

Name of child:		DoB:	
Worker responsible for plan:		Role:	
Date first drawn up:		Date revised:	

## NAS Contact Planning Tool

The planning tool is based on a 5-step model developed by Professor Elsbeth Neil and Polly Baynes. It is informed by the available research on what determines the success or otherwise of contact.

- **Step 1: Consider what the purpose of contact is for this child.**
- **Step 2: Identify the strengths and risks for each person involved.**
- **Step 3: Devise a provisional contact plan in relation to each person with a significant connection to the child.**
- **Step 4: Develop a provisional support plan for all those involved to help ensure that contact is meaningful and can be sustained.**
- **Step 5: Review the plan when changes are needed or in response to a request from one of those involved.**

The authors emphasise that, *'Although contact plans are for children they are enacted by adults and may be helped or hindered by relationships between them and the support that does (or does not) exist'*.

The aim of the template is to ensure that those involved in planning for post adoption contact reflect on the long-term implications and the need to review the arrangement as the child develops and circumstances change over time. It avoids solely focussing on eliminating all risk in contact arrangements, which is not possible. An approach just based on risk avoidance has limitations:

- Undue weight may be placed on potential risks which are not balanced with likely long-term benefits for the adopted person in terms of their identity.
- It is based on a snapshot of the situation at a specific moment in time and ignores the possibility of change.
- Success or otherwise of contact is affected by the characteristics and needs of all concerned over time e.g., the child, the adoptive parents, birth relatives and others.
- There may be insufficient consideration of the critical importance of meeting the support needs of all concerned and how these may change.

It is hoped that practitioners will find this tool useful in providing a logical, stepwise process to assess the contact needs of children and provide a rationale for contact planning, which is based on reputable research evidence.

**List the significant people to this child below who should be considered as part of any contact plan (e.g., those who might be included in the child's Life Journey Work) (Insert additional rows as needed)**

Name(s)	Relationship to the child

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Thinking about the people outlined above and having regard to the strengths and risks of these relationships what are the factors to consider for each of these individuals? Complete the table below *(Insert additional rows as needed)*

Name of person	Relationship to child	Current or previous contact with child	Strengths/positive factors of relationship	What are the identified risks to current/future contact	View regarding plan of adoption

Considering the above what are the potential contact options to maintain these relationships? *(Insert additional rows as needed)*

Name of person	Will direct contact meet the child's needs?	YES/NO	Please outline reasons	Will indirect contact meet the child's needs	YES/NO	Please outline reasons

Having used the Steps 1 and 2 to inform your planning, draw up the contact plan, to form part of the CAR B and then reviewed as part of the matching process to be incorporated into the APR/Adoption Support plan and reviewed as part of Adoption Reviews post placement. This can be reviewed for the APR/ASP at the time of linking/matching.

Name of person	What contact is being proposed? Outline if direct/indirect/virtual/video exchange/letters/photos etc	Frequency proposed.	Factors to consider in relation to contact

Name of Social Worker completing contact plan:

Date: