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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
FAMILY DIVISION**

Neutral Citation: [2025] EWHC 378 (Fam)
E, Z, D, V (Welfare)
Royal Courts of Justice
Strand, London, WC2A 2LL

Case Number: FD23P00574

Date: 21 February 2025

Before
His Honour Judge Middleton-Roy
Acting as a Judge of the High Court

Between

A

Applicant

-and-

R

First Respondent

-and-

N

Second Respondent

Ms Jennifer Perrins, Counsel for the Applicant, instructed by International Family Law Group LLP
Mr Gibson-Lee, Counsel for the Respondents, instructed by Chancery Children's Services Solicitors

Hearing dates: 18-19 February 2025

APPROVED JUDGMENT

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His Honour Judge Middleton-Roy:

Anonymity

1. In line with the Practice Guidance of the President of the Family Division issued in December 2018, the names of the children and the adult parties in this judgment have been anonymised having regard to the implications for the children of placing personal details and information in the public domain. The anonymity of the children and members of their family must be strictly preserved.

The Applications and Background

2. This Court remains concerned with the welfare of four children. They will continue to be referred to in this judgment by the anonymous initials, 'E', 'Z', 'D' and 'V'. The eldest child is of senior school age. The younger children are each of primary school age. Uganda is the country of origin of each of the children and the adult parties.
3. The background facts are set out in the judgment of this Court of 26 April 2024 *E, Z, D, V (Inherent Jurisdiction: Refusal of Return Order), Re* [2024] EWHC 988 (Fam) The father had applied, unsuccessfully, under the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court for an Order for the summary return of the children to the jurisdiction of the Republic of Uganda. The children have remained living in the jurisdiction of England and Wales now for 2 years, 3 months, since entering this jurisdiction in November 2022. The circumstances of their arrival in the United Kingdom are set out in the Court's judgment of 26 April 2024.
4. The Applicant is the father of the oldest three children. The First Respondent is their mother. The Second Respondent is the husband of the First Respondent. He is the father of the youngest child, 'V'. 'V's paternity was established during these proceedings. The Applicant has the benefit of public funding. The Respondents do not qualify for public funding. They are privately funding this litigation.
5. The children were the subject of a final judgment in September 2022, made by consent, in the Chief Magistrates' Court in Uganda following the dissolution of the marriage between the Applicant father and the mother. The judgment in the Ugandan Court records that the Applicant and the mother would share joint custody for the children. It is not in dispute that the mother then removed the children from Uganda without the Applicant's consent, in breach of the terms of the judgment in the Ugandan proceedings.
6. This Court determined in April 2024 that it was not the best interests of any of the subject children for a summary return Order to be made under the High Court's inherent jurisdiction, requiring the children's return to the jurisdiction of Uganda. The Court declined to make an Order for the summary return of the children. The father's summary return application was dismissed.
7. The Applicant told the Court in his statement which followed this Court's determination, "I accept, with the benefit of hindsight, that the court made the right decision to allow the girls to continue living in England, given the girls' expressed wishes. I accept the Judge's analysis in his judgment that 'there is a greater prospect of a relationship between the father and the children being maintained if their wishes and feelings are listened to than if not.' I accept that the children will continue to live in England." In his final statement in January 2025, the Applicant accepted "on reflection" that the decision of the Court for the children to remain in England "is in the girls' best interests due to the opportunities that are available to the girls in England." The Applicant continues to pursue an Order permitting temporary removal of the children from the jurisdiction of England and Wales for the purposes of spending time with him in Uganda. He offers assurances that he would not seek to enforce any past breach by the mother of the Ugandan Order.

8. At this final welfare hearing, the Applicant father now applies variously for a Child Arrangements Order, a Specific Issue Order, a Prohibited Steps Order and for a Parental Responsibility Order. He seeks Orders requiring the mother to make the children available to spend time with him directly in both England and in Uganda and indirectly by video twice weekly. He seeks Parental Responsibility in respect of the youngest child, 'V'. He seeks a change of name for each child to include the paternal family name. He seeks an Order that the children's travel documents should continue to be held by the mother's solicitors and an Order prohibiting the Respondents from removing the children onwards from the jurisdiction of England and Wales to any third State.
9. Subsequent to the Court's decision in April 2024, the Court made Orders for frequent indirect contact to take place between the children and the Applicant. Further, the Court ordered direct contact to take place for one week in England. The children spent time with their father in England as ordered.
10. The Respondents assert that contact between the Applicant and the children has been disruptive to the children and the whole family. The Respondents assert that the Applicant has attempted to manipulate the children emotionally, denigrating the Second Respondent and sharing with the children information about the Court proceedings, with the aim of turning the children against the Respondents. Further, the Respondents assert that the Applicant has not adhered to fixed times for video calls, communicating with them at late hours in the evening and in the early hours of the morning.
11. The Applicant asserts that the Respondents have physically chastised the children and have failed to adhere to regular indirect video contact. He accepts sending "inappropriate" text messages to the children, which he states were, "ill conceived." He further accepts that his, "reintroduction into the girls' lives may have caused some disruption at home."
12. The Respondents' position, prior to this Final Hearing, was to oppose any contact between the children and the Applicant.
13. With the benefit of skilled advice from Counsel for each party and with some judicial steer, at Final Hearing the issues for the Court to determine narrowed. The Respondents do not now oppose the children all spending direct time with the Applicant twice each year in England, during the school holidays, for up to two weeks in the summer school holidays and half of the shorter school holiday in either the Spring or Winter terms. Further, the Respondents do not oppose the children all having indirect contact with the Applicant, up to twice each week, at a defined time, for a defined period.
14. The mother continues to oppose the children spending any time with the Applicant in Uganda at this stage. She expressed being open to the prospect of the oldest three children holidaying in Uganda with their father at some stage in the future, after a period of two years, once they have settled into an established routine of contact in England. The mother and the Second Respondent oppose the youngest child, 'V', spending any time with the Applicant in Uganda. The Respondents both oppose the Applicant having Parental Responsibility for 'V'. The applications for a change of name, Prohibited Steps Order and continued retention of travel documents were all opposed.
15. The Court had the benefit of considering a bundle of documents comprising 730 pages, together with the parties' position statements. Further, this Court had the unique benefit of hearing oral evidence from the Cafcass Family Court Adviser, Ms Huntington, alongside her written reports of February 2024 and October 2024. By agreement, no oral evidence was heard from the parties.
16. At this Final Hearing, the Court's paramount consideration is the welfare of each child.
17. The issues before the Court to determine at the outset of the Final Hearing were:

