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Public board meeting

Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team Overview

13 July 2023



Part 1: Demand, performance and operational practice

1. Data overview - JT
2. Management capacity – phase 3 reconfiguration – JC
3. Operational Service Area Improvement plans Best for children progress – JC
4. Caseloads – JC
5. Quality assuring practice – SP

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1. Successes in the reporting period - SP
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3. Deprivation of Liberty for children - JC
4. Practice quality standard updates (private and public) – JC

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4. Leadership conference and management quality standards - AB
4. Awards and recognition - JB
5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2023-24 – JB

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1. Public Law Improvement Programme - JC
2. Public Law Outline relaunch – update - JC
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4. Principal social worker update - SP
5. Complaints policy and process update – SC/TW

Short film showing: Taking me seriously – How we help?



Part 1: Data Overview – Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun 23)



- **Total demand** for quarter 1 (2023 – 24) when compared to the same period in 2022-23 has **reduced by 1.6%**. We are receiving **c236 applications every working day**
- This represents a **reduction of 15% in public law care and supervision** (330 children) and an **increase of 2%** (117 children) **in private law**
- **c32% of children's cases in private law proceedings currently have at least 1 s7 report ordered**
- In June 2023, there were **c31,900 children's cases open to Cafcass** representing **c52,200 children – c4,100 more children than in March 2020**
- **93% of our work is allocated out in operational service area teams**, 3% awaits allocation on duty, 3% is held in post – assessment hubs (awaiting a hearing) and 1% are overseen in allocation hubs in areas with active prioritisation
- **Timeliness of children's case allocation continues to improve**, with pressure remaining in some operational service areas – monthly spotlight measure
- **S7 Filing times are also to agreed timescales in 98% of the work**, though **c40% have an extension agreed to complete the work before the listed hearing or to avert the need for an addendum report**



Part 1: Data Overview (2) –Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun 23)



- **Delayed proceedings** – most significant pressure for family justice

** Increase compared to quarter 4 2019/2020 – pre – covid baseline*

- **Public law care and supervision – 46 weeks** (increase of 10 weeks)
- **Private law work to first hearing – 13 weeks** (increase of 4 weeks)
- **Private law work after first hearing – 61 weeks** (increase of 22 weeks)
- **R 16.4 proceedings – 111 weeks** (increase of 38 weeks)
- **c13,200 children in proceedings for in excess of 52 weeks** (c4800 children in public law, c8400 in private law) – of whom **c4300 have been in proceedings for over 100 weeks.**
- **56% of children in public law proceedings over 100 weeks are aged 0- 5 years** and in **private law proceedings over 100 weeks, 42% are aged 0-5 years**



Operational Management Capacity and Capability – phase 3 reconfiguration

- The **Management Fundamentals and Management Quality Standards** were launched in May. These inform induction and confirmation of new managers, management training and audit, and Leadership and Learning Reviews.
- Work is continuing to bring **Assistant Service Managers (ASM) caseloads and direct reports into the agreed range**. This includes local plans to achieve the **revised ratios between managers and FCAs/Children’s Guardians**
- The **mid-point confirmation meetings** with the new Assistant Service Managers (ASM) are taking place through July
- As anticipated during this phase of the reconfiguration, the **range of tasks and responsibilities available to Consultant Family Court Advisers (CFCA)** has been adjusted and clarified – particularly for those in specialist roles
- A **mentoring programme** is being put in place for CFCAs
- The **first stage of the management training has been completed**, with feedback from participants being used to adjust and strengthen the induction programme for new operational managers
- The **mentoring programme in small closed groups for ASMs** continues and is well-received and having a positive impact



