

## Child Inclusive Mediation Agreement

### Parental Consent

The Parents have invited the Mediator to see their child to contribute towards the mediation process. The Agreement sets out the purpose of any such discussion and the basis of it.

1. The meeting between the Mediator and the child together with any communication received from the child will be confidential to them except to the extent that they themselves agree otherwise.
2. The purpose of the meeting or meetings between the Mediator and the child will be to help them understand the changes that are taking place in their lives, to help them feel listened to and understood and to give them more opportunity to express their feelings, concerns and needs.
3. The Parents understand that in view of the confidentiality, the outcome of the meeting with their child may not be made known by the Mediator to the Parents and that the Mediator may not specifically be asking the child for their own decision about parenting arrangements although that might become clear in the course of the meeting.
4. The Mediator will not discuss with the child any financial aspects of the family.
5. The Mediator will see the child in a private meeting in absence of their Parents.
6. The rule of confidentiality could be varied by the Mediator in the event of it becoming apparent that the child appeared to be at risk.
7. The Mediator will approach the child with a view to them coming to a meeting in person or online with the Mediator, explaining to them what mediation is and that they are invited to take part.
8. Neither of the Parents will brief the child beforehand, and they will not cross-question or reproach afterwards about anything they may or may not have said.
9. The child will be invited by the Mediator to contact Pam Hatfield at any time in the future if they feel they want a further meeting.
10. The Parents give their consent to this by signing this agreement.
11. There will be a charge of £150.00 + VAT per hour for seeing your children, and this is payable in advance and in accordance with our terms and conditions.



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#### CHILD CONSULTATION – WHAT TO TELL THE CHILDREN

Prior to the mediation, it would be helpful if you would discuss with your child the fact that you have been mediating as parents and that you need to discuss arrangements which will include them. Your child need to know that because their opinion is important to you both and you want them to be fully aware of what is going on, you would like them to come in and meet the Mediator in person, or participate in an online meeting. Please tell them that we will be contacting them, asking them to participate in the mediation process. We will ask them to ring us or to ask one of their parents to ring on their behalf. If they do not wish to have an online meeting, that is fine. We do not want to put them under any pressure. Most children are interested in meeting us and feel important and empowered to be included in the process.

Our task is to make children feel at ease, to talk to them about everyday things such as school, hobbies, aspirations and then gradually to introduce discussions about their family. We will not be asking difficult questions or things that might upset them; rather, we are trying to make sure that they are dealing with the separation process and the changes that it brings.

Please do not try to guess the questions that we will ask, or give any suggestions as to the replies your child should give or the things they should tell us. Children have a disarming way of telling us when they have been 'primed', and this really does not help them, or the mediation process.

We know from experience that sometimes it is easier for children to talk to a third party rather than someone in the middle, who may want them to take sides. We will explain about confidentiality, and the only reason for us to break their confidence would be if they were in some sort of harmful situation and then we may need to get some help. In the safety of this environment, we find children can express their hopes and fears for the future. We may not be able to solve everything, but we find that even listening can make a difference.

After the mediation, please do not ask your child what went on. By all means, ask them what they thought of the Mediator or the office, but please do not put pressure on them to reveal what they said. If they decide to tell you what they said, that is their choice, and we will not tell them not to. However, they will have agreed with us what they want us to say to you at the 'feedback' session, and we will tell you no more than that unless we have their express permission to do so.

Finally, we would ask you to respect whatever it is your child tells us.

Signed: .....

**Father's Name:**

Date:.....

Signed: .....

**Mother's Name:**

Date:.....

Signed: .....

**Mediator: Pam Hatfield**

Date:.....

