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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
FAMILY DIVISION

The Royal Courts of Justice
Strand
London WC2A 2LL

Thursday, 26 March 2026

BEFORE:

MR JUSTICE HARRISON

Re T (A Child) (Abduction: Habitual Residence following Relocation: Objections to Return)

MR M JARMAN, KC (instructed by Ellis Jones Solicitors) appeared on behalf of the Applicant
MR M BASI (instructed by Waldrons Solicitors) appeared on behalf of the First Respondent
MS A CAMERON-DOUGLAS (instructed by CAFCASS Legal) appeared on behalf of the Second Respondent

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JUDGMENT
APPROVED

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(Official Shorthand Writers to the Court)

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This judgment was delivered in private. The judge has given leave for this version of the judgment to be published on condition that (irrespective of what is contained in the judgment) in any published version of the judgment the anonymity of the children and members of their family must be strictly preserved. All persons, including representatives of the media, must ensure that this condition is strictly complied with. Failure to do so will be a contempt of court.

MR JUSTICE HARRISON:

1. These are proceedings under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction in which I am concerned with a boy to whom I shall refer as T. He was born in September 2012 and is now aged 13 ½. His father is a British national who lives in Hungary. His mother is a Polish national who lives in England. For the vast majority of T's life, his mother has been his primary carer. For 11 ½ years out of the 13 ½ years of his life, he has lived in England.

2. The parties were married at one time but their marriage became unhappy. Towards the end of the marriage they moved from England to Hungary in connection with the father's work. In 2019, the mother and T, with the father's agreement, relocated from Hungary back to this jurisdiction. The father remained in Hungary and formed a new relationship which is ongoing. He now has two young children by his new partner.

3. Hague Convention proceedings are summary in nature. The court rarely hears oral evidence from the parties. The issues are circumscribed. On numerous occasions, different courts have emphasised the need to ensure that the evidence filed is concise and focused.

4. One of the unhappy features of this case has been that both parties have used these proceedings as an opportunity to exchange a catalogue of unpleasantries against each other. The father bears primary responsibility for this. Despite being represented by specialist solicitors, who will no doubt have given him appropriate advice, he chose at the outset of the proceedings to file what, in my view, was a wholly inappropriate statement. It made reference to the mother's past medical history, exhibited private medical notes and made a litany of points about her difficult relationships with other members of her family. This can only be described as an attempted character assassination. The mother too needs to take a long hard look at herself and reflect upon the fact that, in responding to the father's statement, she chose to descend into the arena of rancour and level accusations about the father dating back to the embers of these parents' failed relationship.

5. The depressing conclusion I have drawn from reading this catalogue of unpleasantries is that these two highly intelligent people, who love their son and want the best for him, lack emotional intelligence. Both of them have failed their son in different ways. Their lack of emotional intelligence has been evident to me throughout this hearing. As I watched them in court and observed their reactions to the submissions being made it was obvious to me that neither of them has any ability to see things from the perspective of the other. Both of them nodded approvingly throughout the hearing when points were made to their liking and conveyed contrary facial expressions when they disagreed with matters that were said. I was left with the clear impression that each of them labours under a delusion that they are right in every aspect of the case they advance.

6. It can be very difficult being a teenager, as T's guardian, Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick, said. It is especially difficult being a teenager when your parents are determined to maintain an acrimonious relationship with each other, seemingly unable to move on from the past.

7. In May 2025, T moved from England to live with his father in Hungary in what seem to me to have been ambiguous circumstances. There can be no doubt, on the evidence I have read, that the mother agreed to this move. It is equally plain to me from the exchange of messages that took place at the time that she was not, to quote Mr Jarman KC, '*fully in agreement with the move*'. It was a move that occurred in the context of a falling-out between the mother and T. It is not uncommon for teenagers or pre-teen children, as T was at the time, to fall out with parents. It is particularly common for that to occur, in my experience, when children have the misfortune to have two parents who communicate as badly as the two people involved in this case.

8. Both before and after the move, the mother sent communications to the father which, to put it as mildly as I can, were wholly inappropriate. If nothing else, the mother has an urgent need to examine her style of communication and to come to understand the effect that communicating in such an abrupt, jarring way has on the recipient of such emails. She needs to learn to appreciate that maintaining that style of communication is likely to prolong the unhappiness of this failed relationship and to have an impact on T. It is to the father's credit that, from what I have been able to see, he did not respond in kind to the mother's communications.

