 December 2022, she failed to safeguard YBP who was a looked after child subject to a DOLs Order in that she failed to seek approval before transporting him.
144. Ms Campion provided her response to the regulatory concerns regarding her actions in December 2022 in a statement dated 31 October 2023. Within that statement, she set out a chronology of events. She recorded that on 24 December 2022, Staffordshire police came to her property on behalf of Derbyshire police to ask if she knew where Young Person B was. Ms Campion informed them of Young Person B's whereabouts and was asked to collect him. Ms Campion stated that Staffordshire Police did not mention the existence of a DOLs Order.
145. Ms Campion stated that on 25 December 2022, Young Person A was invited to spend Christmas day with Ms Campion and her family. He had not wanted to do this so Ms Campion and her daughter had gone to his address on Christmas afternoon and had taken him a Christmas dinner and gifts. Whilst there he asked if she would collect Young Person B to spend the evening with him as he too was on his own. Ms Campion had agreed as she did not want either of them to be alone on Christmas day. Ms Campion stated that, at this point, she didn't know he was on a DOLs Order as this had not been mentioned by the Police. She collected Young Person B and took him to spend the evening with Young Person A. She stated that on collection no-one stopped young person B coming out of the house, and no one came and asked her any questions. Ms Campion stated that she did not know that Young Person B was in care and had not asked him.

Paragraph 3a.

On 25 December 2022, you failed to safeguard Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, in that you:

- a. failed to seek approval before transporting Young Person B***

146. On the basis of the evidence before it, the panel was satisfied that there was no dispute that Ms Campion transported Young Person B on 25 December 2022. However, there was a dispute as to whether she was required to seek approval before doing so and whether in not doing so she failed to safeguard Young Person B.
147. It was not Social Work England's case that Ms Campion was aware of the DOLs Order. Mr Harris, in closing submissions, stated that Social Work England sought to prove the stem of Paragraph 3 on the basis that Young Person B was, as a matter of fact, a looked after child who was subject to a DOLs Order; it was not a separate requirement that Ms Campion was aware of this.
148. Social Work England's case was that Ms Campion, in transporting Young Person B on 25 December 2022, had failed to safeguard him. Mr Harris submitted that the fact that she had been a social worker did not "*impart on her an ability to just transport children*". Because of her professional knowledge she would still be expected to safeguard them and to avert risk. In not speaking to an adult prior to taking a 16-year-old child from his home, and in taking him from Derbyshire to Staffordshire, she had failed to safeguard him.
149. The panel found that Social Work England had produced no evidence that, on 25 December 2022, Ms Campion had been told that Young Person B was either a looked after child or subject to a DOLs Order. Ms Bhebe-Coleman exhibited to her witness statement a detailed chronology of the events concerning Young Person B from 23 to 29 December 2022. The first reference to staff at the care placement talking to Ms Campion is on 26 December 2022. PC Murray also stated that he first spoke to Ms Campion on 26 December 2022.
150. The panel asked itself whether, without being specifically told that Young Person B was a looked after child and subject to a DOLs Order, Ms Campion was required to seek approval before transporting Young Person B. It noted that at the time this took place, she was not practising as a social worker. She transported Young Person B as part of the personal support she was providing to Young Person A at the time, so that the two young people could spend time together. Having not been told that Young Person B was a looked after child, she had no reason to believe that he was.
151. The panel noted that within Ms Bhebe-Coleman's exhibits was a statement from her that the care placement looks like a residential property; there is nothing to distinguish it as a care placement. There was, therefore, no obvious reason for Ms Campion to consider that Young Person B was in a care placement. The panel noted that, at this time, Young Person A, who was also 16, was living independently.
152. Set against this, the panel reminded itself that Ms Campion accepted she had been visited by the Police the previous evening, on 24 December 2022, when they were trying to locate Young Person B. The panel considered this alone ought to have raised questions in Ms Campion's mind as to whether Young Person B was vulnerable.

However, on her own account, she had gone on to transport Young Person B from his address the following day, which was Christmas Day, without seeking to understand his circumstances. The panel considered that, as an experienced social worker, this at best showed a lack of professional curiosity and at worst a wilful blindness to the possibility that Young Person B was vulnerable and/or a looked after child. Even had she had no reason to suspect that Young Person B was a looked after child it was, in the view of the panel, cavalier to transport Young Person B from his address at 20:52 on Christmas Day, without apparently seeking to understand if there were any responsible adults in his life.

153. The panel considered that it was not credible that Ms Campion had not considered that Young Person B may have been vulnerable or in care. The panel acknowledged that Ms Campion was not employed as a social worker at the time. However, her name was on the Social Work register (whether she had continued to pay her annual subscription or not). The panel concluded that, on that basis, she was required to make proper enquiry to understand whether there was a responsible adult involved whose approval was required before transporting Young Person B from his home at 20:52 on Christmas Day with no obvious independent means of getting home. The panel concluded that her failure to do so amounted to a failure to safeguard Young Person B in circumstances where she ought, at the very least to have had a reasonable suspicion that he was vulnerable or in care.

154. Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 3a. of the Allegation proved.

Paragraph 3

On 25 December 2022, you failed to safeguard Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, in that you:

b. transported him out of the county in which he resided;

155. Social Work England alleges in Paragraph 3b. that transporting Young Person B out of the county in which he resided amounted to a further failure by Ms Campion to safeguard Young Person B. The panel acknowledged that transporting Young Person B to a different county provided additional logistical challenges for the Police in locating Young Person B, in circumstances where Ms Campion had already had a visit from Staffordshire Police on behalf of Derbyshire Police the night before. However, the panel did not consider that this paragraph added anything to the seriousness of the allegation. The issue was that she had transported him without approval in circumstances where, in the view of the panel, she ought to have had a reasonable suspicion that he was vulnerable or in care. The fact that she had transported him to a different county was immaterial.

156. The panel found Paragraph 3b. of the Allegation proved for the reasons stated in relation to Paragraph 3a.

Paragraph 3

On 25 December 2022, you failed to safeguard Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, in that you:

(c)allowed Young Person B to remain overnight at another young person's address without supervision by appropriate care staff.

157. Having transported Young Person B to Young Person A's home on Christmas Day evening, it is alleged that Ms Campion then allowed him to remain there overnight "*without supervision by appropriate care staff*".

158. The panel has found, at paragraph 3a. that it was not credible that Ms Campion had not considered that Young Person B may have been vulnerable or in care such that she should have sought approval before transporting him. However, the panel accepted that Social Work England had advanced no positive evidence that, as of 25 December 2022, Ms Campion knew that Young Person B was in care. The panel was, therefore, unable to conclude that in transporting Young Person B to Young Person A's address she had "*allowed*" him "*to remain overnight at another young person's address without supervision by appropriate care staff*". The panel did not consider that Social Work England had advanced any positive case that Ms Campion had "*allowed*" in the sense of "*permitted*" Young Person B to remain overnight at Young Person A's address simply by transporting him there, even in circumstances where, on Christmas Day, it may have been difficult to find transport back again. The panel was unable to conclude that, by giving Young Person B a lift to spend time with a friend she had assumed a positive responsibility for where he stayed overnight.

