

## Opening Hours

8.30am to 5.30pm - Monday to Friday

## Free Legal Surgery

We hold a free specialist legal surgery every Wednesday from 4.30pm to 5.30pm where we can advise you on any social services involvement. No appointment necessary.

## Out-of-Hours and Home Visits

Home visits and out-of-hours appointments can be arranged where appropriate, but you can always speak to us on our emergency helpline **07785 531 221** which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Our solicitors are members of the Law Society Children Panel and have extensive experience of dealing with children and families involved with social services.



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Out of hours: 07785 531 221

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# Care Proceedings & Social Services

Putting your children first



  
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# Care Proceedings & Social Services

## Children & Social services

Bringing up children is one of the most rewarding things you can ever do; but all parents know that it can be difficult, exhausting and occasionally frustrating.

Sometimes, due to problems in a parent's life, the job becomes even more challenging, and this is where social services may get involved.

This is no reason to panic or worry, as with help, advice and support, things can be made better again. Bromley's team of experts are on hand to help you through this difficult and stressful period of your life.



## How can we help?

The main aim is to always try to keep children with their family. You may be given advice to access other services to help with any specific problems, such as domestic violence, alcohol or drugs, debt and so on. Using these services can often help and may prevent things from getting worse.

If things don't improve, then social services may involve other people to help and support you through the Child in Need process and Child Protection Plans. At this stage, our team of experts will be on hand to guide and support you through this process. We will answer any questions that you may have and raise your complaints, if any, with social services.

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## PLO - public law outline

If problems continue, social services may start a process known as PLO. You will receive a letter explaining social services' concerns. If you do receive a PLO letter, contact us immediately for advice and support. We can attend PLO meetings with parents. This will not cost parents anything.

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## What else can happen?

Sometimes social services ask you to agree to your child being placed in foster care. This agreement is known as Section 20 accommodation. They can only do this with your agreement. If you are asked to agree to this, it is important that you speak to us before signing or agreeing to anything. We can give you advice about your options.

## Court Proceedings

Even with everyone working really hard to keep your family together, social services may think that there is no choice but to involve the courts. If you receive court papers, it is important that you call us straight away so we can make sure you are represented at court and we will help and advise you through the court proceedings.

## Do you need to pay for our help?

If you are a parent or person with parental responsibility, representation during the PLO process and in care proceedings is free. Legal aid can be available during the early stages of social services' involvement with your family at Child in Need or Child Protection Plan stages. Our solicitors are members of the Law Society Children Panel and have extensive experience of dealing with children and families involved with social services.



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Clear, concise legal advice