9. The circumstances of the move were, as I have said, ambiguous. It was first mooted at the start of May 2025 and accomplished by the May half-term. No school place was available for T upon his arrival in Hungary. The father agreed with T's English school that the school would provide T with some work to complete over the second half of the term that he was going to be missing.

10. On any view, this was not a move undertaken with the type of careful planning one would expect in connection a relocation of this magnitude. It is unusual for parents to agree that a child should relocate from one jurisdiction to another in the middle of the third term of the academic year. The parents, had they been focusing upon T's interests, would have taken a step back and reflected upon the folly of moving him at that time. Far more sensible, with the benefit of hindsight, would have been to allow T to complete his academic year at his English school even if he needed a period of respite from his mother's care He could then have moved to Hungary in less pressured circumstances over the summer. This would have given everybody some time for reflection. As it was, the move took place in a climate of acrimony.

11. In my judgment, there was no clear agreement about the basis of the move. Each of the parties has a different perception about its length. The balance of the evidence, in my view, tends to suggest that the mother is right and that the move was, in the first instance at least, only intended to be for a single academic year. In this regard, I have in mind the messages sent to the father to that effect in September 2025, admittedly sometime after the move had taken place. In these messages she made clear, in the context of attempts by the father to procure her signature to an application for a residence permit, that she would not provide her agreement beyond the 2025/2026 academic year, that being, from her perspective, the agreed basis of the move. In responding to the mother, the father did not dissent from that proposition.

12. It is also plain from the evidence of Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick that T did not see this as a permanent move. His understanding was that this was a move for a trial period. If it move did not work out, it was not to be permanent. Rather, he had the safety net of being able to return to the country that had been his home for almost all of his life.

13. So it was that T, against the background of a parental row, made a monumental move in travelling from this country to Hungary without the sort of clarity that, in my view, he deserved in such circumstances. In failing to give him that clarity, both of his parents let him down.

14. As I have said, when T arrived in Hungary he did not go to school because there was no school place available for him. It is, however, clear that the father had a school in mind and that the mother knew which school he was to attend and did not object to the father taking steps to enrol him there. To that end, T attended a summer camp at the school which was a necessary part of the enrolment process.

15. Apart from that summer camp, T spent in Hungary what was, in essence, a prolonged version of previous summers he had spent in that jurisdiction with his father. Apart from a short holiday in France, T spent what was no doubt a pleasant summer staying with his father and his stepfamily in his father's home.

16. It is clear from the evidence that the majority of T's belongings were transported to Hungary as part of the move. I have also seen evidence, drawn to my attention by Mr Jarman KC, that in the context of the acrimonious discussions surrounding the move, the mother spoke about selling up her home and getting rid of the remaining possessions in that home. In the event, however, she did not act upon what strikes me as having been a rather volatile expression of her unhappiness at that time.

17. From T's perspective, as communicated to his guardian, notwithstanding the many happy summers he had spent with his father in Hungary, he did not regard Hungary as his home. For him, England has always been his home country and home has always been with his mother. Since the parents' separation, his trips to Hungary had been, unambiguously, holidays. He had enjoyed those holidays, but the experience of a holiday is a very different from going to live in a new household.

18. It seems to me highly likely that the rushed circumstances of the move will have made it difficult for T to process. As the maternal row faded from prominence in his mind, he will no doubt have reflected upon the enormity of moving from the country in which he had lived for almost all of his life to a new country of which he is not a national. As

that reality dawned upon him, it will no doubt have caused him to feel anxious and unsettled even if he was unable to communicate those feelings to his father. As T looked into the future, he will have been faced with the prospect of no longer living his familiar life in England according to the routines he had established for himself over many years. He would no longer be spending regular time with his paternal family in England nor regular time with his established friendship group. Instead, he was looking at a very new and different kind of life where he was going to become an integrated part of his stepfamily.

19. I do not in any way seek to suggest that T has anything other than an excellent relationship with his two stepsiblings; nor that, one level at least, he did not get on well with his stepmother. But it is not difficult for me to imagine that from T's perspective, moving into a household with its own settled rhythms and routines where, however much the adults and his stepsiblings made every effort to made him feel an integral part of that family, he will have perceived that there was a difference between him and his stepsiblings. It is not difficult for me to conclude that this perception, coupled with the realisation of what he had left behind will have caused him considerable anxiety, a degree of regret, as well as feelings of unhappiness, loneliness and homesickness. At the same time, he no doubt made every effort to make the best of his situation. It will not have been difficult for him to do so, at least not initially, when what he was essentially doing was repeating experiences of holidays that he had previously enjoyed in that household.