159. **Accordingly, the panel found paragraph 3c. of the Allegation Not Proved**

Paragraph 4

“You transported Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, without permission from appropriate care staff, when you were aware that he was subject to a Deprivation of Liberty order and/or contrary to instructions given by the Police, on one or more of the following dates:

- (a) 26 December 2022;***
- (b) 28 December 2022”.***

160. Distinct from Paragraph 3 of the Allegation, Paragraph 4 alleges that Ms Campion transported Young Person B without permission from appropriate care staff when she was aware that he was subject to a DOLs Order and/or contrary to instructions from the Police on two separate dates.

Paragraph 4a. 26 December 2022

161. Whereas SWE it was not Social Work England’s case that Ms Campion was aware of the DOLs Order on 25 December 2022, it was its case that by 26 December 2022 she had been made aware of the existence of the DOLs Order.

162. As set out earlier, PC Murray was asked to locate Young Person B on 26 December 2022 following his failure to return to his care placement the night before.

163. PC Murray was aware of the DOLs Order and that Ms Campion was alleged to have taken Young Person B to an address in Burton, Staffordshire. PC Murray confirmed with staff at the care placement that they had not given permission to Ms Campion to take Young Person B away. His evidence is that he then spoke to Ms Campion at around 10.30 on 26 December 2022, during which call he reported that Ms Campion confirmed she had collected Young Person B on the evening of 25 December 2022 from an address in Derby and had taken him to Young Person A’s address.

164. It was during this call that PC Murray told Ms Murray that Young Person B was subject to a DOLs Order, which prohibited her from taking Young Person B anywhere without prior consent from the staff at the care placement. Ms Campion is reported as saying that she was not aware of the DOLs Order. PC Murray stated that he told Ms Campion that Staffordshire Police would transport Young Person B back to the Care Placement and that he “*made it very clear*” that no-one other than care staff or the Police should transport him.

165. In both his written and oral evidence, PC Murray stated that he was not aware of any police officer other himself contacting Ms Campion during this period.

166. Ms Bhebhe-Coleman provided a detailed note of the events of 26 December 2022. She recorded the following:

- 10:00, staff received a call from PC Murray asking if they knew who Ms Campion was and raising a concern that Ms Campion had been picking him up.
- 10:07 care staff called Young Person B who did not pick up.
- 10:46, Young Person B called again expressing unhappiness that care staff had provided the police with the numberplate to Ms Campion's car. He told staff he was going to Young Person A's address.
- 12:23, PC Murray called to say he had managed to get hold of Ms Campion and had told her she was not allowed to pick up Young Person B. He said she had agreed to comply. He advised staff to look out for Ms Campion and, should she come staff should inform her that she is not allowed to pick up Young Person B.
- 12:25 Young Person B called to say he was on his way back to the placement and was getting dropped off. Care staff called the police.
- Despite previous instructions, Ms Campion dropped Young Person B off at the care placement [no time specified]. Ms Bhebhe-Coleman invited Ms Campion into the Care Placement and spoke with her, during which time she told Ms Campion that she was not allowed to pick up Young Person B due to the conditions of the DOLs Order.
- 12:50 Ms Bhebhe-Coleman reported to PC Murray that care placement staff had confirmed that Young Person B has been returned home by Ms Campion.

167. In her responses to Social Work England with regard to Paragraph 4 of the Allegation, Ms Campion stated that on 26 December she received a call from Derbyshire Police asking if she knew where Young Person B was. She stated that she told them and the officer asked her to collect him and take him back home with no mention of the DOLs Order. Later that day, she had a call from PC Murray who informed her of the order and asked why she had collected him. Ms Campion had told him that she had done so because his colleague had asked her to do so. She stated that PC Murray appeared unaware of the call from a colleague. Ms Campion stated that having been informed of the DOLs Order, she did not collect him again until some point in early January 2023.

168. The panel considered Ms Campion's evidence in the light of the timelines provided by PC Murray and Ms Bhebhe-Coleman. The panel noted that both PC Murray and Ms Bhebhe-Coleman's timelines suggest that Young Person B was dropped back at the care placement after PC Murray had notified Ms Campion that Young Person B was subject to a DOLs Order and should not be transported by anyone other than care staff or the police.

169. The panel noted the use of the term "collect" by Ms Campion when stating that she had not "collected" Young Person B again, having been told of the DOLs Order, until early January. The panel considered that, for this to be true, Ms Campion must have already collected Young Person B from Young Person A's address on 26 December 2022 at the time PC Murray called her to inform her of the DOLs Order and they were on route back to the care placement. In the alternative, her account that she had not collected Young Person B again until early January was untrue and she had done so on 26 December 2022 having just been advised by PC Murray not to do so. On either analysis, Ms Campion had "**transported**" Young Person B, without permission from appropriate care staff, when she was aware that he was subject to a Deprivation of Liberty order and/or contrary to instructions given by the Police.

170. In rejecting Ms Campion's account, the panel had regard to the detail of Ms Bhebhe-Coleman's log of telephone calls and log of Young Person B's movements on 26 December 2022 together with PC Murray's record of his telephone calls and actions on that date. The panel found that these records were corroborative. Ms Campion had not provided any details about the times she states she received a call from an unknown police officer at Staffordshire police or the time PC Murray called her. PC Murray had searched for a record of any telephone calls by a colleague but could find none. In circumstances where Ms Bhebhe-Coleman and PC Murray had attended to give oral evidence and that evidence had been tested through the panel's questions, it was satisfied that their evidence was more likely than not to be reliable. It rejected Ms Campion's evidence as vague and tenuous.

171. The panel was therefore satisfied that on 26 December 2022 Ms Campion transported Young Person B, who was a Looked After Child subject to a Deprivation of Liberty court order, without permission from appropriate care staff, when she was aware that he was subject to a Deprivation of Liberty order and contrary to instructions given by the Police. The panel found that the evidence in relation to both parts of the stem of Paragraph 4 were made out.

172. **Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 4a. of the Allegation Proved.**

Paragraph 4b. 28 December 2022

173. Having determined that, on 26 December 2022, Ms Campion had been informed that Young Person B was the subject of a DOLs Order and instructed by PC Murray not to transport him, it follows that this remained true two days later on 28 December 2022.
174. On 28 December 2022 at 12.01, Ms Bhebhe-Coleman records that she received a call from Young Person B's social worker, Monica Shields. Ms Bhebhe-Coleman updated Ms Shields on the situation of the last few days, including the missing episodes and concerns over the Ms Campion's involvement. At 13:43 care staff received a further call from Ms Shields to say that she had received a call from Ms Campion who told her that Young Person A had asked her to go and pick Young Person B up from Birmingham. Ms Shields is reported as having told care staff that Ms Campion had told her that Young Person B and another young person (not Young Person A) had gone to Birmingham together on Boxing Day night; the other young person had returned as Young Person B had "*disappeared on him*".
175. Ms Bhebhe-Coleman produced records that at 15:00 on 28 December 2022, Young Person B sent care staff a message to say he was returning with Ms Campion. At 15:48, Young Person B and Ms Campion arrived at the Care Placement. Care staff called the police to provide an update and PC Goodman spoke to Ms Campion during the same call. Ms Campion then left at around 16:15 and staff called Ms Shields for an update.
176. Ms Shields provided a witness statement for these proceedings and attended to give oral evidence. She stated that while she could not remember the specific date, she recalled an occasion when Young Person B had gone missing and she was informed that he was in Birmingham. She and care staff had encouraged him to return to his placement but Young Person B had said that he would only come back with Ms Campion. Ms Shields describes making a "judgement call" in challenging circumstances. Ms Shields could not remember whose suggestion it was that Ms Campion bring Young Person B back. She had spoken on the phone with Ms Campion and had agreed that she should collect him. He was already missing and she said that she was worried that he would continue to be missing. Ms Shields stated that she had stipulated to Ms Campion that this was a "*one-off*" and not something which she should continue to do. Ms Shields was unable to explain to the panel whether she had asked Ms Campion to perform this function as a social worker or a member of the public.
177. Ms Shields said that she had considered calling the police to pick him up but that things were "tricky" with the police as there had been instances where they had refused to intervene because professionals were aware of where Young Person B was and he was not, therefore, assessed as "missing". Further, if the police had gone to collect him, Ms Shields said it was likely that Young Person B would have gone missing again.