Operational Service Area (OSA) Improvement Plans - progress report

- The **19 OSA Improvement Plans** have been approved by the National Director and Deputy Director of Operations. This includes an adjustment to the **5th Practice Improvement Priority to focus exclusively on addressing delay for children.**
- Progress in achieving the **objectives of the OSA Improvement Plans** are scrutinised through the **monthly Spotlight report, the 6-weekly Performance & Learning Corporate Management Team and Regional Performance Boards.**
- In addition to the **2 OSAs where Prioritisation remains activated, Targeted Support Plans are in place for 3 OSAs following their Regional Performance Boards.** Targeted Support Plans are subject to quarterly review with the National Director and Deputy Director of Operations.
- These performance and accountability processes are evidencing **further improvement overall in the quality of practice and performance** – supported by local and national practice quality audits and performance data.
- It is proving challenging for those OSAs that are performing less well to close the gap on their higher performing colleagues, because they too are making further improvements. There are **notable improvements in 3 of the practice improvement priorities; seeing and engaging with children, domestic abuse practice, and understanding the impact of the child's uniqueness on their life and future.**
- While there is **improvement in the effective use of the new Assessment & Child's Plan - management review and requires further attention to achieve consistency and the numbers of children experiencing delay remains too high**



Caseloads and workload demand - June 2023

- **Context for current caseloads and workloads is a raised bar for the quality and impact of practice and performance** since our Ofsted inspection in 2018, including, seeing and engaging with children to the introduction of a new practice framework to applying the practice learning from audit, learning reviews, feedback and Ofsted inspections/visits. It is also important to recognise that caseloads are not the same for everyone
- The proportion of open work that is **allocated to an individual is 95.9%** (92.8% lead allocated and c3.1% held on duty at any one time) with just 0.9% held in an Allocation Hub (reducing) and 3.2% held in a Post-Assessment Hubs (increasing) where the report has been completed and filed but the family is waiting for a court date.
- There are **289** children's cases (~462 children) allocated to social workers in the 2 Allocation Hubs – 81 fewer children's cases (-130 fewer children) than 1 April 2023
- There are **1,011** cases (1,618 children) allocated to social workers in the Post-Assessment Hubs awaiting a court date – 179 more children's cases (287 more children) than 1 April 2023
- Nationally, average open caseloads in the **early intervention teams** have reduced to below pre-pandemic levels at **39.3** (adjusted to remove outlier Service Areas with inflated workloads due to local working practices) compared to the 40.9 in March 2020.
- Nationally average open caseloads for **long-term team FCAs** have reduced to below pre-pandemic levels at **19.9** (adjusted for FTE) compared to 22.5 in March 2020 and in excess of 24 during the height of the pandemic . Closure rates in both law types are now above 100% - again with regional variation.



Quality assuring practice

- **Operational Service Areas report monthly** to the Operational Management Team (OMT) on audits undertaken by service managers.
- **In this period 89.4% of FCAs have had 1 or more audit of practice undertaken** a total of 1070 audits completed (3mths to June), the target is 90%.
- Audits demonstrate that **children are seen in time and engaged with well**. In 8 of these 1070 audits children were found not to have been seen. Heads of Practice are asked to review these children's situation and provide updates to their Assistant Director.
- **Recommendations are being shared with children** and only not shared when they should have been shared in 11% of eligible audits; this is a 3% improvement on the previous period (3mths to March)
- **Introductory and goodbye letters continue to be used for children**, 65% of audits where they should have been used demonstrating the use of letters of which 75% of these were considered to be well written in child friendly language. Achieving further progress is a focus of operational activity
- **Assessments of risks that enabled well-reasoned decisions to be made were seen in 93% of audits** and when this didn't happen, actions were set as part of the audit, or the work was judged as inadequate. Heads of Practice are asked to follow up through OMT.
- **Management Oversight of practice** remains a national and local improvement priority



Feedback from Children and adults though collaborative audit

48 children and 492 adults provided feedback in audits in the reporting period. **Children gave an average score of 4.25 out of 5**

- They liked being offered the opportunity to write to or speak to the judge
- They liked that their FCA helped them understand, being able to tell someone what they want and don't want and someone to explain what is happening and what will happen next. Storyboards and letters helped with their understanding
- What the relationship with their FCA felt like: “not being like a robot”, “knew me like the back of their hand”, “being the child’s favourite of all the people they meet because they always smile”.

