

Document name: Ellie Smith and her family: overview and brief for social worker  
Document date: 2019  
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#### Family members:

- Ellie Smith, aged 15
- Danny Brown, aged 11 (not in the meeting – will be at football practice for the school team).
- Mother, Lisa Brown (32)
- Father, Greg Brown (41)

All are White British.

The following referral was made by a local secondary school. The school states that they have advised Ellie's parents (but not Ellie herself) about the referral.

- Ongoing concerns are Ellie's low school attendance, erratic and unpredictable behaviour including verbal and some physical violence towards other pupils. The Education Welfare Officer and Student Relation Officer have been involved intensively since the issues emerged soon after Ellie transferred from primary school. Despite this involvement there has been no change in Ellie's attendance or behaviour. This had led to several short-term exclusions from school. Ellie is now on the verge of permanent exclusion.
- Both parents have attended school attendance meetings, however they don't appear to have followed through with advice given by professionals.
- Two new concerns arose last week: 1) Ellie was seen to consume alcohol on school premises. Staff say they have also seen her drinking out of school. Some staff think that Ellie may also be using drugs. 2) Ellie has told friends she is in a sexual relationship with her boyfriend – school staff are concerned about this because the boyfriend may be older (they have seen him at the school gates and he looks about 18). School has heard the boyfriend referred to as Darren, but they don't know his full name.

#### Reason for referring to social services today:

- Ellie was not in school this morning. School phoned Ellie's mother (Lisa) – it became apparent that Ellie has not been home all weekend. Lisa didn't know where Ellie was, but thought she was probably with her boyfriend. Lisa did not appear very concerned about this, and did not seem surprised to hear that Ellie had told friends she was in a sexual relationship. Lisa had simply commented that the boyfriend seems very nice, although also said that she has only seen him at a distance. Lisa had acknowledged that Ellie should not have brought alcohol into school, but did not appear concerned when the school shared their concern about Ellie drinking alcohol and possibly using drugs.
- After the phone call to Lisa, Ellie did come to school later that morning. She would not discuss where she had been. She was overheard telling friends that she was going home only to collect some clothes and was then leaving again.
- School stated that they had exhausted all their options. They were concerned that Ellie's behaviour is potentially putting her health and well-being at risk (substance misuse, and perhaps sexually at risk, depending on the boyfriend's age).

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- School is concerned that Ellie is beyond her parents' control. Despite significant support and guidance over the past 18 months, Ellie's parents have not taken the advice on board, and any small changes have not been sustained.

Action so far:

- Referral and Assessment Team Manager has considered the referral and decided that, given the concerns, an assessment by a qualified social worker is required.
- You have been allocated the case. You have had a brief discussion with the Team Manager and have agreed a plan of action (check on Local Authority record system if family is known, make an appointment with the family ASAP and see the young person).
- You have checked the Local Authority records and cannot see any evidence of any previous referrals.