178. Ms Campion, as noted above, does not accept that she transported Young Person B on 28 December 2022. She does, however, refer in her statement to an occasion in early January when she says she received a call from Ms Shields asking if she knew where Young Person B was as he had gone missing. At Ms Shield's request, Ms Campion had called Young Person B who had answered and said he was in Birmingham city centre. Ms Campion had called Mr Shields back and she had asked if Ms Campion would collect him as he did not like the Police. Ms Campion had agreed.

179. The panel was satisfied that the incident which Ms Campion described as taking place in early January is the same incident which Ms Bhebhe-Coleman recorded as having taken place on 28 December 2022. It was not suggested that Ms Shields and Ms Campion spoke on more than one occasion.

180. Whilst accepting, as it had done in relation to the events of 26 December 2022, that Ms Campion was aware at this point of the existence of the DOLs Order and the police instruction not to transport Young Person B, the panel had regard to the stem of Paragraph 4 which alleges that Ms Campion transported Young Person B "*without permission from appropriate care staff.*" The panel noted that Ms Shields was named on the face of Young Person B's DOLs Order. It followed that she was "appropriate care staff" and there was no doubt in the mind of the panel that she had given Ms Campion her express permission to transfer Young Person B back from Birmingham.

181. Accordingly, the panel found Paragraph 4b. of the Allegation Not Proved.

Finding and reasons on grounds

182. Having announced its findings on the facts, the panel went on to consider whether the facts it had found proved were sufficiently serious so as to amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

183. The panel took into account all the evidence it had received at the fact-finding stage; it received no new evidence at this stage of proceedings.

184. Mr Harris set out the law in relation to the statutory ground of misconduct. He submitted that the facts which the panel has found proved were serious. He said that the conduct fell short of what would be considered proper in the circumstances and that the falling short was serious.

185. In relation to Young Person A, Mr Harris acknowledged that Ms Campion's actions were motivated by wanting to care for him and that she considered that she was looking out for his best interests. However, in failing to maintain boundaries, her actions affected how other professionals were able to engage with him.

186. In relation to Young Person B, Mr Harris submitted that Social Work England did not suggest that he was absconding from his care placement as a result of Ms Campion's involvement with him; he had been doing that prior to her involvement. However, it was Social Work England's position that Ms Campion had facilitated that behaviour through her lack of professional curiosity into who was looking after him and what should her involvement should be in relation to him. She had thereby facilitated his absconding by acting as she did while other professionals around him were trying to act appropriately.
187. Mr Harris submitted that Ms Campion had breached the following Social Work England Professional Standards (2019):

As a social worker, I will:

1.3 Work in partnership with people to promote their wellbeing and achieve best outcomes, recognising them as experts in their own life

1.4 Value the importance of family and community systems and work in partnership with people to identify and harness the assets of those systems.

1.7 Recognise and use responsibly, the power and authority I have when working with people, ensuring that my interventions are always necessary, the least intrusive, proportionate, and in people's best interests

2.1 Be open, honest and reliable, and fair

2.3 Maintain professional relationships with people and ensure that they understand the role of a social worker in their lives

2.7 Consider where conflicts of interest may arise, declare conflicts as early as possible and agree a course of action

3.1 Work within ethical frameworks, using my professional authority and judgment appropriately

As a social worker, I will not:

5.2 Behave in a way that would bring into question my suitability to work as a social worker while at work or outside work.

188. In relation to standard 2.1, Mr Harris said that it was not suggested that Ms Campion had been dishonest but it was submitted that she had been unreliable in how she practised as a social worker. Mr Harris submitted that Ms Campion's failings related to basic and fundamental expectations of her as a professional. These failings included breaches of professional boundaries which in turn had resulted in safeguarding failures.
189. Mr Harris submitted that Ms Campion had demonstrated a pattern of behaviour in relation to Young Person A and Young Person B across multiple events. He said that it appeared she had lost the ability to be objective and to maintain an appropriate professional distance from these young people. She had not recognised or acted upon the conflicts which the failure to maintain professional boundaries had created.
190. In relation to Young Person A, this had made it difficult for others to engage with him. In acting as she had done, including purchasing personal items for him, she had risked him becoming dependent on her and had turned him off working with other professionals who were trying to engage with him.
191. Mr Harris submitted that this had had a clear impact on Young Person A and gave rise to a real risk of harm. He said that her actions were discovered by the local council rather than as a result of her coming to a realisation that her actions were inappropriate. Her actions had included failing to tell management about events and issues to enable them to address them at the time.
192. In relation to Young Person B, Mr Harris acknowledged that Ms Campion was not practising at the time. He submitted, however, that she was a registered social worker. She had not had the discussions she should have had to understand Young Person B's circumstances and, having become aware he was subject to a DOLs Order, had transported him in direct contravention of PC Murray telling her not to do so. Mr Harris submitted that Ms Campion would know, as a social worker, of the importance of complying with Court orders but she had carried on and transported Young Person B again. Mr Harris submitted that this was a particularly serious aspect of her misconduct.
193. Mr Harris said that the impact of Ms Campion's actions on Young Person B became clear. He moved to expecting Ms Campion to transport him and to a position of only wanting to travel with her. He was vulnerable and at risk of harm. Ms Campion was an experienced social worker and appeared to have taken the view that she knew best; that she neither needed nor wanted advice from others; and that nobody else could tell her what to do. Mr Harris said that this was repeated behaviour which was neither trivial nor an inconsequential lapse of judgement.