- (a) Whether all four children should spend time with the Applicant in Uganda and if so, what steps, if any, should be taken prior to such contact;
 - (b) Whether all four children should spend time with the Applicant in England;
 - (c) What indirect contact should take place between the Applicant and children;
 - (d) Whether the Applicant should have Parental Responsibility in relation to the child 'V';
 - (e) Whether the children's names should include the paternal name;
 - (f) Whether the children's travel documents should continue to be held by solicitors;
 - (g) Whether a Prohibited Steps Order should be made to prevent onward removal of the children to a third State.
18. Uganda is not a contracting party or signatory to the Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction ("The Hague Convention"). There is agreement between the parties that there is no need for this Court to hear expert evidence. Each party obtained advice from Ugandan lawyers. There is broad agreement between the parties that it is possible for an Order made by the Court in England and Wales regarding the arrangements for the children to be recognised and enforced in a Ugandan Court by way of a 'mirror Order' for the children, if it is in the child's best interests. Further, the parties agree it is possible for the Courts in Uganda to provide for 'custody' orders. Moreover, there is agreement that in Uganda, the Children Act Chapter 62 emphasises the best interests of the child in family disputes. There is agreement that a breach of any Order made in Uganda or any undertakings given could be enforced as they would in England and Wales by proceedings for contempt of court. Both legal systems are derived from a similar common law foundation and there are proper mechanisms for enforcing a breach.

19. All parties were present and legally represented at this Final Hearing. The Applicant father attended by video from Uganda. The Court was once again greatly assisted by skilled representation from Ms Perrins and Mr Gibson-Lee of Counsel, for which the Court is grateful.

The Legal Framework:

20. The choice of whether this Court makes any Order, and if so which, is to be determined by the Court affording paramount consideration to the child's welfare under s.1 Children Act 1989.
21. In any proceedings in which any question with respect to the upbringing of a child arises, the Court shall have regard to the general principle that any delay in determining the question is likely to prejudice the welfare of the child (s.1(2) Children Act 1989).
22. A Court is to presume, unless the contrary is shown, that involvement of a parent in the life of the child concerned will further the child's welfare (s.1(2A) Children Act 1989).
23. When assessing whether the contrary is shown for the purposes of s.1(2A) Children Act 1989, MacDonald J in *D v E (by her Children's Guardian)* [2021] EWFC 37 observed that Courts have, historically, held that it is almost always in the interest of a child whose parents are separated that the child should have contact with the parent with whom he or she is not living. This principle, and the following further applicable principles, can be drawn from the decisions of the Court of Appeal in *Re C (Direct Contact: Suspension)* [2011] 2 FLR 912, *Re W (Direct Contact)* [2013] 1 FLR 494 and *Re J-M (A Child)* [2014] EWCA Civ 434 at [25]:
- (a) The welfare of the child is paramount and the child's best interests must take precedence over any other consideration;
 - (b) There is a positive obligation on the State and therefore on the Judge to take measures to promote contact, grappling with all available alternatives and taking all necessary steps that can reasonably be demanded, before abandoning hope of achieving contact;
 - (c) However, the positive obligation on the State, and therefore on the Court, is not absolute. Whilst authorities must do their utmost to facilitate the co-operation and understanding of all concerned, any obligation to apply coercion in this area must be limited since the

- interests, as well as the rights and freedoms of all concerned must be taken into account and, more particularly, so must the best interests of the child;
- (d) Excessive weight should not be accorded to short term problems and the Court should take a medium- and long-term view;
 - (e) Contact should be terminated only in exceptional circumstances where there are cogent reasons for doing so, as a last resort, when there is no alternative, and only if contact will be detrimental to the child's welfare. The key question, and the question requiring stricter scrutiny, is whether the Court has taken all necessary steps to facilitate contact as can reasonably be demanded in the circumstances of the particular case.

These principles must be read in light of Family Procedure Rule 2010 Practice Direction 12J, entitled "Child Arrangements and Contact Orders: Domestic Abuse and Harm."

- 24. The Court must have regard to the matters set out in the welfare checklist in s.1(3) Children Act 1989 and in particular to: (a) the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child concerned, considered in the light of their age and understanding; (b) their physical, emotional and educational needs; (c) the likely effect on the child of any change in his circumstances; (d) their age, sex, background and any characteristics of the child which the Court considers relevant; (e) any harm which the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering; (f) how capable each of the child's parents, and any other person in relation to whom the Court considers the question to be relevant, is of meeting the child's needs; (g) the range of powers available to the Court under this Act in the proceedings in question.
- 25. The Court must also have regard to the non-intervention principle in s.1(5), namely that the Court in considering whether or not to make one or more Orders under this Act with respect to a child, shall not make the Order or any of the Orders unless it considers that doing so would be better for the child than making no Order at all.

Evidence and Analysis

- 26. Miss Huntington, Family Court Adviser met with the children and the adult parties. Miss Huntington told the Court in her report that the eldest child, 'E', "referenced having spent time with her father in the summer and spoke of her closeness to her mother and sisters. She conveyed that things were working well at home and depicted a positive relationship with her mother, whom she felt able to talk to and felt largely understood by. ['E'] depicted a limited relationship with [her stepfather] whom she described as either at work or in his room. ['E'] did not express any disquiet about this, stating that [her stepfather] did not tell her what to do. However, she spoke of an incident whereby she felt that [he] had been unhappy at the children's behaviour and had said, "you're going to make a decision that you're going to regret". ['E'] interpreted this as a warning although she was unsure what exactly was meant. ['E'] was tearful when recounting this to me and expressed that she did not like how [he] had spoken to them."
- 27. 'E' told the Family Court Adviser that 'E' and her father (the Applicant), "get on sometimes," and described a shared interest in football: "In exploring the occasions they did not get on, ['E'] referenced being told off by him... [she] referred to her father having bought the children phones, describing that it is mostly ['Z'] and ['D'] who call their father and dominate their conversations, although she felt that she had sufficient opportunity to speak to him. ['E'] enjoyed the time spent with her father in August 2024, stating that it was 'amazing' to see him and spend time together, depicting this as natural and easy. [She] felt sad at having to say goodbye to her father and appeared tearful when discussing this, although she was resistant to discuss this further. [She] did not report any negativity in the way that the adults spoke about each other and denied ever sensing tension between them. [She] appeared hesitant in providing a view with regard to ongoing spending time arrangements, expressing uncertainty in respect of the frequency of contact with her father. [She] appeared unsure with regard to the potential to visit her father in Uganda and expressed that she would not want to miss school. [She] was tearful once more but would not be drawn when I sought to explore her feelings. At a later stage of the discussion, she said that she would like her father to visit them in England

again. [She] expressed that her ideal scenario for her family would be to go back to the time when her parents were together, as it was fun to have both of them.”