20. On 21 August 2025, T started at his new school in Hungary. By all accounts, he was welcomed into that school environment. He was made class representative. The school no doubt went out of its way to help him integrate by providing him with the level of pastoral care it felt he needed. He had been that school for approximately a month when, by agreement between the parents, he came to England to spend what was intended to be a period of one week staying with his mother around his birthday. He was supposed to go back to his father on 28 September 2025 but did not do so. Instead, on that date, the mother sent the father what I regard as a wholly inappropriate letter communicating to him in abrupt and, frankly, cruel terms the decision that T had made not to go back to Hungary.

21. That letter perfectly illustrates the communication difficulties that exist between these parents which have such an impact upon T's situation. The father's response to the letter was to send his own communications to T. I do not think there is anything in the point that the father's first message to T was sent very early in the morning and that it took T some four hours to respond. There could be a number of reasons for this. I suspect that the most likely reason, although this is speculation on my part, is that T found it difficult to communicate to his father what he intended to happen.

22. However inappropriate I regard the letter sent by the mother on 28 September 2025, I am satisfied on the evidence that this was not a premeditated plan on her part. I do think that the impetus not to return to Hungary came from T himself. I also consider it likely that this was not a decision made on the spur of the moment on the 28 September. That decision is likely to be one of the reasons why T declined to speak to his father on his birthday. He probably felt hesitant about communicating such difficult news to his father on that important day. I regard it as a major failing on the mother's part that she did not ensure that some form of communication took place on that birthday.

23. In support of my conclusion that this was not a premeditated retention by the mother, I rely in part on the job the mother had obtained. The hours she was expected to work were incompatible with looking after a child full-time. She has also provided evidence that she had made arrangements for T to be taken back to the airport on the 28 September. Most of all, however, I rely upon T's contemporaneous messages to the father in which he made it clear that this was his decision. He later said the same thing to his guardian.

24. The first issue I need to decide in the context of this 1980 Hague Convention application is whether the failure to return T on 28 September 2025 was, for the purposes of Article 3, a wrongful retention.

25. It is accepted that the father had rights of custody in relation to T. In order for the retention to be wrongful, however, it is necessary for T to have been habitually resident in Hungary at the relevant time, not in England.

26. On a number of occasions, the courts have emphasised that habitual residence is essentially a question of fact. It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that the issue has been litigated so extensively in the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal. A number of principles have been established, deriving primarily from the learning of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

27. Those principles were very helpfully distilled by Moylan LJ *Re F (A Child) (Habitual Residence)* [2025] EWCA Civ 911 at paras 57 and 58. The parties have all referred to this summary in their skeleton arguments and, in the interests of time, I am not going to repeat what was said in this judgment.

28. An important point was established by Supreme Court in a case called *Re LC (Children)* [2014] UKSC 1. While it is normally the case that, following a consensual move from one jurisdiction to another, a child will swiftly acquire a new habitual residence, this is not a universal rule. Where the child is either an adolescent or should be treated as an adolescent, it may be relevant to take into account, as part of the court's overall evaluation, the child's state of mind following the move. This applies in cases where, as here, the stay in the overseas jurisdiction has been short. In common with the *LC* case, T's stay abroad lasted for some four months.

29. Ultimately, the court must examine the position as at 28 September 2025. It needs to undertake a comparative evaluation between this jurisdiction and the Hungarian jurisdiction, weighing up a host of relevant factors in order to decide whether the degree of integration achieved by T in Hungary could be said to mean that he had become habitually resident there, when compared with the degree of integration he had as at that date in this jurisdiction.

30. In undertaking that analysis, my starting point is that T had what are sometimes termed 'deep roots' in England and Wales. It is the country in which he had lived for the vast majority of his life. It is where his mother, who had been his primary carer, continued to live after his move to Hungary. It is where members of his wider paternal family live. It is where he had been mainly been to school throughout his life. It is also where he had many, many friends. The move to Hungary, as I have said, took place in ambiguous circumstances. T himself was unclear about the duration of the move. He

viewed it as being a trial move. Despite being in Hungary, as he has made clear to the guardian, he continued to regard England as his home.