194. The legal adviser reminded the panel that at this stage of proceedings, there is no burden or standard of proof and a decision on misconduct is a matter for the panel's judgement alone. She said that there was no statutory definition of misconduct and referred the panel to the cases of *Roylance v GMC* (No. 2) [2000] 1 AC 311 and *Remedy UK Ltd v GMC* [2010] EWHC 1245 (Admin) in which the courts had considered what may or may not amount to misconduct.
195. The panel was advised that the standards for social workers could be found in the relevant provisions of Social Work England's Professional Standards of July 2019 and its Professional Standards Guidance of April 2020 and that it should consider whether Ms Campion had breached any of those provisions, the extent of any such breach and the circumstances or context in which the breach occurred. The panel was reminded that not every breach of a social worker's duty will amount to misconduct; the misconduct must be serious. The legal adviser referred the panel to the case of *Nandi v General Medical Council* [2004] EWHC 2317 (Admin) in which it was said that misconduct was "conduct which would be regarded as deplorable by fellow practitioners" and that this should be seen as a measure of the extent to which conduct could be found to have fallen short of what is expected in the circumstances.
196. The panel reminded itself that, at the fact-finding stage, it had found that, in relation to Young Person A, Ms Campion had failed to maintain professional boundaries in that she had: used her own money to purchase personal items for Young Person A and had facilitated Young Person A carrying out paid work for her daughter's business. She had also failed to inform an appropriate supervisor or manager in a timely manner that Young Person A had been inside her home; that Young Person A had worked for her daughter's business or that she intended to pursue a caring relationship for Young Person A.
197. In relation to Young Person B, the panel reminded itself that it had found that Ms Campion had failed to safeguard Young Person B by failing to seek approval before transporting him. Further, she had transported him without permission from appropriate care staff on one occasion when she was aware he was subject to a DOLs Order and contrary to Police instructions not to do so.
198. The panel started by considering which of Social Work England's professional standards, if any, Ms Campion had breached by her proven conduct. Having reviewed Social Work England Professional Standards (2019) in their entirety, it was satisfied that Mr Harris had identified those that were relevant to the nature, character and context of Ms Campion's conduct. It considered her conduct against each of the relevant standards in turn:

1.3 Work in partnership with people to promote their wellbeing and achieve best

outcomes, recognising them as experts in their own life

199. The panel was satisfied that Ms Campion's conduct breached this standard. It accepted that Ms Campion, in her professional role with Young Person A, had sought to promote his wellbeing and to achieve best outcomes for him, recognising him as an expert in his own life. However, in failing to maintain professional boundaries with him, she had, in the view of the panel, failed to do that which she had set out to do. She had failed to act in his best interests. She had valued her personal relationship with Young Person A and prioritised it over her professional role. She had done what Young Person A had wanted of her rather than what was indicated in her professional role. By purchasing personal items for him from her own funds, she had undermined Young Person A's relationship with his allocated social worker, and with his foster carer Person C. She had not, in the view of the panel, modelled a proper professional relationship with Young Person A, thereby giving him a wrong understanding of the role of a social worker and creating an unhealthy dependence on her. Her actions had distanced Young Person A from the other professionals involved in his care and had made it harder for them to engage with him.

1.4 Value the importance of family and community systems and work in partnership with people to identify and harness the assets of those systems.

200. The panel was satisfied that Ms Campion's conduct breached this standard. In the view of the panel, she did not work in partnership to harness the best assets of the systems which were in place to support and safeguard Young Person A. She did not comply with the professional standards or norms which existed to safeguard a vulnerable service user to whom she owed professional responsibilities. She preferred her own view of what she thought was right for Young Person A over what her professional role required. To a large extent, the panel considered that the way she carried out her role was closer to that of a parent than a social worker in a professional role.

201. In relation to Young Person B, the panel acknowledge that Ms Campion was not professionally involved with him. However, in the view of the panel she was nonetheless a registered social worker at the time of her interactions with him in December 2022. Whilst not required to work in partnership with others in any professional capacity, the panel nonetheless considered it was incumbent upon her as a registered social worker not to frustrate the safeguarding role which others had for Young Person B. The panel considered that her lack of professional curiosity in taking a young person from his home at 20:52 at night without any enquiry as to whether there was a responsible adult in his life amounted to a failure to work with family and community systems that may have been in place to support him. She had created a situation where Young Person B had been only willing to be transported by her. She had

then directly flouted the DOLs Order and the express instruction of the Police not to transport him, which in the view of the panel was particularly serious.

1.7 Recognise and use responsibly, the power and authority I have when working with people, ensuring that my interventions are always necessary, the least intrusive, proportionate, and in people's best interests

202. The panel was satisfied that Ms Campion's conduct breached this standard. In relation to Young Person A, it considered that she had failed to recognise the power and authority she had in his life and the responsibility which came with that power imbalance. She had failed to ensure that her interventions were always necessary, the least intrusive, proportionate, and in people's best interests. In purchasing items for Young Person A she had intervened in a way which Person C did not support, buying him items which, in Person C's view he should have saved for. She had bought Young Person A expensive personal items which he had wanted rather than items that he had needed. She had again formed a view of his best interests which was not supported by others. Her view had appeared to be that because she believed she was acting in his best interests and her motivation was one of care, her interventions were valid and valuable. She had, however, failed to take into account and adhere to ethical frameworks and professional standards designed to maintain professional boundaries and to safeguard not only service users but also herself.

203. In relation to Young Person B, Ms Campion had again intervened when there was no call upon her to do so. The panel acknowledged that she had done so, not in any professional role, but in her caring role for Young Person A. However, she had formed a view of Young Person B's best interests (to spend time with Young Person A on Christmas Day) apparently without taking any steps to understand his circumstances, notwithstanding that the Police had attended her home the night before, when they were looking for him. The panel considered that, as a registered social worker she was required to show some professional curiosity when faced with clear information which might point to Young Person B's vulnerability.

2.1 Be open, honest and reliable, and fair

204. The panel noted Mr Harris' submission that this standard was engaged on the basis that Ms Campion had been unreliable in how she had acted. The panel considered that this standard was engaged on a different basis, in relation to Ms Campion's proven failures to keep appropriate managers informed of her actions in relation to Young Person A. The panel accepted that Ms Campion had made no secret of her intention to care for Young Person A. However, she had not kept appropriate managers abreast of how much time she was spending with him at weekend; of the fact that he had been inside her home; and the fact that he was working for her daughter. This had prevented managers from having proper oversight of the professional relationship or of managing

any conflicts of interest as they arose. The panel was, therefore, satisfied that Ms Campion breached this professional standard.

2.3 Maintain professional relationships with people and ensure that they understand the role of a social worker in their lives

205. The panel was satisfied that, in its reasoning in relation to professional standards 1.3 and 1.4 above, it had already covered how Ms Campion's failure to maintain professional boundaries in relation to Young Person A had resulted in a relationship which was more akin to that of a parent than that of a professional social workers bound by professional standards. For the reasons stated earlier, the panel was satisfied that Ms Campion had not modelled a proper professional relationship with Young Person A, thereby giving him a wrong understanding of the role of a social worker and creating an unhealthy dependence on her. Her actions had distanced Young Person A from the other professionals involved in his care and had made it harder for them to engage with him.

206. In relation to her interactions with Young Person B, although she had no professional responsibility for him, the panel found that Ms Campion's conduct would inevitably give rise to confusion in his mind as to the role of a social worker. The panel considered that, on the face of it, Young Person B appeared to be manipulating circumstances to avoid effective engagement with the Police and care staff, preferring to seek support from Ms Campion over those who had professional responsibility for him. When confronted with her conduct, Ms Campion's response appears to have been to blame others rather than to understand how her own conduct may have contributed to confusion in Young Person B's mind as to the role of a social worker.

207. The panel further considered that Ms Campion's conduct had an impact on Person C's understanding of the role of a social worker in her life. She was new to foster care and found her position undermined by Ms Campion's failure to maintain professional boundaries. It noted that Ms Campion had taken over the role of liaison with Young Person A's school. While acknowledging that Ms Campion had taken the lead in advocating for Young Person A's educational needs, the panel considered that again she did not always act to equip Person C to perform the role effectively, again taking on the role of parent rather than supporting Person C.