28. The second oldest child, ‘Z’, described everyone in her family as ‘kind’: “She conveyed tensions in her relationship with her mother, stating that she sometimes fights with her mother over what she considered to be unfair rules in the house. [She] described the situation in her family as ‘up and down’...She spoke of being able to see her father in the summer holidays and conveyed her distress at him having to return to Uganda, noting that her father had also cried. [‘Z’] said that she loved her parents equally and wanted to be able to see them both. [She] felt that if her father lived in this country, it would be far easier. She told me that her father was always missing her and her sisters, that he told her that he was lonely and that he had no-one to be with. [She] said that she had felt bad when her father had expressed that he only had their company for one week. Poignantly, [‘Z’] articulated her sense of divided loyalties, stating that when they are with their father the girls feel like they have abandoned their mother but when with their mother, they feel like they have abandoned their father. [She] wished for her father to come to England to live, as she viewed this as resolving the difficulties and enabling her to spend time with both parents. [She] was distressed at having not seen her father for almost 2 years, which she said had been hard. [She] said that it was good that she got to be with her mother and sisters.”
29. ‘Z’ depicted arguments with her mother and stepfather, describing her stepfather as, “bossy, demanding and as coming between them and their mother.” ‘Z’ had previously spoken in more positive terms about her stepfather. She told the Family Court Adviser, he had “changed.” ‘Z’ was noted by the Family Court Adviser to be, “aware of her father’s negative view of [her stepfather], stating that her father had voiced this to her. [‘Z’] said that her father had told her of his anger that their mother had brought them to the UK and repeatedly questioned why [her stepfather] would leave his own children to care for another person’s children.” ‘Z’ informed the Family Court Adviser that she had shared her feelings of distress with her mother, whom she felt had listened to her.
30. ‘Z’ was noted by the school to have spoken, “about difficulties in her home life. She had expressed how hard it was for her to get used to her parents’ divorce and her dislike of her mother’s partner. [‘Z’] conveyed her father’s anger that her mother had brought her and her sisters to the UK without his consent, although she also said that he had told her that he did not hate [her mother] because she is their mother. [‘Z’] felt that her mother prioritised her partner over the children, had less time for them and took his side over theirs. [‘Z’] said that she and her sisters had spoken to their mother, asking for her to support them more. She said that she and one of her sisters wish to live with their father because it is not working out with their mother. However, if things were to work out, [‘Z’] would wish to stay with her mother in this country and also with her father. [‘Z’] spoke of having overheard her mother and stepfather talking about the proceedings and speaking negatively about her father, which had upset her. The school noted that prior to September 2024, [‘Z’] had not come to their attention with regard to any difficulties or concerns.”
31. ‘Z’ was noted to depict a positive relationship with her father, whom she described as ‘fun.’ “She described video calls and messaging and her pleasure in being able to speak to him anytime. [‘Z’] was mindful not to call her father in her mother’s presence, as she did not feel that her father would be comfortable with that. She inferred that she was expected to report back to her father, commenting that her father told her that ‘it’s his responsibility to know what’s happening’. The week spent with her father in August 2024 was described as ‘amazing’ and [‘Z’] highlighted her enjoyment of spending time with him.” ‘Z’s clear preference was for her father to come to England. She also expressed a wish to have a holiday to Uganda. The Family Court Adviser told the Court, “[‘Z’] pleaded with me to ask the judge to enable her father to come to England to live or in the alternative to allow him to visit many times.” Further, the Family Court Adviser noted, “However, she conveyed a sense of responsibility for having to make a decision, which appeared prompted by her father’s encouragement to choose her own path and to ask for something if she wants it. [‘Z’] said

that her father had told her that if she wants to stay with her mother, he will be happy, but that he would also be happy for her to stay with him.”

32. The child ‘D’ proposed to the Family Court Adviser that ‘D’ could live with each parent for a year at a time, so that she had the opportunity to spend time with both. She told the Family Court Adviser, “Things had been up and down since she had last seen me, describing arguments in the family about her mother and stepfather removing the Wi-Fi network. Whilst [‘D’] described a good relationship with her mother, she said that she did not get on that well with [her stepfather], portraying him as authoritative and her mother as taking his side. She wished her mother would spend more time with her and her sisters, instead of her stepfather. [‘D’] also referred to [her stepfather’s] comment to them that they would regret their decisions and described that this was said in the context of an argument and that it had made her feel sad.”
33. ‘D’ described her father as ‘nice’ and said, “he asks us if we want to go with him”. ‘D’ was noted to speak to her father via the device he bought her and through ‘Z’s phone. ‘D’ was noted to show reluctance to speak to her father in the vicinity of her mother, “saying that she would be ‘scared’ to, although she could not expand further on this.” ‘D’ expressed her wish to be able to speak to her father in the same way that she talks to her mother, to be in the same country and to spend time with him as she does her mother. She described the week spent with her father in England in August 2024 positively. She was pleased to have had the opportunity to spend time with him, wishing that she had longer with him. ‘D’ expressed a wish to see her father more often, to spend alternate years with each parent and to live in Uganda when with her father. Additionally, she would wish her father to visit them in England more often. ‘D’ indicated having overheard her mother and stepfather talking in the night and that they were planning to move to Canada and being derogatory about her father. She told the Family Court Adviser that in an ideal world, she would wish for her parents to reunite, indicating, “She did not know who to pick and it was hard not seeing one parent... Positive emotions were associated with the ability to see both parents and sadness was attributed to her separation from her father. As with [‘Z’], [‘D’] expressed that when with her mother, she feels like she has abandoned her father and vice versa.”
34. In respect of the youngest child, the Family Court Adviser informed the Court in her written analysis that a referral was made to the Local Authority following the child ‘V’ “speaking of experiencing physical chastisement by her mother...I was informed that the Local Authority made enquiries with the children’s schools and spoke to [the mother]. [The mother] acknowledged having smacked [‘V’] on one occasion but denied this being a regular occurrence.” Miss Huntington told the Court that the school had identified one occasion in September 2024 when ‘V’ presented as subdued and upset: “She told her teacher that her mother had slapped her on her hip. [The mother] was spoken to by the Deputy Head and acknowledged having slapped [‘V’] on her bottom.” The school records noted that in November 2023 ‘V’ had been “overheard saying that she wished a teacher was her mummy because mummy ‘beats me’.” A school record dated October 2023 noted [‘V’] to have commented, “‘My dad beats me too,’ when another child said the same thing.” ‘V’ was noted by the school to describe the Second Respondent as, “Mum’s friend” and said that whilst [‘V’] felt safe with him, she and her other sisters did not, as he is sometimes not nice, although she also described liking him when he bought her jelly. [‘V’] described the Second Respondent as “daddy” and did not raise any concerns about her home or family dynamics.” No safeguarding concerns were raised by other agencies and no other needs were identified.
35. ‘V’ was noted to have depicted, “a broadly positive experience of family life,” telling the Cafcass Family Court Adviser, “things were going well.” She expressed getting on well with her father, the Second Respondent, depicting, “a more strained relationship with her mother, whom she said told her off and had slapped her on her bottom for not listening ‘a million times’...she expressed feeling sad about ‘slapping’ and worried ‘that mummy will slap me, which happens because [she] doesn’t listen’...when asked what upset her about her life at the moment, [‘V’] said that she does not like staying with mummy, who is always angry and