31. On the other hand, it is relevant that in making the move T gave up his school place in England. As at 28 September 2025, prior to his re-enrolment, he did not have a place at an English school. It is also relevant to bear in mind that he had not left a wholly stable environment in England when he went to Hungary. His mother was expressing herself in unhappy terms and going so far as to talk about selling her property.

32. The unsettled nature of the move to Hungary has caused me to form the view that this was not one of those cases in which habitual residence transferred either immediately upon arrival or soon thereafter. In that connection, it is relevant to have regard to the lack of schooling on T's arrival and the holiday-like nature of his stay for the first part of the trip.

33. However, as at 28 September 2025, the position was different. Most of T's belongings by that stage were in Hungary. T had completed four weeks of school in Hungary. The evidence suggests that he was doing well at that school. When T came to this jurisdiction, he was expecting to return to Hungary at the end of the week. He brought his laptop with him to complete some homework. That factor, it seems to me, is of some significance. It demonstrates, in my view, that so far as T was concerned, whilst he may not have initially regarded Hungary as home, whilst he may have felt lonely and unsettled in that jurisdiction over the summer months, by September he had come to a degree of acceptance as to the position. From his perspective, he was coming to England for a short period before returning home at the end of that week.

34. I regard this as a very finely balanced issue but, on narrow balance, when weighing up the competing considerations that pull in different directions, I am satisfied that by 28 September 2025 T had become habitually resident in Hungary. The decisive factor is his perception when he came to this jurisdiction that he would be returning to his home and school in Hungary.

35. The consequence of that conclusion is that for the purposes of Article 3 of the Hague Convention, this was a wrongful retention. Where there has been a wrongful retention,

Article 12 mandates that the court is obliged to order the return of the child to the country of habitual residence forthwith, unless one of the exceptions in Article 13 of the Convention is satisfied.

36. The only exception relied upon by the mother is contained in the second paragraph of Article 13. This is sometimes known as the 'child objections exception'. It allows the court to refuse a return that would otherwise be required pursuant to Article 12 where the child objects to a return and has attained an age and degree of maturity at which it is appropriate to take into account his views.

37. It is rightly accepted on behalf of the father that what are sometimes referred to as the 'gateway conditions' of this exception are satisfied in this case.

38. It is clear that T objects to returning to Hungary. It is also plain to me that he has attained an age and degree of maturity at which it is appropriate to take into account his views. He is 13 ½. The courts regularly take into account, in this context, the views of children as young as 7 or, in some cases, even younger than that.

39. The fact that the gateway conditions are established does not, however, automatically mean that the court must refuse a return. What it does is confer upon the court a discretion about whether to order a return or not. There is, again, considerable learning about how the court should go about exercising its discretion. The leading authority is the House of Lords decision in *Re M (Zimbabwe)* [2007] UKHL 55 where Baroness Hale identified some of the matters that the courts must take into account in this context.

40. I recently gave a judgment about the exercise of the discretion in the context of the child-objections exception in *Re C (A Child) (Abduction: Grave Risk: Asylum Claim: Child's Objections)* [2025] EWHC 3461 (Fam). I set out at para 78 what I understand to be the relevant principles governing the exercise of the discretion. It is unnecessary for me to recite these again but I apply those principles in this case.

41. This was a retention that took place after what was intended to be a period of holiday contact. The authorities establish that in this type of case what is termed "the policy of

the Convention" should carry considerable weight. The policy of the Convention is that following a wrongful removal or retention, children should be returned to the country from which they have been removed or retained. The father made his application promptly, meaning that this is what is sometimes termed "a hot pursuit case". This is another factor which means that significant weight falls to be given to the policy of the Convention.

42. The policy of the Hague Convention is not the only matter that needs to be taken into account. As *Re M* makes clear, a whole host of factors need to be considered in this context, including the nature and strength of the child's objections, the reasons for the child's objections, as well as what are termed more general welfare considerations. The age of the child is highly relevant. The objections of a 13 ½ year old inevitably carry far more weight than the objections of a 7 year old. In this case, T is not only 13 ½; on the evidence of Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick, which I have no hesitation in accepting, he is a mature and articulate boy. It is clear to me that from the outset he has been consistent in maintaining an objection to returning to Hungary. He has communicated that repeatedly to his father. In my view, many of the present difficulties in the father's relationship with T stem not from attempts by the mother to influence T against him, but from the father's own refusal to listen to what T is saying. That is made plain by T in some of the text messages he has sent to his father.