2.7 Consider where conflicts of interest may arise, declare conflicts as early as possible and agree a course of action

208. The panel acknowledged that, to her credit, Ms Campion had recognised that her intention to enter into a caring relationship for Young Person A created a conflict of interest and had indicated her willingness to resign at an appropriate time. However,

the panel found at the fact-finding stage that she had failed to inform an appropriate supervisor or manager in a timely manner that Young Person A had been inside her home; that Young Person A had worked for her daughter's business or that she intended to pursue a caring relationship for Young Person A. The panel found that she had not considered the wider context of her actions as they arose and the conflicts that her growing personal relationship with Young Person A was creating. She, therefore, did not engage with managers in a timely manner such that they could provide advice and support. The panel acknowledged that there was confusion about who Young Person A's allocated social worker was from late March to early May and that formal supervision did not always happen when it should have done. However, in the view of the panel, a social worker has a responsibility to take swift action to declare a conflict when it arises and to agree a course of action. In the view of the panel, Ms Campion did not do this.

3.1 Work within ethical frameworks, using my professional authority and judgment appropriately

209. The panel has found that Ms Campion has breached several of the professional standards. It follows that she did not work within ethical frameworks, using her professional authority and judgement appropriately. It noted that she had failed to follow proper processes when making purchases for Young Person A from her own funds when there were clear processes in place to cover who and in what circumstances the purchase of items could be made for a young person. In the view of the panel, this was a failure of professional judgement and a blurring of her professional role and the future personal role she hoped to have in relation to Young Person A. The panel found that Ms Campion thought that she knew better than to follow the rules.

210. Likewise, in relation to Young Person B, the panel found that Ms Campion had failed to exercise her judgement as a social worker appropriately in transporting Young Person B on 26 December in breach of a DOLs Order and a direct instruction from the Police.

As a social worker, I will not:

5.2 Behave in a way that would bring into question my suitability to work as a social worker while at work or outside work.

211. The panel carefully considered whether Ms Campion's conduct called into question her suitability to work as a social worker while at work or outside work. It found that it did. She did not maintain appropriate boundaries between her professional role as a social worker and her developing role as Young Person A's carer. Her relationship with Young Person B, who was Young Person A's friend, was an extension of this failure. In the view of the panel she thought she knew best for these two young people to the extent that

she was willing to depart from proper professional standards, obligations and ethical frameworks. The panel was, therefore, satisfied that this standard was breached.

212. Having identified specific breaches of professional standards, the panel went on to consider whether those breaches were sufficiently serious as to amount to misconduct. It reminded itself that not every breach of the standards will amount to misconduct.
213. The panel was in no doubt that these breaches of the standards were serious and that Ms Champion's conduct fell far short of what would be expected of a social worker. The panel determined that other social workers would be dismayed to learn that a social worker had acted in the way Ms Champion did.
214. The panel noted that Ms Champion's breaches of professional standards could not be described as a temporary or isolated lapse of judgement, her behaviours persisted over a period of some weeks and was repeated. The behaviours were present both in her relationship with Young Person A for whom she had professional responsibility, and Young Person B for whom she did not. The panel considered that the conduct was attitudinal in nature and borne of a belief that she was right and that her actions were proper and justified because they were motivated by care. The panel concluded that failures to maintain professional boundaries and failures to safeguard vulnerable young service users put them at serious risk of harm.
215. Accordingly, the panel found that Ms Champion's actions amount to misconduct.

Finding and reasons on current impairment

216. Having determined that Ms Champion's actions were sufficiently serious as to amount to a finding of misconduct, the panel went on to consider whether her fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of that misconduct. When considering the question of impairment, the panel took into account Social Work England's 'Impairment and sanctions guidance' (updated 23 April 2026).
217. In relation to impairment, Mr Harris reminded the panel of its task in looking at both the personal and the public elements of impairment. He said that it was Social Work England's position that Ms Champion's fitness to practise was impaired on both elements; there was a risk that she would repeat the behaviour but there was also a need for the panel to consider the wider public interest and the need to maintain public confidence in the social work profession and to uphold and declare proper standards of practice.
218. Mr Harris outlined the case law in relation to impairment and referred the panel to relevant paragraphs of Social Work England's *Impairment and sanctions guidance*

(updated 23 April 2026). He reminded the panel that the purpose of fitness to practise procedures was not to punish social workers for their mistakes but to protect the public; a decision that a social worker's fitness to practise is impaired means that the panel has serious concerns about the social worker's ability to practise safely, effectively, or professionally.

219. Mr Harris directed the panel to paragraph 16 of *the Impairment and sanction guidance* and the factors set out in that paragraph which the panel should consider when making a decision about personal impairment. He submitted that, when considering whether Ms Campion had put right any deficiencies in her practice, the guidance highlights that remediation is best shown by objective evidence and that concerns in relation to attitudes and character may be more difficult to remedy. He further submitted that intentional misconduct is difficult to remedy without acceptance of misconduct and evidence of insight. He submitted, as he had done when addressing the panel on misconduct, that Ms Campion's actions were not lapses in judgement but rather taking actions that should not have been taken and then later late deliberately flouting what was right.

220. Mr Harris submitted that a finding of current impairment on the personal element should be made. He submitted that basic expectations of a professional had been breached and that this was repeated misconduct by an experienced social worker. He said that where Ms Campion had provided informal admissions of facts and where she had accepted what she had done, she had not accepted the seriousness or wrongness of her actions. She had attributed her actions to external factors and had shown very little insight or evidence of change and remediation. Mr Harris submitted that what Ms Campion had done, in essence, was to accept what she had done but then to say that she was right to do it. She had appeared not to understand the power imbalance or the conflicts that were being developed. Mr Harris acknowledged that Ms Campion had referred to [PRIVATE] and to having overstepped the boundary between personal and professional relationships. However, he submitted that her expressions of insight did not address the impact of her actions. She still seemed to hold the view that she had been endeavouring to do, and doing, the right thing, particularly in relation to transporting Young Person B and that there was no clear evidence she accepted responsibility or was unlikely to do it again. He said there was a pattern or behaviour which continued through Ms Campion's most recent contact with Social Work England that she believed she was acting in the best interests of Young Persons A and B when she clearly was not, pointing to a high risk of repetition.

221. Mr Harris noted that Ms Campion had chosen not to engage in the hearing so there was no real evidence of insight or of an intention to develop it. Therefore, in addition to public protection considerations, there was public interest considerations in maintaining confidence in the profession and in upholding high standards. Mr Harris submitted that a member of public would be troubled if a social worker who had acted

as Ms Campion had done and had departed so significantly from professional standards were not found to be impaired. He therefore invited the panel to find impairment on both the personal and the public element.