Adults gave an average score of 4.08 out of 5

- Majority of the feedback is very positive. The themes are listening, understood our thinking, we took the time to explain what was happening, what would happen next and that we put their children at ease.
- Some negative feedback related to bias, not feeling we were gender neutral or we had taken a position against one parent
- Not understanding alienating behaviours and how this was impacting the child
- Not listening, speaking over people or appearing dismissive about what they were trying to tell us
- Want more time with us – questions about making big decisions with brief engagement
- Being clear about our thinking and this tracking through to the recommendations we make – being consistent



Part 2 – and in other news: achievements in the reporting period

- **Child engagement** recording remains stable and strong at 98.1%.
- **91.4% of children have been seen in person, which continues a reliable upwards trend of in person contact** and is an increase from 90.7% in May.
- We are trying to reduce the 16.4 ordering rate to those children's cases where this has an impact greater than work undertaken for a s7 report. **There continues to be a stable downward trend - 1996 open Rule 16.4 children's cases in March 2023 to 1881 in June**
- The **volume of feedback is increasing** and we are now able to **analyse it thematically** – resulting in changes to policy and guidance, **and by area** so that we can begin to take action locally based on this feedback
- Increasingly effective use of **Post Assessment hubs**, reducing pressure on FCAs and teams and we are seeing a consistent downward trend in caseload averages
- Principal social worker and Cafcass legal services presented at DfE to **Ukrainian delegation** on the use and need for children's guardians in public law proceedings – positive feedback
- **Cafcass engagement with adults and children who have lived experience of family proceedings has been highly praised for responsiveness and authenticity** by the learning and improvement board (our external reference group set up following the harm panel report in 2020)



Learning, improvement and next steps in practice where domestic abuse is known or alleged

- The Harm Panel report was published three years ago this month – a good time to reflect on progress and plan our next steps
Prior to that and since, we have been prioritising improvement in our practice where domestic abuse is known or alleged
- **Learning & Improvement Board** was set up with external chairs and partners to bring challenge to us in our improvement work
- The programme of work of the Board has been completed and its impact evaluated. Feedback from Board members was that they felt they were taken seriously and there was a priority to listen and take effective action in response
- Our **specialist audit in 2020** provided our baseline of where we were and helped us develop our training and development programme and our five Domestic Abuse practice priorities
- We have just completed our third annual audit- **we can see progress in all aspects requiring change identified in the Harm panel report. We are clear what and where further progress is still required.** Our training programme launched in May 2021 and 95% of us have attended
- **Safe Lives** – two colleagues on a 12-month secondment to work alongside us as we continue to listen to people with lived experience and target out improvement activity to where its most needed
- We are establishing a **Practice Reference Group**, as the successor to the Learning and Improvement Board. this will again create the opportunity to gain perspectives of members with lived experience who will help us develop our policy and practice



Deprivation of Liberty for children

The **National Deprivation of Liberty (DoL) Court** has been in operation 1 year on 4 July 2023 to provide judicial oversight .
Nuffield report published in June 2023

- **Of the 114 applications**, in 17 cases (15%) a Guardian was not appointed at a first hearing (application usually short notice) and in 2 cases (1.8%) by the second hearing. (a Children's Guardian is appointed when Cafcass receive the application. The HMCTS process to ensure that this happens has been corrected and is being monitored)
- In most cases, the **Guardian supported the application**, with some challenge on unregistered provision and plans for children - duration of proposed order, nature of proposed restrictions, the number of supervising staff and suggestions about software to monitor use of phone/computer rather than removing. Guardians made interventions about **long-term plans to safeguard children. We are:**
 - ✓ **Monitoring the circumstances of children** - rise in orders to protect children from sexual and criminal exploitation – we are going to question the efficacy of multi- professional disruption work
 - ✓ **National audit by Heads of Practice** - reporting in September 2023 with action plan
 - ✓ **Public law mapping** in to update specific issues and variation across England – eg North West highest rate of applications and North East the lowest
 - ✓ **Review of urgent applications** where child's view cannot be secured as well as policy on seeing children where placement changes



