

## Notice of Decision

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Registrant</b>          | Carrie Anne Michelle French |
| <b>Registration number</b> | 3014364                     |
| <b>Part of Register</b>    | Social workers              |
| <b>Town of employment</b>  | Kilmarnock                  |
| <b>Sanction</b>            | Removal                     |
| <b>Date of effect</b>      | 18 February 2025            |

This is notice of a decision of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

### Our decision

We decided:

1. that based on the facts found your fitness to practise is impaired, as defined in Rule 2 of Part 1 of the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021
2. to impose a Removal Order removing your registration from the part of the SSSC Register for social workers.

### Findings of fact

We decided there is evidence that:

Between 15 October 2018 and November 2021, while employed as a Social Worker with East Ayrshire Council within the (Information redacted) Social Work Team, and during the course of that employment, you did:

1. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, AA:
  - a. between June 2019 and November 2019, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to AA for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020

- b. between around 3 April 2019 and 21 April 2020, fail to maintain an appropriate level of contact with AA as required, in that you did visit AA on two occasions, namely 28 October 2019 and 6 November 2019
    - c. between October 2019 and November 2019, fail to adhere to a management instruction to undertake weekly visits with AA, in that you did have contact with AA on only three occasions, namely at a (Information redacted) on 7 October 2019, 28 October 2019 and 6 November 2019
  2. in your capacity as allocated professional to users of services, BB and CC:
    - a. between in or around 6 November 2018 and 21 November 2018, fail to adhere to management instruction, in that you did fail to compile and record a plan of work pertaining to (Information redacted) BB and CC
    - b. between November 2018 and September 2019, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to (Information redacted) BB and CC for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
  3. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, DD:
    - a. between 6 June 2019 and 3 February 2020, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to DD for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
    - b. between 15 April 2019 and 24 June 2019, fail to maintain an appropriate level of contact with DD, in that you did only have contact with DD once on 6 June 2019 in advance of a (Information redacted) meeting
    - c. fail to complete a task which was detailed as an action from a (Information redacted) held on 4 November 2019, namely, to compile a transition plan in relation to DD by the required date, namely 10 March 2020, in that this task remained outstanding as at June 2020
    - d. between 20 February 2020 and 7 May 2020, fail to visit DD on a weekly basis, as instructed by your manager
  4. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, EE:

- a. between 5 February 2019 and 18 July 2019, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to EE for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
  - b. between on or around 3 January 2019 and on or around 5 August 2019, fail to carry out regular fortnightly visits with EE, as instructed by your manager, in that one home visit was undertaken by you on 15 July 2019, or in the alternative, fail to record details of any visits
5. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, FF:
- a. between 27 November 2018 and 13 December 2019, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to FF for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
6. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, GG:
- a. between 26 October 2018 and 29 January 2020, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to GG for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
7. in your capacity as allocated professional to users of services, HH, II and JJ:
- a. in relation to HH:
    - i. between 8 November 2018 and 30 August 2019, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to HH for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
    - ii. between 12 November 2018 and 2 June 2020, fail to maintain an appropriate level of contact with HH, in that you did only undertake two home visits on 12 November 2018 and 12 December 2018
  - b. in relation to user of services, II:
    - i. between 8 November 2018 and 20 January 2020, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to II for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020

- ii. between 8 November 2018 and June 2020, fail to maintain an appropriate level of contact with II in that you did only undertake two home visits on 12 November 2018 and 6 February 2020
  - c. in relation to user of services, JJ:
    - i. between 8 November 2018 and 22 August 2019, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to JJ for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
    - ii. between 8 November 2018 and 2 June 2020, fail to maintain an appropriate level of contact with JJ in that you did only undertake two home visits on 12 November 2018 and 6 February 2020
    - iii. fail to make a referral in relation to seasons for growth work pertaining to JJ by the required date, namely 5 December 2018
- 8. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, KK:
  - a. between 5 March 2019 and 30 January 2020, fail to record relevant information within the case recording system, SWIFT, in that information pertaining to KK for this date range was recorded in SWIFT, by you, on 20 February 2020
- 9. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, LL:
  - a. between in or around 18 February 2019 and August 2019, fail to maintain an appropriate level of contact with LL, in that you did not have any contact with LL between 18 February 2019 and 22 August 2019 aside from an introductory visit on 25 March 2019
- 10. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, MM:
  - a. between 18 October 2018 and 21 August 2019, fail to maintain appropriate contact with MM, in that you only conducted one home visit on 16 April 2019
- 11. in your capacity as allocated professional to users of services, NN and OO:
  - a. on 25 March 2021, further to being made aware that NN and OO's relevant person was allegedly regularly using a controlled drug, namely cocaine, fail to immediately report the matter to your Team Manager, as required, in that you did report the matter on 9 April 2021

12. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, PP:
- a. between in or around 16 November 2020 and 18 May 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with PP, namely at six weekly intervals, in that you did visit PP once on 18 December 2020
  - b. between 18 May 2021 and in or around November 2021, fail to adhere to a management instruction, namely that fortnightly visitation with PP was required, in that you did fail to visit PP throughout this timeframe
13. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, QQ:
- a. between around 24 February 2021 and in or around May 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with QQ, namely at a minimum of six weekly intervals, in that you did only visit QQ once on 11 March 2021
  - b. between in or around May 2021 and November 2021, fail to adhere to a management instruction, namely that fortnightly visitation with QQ was required, in that you did visit QQ on 2 July 2021, 5 July 2021, 6 July 2021, 8 July 2021, 13 July 2021, 2 August 2021, 20 October 2021 and 9 November 2021
14. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, RR:
- a. between in or around 2 June 2021 and in or around 15 October 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with RR, in that you did fail to visit RR throughout this timeframe
15. in your capacity as allocated professional to users of services, SS and TT:
- a. between around 4 February 2021 and 21 October, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with SS and TT, namely monthly, in that you only undertook one home visit on 25 February 2021
16. in your capacity as allocated professional to users of services, UU, VV, WW and XX:
- a. between in or around 4 February 2021 and in or around 4 May 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with the family, in that you only undertook one home visit on 11 March 2021

17. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, YY:
- a. between on or around 26 February 2021 and 23 May 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with YY, namely monthly, in that you did not visit throughout this timeframe
  - b. between May 2021 and November 2021, fail to adhere to a management instruction, in that during staff supervision on 18 May 2021, you were instructed to undertake visitation with YY at a minimum of monthly intervals and did only visit YY twice on 27 July 2021 and 18 October 2021
18. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, ZZ:
- a. between in or around February 2021 and in or around November 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation with ZZ, namely monthly, in that you did not visit ZZ throughout this timeframe
19. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, AB:
- a. between in or around 1 March 2021 and 17 October 2021, fail to maintain an appropriate level of visitation, namely monthly, in that you did visit AB once on 14 July 2021 throughout this timeframe
20. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, AC, who was subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order:
- a. between 24 March 2021 and 13 September 2021, fail to maintain the statutory requirements in relation to visitation, namely a minimum of monthly, in that you did fail to visit AC throughout this timeframe
21. in relation to user of services, AD:
- a. in or around August 2021, fail to identify and immediately act upon child protection concerns pertaining to AD in relation to potential substance misuse on the part of AD's relevant person
22. in relation to user of services, AE:
- a. in your capacity as duty social worker on or around 18 May 2021, fail to take required action in relation to a child protection concern, and in particular fail to immediately report the matter to a Team Manager, as required, in that you did report the matter on 20 May 2021

23. in your capacity as allocated professional to user of services, AF:
- a. between in or around 18 May 2021 and in or around November 2021, fail to adhere to a management instruction, in that you did fail to undertake fortnightly visitation with AF
  - b. on or around 6 May 2021, fail to attend a scheduled visit with AF's kinship carer, AG, without reasonable excuse or explanation
  - c. in or around May 2021 further to kinship carer AG complaining about your non-attendance at a scheduled visit, falsely advise colleague ZA that you had instructed colleague ZB to call AG and cancel the visit, when this was not the case
24. by your actions at 23.c, act dishonestly in that your motivation was concealing your failure to attend at a scheduled visit from colleague ZA
25. by your actions at 1.a, 2.b, 3.a, 4.a, 5.a, 6.a, 7.a.i, 7.b.i, 7.c.i and 8.a, act contrary to your employer's Case Recording Guidelines

and your fitness to practise is impaired because of your deficient professional practice at allegations 1 - 25.

### **Reasons for finding your fitness to practise has been impaired**

1. Your fitness to practise is impaired because:
  - a. Social service workers must be reliable and dependable and must meet relevant standards of practice while working in a lawful, safe and effective way. By failing to maintain the required level of contact with a number of children and families, for whom you were the allocated professional, you acted negligently and demonstrated a disregard for the duty of care owed. Your actions placed extremely vulnerable children and young people at significant risk of harm.
  - b. Social service workers must maintain clear, accurate and up-to-date records in line with procedures relating to their work. By failing to maintain case notes in respect of a number of cases, you failed to provide an accurate record of support provision which may have had a detrimental impact on future decisions in relation to support requirements. Failure to accurately and timeously record incidents may have exposed the children and their families to risk of harm.