222. The legal adviser reminded the panel of the case of *Cohen v General Medical Council* [2008] EWHC 581 (Admin) and advised that the panel should ask itself whether the misconduct found is capable of remedy; whether it has been remedied; and whether it is highly unlikely to be repeated. The legal adviser further reminded the panel of the observations of *Dame Janet Smith in the 5th Shipman report*, in which she identified a series of questions that should be considered in determining whether a doctor's fitness to practise is impaired. The legal adviser said that those questions were equally relevant to regulatory proceedings against a social worker.
223. The legal adviser reminded the panel not to lose sight of all three elements of Social Work England's overarching objective and that it should ask itself not only whether Ms Campion continues to present a risk to members of the public in her current role but also whether the need to uphold proper professional standards and public confidence in the social work profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the particular circumstances. This is referred to in Social Work England's Impairment and sanctions guidance as 'the public impairment element', and that guidance sets out that a finding of public impairment may be made even if there is no personal impairment and even if the panel does not consider that the social worker presents a risk to the public.
224. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser. In approaching the question of impairment, it started by asking itself whether Ms Campion's misconduct was remediable, whether it had been remedied and whether it was highly unlikely to be repeated.
225. The panel bore in mind that attitudinal concerns, such as those it had identified in relation to Ms Campion, are often said to be difficult to remedy. However, the panel acknowledged that there are steps which a social worker can take to remedy such concerns and to reduce the risk of repetition. The panel noted that prior to these events, Ms Campion had no previous fitness to practise history and was an experienced social worker. It noted that Social Work England's witnesses described her as a committed and passionate social worker who went above and beyond in advocating for young people. Her line manager, Lisa Burke, had had no previous concerns about her practice.
226. The panel also had the benefit of two testimonials which Ms Campion had provided for the purposes of this hearing. Whilst it was unclear to the panel the extent to which these referees were aware of the precise allegations against Ms Campion, both spoke very positively of her practice as a social worker. David Ankers, Clinical Psychologist,

highlighted her “*high level of commitment, professionalism, resilience and dedication to her work and the children and families she supports*”. Samantha Kelsall, in her reference, wrote “*I never found her practice to be anything other than professional, restorative and caring.*” In her oral evidence, she repeated that she had found Ms Campion to be a very supportive colleague.

227. The panel had regard to the context of the misconduct in relation to Young Person A which was that this was a chaotic time at the council. Young Person A had three different allocated social workers within a short period of time. Further, formal supervision did not always take place when it should have done. Further, the panel acknowledged Ms Campion’s submissions about [PRIVATE] and the impact of COVID on ways of working at the time.

228. Set against that, the panel had regard to the nature of the misconduct it has found which was that Ms Campion’s behaviours were repeated and borne of a belief that she was right and that her actions were proper and justified because they were motivated by care. She failed to work co-operatively with colleagues and within ethical frameworks and professional standards and appeared to think that she did not need to adhere to these because she believed that she was acting in Young Person A’s best interests. The panel has found that her actions harmed Young Person A and Young Person B. Both were vulnerable. Her actions resulted in difficulties in the relationships between these young people and the carers and/or professionals working with them. The panel also found that Ms Campion’s conduct gave rise to a risk of harm in terms of the confusion it caused in the minds of these young people as to the professional role of a social worker and the potential to raise expectations about what other professionals could provide within their professional roles.

229. The panel considered whether the misconduct it had found is capable of remedy. The panel determined that notwithstanding the attitudinal nature of Ms Campion’s misconduct, it was capable of remedy. It acknowledged that her attitudes and actions, albeit deeply misguided and harmful, came from a desire to support and advocate for young people in care.

230. The panel went on to consider whether Ms Campion had remedied her misconduct such that it could conclude that it was highly unlikely to be repeated. Ms Campion has produced no written reflection into the matters which have brought her before her regulator. The panel had regard to the written responses provided by her in the course of the council’s investigation and these fitness to practise proceedings; and carefully reviewed these when considering the question of impairment.

231. In considering the risk of repetition, the panel had careful regard to any evidence of insight which Ms Campion has developed into her misconduct together with steps she has taken to remedy the identified concerns in her practice. It took into account that

she made admissions about the actions she took and that she did this from the time of the council's investigation. It found however that while she had accepted what she had done, she had not accepted why it was wrong or why it fell far short of what was expected of a registered social worker in the circumstances. She accepted that there were times that she "overstepped" boundaries and "lost focus" as a social worker. She had also indicated that in future she would talk to more people and would delegate more.

232. The panel accepted that there was some evidence of insight by Ms Campion into the concerns about her practice. However, the panel was concerned that where insight is expressed, it is invariably followed by an explanation as to why she breached professional boundaries rather than a statement as to precisely why it was wrong and should not happen again. In the view of the panel, there was also a lack of evidence of insight into the impact of her actions on Young Person A and Young Person B or the other professionals who were trying to engage with them within appropriate professional standards and norms. The panel found some evidence that Ms Campion feels aggrieved and believes herself to be a victim of circumstances and others rather than taking responsibility for her actions. The panel did not have the benefit of hearing from Ms Campion as to any reflection she has taken as a result of the matters which have brought her before her regulator.

233. Nor did the panel have any objective evidence of any remediation or targeted learning she has undertaken to address her misconduct. On that basis, the panel was not reassured that she was highly unlikely to repeat the misconduct which it has found.

234. The panel had regard to Dame Janet Smith's guidance in the case of *Grant*:

"Do our findings of fact in respect of the doctor's misconduct, deficient professional performance, adverse health, conviction, caution or determination show that his/her fitness to practise is impaired in the sense that s/he:

- i. has in the past acted and/or is liable in the future to act so as to put a patient or patients at unwarranted risk of harm; and/or*
- ii. has in the past brought and/or is liable in the future to bring the medical profession into disrepute; and/or*
- iii. has in the past breached and/or is liable in the future to breach one of the fundamental tenets of the medical profession; and/or*
- iv. has in the past acted dishonestly and/or is liable to act dishonestly in the future."*

235. The panel concluded that the first three paragraphs of the test were met and that in the absence of any evidence of remediation by Ms Campion, a real risk of repetition of her misconduct remained. The panel accepted that Ms Campion had indicated that she no longer wishes to practise as a social worker which may account for the absence of evidence of remediation.

236. The panel, therefore, found that Ms Campion's fitness to practise is currently impaired on the personal element.

237. The panel next considered the public element. The panel concluded that Ms Campion's actions undermined public confidence in the social work profession and in proper professional standards for social workers. Social workers are trusted with the health, safety and well-being of some of the most vulnerable members of society. The public must be able to trust social workers to act within appropriate professional boundaries and frameworks. The panel considered that the public would be deeply concerned that Ms Campion had failed to do so and that she had breached professional boundaries and in so doing failed to safeguard vulnerable young people.

238. The panel concluded that a finding of impairment is required on the public element of impairment to maintain public confidence in the profession and to maintain proper professional standards for social workers.

239. The panel concluded that Ms Campion's fitness to practise is currently impaired on the public as well as the private element.

Decision and reasons on sanction

240. Having determined that Ms Campion's fitness to practise is currently impaired by reason of her misconduct, the panel went on to consider whether it is impaired to a degree that requires action to be taken on her registration.

241. Mr Harris, on behalf of Social Work England, outlined the key principles set out in Social Work England's *'Impairment and sanctions guidance.'* He reminded the panel that the purpose of a sanction is to protect the public, which includes maintenance of public confidence in the profession and upholding and maintaining professional standards.

242. Mr Harris reminded the panel of the sanctions available to it and that it should approach these in ascending order, starting with the least restrictive. He submitted on behalf of Social Work England that the facts found proved, and the misconduct and impairment found by the panel indicated that the appropriate and proportionate sanction was one of a removal order.

243. Mr Harris invited the panel to consider what mitigating and aggravating factors are present on the evidence. He reminded the panel of its observations at the misconduct and impairment stage in relation to Ms Campion's insight and remediation. He highlighted matters of personal mitigation which had been raised by Ms Campion in statements provided to Social Work England [PRIVATE]. Mr Harris also reminded the panel of contextual factors which it had identified at the misconduct and impairment stage; these included periods where Ms Campion did not have formal supervision and systemic issues in the workplace. He also highlighted that there was positive material from Social Work England's witnesses about Ms Campion's engagement with Young Person A, albeit that this material must be seen in the light of the panel's findings.
244. In relation to aggravating factors, Ms Harris reminded the panel that it had made observations about a pattern of behaviour and a lack of insight or remorse. He drew the panel's attention to the long period since the events in question and the fact that Ms Campion had not developed insight or remedied her failings in that period.
245. Mr Harris reminded the panel that it had found a risk of repetition and of harm to service users. He said it followed that this was a risk which must be protected against. On that basis, to take no action or to issue advice or a warning would be wholly inappropriate; they would not restrict Ms Campion's practice and there would be no review upon their expiry.
246. In relation to conditions of practice, Mr Harris reminded the panel that it had not found that Ms Campion's misconduct could not be remedied. However, he submitted that Ms Campion's attitude towards engagement with Social Work England during these proceedings meant that conditions would have no effect. There was no evidence that Ms Campion would be willing or able to comply with any conditions which the panel might impose. Further, some of her misconduct took place outside the workplace such that it would be difficult to identify workable conditions. Mr Harris submitted that, in any event, her misconduct was too serious for conditions to be an appropriate and proportionate sanction.
247. Mr Harris addressed the panel on suspension and removal. He referred the panel to factors set out in the '*Impairment and sanctions guidance*' which a panel should take into account when considering each of these sanctions. Mr Harris submitted that there was no evidence that Ms Campion was willing and able to resolve or remediate her failings and, on that basis, suspension would be inappropriate. He said that Miss Campion had made very clear that she does not intend to engage and does not intend to return to social work practice. As a result, the prospects of her developing insight, and of positively remediating her failings during a period of suspension were very low.
248. Mr Harris submitted that removal was, therefore, the appropriate and proportionate sanction. He highlighted that the guidance indicated that a removal order may be

appropriate where a social worker has demonstrated a persistent lack of insight into the seriousness or consequences of their actions and where they are unwilling or unable to resolve or remediate, including in circumstances where there is clear evidence that they do not wish to practise as a social worker in the future, as Ms Campion had done. Ms Harris submitted that the guidance indicated that a removal order was the necessary and appropriate order.

249. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser and exercised its own independent judgement having regard to Social Work England's overarching objective and Social Work England's *'Impairment and sanctions guidance'*. She advised that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive but to protect members of the public and to safeguard the public interest. Any sanction imposed must be proportionate, weighing both the interests of the public with those of Ms Campion, and the panel should have regard to the impact of any sanction upon her both in financial and reputational terms

250. The legal adviser reminded the panel that the sanctions available under paragraph 12(3) of Schedule 2 to the Social Workers Regulations 2018 are:

- no further action
- advice
- warning order of one, three or five years
- conditions of practice order of up to three years
- suspension order of up to three years or
- removal order

251. The legal adviser advised that the panel should take into account any mitigating and aggravating factors it has identified. It should start with consideration of the least restrictive sanction and move through all the available sanctions in ascending order of seriousness until it identifies the sanction that is sufficient to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession, and uphold professional standards. She referred the panel to the detailed guidance within the *'Impairment and sanctions guidance'* in relation to the factors which the panel should take into account in relation to each sanction.

252. Before turning to the sanctions available to it, the panel considered whether there were any mitigating or aggravating factors in relation to sanction. It acknowledged by way of mitigation that prior to these events, Ms Campion had no previous fitness to practise history and was an experienced social worker. It noted that Social Work England's witnesses described her as a committed and passionate social worker who went above and beyond in advocating for young people. Further, her referees described her as a

supportive colleague and someone who demonstrated commitment, professionalism, resilience and dedication to her work and the children and families she supported. The panel accepted that Ms Campion believed that her actions in relation to Young Person A and Young Person B were taken in their best interests.

253. The panel took into account that the concerns relating to Young Person A arose in the context of systemic issues at the council and in circumstances where Ms Campion was carrying out several different roles simultaneously, and formal supervision had not always taken place. [PRIVATE].

254. The panel also accepted that during the council's investigation and at earlier stages of these proceedings, there had been positive engagement from Ms Campion who had made admissions about things she had done, albeit that she had not accepted the wrongness of her actions. The panel accepted that Ms Campion's withdrawal from engagement had arisen in the context of ongoing frustrations at the length of time it has taken to bring the allegations against her before a final fitness to practise panel.

255. Set against this, the panel identified a number of factors which aggravated the misconduct it had found. It was particularly troubled by Ms Campion's persistent lack of insight into the consequences of her actions and what appeared to the panel to be an inability to reflect on her actions. The panel accepted that Ms Campion had made certain admissions as to factual matters but she had not acknowledged the context and impact of those actions or the harm they could and did cause. For example, she had accepted that she had purchased items for Young Person A from her own funds but had not reflected on why this was problematic and potentially harmful.

256. The panel noted that throughout Ms Campion's engagement with Social Work England, she had continued positively to assert that what she had done was right. As recently as 30 September 2025, Ms Campion had written,

"I don't regret my actions and no hearing or reviews is going to change that and to be honest I'd rather stick pins in my eyes than be part of the social work profession".

257. The panel found that Ms Campion's apparent refusal to reflect on her actions and to recognise the concerns of others in her practice was an aggravating factor. It noted that she appeared able to reflect on the impact which external circumstances had had on her but appeared unable to turn the lens on herself and to explore the harmful impact of her actions on others. This persistent lack of insight had, in turn, resulted in a lack of remediation, some four years after the events which have resulted in the panel's finding of misconduct and impaired fitness to practise.

258. It appeared to the panel that this was a deep-seated attitudinal issue which was present at the time of Ms Campion's misconduct where there was evidence of an unwillingness to accept the advice or views of others in circumstances where they conflicted with her own.

259. Having identified the mitigating and aggravating factors, the panel went on to consider each of the available sanctions in turn, starting with the least restrictive.

No further action

260. The panel first considered whether a sanction was necessary. In light of its findings on impairment, the panel was of the view that a sanction was required. The panel has found that Ms Campion failed to maintain professional boundaries with one vulnerable young person and failed to safeguard a second young person. The panel has found that Ms Campion has demonstrated a persistent lack of insight, that she has not remedied her misconduct, and that there is a risk of repetition. The panel therefore considered that a sanction was required to protect the public.

261. The panel has further found that other social workers and the public would be troubled by her actions. The panel concluded that taking no action would not protect the wider public interest. It would send the wrong message to the public and significantly undermine public confidence in the profession and the regulator's response to such conduct.

Advice or Warning

262. The panel next considered whether to issue advice or to impose a warning. The panel bore in mind that neither advice nor a warning would restrict Ms Campion's practice and so would not protect the public against the risk of repetition of the misconduct which it has found. Further, the panel noted that the nature of the misconduct itself indicated that Ms Campion could be resistant to advice. On that basis, it was not satisfied that advice or a warning would result in any change to her behaviour or to the deep-seated attitudinal issues which underpinned that behaviour.