Practice Quality Standards – Public and Private law - update on implementation and self – assessment

- The **Practice Quality Standards (PQS)** set out what good practice looks like based on practice experience, feedback and learning from audit and case reviews – revised versions launched in April 2023
- They have been **well - received by Family Court Advisers and Children’s Guardians**
- **Form the basis of induction and continuing professional development** through supervision, practice observations, practice and learning reviews, group supervision, training and practice quality audit
- Proposal is for **Family Court Advisers and Children’s Guardians to self- assess** their practice against these standards as a basis for their learning and Practice & Learning Review. **A session in Practice Week** in on ‘Using the Practice Quality Standards in all of our work’. This will consider the importance of PQS, updating on the understanding and use of the PQS in the PLR discussion
- A second session will follow this to launch a **new self-assessment** based on the PQS. Practitioners and managers will be asked to complete the **familiarisation process.**



Part 3: People and Workforce: Pay and Benefits update

- **Business case for maximum pay award** achievable under the Civil Service Pay Remit Guidance 2023/24 is submitted. We have **set our budgets to enable all colleagues to benefit from the best pay deal possible** within the rules. Submission refers to joint union pay claim, Local Government pay award and comparisons and challenges around retention in the sector. The **maximum pay award budget achievable under the Civil Service Guidelines is 4.5% with a further 0.5% to be targeted towards those on lower pay**
- However as in all previous years, **settlement must account for all other pay increases including in year pay progression for staff moving to target salaries as well as other structural benefits to our pay**, arising from recent increases in pay bands 1- 4 to give effect to the increase in the **national minimum wage** and the **creation of the new Band 8B Assistant Service Manager roles** which came into effect from 1st April this year.
- **Constructive dialogue with our joint trade unions** on their pay claim for 2023/24
- **Civil Service one-off payment of £1,500** to staff who were in our employment last year and up to £73,000 salary is confirmed for ALBs. We are in discussion with the Trade Unions.
- An **amended policy on home to work mileage adjustments is now in place**. Whilst **trials on multiple day court hearing expense claims**, and the **opportunity to earn additional income through fixed price work** are ongoing.



Workforce overview and update

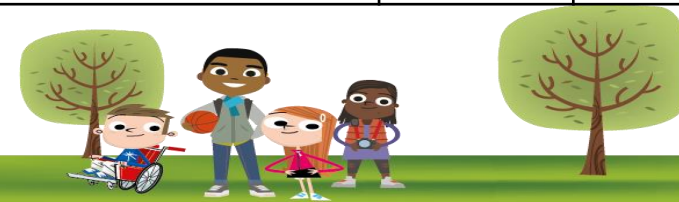
- Over the last 12 months (to June 2023), we have continued to be able to recruit to our establishment, although it is becoming harder. Some areas of the country continue to be very challenging for recruitment
- **Locum usage of social workers has remained low at 2.5% in the last 12 months.** This is significantly low when compared to most local authorities
- **Turnover for social workers continues to rise for Cafcass** as it does for most local authorities. Over the last two years Cafcass' turnover has increased to 15.5% at June 2023, although there are variations across the country and this is lower than average turnover in local authorities.
- In the year to June 2023, **sickness absence for social workers** is 4.8% which is a decrease from June 2022 when it was 5%. The majority of the sickness absence is due to long term absence
- New **staff survey** has completed with very high engagement. Results will be available for the next Board meeting
- **Employer Identity** work progressing
- ✓ Film 'Be their Voice' been filmed and is being edited. It will be available for next Board meeting
- ✓ An enhanced recruitment platform and website to launch in September

Agency User (Social Work)	
Ave local authority (sept 22)	18%
Cafcass (March 23)	2.50%
Cafcass (June 23)	2.50%

