

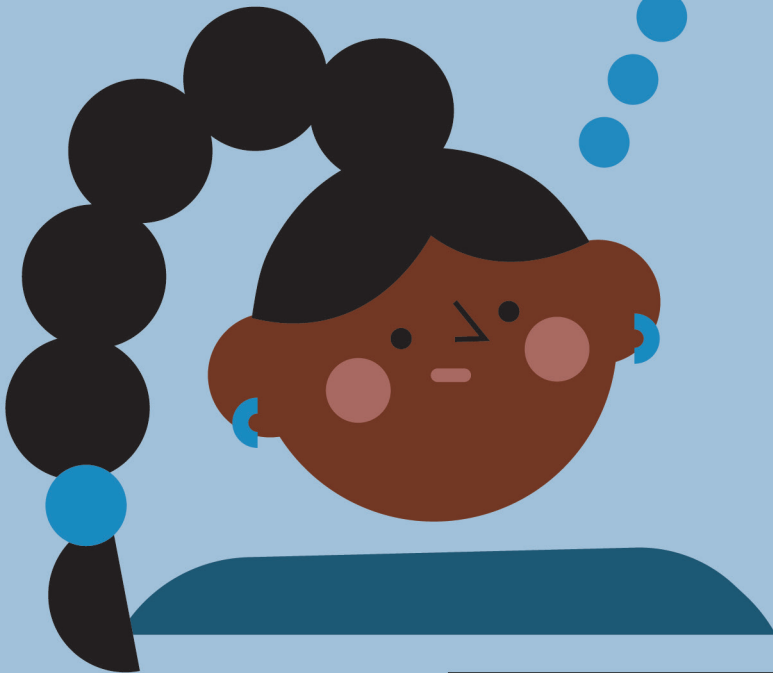
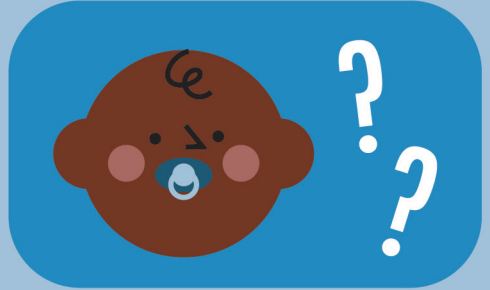
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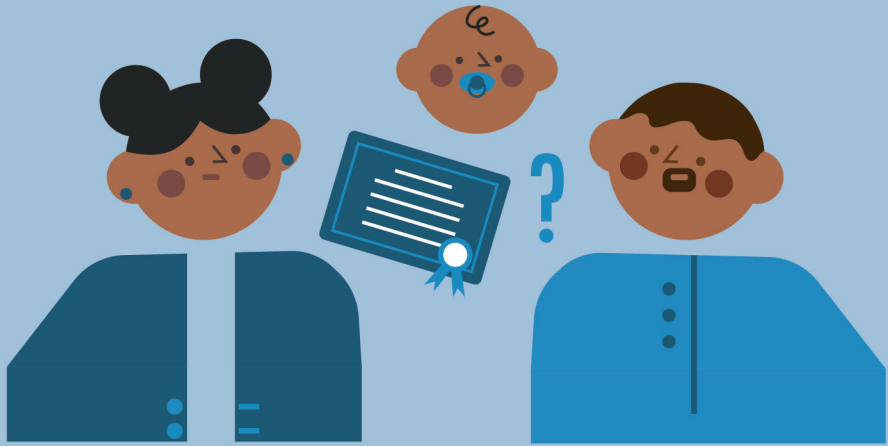


University of  
Chester

This leaflet has been produced by law  
students at the University of Chester.



# What is a Child Arrangements Order?



A CAO is a court order that deals with the arrangements regarding:



Who the child lives with



Who the child spends time with



When or if the child has contact with any person

When a CAO is in place the parent with primary care - or in an equal care arrangement, both parents - must ensure that the child spends time with each parent as set out within the order.



# What can a CAO include?



When considering making a CAO, the Court will always hold the child's welfare as the most important consideration.

The court can make a range of CAOs including orders that provide for:



Direct contact between the child and the person named in the order



Overnight staying contact



Indirect contact through letters or cards



Supervised or supported contact

In certain circumstances the court can order that there is no contact, although the Court has a positive duty to promote contact and look at all available options before making an order for no contact. It must also be satisfied that the child would not benefit from continuing an attempt to establish contact.



# How long will a CAO last?



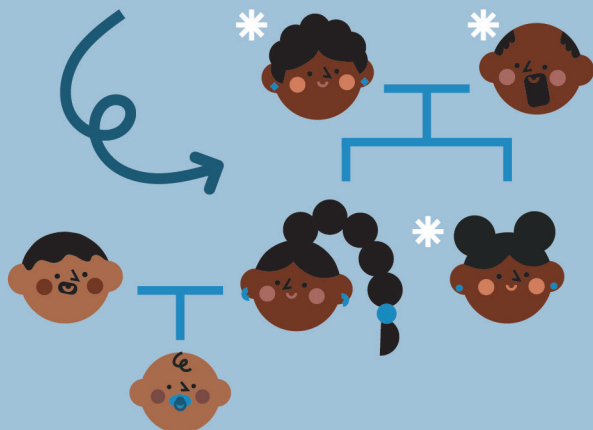
An order will last until the child is 16, unless ended sooner by the court, or unless the circumstances of the case are exceptional. A CAO that provides for a child to have contact with a person cannot be made once a child reaches 16, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

\* An order will no longer have any effect if the child's parents reform a relationship and live together for more than six months.



## Do CAOs only apply to parents?

No, contact may be ordered to take place between children and persons other than their parents, such as grandparents or other extended family members.



\* For more information on CAO's visit:  
<https://www.gov.uk/looking-after-children-divorce/types-of-court-order>