always slaps her...[‘V’] commented that [‘Z’] had told her that, “mummy was cheating on daddy.”

36. ‘V’ described her week with the Applicant in England in summer 2024 as being “fun...She said that she had been happy to see him and had given him a big hug. [She] said that she missed him, now that [he] had returned to Uganda and said that [‘Z’ and ‘D’] were always crying because they miss him. When I explored how [‘V’] might feel about spending time with [the Applicant] in Uganda, she could not remember having travelled by plane before but felt happy at the prospect. [She] expressed no disquiet at being away from her mother for the week that she spent with [the Applicant], expressing her pleasure in having been able to stay up late.”
37. The Family Court Adviser informed the Court in her report that the children, “have experienced the separation of their parents and the ensuing conflict in respect of their care arrangements...they had been involved to varying degrees in the parental dispute and that their relationships with each parent had been compromised at different times as a result. All the children, whilst expressing a wish to remain in the UK, wished to be able to enjoy positive and meaningful relationships with each of their parents and were acutely aware of the inherent difficulties of being able to do so, by virtue of their father being in Uganda. In the time that had passed since my previous meetings with the girls, they had spent time with their father during his week-long trip to England in August 2024 and whilst this was recounted as a positive experience by each of the children, it was evident from my discussions with them that this had created further difficulties within the family.”
38. In informing the Court of her professional recommendation, Miss Huntington stated, “Consideration of the children’s spending time arrangements with their father has presented me with a significant dilemma. The children have consistently expressed a sense of loss in respect of their separation from their father and his absence from their lives, where he had previously played a significant parental role. They all spoke positively and without any reservation about their week with him in August 2024 and clearly enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with him, and prior to August 2024, the children’s regular video call contact with their father did not appear to have raised significant concerns. It is evident that whilst there are some varying degrees of strength of feeling between the siblings, each child would experience loss and distress were their ability to maintain a relationship with their father be compromised. This appears to be particularly keenly felt by [‘D’ and ‘Z’], who express a wish for their father to play an equal role in their lives to their mother.”
39. The Family Court Adviser went on to tell the Court, “However, from my discussions with the children, the parents and the feedback from [‘Z’s] school, it is evident that the children have presented as significantly de-stabilised in the last few months. The stability and harmony of their family life with [their mother and stepfather] has been undermined, with the children’s previous cordial relationships with [their stepfather] having significantly deteriorated, creating tensions in their relationships with their mother. The emotional turmoil experienced by [‘Z’] has extended into her school experience and thus has had wider implications for her wellbeing. It is my assessment from the evidence and my discussions with the children that this could be largely attributed to the spending time arrangements with their father and this can be viewed within the context of [the mother’s] reports of [the Applicant] exhibiting coercive, controlling and abusive behaviours pre and post-separation. [The Applicant’s] approach to the spending time arrangements with the children has demonstrated characteristics of emotionally manipulative and coercive and controlling behaviours which give weight to [the mother’s] account. It would appear from my discussions with [‘Z’ and ‘D’] in particular, that [their father] has sought to undermine the stability of the children’s home with their mother. He has introduced the notion that the children could choose their care arrangements and the potential for the division of the sibling group, in the context of actively conveying his distress and emotional fragility to them. He has engaged in inappropriate, communication with [‘Z’] which has been demeaning and derogatory in respect of [her stepfather] and undermining of the children’s relationship with him. Further it would appear that [the

Applicant's] positioning of [their stepfather] as a risk has been communicated, however implicitly, to the children. The tone of some of the...communication is conspiratorial, actively involving ['Z'] in the conflict and encouraging (whether explicitly or implicitly) her alignment with him against her mother and stepfather and creating divisions within the sibling group."