Turnover (Social Work)	
Organisation	% turnover last 12 months
local authority average (Sep 22)	17.0%
Cafcass March 23	15.0%
Cafcass June 23	15.5%

Sickness absence (Social work)	
Children's social work (Sept 22)	3.50%
Cafcass (12 months March)	4.80%
Cafcass (12 months June)	4.80%

Joiners & Leavers April to June 2023 (Headcount)		
Staff Group	New Starter	Leavers
FCAs (inc NQSW's)	43	53
Practice managers & supervisors	1	6
Business & corporate services	19	6
Total	63	65



Performance and Learning Reviews (PLR/LLR) – change programme overview

- For social work practitioners – **appraisal title changing** from Performance & Learning Review to Practice & Learning Review (still PLR!) And for managers from Performance & Learning Review to Leadership & Learning Review (LLR)
- The process for practitioners and the LLR process for managers is being updated and made more **relevant to current practice and management quality standards**
- The **standards which are self-assessed** within the review and **assessed by the manager** once a year will be **aligned to the Practice Improvement Priorities** for practitioners and the Leadership Improvement Priorities for managers
- **Pre-populate both with practice/management quality audit and performance information** whilst maintaining the focus on providing an opportunity for reflection.
- **Separate change programme** for operational and business/corporate colleagues to reduce the impact and change load on operational staff
- The change programme commences with operational **staff and manager consultation through July.**
- The **revised approach and formats will be launched in October 2023.**



Leadership Conference & New Management Quality Standards

Leadership Conference – May 2023 – 321 managers - Sustainable Change, Ownership/Responsibility, Greater connectivity

- **AMBITION – EXCEPTIONAL experiences for all children and Families, everywhere and all of the time**
- Feedback :
 - ✓ 94% either confident or very confident of leading and implementing our new strategy
 - ✓ 92% either confident or very confident leading and implementing the new management quality standards
 - ✓ 93% either confident or very confident using and promoting Cafcass’s feedback channels such as staff recognition, staff engagement, staff survey

Management quality Standards

- Management standards launched and include:
 - Management Quality Standards and Management Fundamentals for Social Work managers
 - Management Standards for Corporate & Business Service managers
 - The new standards are being embedded in performance review and learning systems from July to October to support the review for all managers against the new standards by March 2024



Awards and Recognition

Internal:

- Cafcass values e-cards – Individual 1627, Team 103
- Work Anniversary cards – 124
- Employee Appreciation and Career Milestone e-cards – 176
- Quarterly celebrations of employee of the month and nominees
- Annual Recognition Event – 10th July 2023

External:

- Social Worker of the Year – 7 category nominations
- Family Law Awards – 1 nomination
- Children and Young People Now – 2 nominations



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2023 – 24 – review of year 1 achievements

- **Governance and Coordination** – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group/CMT, EDI Operational Group, Bi-monthly Staff network chairs meeting chaired by Director of Resources/Deputy CEO and Strategic Lead for EDI
- **Inclusive communication with Children** - welcome and goodbye letters personalised to meet individual needs and circumstances - used more consistently and assessed in every Quality And Impact (QAI) audit
- **Positive action launch of talent pathway** – 3 programmes aimed at improving representation of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues in management and senior leadership roles
- **Employee advocacy staff diversity networks’ annual plans** have focused on supporting members and ensuring their perspectives are considered in strategic initiatives, including employer identity and attraction, staff induction and recognition/awards
- **Learning and Engagement** - new resource ‘Exploring diversity conversations with young people’, directorate/service ‘think ins’, EDI sessions during Practice Week and wide range of learning linked to events in diversity calendar, including blogs, vlogs, live events, MS Teams backgrounds during Disability History Month, LGBT+ History Month
- **Targeted implementation of local EDI objectives** with Diversity Champions identifying priorities specific to their area/service



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2023 – 24 (2)