263. The panel was further of the view that neither advice nor a warning would be sufficient to protect and promote public confidence in the profession or to affirm the importance of upholding professional standards. The panel found that to issue advice or give a warning would undermine public confidence in social workers and proper standards for social workers in a case where failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries and failures to safeguard a vulnerable young service user have been established.

Conditions of Practice

264. The panel next considered whether a conditions of practice order would be the appropriate and proportionate response. The panel reminded itself that the purpose of a conditions of practice order is to allow a social worker to practise with restrictions. Such orders protect the public whilst the social worker takes steps to remediate their practice and may be appropriate where there are identified shortcomings which are capable of remedy, where the social worker has demonstrated insight and a willingness to remedy those shortcomings and where appropriate, proportionate and workable conditions can be put in place which sufficiently mitigate the identified risks.

265. The panel noted that the Impairment and sanctions guidance also sets out circumstances where a conditions of practice order may not be appropriate. Paragraph 118 of the guidance states,

118. Conditions of practice are less likely to be appropriate in cases of character, attitude or behavioural failings. They may also not be appropriate in cases raising wider public interest issues.

266. The panel has found that Ms Campion's misconduct was attitudinal in nature and did not easily lend itself to being managed by way of conditions. It took into account that the conduct had taken place both in Ms Campion's role as Young Person A's social worker, and also during a period when she was not practising as a social worker, making it difficult to manage by way of conditions on her practice. The panel could think of no conditions it could formulate that would address Ms Campion's deep-seated attitudinal issues and her persistent lack of insight. Further, the panel had no confidence that Ms Campion would comply with conditions, noting that she had set out in unambiguous terms that she does not intend to practise again as a social worker. Further, the panel considered that a conditions of practice order would not satisfy the public interest considerations in the case.

Suspension

267. The panel next considered whether a suspension order would be the appropriate and proportionate sanction. The panel had regard to paragraphs 136 to 138 of the 'Impairment and sanctions guidance' which set out the circumstances in which suspension may be appropriate and circumstances where it may not be appropriate:

"When a suspension order may be appropriate

136. Suspension is appropriate where (both of the following apply):

- *the decision-makers cannot formulate workable conditions to protect the public or the wider public interest*
- *the case falls short of requiring removal from the register (or where removal is not an option)*

137. *Suspension may be appropriate where (all of the following):*

- *the concerns represent a serious breach of the professional standards*
- *the social worker has demonstrated some insight*
- *there is evidence to suggest the social worker is willing and able to resolve or remediate their failings*

When a suspension order may not be appropriate

138. *Suspension is likely to be unsuitable in circumstances where (both of the following):*

- *the social worker has not demonstrated any insight and remediation*
- *there is limited evidence to suggest they are willing (or able) to resolve or remediate their failings.”*

268. The panel found that the factors which might indicate that suspension was appropriate were not present in this case. The panel did not find that this was a case which fell short of requiring removal. Whilst the panel acknowledged at an earlier stage of its decision-making that Ms Champion’s misconduct was capable of remedy, she has not taken the necessary steps to remedy her failings. Further, she has indicated that she does not intend to practise as a social worker in the future. In circumstances where she has persistently failed to acknowledge the wrongfulness or harmfulness of her actions and does not intend to return to social work practice, the panel considered that a period of suspension would serve no useful purpose.

269. The panel considered that a suspension order would be insufficient to uphold proper professional standards and maintain confidence in the profession. It noted that Ms Champion had flouted an instruction by the Police and had disregarded professional standards and norms. The panel concluded that a suspension order would not send the right message to either Ms Champion or the public as to the importance of compliance with professional standards.

Removal order

270. The panel, therefore, concluded that a removal order was the only sanction sufficient to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession and to maintain proper professional standards for social workers.
271. In reaching this view it took into account the reputational and financial impact that such an outcome may have on Ms Campion but considered that the protection of the public and the wider public interest outweighed Ms Campion's interests.
272. Social workers hold positions of trust in society and Ms Campion, by her actions in breaching professional boundaries and failing to safeguard a young person, has undermined that trust. The panel reminded itself that it has found a persistent lack of insight by Ms Campion into the seriousness of her actions or their consequences and an unwillingness and inability to remedy her deep-seated attitudinal issues. Further, she has indicated that she does not wish to practise as a social worker in the future. The panel noted that these were factors which were set out in the guidance as factors which may mean a removal order is appropriate.
273. The panel acknowledged that a removal order is a sanction of last resort and should be reserved for those categories of cases where there is no other means of protecting the public and the wider public interest. The panel decided that Ms Campion's case falls into this category not because her misconduct is irremediable, but because of her persistent lack of insight into the seriousness of her actions or consequences, and the indication that she is unable or unwilling to remediate them. The panel was satisfied that any lesser sanction would undermine public trust and confidence in the profession, in the absence of engagement, insight, remediation, and reflection by her.
274. **Accordingly, the panel determined that the appropriate and proportionate sanction is a removal order.**

Interim order

275. In light of its findings on sanction, the panel next considered an application by Mr Harris for an interim suspension order. Mr Harris told the panel that, although there was an existing interim suspension order in place, this would fall away upon its expiry in August 2026. He invited the panel, therefore, to impose an interim suspension order to cover the appeal period before the final order becomes effective.
276. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser that the panel may make any interim order it considers is necessary for the protection of the public, or in the best interests of the social worker. The panel should balance the interests of Ms Campion which may be to return to work pending any appeal, with the need to protect the public, which may require that her registration be suspended immediately.

277. The panel considered whether to impose an interim order. It was mindful that, should Ms Campion choose to appeal this decision, she would be able to practise unrestricted until the appeal is determined. The panel decided that it would be wholly incompatible with its earlier findings if no interim order were to be imposed in circumstances where a real risk of harm to the public has been identified and there are significant public interest concerns.

278. The panel considered the interests of Ms Campion in reaching that decision. It noted that the impact of any decision to impose an interim order would be mitigated by her stated position that she does not intend to return to social work practice.

279. The panel concluded that an interim suspension order is necessary for the protection of the public. It determined to impose the maximum 18-month period to enable any appeal to be determined. When the appeal period expires, this interim order will come to an end unless an appeal has been filed with the High Court. If there is no appeal, the final order of removal shall take effect when the appeal period expires.

Right of appeal:

280. Under Paragraph 16(1)(a) of Schedule 2 of the regulations, the social worker may appeal to the High Court against the decision of adjudicators:

- the decision of adjudicators:
 - to make an interim order, other than an interim order made at the same time as a final order under Paragraph 11(1)(b),
 - not to revoke or vary such an order,
 - to make a final order.
- the decision of the regulator on review of an interim order, or a final order, other than a decision to revoke the order.

281. Under Regulation 9(4) of the regulations this order may not be recorded until the expiry of the period within which an appeal against the order could be made, or where an appeal against the order has been made, before the appeal is withdrawn or otherwise finally disposed of.

282. This notice is served in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the Social Work England Fitness to Practice Rules 2019 (as amended).

Review of final orders:

283. Under Paragraph 15(1), 15(2) and 15(3) of Schedule 2 of the regulations:

- 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), and a final order does not have effect until after the expiry of that period

284. Under Rule 16(aa) of the rules 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:

285. Please note that in accordance with section 29 of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, a final 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>.