40. The Family Court Adviser told the Court that the Applicant, "had availed the children of mobile phones and tablets, without reference to or the agreement of their primary carer and would appear to have sought to restrict [the mother's] access to those devices and to have encouraged the children to do the same and conceal their communication, most notably warning ['Z'] that if [the mother] had sight of their messages, she would seek to restrict their contact. In their discussions with me, ['Z' and 'D'] both demonstrated awareness of their father's reluctance for their mother to be in the vicinity of their conversations with him. I further note that during the time that the children spent with [the Applicant] in England in August 2024 they were not enabled to speak to their mother, as directed in the court Order, beyond one occasion."
41. The Court was further told, "In my discussions with him, [the Applicant] lacked insight into the emotionally manipulative and harmful nature of his communication. Whilst he acknowledged that he may have used 'inappropriate words' and may have communicated in a way that was inappropriate, he framed this as an emotional response to his children's suffering and as efforts to 'empower' them to speak up against the threat from [their stepfather]. The risks inherent in these behaviours is that it will further undermine the stability and security of the children's care arrangements and further undermine and compromise their relationships with their mother, who is their primary carer, and their stepfather, with whom they have lived over an extended period. A potential trajectory and outcome would be for the loss of the children's relationship with their mother and the potential separation of the sibling group, causing lasting emotional harm for the children. Further ['Z' and 'D'] in particular are voicing their feelings of divided loyalties and convey the burden experienced of being placed at the centre of the parental dispute. Whilst ['E'] was reticent in expressing her experiences and feelings, she was tearful throughout my meeting with her and I was concerned for the emotional burden on the three older children."
42. In a careful, thoughtful and balanced report, Miss Huntington concluded, "I have contemplated that the level of concern in respect of the harmful nature and impact upon the children of contact with their father is such that it may not be possible to support ongoing spending time arrangements. However, in balancing the harm to the children, I am mindful that to abruptly cease their contact with their father, where they each express a wish for a meaningful relationship with him and their difficult previous experiences of an absence of communication with him, may be counter-productive and equally negatively impact their emotional wellbeing. It may also have the potential for [the mother] to be held responsible and thus increase the children's resentment towards her."
43. A recommendation was made for video calls and other indirect contact to be "reduced, contained and managed" in an interim period, "to determine whether the children can be stabilised and whether their communication with their father can be a more constructive and positive experience. A final view on arrangements can be given thereafter, including whether it would be in the children's best interests for in person spending time arrangements to take place and the consideration of supervision. There would need to be the monitoring of the video calls between the children and their father, either via [the mother], another family member or potentially through the use of the recording of calls...It will be necessary for [the mother] to be able to have access to and parental control of all of the children's devices and for the unrestricted digital contact to cease."
44. On the issue of whether the children should spend time with the Applicant father in Uganda as well as in England, the Family Court Adviser told the Court, "I recognise the importance for the children of their connection to their country of origin being promoted and maintained. However, I am of the view that the current concerns in respect of spending time

arrangements...would only be further exacerbated in circumstances where there would be even less oversight and management of those arrangements and where there are questions as to whether direct contact may not be in the children's best interests. [The mother] has expressed fears for hers and [the Second Respondent's] safety in Uganda, that she would be separated from her children and criminalised with no recourse to fair and accessible welfare proceedings and where [the Applicant] holds power and influence. In the context where [the mother] has reported experiencing post separation coercive control and abusive behaviours and where there are indicators of such behaviour in [the Applicant's] manipulation of the children via contact, I would assess there to be a risk of retention. It does not appear to me that [the Applicant] fully accepts the children's home as being with their mother and stepfather in England and he has raised the notion of ['Z' and 'D'] returning to his care, should that be their expressed wish. Whilst [the Applicant] has set out protective measures...It was noted in the judgment of...26/04/2024 that whether the police decide to prosecute [the mother] in Uganda was outside of [the Applicant's] control and the court was not satisfied that the protective measures offered by [the Applicant] would sufficiently ameliorate the risks to the children."

45. The Family Court Adviser concluded, "The children are currently experiencing a period of turmoil and emotional instability which has to varying degrees impacted their relationships with their mother and stepfather...I am unable to make a positive recommendation for spending time arrangements to take place in England at the current time and consider that spending time arrangements in Uganda would be contrary to the children's best interests."
46. In oral evidence, Miss Huntington informed the Court that she had reflected on the period of indirect contact since October 2024, expressing, "remaining concerns...Despite a clear indication to [the Applicant] about the concerning nature of indirect contact, it would appear that the concerns remain. I felt in my discussions with [the Applicant] he did not fully understand or acknowledge the extent of the concerns and the harmful behaviour which I saw as emotional manipulation of the children, particularly ['Z']. He still does not have the level of recognition of the harm he has caused...I have weighed up the fact that the children all expressed a clear unequivocal wish to have relations with their father. ['V'] has a positive view of [the Applicant] even though he is not her biological father. She views him as a parental figure. They have keenly felt his absence from their lives and they wish to have a relationship with him. It would be a very severe act to remove the opportunity for the children to have the ability to spend time with him,"
47. Miss Huntington told the Court that she retains the concerns she expressed in her written analysis, "I wish to highlight those behaviours are harmful to the children and have the potential to cause long term harm and emotional damage if the stability of the home environment is continually undermined. On a fine balance, there should be the opportunity for the children to spend time with him. If there continue to be concerns and the lives of the children are destabilised, it would be open to the mother to bring the matter back to Court to vary the Order."
48. In respect of the father's wish for the children to visit him in Uganda, the Family Court Adviser told the Court in her oral evidence, "I do not discount the fact that the children would wish to visit Uganda, which is their country of origin. They have no negative feelings towards their country of origin, where they lived their whole lives until November 2022. However, I remain concerned, from my discussions with [the Applicant] and what I viewed of his correspondence with ['Z'] in particular, that suggests he has not fully accepted, despite what he said in his statement, that England is their home. He said to me that he felt there should be consideration, if two of the children indicated a wish to live with him, the option of that, and the other two remaining in the UK. He conveyed a similar notion in his communications with ['Z']. The communications were really inappropriate in tone and content and the message it conveys...In the context also of the concerns raised by the mother...where she reported coercive, controlling, abusive behaviours and a fear in the context of significant publicity in Uganda previously. The children have already experienced disruption...there has been very

overt and explicit manipulation of ['Z'] by her father. The messages went beyond merely being critical. He encouraged ['Z'] in particular to contact the police. He talks about the mother in a way that raises concern. He raises concern about [her stepfather] centred around sexual risks but [the Applicant] does not appear to have any evidential basis for that... There is a real shift in the experience of the children and their behaviour. They were having only video contact with [the Applicant] for a year prior to seeing him directly in August 2024. There were no concerns about their emotional wellbeing or emotional presentation or home. There has been a significant shift and change following direct contact in August 2024 and the correspondence from him. He is deeply undermining their family arrangement. The children are very aware of the difficulties in the relationships between the adults.”