43. As Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick said in her evidence, she did not detect in the things T said to her the adverse influence of his mother. Mr Jarman KC, on the father's behalf, is able to make the point that in some respects T has used adult language which, with some children, would be a strong indicator of the presence of inappropriate influence. Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick, however, made clear that from her perspective, having met T, she did not find it surprising that he was using language of that nature. The possible exception to this, in her assessment, was his use of the phrase "self-reflect".

44. Having read the mother's communication style and having formed a clear view about the antipathy she holds towards the father, I do not find it difficult to conclude that T will have been exposed to some of her views within the home. But the mere fact that he may have been exposed to those views does not necessarily mean that the views he is now expressing are inauthentic or the product of influence from the mother. T, in

my view, has demonstrated that, to adopt an expression used by Baroness Hale in *Re D (A Child)* [2006] UKHL 51, he is a moral actor capable of making decisions in his own right. The clearest example of this can be seen in the events of May 2025.

45. Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick formed the clear impression that T was genuine in what he was saying to her. He was able to articulate reasons for the stance he was adopting. He was consistent in the views he was expressing to her. The views he expressed to her are the same, as I have already recorded, as the views he has been able to express directly to his father. They are also the views he expressed to his school in a written communication which, as accepted by Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick, demonstrates that he is a child capable of balanced consideration. In that document T spoke about witnessing what he felt was the difficult relationship, to put it as neutrally as I can, that existed between the father and his stepmother, and his witnessing of what he regarded as inappropriate behaviour by his father towards his stepmother. All of this, from his perception, will have made the environment in which he was living in in Hungary a difficult one. Nevertheless, despite communicating those difficult things to his teacher, T was at pains to make clear that he had not witnessed any physically inappropriate behaviour. That level of balance, that keenness to ensure accuracy on his part is, in my view, a hallmark that what he was saying was likely to be rooted in reality and not the false expression of a child determined at all costs to achieve his own way.

46. There is a logic to the views T is expressing. He went to Hungary, as I have said, in ambiguous circumstances believing it was to be for a trial period. He thought that if he was unhappy in that jurisdiction, he would not have to remain there. Having been to Hungary and learned over a short period of four months that the grass is not greener there and that his hot-headed 12-year-old self was not right, as a result of this row he had with his mother, to make this monumental move, he is now very clear that he wants to remain living in what, for him, has always been his home. It is a perfectly understandable and logical wish for this 13 ½ year old boy to hold.

47. As Ms Cull-Fitzpatrick accepted in her evidence, where young people have to live against a background of this level of hostility between their parents, other aspects of their life assume particular importance for them. These include their friendship groups,

wider members of the family -- such as the paternal family in this case -- and familiar everyday things such as their home, their bedroom, their bed, their routine. They become accustomed to a way of life, the rhythm of life in a particular household, and they want to maintain that. All of these considerations are, in my view, likely to form part of these views which T has clearly articulated to various people.

48. The Hague Convention is a blunt instrument. It is not an instrument through which the court makes long-term welfare decisions. The court orders or declines a return, depending on the circumstances of the case. Thereafter, if there remains a dispute between the adult parties, that dispute has to be the subject of further litigation in order for a court to make long-term decisions about the child's welfare.

49. Standing back, it seems to me to be manifestly contrary to T's interests to require him at this juncture of his life to go back to Hungary for there then potentially to be a prolonged further dispute in that jurisdiction about where he should live, with one possible outcome of that dispute being that he should come back again to this jurisdiction. To put him through that chain of events would essentially mean, to adopt the famous expression of the former president Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, treating him like a parcel moving backwards and forwards between two countries and two parents who hold a deep antipathy towards each other.

50. If there is to be further litigation -- and, for T's sake, I hope there will not be -- it is far more in his interests for that to take place in this country. Not only for the reasons I have given, but based on the fact that both of his parents will find it much easier to litigate here. The mother lives here. She is not a Hungarian national. The father may not live here but he is a British national and he is well-able to instruct lawyers and pursue arguments here if that is what he chooses to do. The vast majority of the evidence relevant to T's life now lies in this jurisdiction, when one looks at his life from a perspective that goes beyond the four months he spent in Hungary. He feels that this is his home.