- c. Social service workers must follow risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of people who use services presents a risk of harm to themselves or others and must ensure that relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments. As a result of your failure to appropriately respond to a number of child protection concerns, changes required to support packages may not have been implemented at the earliest opportunity, thereby materially contributing to vulnerable users of services being placed at risk of harm.
  - d. Social service workers must honour work commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explain why to people who use services, carers and their employer. By failing to complete tasks instructed by your manager, including failure to compile and record a plan of work, failure to complete a transition plan and failure to make a seasons for growth referral, and further failing to notify your manager that completion of these tasks was not possible, you demonstrated a lack of reliability and dependability which materially contributed to delay in vulnerable users of services receiving required support.
  - e. Social service workers must be truthful, open, honest and trustworthy. By falsely informing a colleague that you had taken steps to cancel a scheduled support visit, when you had not, you were dishonest.
  - f. Your actions represented an abuse of your position of trust and authority.
  - g. You were a newly qualified Social Worker at the time the behaviour under consideration occurred and ought to have known what was expected of you in respect of your role.
  - h. There is a public interest in maintaining trust and confidence in the register and upholding proper standards of behaviour in the profession. Your behaviour damages the reputation of the profession and needs to be marked as unacceptable.
2. You have failed to follow parts 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.10, 4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.7, 5.8, 6.1 and 6.2 of the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers in force from 1 November 2016.



## **Sanction**

After referring to our Decisions Guidance, we decided to impose a Removal Order, removing your registration from the SSSC Register.

## **Reasons for the sanction**

When making our decision we considered the following factors:

### **Factors of concern**

- Your behaviour placed vulnerable users of services at significant risk of harm.
- You were a newly qualified Social Worker at the time the behaviour occurred, therefore ought to have been fully aware of your responsibilities in respect of your role. You had also undertaken relevant induction training.
- There is a prolonged pattern of analogous concerning behaviour under consideration and given that you are not currently employed in a role that requires registration with the SSSC, there is no information held in respect of recent practice.
- The behaviour relates directly to your employment in the social service sector and the care of vulnerable users of services.
- Your behaviour represented an abuse of the trust placed in you by your employer, the users of services and their families.
- Your employer implemented supports to address your failings, including increased supervision, an opportunity to complete the Newly Qualified Social Worker programme for a second time, peer support, reintroduction to the role, protected caseload both in terms of numbers and complexity and provision of additional training. Your employer confirmed that these supports would not be sustainable on a long-term basis and that they did not result in adequate improvement in respect of your practice.
- The behaviour at 23.c above was indicative of concealment of wrongdoing.
- Your behaviour showed a high disregard for the Codes of Practice.
- Taking account of the factors detailed above, it appears that there is a high risk of repetition.

**Factors in your favour**

- You have complied fully with the requirements of the SSSC investigation.
- You have accepted responsibility for some of the behaviour and demonstrated a degree of insight and remorse in this regard.
- The most recent behaviour under consideration occurred almost three years ago.

**Reasons why other sanctions are not appropriate**

- A warning would not be appropriate as it would not adequately address the impairment of your fitness to practise. A warning would give no protection to people who use services.
- A condition would not be appropriate because taking account of the level of support implemented by your employer that did not result in adequate improvement in your practice, it appears that there are no conditions which could be placed on you which would address why your fitness to practise is impaired.
- A warning plus conditions would not be appropriate due to the reasons outlined above.
- A Suspension Order would not be appropriate as your behaviour is fundamentally incompatible with continuing registration. The interests of people who use services and the public would not be sufficiently protected by any period of suspension. There is no evidence a period of suspension would allow you to remedy the cause of the impairment of your fitness to practise.
- For the reasons outlined above a Suspension Order plus conditions would not be appropriate.
- The SSSC considers a Removal Order is the most appropriate sanction as it is both necessary and justified in the public interest and to maintain the continuing trust and confidence in the social service profession and the SSSC as the regulator of the profession.

**Documents we have referred to**

- The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021.
- Decisions Guidance for Fitness to Practise Panels and Scottish Social Service Council staff.

**Imposing the Removal Order**

Under the Scottish Social Services Council (Fitness to Practise) Rules 2016 (the Rules) as amended by the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2017 and the Fitness to Practise (Amendment) Rules 2021, we can impose a Removal Order if you do not ask for a hearing before a Fitness to Practise Panel.

We wrote to you on 6 January 2025 to tell you we wanted to place a Removal Order on your registration. After explaining the consequences and recommending you take legal advice, you have not asked for the case to be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. We are therefore permitted by the Rules to impose this Removal Order.

**Date of effect**

The notice comes into effect on 18 February 2025.