49. Miss Huntington observed that the Applicant had provided the children with electronic devices so that they could communicate with him. Those devices were password protected and the father encouraged the children not to share the passwords with their mother. The Family Court Adviser told the Court, “It is reasonable for the children to have the means to communicate with their father. It is not reasonable to explicitly and actively encourage the children to password protect the devices, not share those passwords and conceal their communications with their father. He explained to me he had given the devices to the children without reference to their mother. The onus is on the person providing the device to inform the other parent. There needs to be a means of the parents communicating. I am mindful of the context of domestic abuse and coercive control allegations. At present, the divisions are being created between the children and between the parents and the children. There has been a distinct shift in dynamics.” There needs to be unity between the mother and [Applicant] and to convey to the children there is some level of agreement that this is their home and that is not going to be challenged.” The Family Court Adviser told the Court that she acknowledged the importance of the role of the Applicant in the lives of the children but contact needs to be managed in a bounded and structured way: “Father needs to commit not to undermine the children’s arrangements and stability.” Moreover, reiterating the need for structured video contact at set times and set days, the Family Court Adviser emphasised the need for consistency. The Family Court Adviser helpfully recommended that, in the event of the children contacting the father outside those defined times, there should be, “a consistency of message given to the children about ‘what was agreed with the Judge’, not rejecting the children but conveying the message, ‘I’m really looking forward to speaking at the time set aside. That is precious time. I was not anticipating you would call today,’ and redirecting the children to those times.”
50. Having regard to the evidence of the mother that CCTV cameras have been installed in the family home to protect her against allegations of physically hurting the children, the Family Court Adviser told the Court, “Introducing surveillance in the home will not foster sense of positive familial relations or unity. It is not appropriate to have cameras in the home.”
51. The Family Court Adviser maintained her professional view that she could not make a positive recommendation for the children to travel to Uganda, telling the Court, “Potentially down the line, if there is a sustained period of significant change. Presently, the risks outweigh the benefits. If things work well over time, it is within the parents’ remit to reach agreement... somewhere down the line but not by the summer of 2026.”
52. In respect of the father’s application for the names of the children to reflect the paternal family name, the Family Court Adviser told the Court, “If that is the name they were always known by, it would be in their interest to reflect both their maternal and paternal heritage, as a broad view.”
53. Regarding the application for a Parental Responsibility relating to the child ‘V’, The Family Court Adviser told the Court, “It would not make a material difference to ['V'] on the ground. It should be more about the nature and quality of that relationship and contact. ['V'] will not understand who has Parental Responsibility. It should be more about her lived experience on the ground. Sharing information would support the quality of [the Applicant’s] interactions

with [‘V’], if he knew what was going on at school and her interests, so they could engage in meaningful communication. He could be informed of significant events in the family’s life, such as a home move. He shares Parental Responsibility with the mother for the oldest three children and he should be consulted in respect of key issues for them. He would find out that way. I would not agree, for example, that it would be necessary for him to be involved in choosing schools for [‘V’].”

54. By way of an especially helpful proposal, Miss Huntington offered to write to and meet with the children after the conclusion of these proceedings to share and explain to them the outcome, an offer that was embraced by all parties.
55. In the judgement of this Court, Miss Huntington was an impressive and thoughtful witness who carefully and fairly considered the likely welfare benefits and the welfare detriments implicit in each of the parties’ respective, incompatible positions. This Court finds no reason to depart from the compelling recommendations of this experienced Family Court Adviser.
56. The parties, having had the benefit of hearing the oral evidence of the Family Court Adviser and having reflected upon it, informed the Court through Counsel of their revised positions. The Court was informed that:
 - (a) the Applicant no longer pursues a Parental Responsibility Order in respect of ‘V’: He seeks to be kept informed of important matters relating to ‘V’s welfare. The Respondents agree;
 - (b) the Applicant does not seek any Order permitting the inclusion of his paternal family name in ‘V’s name;
 - (c) the mother agrees to including the paternal family name in the names of the three oldest children;
 - (d) the Respondents agree to keep the Applicant informed of any change of address the children are living at and to provide updates to the Applicant regarding ‘V’s welfare, including school reports, notification of any medical treatment and any change of school;
 - (e) the Respondents agree to remove the CCTV cameras from the family home forthwith;
 - (f) the mother agrees to consider the return of ‘Z’s mobile phone to her at an appropriate time;
 - (g) the mother agrees to video calls between the children and the Applicant each Saturday for up to 1 hour, at 7pm, beginning immediately;
 - (h) the mother agrees to an additional video call each alternate Wednesday from 5 March 2025 at 7pm for 1 hour, moving to each week on a Wednesday from 30 April 2025;
 - (i) the mother agrees to two direct contact visits between all four children and the Applicant in England each year, for up to 14 nights in the school summer holidays, beginning in August 2025, and for half the school holiday at Christmas or Easter. ‘V’s father agrees that ‘V’ can be included in those visits.
57. Additionally, the Applicant offers undertakings to the Court not to denigrate either the mother or the Second Respondent within the hearing or presence of any of the children nor will he instruct, encourage or allow any other person to do so and not to harass, pester or use or threaten violence against the mother or Second Respondent nor will he instruct, encourage or allow any other person to do so.
58. The Respondents both agree and undertake not to denigrate the Applicant within the hearing or presence of any of the children nor to instruct, encourage or allow any other person to do so. Further, they both agree and undertake not to physically chastise any of the children nor instruct, encourage or allow any other person to do so. There was some consternation on behalf of the Respondents regarding the inclusion of the words “or allow” as part of their undertaking and whether the same was enforceable. In this Court’s judgement, the inclusion of those words is important. The words reflect the form of undertaking given by the mother to the Honourable Mr Justice Cobb in these proceedings on 13 December 2023.