51. There is another important welfare consideration at play here. As submitted on behalf of the guardian, if T were to be the subject of a return order in the face of his articulate objections that he has repeated time and time again, that course would be emotionally

damaging for him. He would feel that he had not been listened to. He would feel let down by the system. Above all, in my judgment, he would feel let down by his father. In those circumstances, adopting such a course would be likely to aggravate, rather than heal, the difficulties that T currently has in his relationship with his father. It is potentially a case where T would refuse to comply with an order, given the objections he has consistently expressed.

52. Ultimately, I have come to the very clear conclusion that in the exercise of my discretion, this is a case in which this Hague Convention application must be dismissed. It is clear to me that the nature, strength and rationality in the objections that T has expressed, which I find to be authentically his own, coupled with the welfare considerations I have described, outweigh by a considerable margin the policy considerations of the Hague Convention.

53. I would urge the parties yet again to make attempts in the interests of their son to come to a resolution about matters going forward outside the court system. I have been very critical of both parties in this judgment and I do not resile from those criticisms. But what I will say to both of them is that despite all the difficulties in their own relationship, they do deserve credit for the fact that they were to come to an accommodation for many years during which T enjoyed happy holidays in Hungary whilst living here. It is very unfortunate that the way things turned out last May has led to this major rupture in what was previously, if not a harmonious state of affairs, an arrangement which was working for T.

54. As I have said, I think both parents lack insight and emotional intelligence. They and, most of all, T would benefit if they were able to find a way to speak to an independent third party in mediation to talk about the way forward. The past few months have been very difficult for everybody and particularly for T. I understand how difficult it is for parents to be caught up in this sort of mess and I understand that, from the father's perspective, he is likely to have felt an increasing sense of desperation, as feelings communicated to him by his son, of which he was not aware, came to the fore with increasing strength and vehemence. There has been something of a snowball effect in that the more T expressed feelings of dissatisfaction and wanting to remain in this country to his father, the more the father came to perceive that these were not

authentically T's views but the product of his mother's manipulation. He attempted to counteract those feelings through persuasion, through visiting the home -- wholly inappropriately, I would add -- shortly after the initial retention and ultimately, through litigation. All of those steps have only served to aggravate the rupture in the relationship.

55. I hope that the decision I have made today can mark a turning point and that the parents can find a way to put this unhappy chapter behind them and move forwards. No good is to be gained from dwelling on the past. I repeat: I found it depressing in the mother's statement reading about accusations of adultery as well as other allegations dating back to the end of the marriage. That was, I remind myself, seven years ago. Things have moved on. The adults need to move on. They need once again to re-establish the working relationship that they had for several years and to think about putting T first. They need to rebuild the level of trust they once had, because only by recovering some degree of trust can they come back to the type of working relationship that served T well. It is going to be difficult and may require a skilled professional to provide them with assistance.

56. The optimum outcome for T now is likely to be a return to the sort of system that was in place previously before the recent rupture, where he can continue spending time with his father on holiday in Hungary and where his father can be fully involved in his life in England. He will soon have to go through what, for any child, is the difficult period of GCSEs followed by A-levels. Children going through that need both their parents to support them. What they do not need is ongoing conflict. Exams are difficult and stressful enough. In many ways, the next few years are going to be amongst the most important of T's life because his success in the examination room may determine where he goes to university and his career path thereafter. What he does not need, against that background, is ongoing conflict. So, I urge both parent to reflect on everything that has happened, to look at things from T's perspective and to put him first above all else.

(After further submissions)

57. It seems to me that the likely cause of T's expressed wish not to see his father is this litigation and his unhappiness about it. It is time to draw a line under the past. It will benefit T, I think, to lance the boil, to see his father, initially for a short period, so that the two of them can have a face-to-face communication and start building bridges and talk about moving forward. It should initially be a short unpressured meeting, somewhere T likes -- the father will know the sorts of places he likes -- but it is clearly in his interests, in my view, for this to take place. If at all possible, the guardian should explain to T the outcome of the proceedings. He can also be told that that is what I think should happen. The meeting should happen tomorrow, if at all possible.

(After further submissions)

58. T can feel reassured that his views have been fully listened to but, in this respect, I have very much in mind what I consider to be his long-term welfare interests. After everything that has happened, I think it is very important for him to start the process now of rebuilding his relationship with his father.

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