59. Moreover, the Court was informed that the Applicant and the mother agree the following matters in relation to their co-parenting of the children:
- (a) both parents will co-operate in communicating to the children the outcome of the final hearing and the terms of the specific child arrangements ordered, including informing the children that any decisions made have been made by the adults, in their best interests and that their parents support the arrangements which have been ordered. It is agreed that such communication will be in liaison with the Cafcass Family Court Adviser;
 - (b) the father will not instruct, encourage or allow any of the children to contact him outside of court-ordered times for video-calls, unless expressly agreed with the mother in advance;
 - (c) the father will not seek to undermine the children's home in England with their mother;
 - (d) the parents will agree on a way to communicate about essential matters concerning the children such as through a parenting 'app';
 - (e) in the event that it comes to the attention of either of the parents that any of the children has been trying to contact their father outside the court-ordered times for video-calls, each parent will be supportive of the ordered arrangements and will remind the children that they will be able to speak to their father at those times. This would not prevent the parties agreeing between themselves in due course that the indirect arrangements may become more flexible;
 - (f) the mother will positively promote and encourage the children's relationship with the Applicant, and in particular, will ensure the children are aware that she is supportive of the arrangements for indirect and direct contact between the children and the Applicant;
 - (g) both parties will continue to support 'V's relationship with the Applicant, including by acknowledging and supporting his role as 'V's 'psychological' parent, including but not limited to ensuring that 'V' continues to have the same opportunities for contact with the Applicant as her elder three sisters and supporting her to understand that the Applicant still loves her equally and wishes to treat her the same as her elder sisters;
 - (h) the mother will respect the father's parental responsibility for the three older children.
60. The Court commends the parties for the agreements reached, with the guidance of the Cafcass Family Court Adviser and Counsel. In this Court's judgement, the agreements between the parties are sensible, child-focussed and consistent with the best interests of the children. The Court endorses those agreements. Moreover, the Court accepts the undertakings proposed by each party.
61. There remain important disputes between the parents in respect of the Applicant's wish for the children to spend time with him in Uganda and whether a Prohibited Steps Order is necessary to prevent the Respondents from moving the children to a third State.
62. The Applicant's revised position advanced at Final Hearing, after considering the evidence of the Family Court Adviser, was to seek an Order for the children to have their first visit to him in Uganda in the Summer of 2026 and annually thereafter. He offers an undertaking to obtain an Order in the Ugandan court to mirror the terms of an Order of the English Court and to pay any costs of doing so. He undertakes to return all the children to the jurisdiction of England and Wales at the conclusion of all ordered or agreed contact visits to Uganda. He undertakes not to support or pursue any action against the mother in Uganda in relation to either any alleged breaches of the Order of the Ugandan court dated September 2022 or any form of criminal or civil liability arising from the removal of the children from Uganda to the jurisdiction of England and Wales in November 2022. He offers an express covenant not to sue the Respondents in relation to any alleged breaches of the Ugandan Order dated 19 September 2022 and not to seek to enforce any rights arising from the Ugandan Order dated 19 September 2022.
63. The mother agrees to revisit the question of the oldest three children visiting Uganda, after two years. Her position, as summarised by Mr Gibson-Lee of Counsel is, if contact works out fine over the next two years, contact in Uganda will happen. The mother proposes that a

recital to the Order is included to record her agreement in this regard. There is no agreement to the youngest child 'V' visiting the Applicant in Uganda.

64. In this Court's judgement, there is no reason to depart from the careful, nuanced recommendation of the Cafcass Family Court Adviser. Miss Huntington was not able to give a positive recommendation in support of the children spending time with their father in Uganda at this time. This Court respectfully agrees with the Family Court Adviser's analysis.
65. In reaching this decision, the Court takes into consideration the fact that the children have keenly felt the Applicant's absence in their lives. They wish to have a relationship with him. The children are each of Ugandan heritage. Uganda is a country familiar to them, where the culture is also familiar to them. They were raised in Uganda and they continue to have extended paternal family members there.
66. There is no dispute that the habitual residence of the children is now in England and Wales. Further, there is no dispute that the legal systems of England and the non-Hague country will apply similar principles to determining their best interests.
67. There is some risk of abduction by their father. The Family Court Adviser was concerned that the father sought to manipulate the children 'Z' and 'D' in particular, telling them he would be happy if they stayed with him and asking them if they wanted to 'go' with him. It would be an obvious and grave detriment to the children if that risk were to materialise. This Court proceeds, however, for the purpose of this analysis, taking the father's assertions at their highest, that he would not breach any Order or undertaking of this Court. There are various real and tangible safeguards, as proposed by the father, which could be put in place to minimise the risk of retention and to secure the return of the children if that transpired. The efficacy of those safeguards, however, must also be seen in the context of what is recorded at paragraphs 44-46 of this Court's judgment of 26 April 2024 and the significant publicity in Uganda in which the children had been identified. Moreover, the Court noted that, whether the police decide to prosecute the mother in Uganda is outside the father's control, even in circumstances where he does not support a prosecution.
68. The overriding consideration for this Court in deciding whether to permit the children to visit their father in Uganda, a non-Hague country, is whether the making of an Order would be in the best interests of the children individually.
69. The children all expressed a wish to spend time with their father in England. 'D' wanted more visits from her father, in the United Kingdom. 'E' expressed being unsure about a potential visit to her father in Uganda.
70. It is also necessary to put in the balance the unambiguous evidence of the older children having divided loyalties, 'Z' in particular articulating that when they are with their father, the children feel like that have abandoned their mother. When with their mother, they feel like they have abandoned their father. Further, the father expressed to the children, articulated particularly by 'Z', of his anger against their mother for her actions in bringing the children to the United Kingdom, resulting in 'Z' feeling distress. The father expected the children to report back to him about the mother and stepfather, telling the children it was his responsibility to know what is happening. The children continue to experience both the separation of their parents and the ensuing conflict in their care arrangements, being involved to varying degrees in the parental disputes, creating further difficulties within the family. The stability and harmony of their family life with their mother and stepfather has been undermined. Previous cordial relationships between the children and their stepfather have deteriorated significantly, creating tensions in their relationships with their mother. The emotional turmoil, described by the Family Court Adviser, is largely attributable to the children spending time with their father. Cafcass concluded that the father has demonstrated characteristics of emotionally manipulative and coercive and controlling behaviours during contact. He has sought to undermine the stability of the children's home with their mother. He

has introduced the notion that the children could choose their care arrangements and the potential for the division of the sibling group, in the context of actively conveying his distress and emotional fragility to them. He expressed feeling there should be consideration of an option of two of the children living with him. He has engaged in inappropriate, communication with 'Z', which has been demeaning and derogatory in respect of her stepfather and undermining of the children's relationship with him, adopting communication that has been conspiratorial in tone, actively involving the children in the conflict and encouraging their alignment with him against their mother and stepfather, creating divisions within the sibling group. He has restricted the mother's access to devices used by the children to communicate with him. He has encouraged the children to conceal their communication with him. In this Court's judgement, it is reasonable to conclude that spending time with their father in Uganda would carry with it a high risk of further destabilising their existing relationships, further undermining the stability and security of the children's care arrangements and further undermining and compromising their relationships with their primary carer and stepfather. Those risks are better managed and much reduced by direct contact taking place in England. As the Family Court Adviser observed, concerns in respect of the spending time arrangements would be further exacerbated in Uganda in circumstances where there would be less oversight and management of those arrangements.

71. In this Court's judgement, in the context of the children currently experiencing a period of turmoil and emotional instability, contact with their father in Uganda would not be conducive to a positive meaningful relationship with each parent and would increase the likelihood of causing lasting emotional harm for the children, impacting negatively on their emotional wellbeing. In this Court's judgement, the prospects of the children solidifying a meaningful relationship with the Applicant, whilst maintaining the security of their relationship with their primary carer, are better achieved by no direct contact taking place Uganda. In this Court's judgement, a period of emotional stability is necessary for the children before further consideration is given to the children spending any time with the Applicant in Uganda. Further time is necessary for the Applicant to fully accept the children's home as being with their mother and stepfather in England, allowing time for the children's emotional wellbeing at home to settle, stabilise and for trust to develop.
72. In the professional opinion of the Family Court Adviser, no direct contact should take place between the children and their father in Uganda in 2025 or 2026, allowing for an adequate period of emotional stability. This Court finds no reason to depart from that view. The children's sense of loss in respect of their separation from their father can be ameliorated by their ongoing contact with him through frequent video contact and twice-yearly direct contact in England. Contact in Uganda is not a necessary component in ameliorating that loss. Their understanding of their Ugandan culture can plainly be promoted through their mother and stepfather, who share their cultural background.
73. The overriding consideration for this Court in deciding whether to permit the children to visit their father in Uganda, a non-Hague country, is whether the making of an Order would be in the best interests of the children individually. This is not a case where the Court can conclude that the best interests of the children individually positively demand the making of an Order permitting their temporary removal to Uganda. Recognising that excessive weight should not be accorded to short term problems and the Court should take a medium and long-term view, in this Court's judgement, the emotional safety of the children and the parent with whom the children are living would be compromised before, during and after contact, if contact was to take place in Uganda, without the period of necessary stability highlighted by the Family Court Adviser.
74. The critical consideration here is a balance between the benefit to the children of knowing and developing their relationship with their father and the risk to the children of their care by their mother and stepfather deteriorating because of the impact on them of contact. On the facts of this case, in particular where the children need to feel secure and contact can be promoted by other reasonable and proportionate means, it would not be in the best interest of the children

to grant temporary leave to remove. That would run the real risk of further destabilising each of the children. There is already a definite risk of ongoing harm to the children if the important adults in their lives are unable to parent cooperatively. If that continues, it will undoubtedly further impact upon the children's wellbeing and development. The prospects for such progress would, this Court is satisfied, be measurably assisted by the mother and the children feeling confident and comfortable in their surroundings. This Court is satisfied that a visit to their father in Uganda now or in the near future would risk imperilling the current delicate balance and exacerbating the turmoil. In this Court's judgement, the circumstances pertaining to the children are better assessed by the parents after a period of two years, when the stability of their situation and the impact on the children of the time they spend with the Applicant in England can be further assessed. If there is no agreement at that point, it will be open to the father to make an application for temporary leave to remove. In this Court's judgement, it is neither sensible nor prudent to give prospective leave now, with so many uncertainties. The parties should focus their efforts on making the agreed contact arrangements, both video contact and direct contact in England, work before seeking to agree the future arrangements for the children.

75. The contact arrangements for the children to see the Applicant in England and speak with him weekly by video provide for a significant amount of time together. The father's travel to the United Kingdom to meet with the children will be dependent upon the requirements of a visitor visa. The father appears to have had no difficulty in securing a visa in 2024 and no future difficulties are highlighted. This will require him to meet the costs of a return flight twice each year, compared with the more substantial costs of return flights for the children and an adult if they were to travel to Uganda. There has not, at this hearing, been any detailed investigation into the parents' means. None of the parents appear to have significant disposable incomes. The mother and stepfather, of course, have four dependent children to support. On his case, the Applicant has no dependents. In this Court's judgement, the costs of the father's travel to the United Kingdom should be met by him.
76. The father pursues on application for a Prohibited Steps Order, to prevent the Respondents from removing the children from the jurisdiction of England and Wales to any third State. The mother by her own admission acted unilaterally and clandestinely, without the consent of the father, in breach of clear Orders in Uganda, without seeking permission of the Ugandan court to relocate the children abroad. The mother has demonstrated an ability to breach Court Orders when she does not agree with them. It is very clear that the mother ought to have applied to the Ugandan courts for permission to relocate, before taking the unilateral decision to do so. It is clear also that her main motivation for relocating to England was to move away from a relationship she perceived as abusive, controlling and coercive. The Court takes into account the mother's allegations of domestic abuse and the father's denials. The children have now been living in England for over two years. They have been at schools in England for most of that period. They have made friends here and they are engaged in activities. Their parents are engaged in employment in England. They have not, on the evidence, travelled out of England in that period. From the perspective of the children, a period of over two years living in a new country is a long time and the children have now established connections in and with England. Their parents' immigration status in the United Kingdom is not guaranteed. Presently, their leave to remain is time limited. The father expressed concern that the Respondents intend to relocate to Canada. The Respondents deny any such intention. They tell the Court of no intention to leave the United Kingdom. In this Court's judgement, there is no solid evidence-based reason to conclude that a Prohibited Steps Order preventing the Respondents from removing the children from the jurisdiction of England and Wales is necessary from the perspective of the welfare of the children. The father's application for a Prohibited Steps Order is dismissed.
77. It is no longer necessary for the children's passports to be held by solicitors. The passports and travel documents should be released to the mother forthwith.

78. For these reasons, having regard to each of the factors under s 1(3) Children Act 1989, the Court makes a Child Arrangements Order recording that the mother will make the children available to spend time with the Applicant directly twice each year in England, in addition to the pattern of indirect video contact agreed between the parents. The Court makes a Specific Issue Order, by consent, recording that the paternal name shall be included in the names of the oldest three children. The father's application for leave to remove the children temporarily from the jurisdiction, the father's application for Parental Responsibility for 'V' and the father's application for a Prohibited Steps Order are dismissed. The Orders requiring the solicitors to hold the children's travel documents are discharged.
79. This Court ends by expressing the hope that the parents will not need to litigate the issues around the children's welfare further. All parties in this case have expressed the view that they do not wish to be in litigation. The parties are encouraged to engage in mediation prior to any further application being made to the Court. Further, the Court encourages the Respondents to engage with the parenting support resources recommended by the Family Court Adviser and available through the Local Authority. Furthermore, the Court accepts the helpful offer from the Cafcass Family Court Adviser to write to the children and, where possible, to meet with the children to help to explain to them the agreements reached between the parents and the decisions made by this Court. The Court permits a copy of this judgment to be provided by the parties to Cafcass.

HHJ Middleton-Roy
21 February 2025