- **Next EDI Steering Group 25 July 2023**
- **Review progress against 4 strategic EDI objectives and make amendments/updates**
- **Consult staff networks and diversity champions to confirm year 2 priorities – taking account of staff survey**
- **Evaluation of talent pathway programmes**
- **Extending thinking on Diversity to include socio- economic background**



Part 4: Improvement in the next period: Public law improvement programme

- 1. Deprivation of liberty orders:** Contribution to the research of the Family Justice Observatory – analysis of data with partners to understand the impact on children – closer scrutiny of practice in challenging unregistered placements and progress towards registration. Action required to challenge length of deprivation orders and review/impact on children
- 2. Management oversight of delayed proceedings:** Performance data and practice challenged by the operational leadership team through review of the child’s plan from the outset and at 26 weeks – practice quality audits showing increased management oversight of delayed proceedings and more evidence of guardians challenging delay– delay will be the subject of a themed audit this year
- 3. Variation in practice and performance:** The new OSA Improvement Plans are focused on ‘narrowing the gap’ in the quality of practice and performance – subject to quarterly review of progress by local leadership teams and mid-year review – comparison to national average and ‘Best for Children’ performance
- 4. Seeing and engaging with children:** Evidence of seeing and engaging children is being sustained and further improved – still some variation in seeing all children in person – and use of Together practice elements and practice aides
- 5. Assessing harm and risk of future harm:** The effective use of the new Assessment and Child’s Plan is one of our 5 practice improvement priorities – with a particular focus on the assessment of harm, the impact on the child and the risk of future/further harm – the revised audit methodology emphasises the importance of behavioural detail in assessing harm. Recent audits evidence an improvement in this aspect of practice – linked to seeing children.



Part 4: Improvement in the next period: Public law improvement programme (2)

6. **Mandatory supervision triggers:** There is evidence of greater use of the mandatory triggers in some operational service areas for supervision but there is a need for data development to record supervision in relation to the 7 triggers – and for reliable reporting of performance. Compliance with the triggers is a Priority Improvement Action in all OSA improvement plans
7. **Learning reviews:** The learning reviews are informing the refresh of policy, practice guidance and practice quality standards – particularly but not exclusively in terms of seeing and engaging with children, the mandatory triggers for supervision, and audit methodology. In addition to ‘practice alerts’ they also inform the content of training.
8. **Multi-disciplinary practice discussions:** These are happening but not yet consistently in terms of the engagement of partners. Our improvement lead for public law is working to secure consistency on this and an associated programme schedule.
9. **Training and development:** Specific training in public law practice is being introduced – based on the practice quality standards – draws from the findings from audit, feedback, case record and learning reviews (both local and national). Team-based group supervision sessions are increasing
10. **Addressing delay for children:** Ofsted inspectors acknowledged the role Cafcass has played in making the reduction of delay for children a system priority. Addressing delay for children will replace our 5th practice improvement priority – using the practice quality standard for delay as the benchmark to supervision and audit.



Public law outline (PLO) relaunch 2023

1) 26 weeks – a statutory requirement so we must intervene to minimise delay:

Internal supervision to be triggered prior to and at 26 weeks for manager review alongside timetable on the assessment and child's plan. Specific changes to Cafcass' CMS to capture this requirement to be implemented September 2023, reporting available from January 2024

2) The no-order principle – in our collective mind:

Collaborative public law audits to test how 'no order' has been applied/considered.

Following system changes data and key headlines from national audits available from January 2024

3) The use of additional experts:

If an expert is recommended by Cafcass, is there a clear rationale as to why required? Specific changes to Cafcass' CMS to capture this requirement will be implemented September 2023, reporting available from January 2024.

National practice quality audits to explore the use of experts, their necessity to proceedings and the impact on the child – including rationale in submission to court and identified by first CMH. Key headlines from audit available from January 2024.



Public law outline (PLO) relaunch 2023

4) Pre-Proceedings and understanding whether the threshold for proceedings is met - why this order and why now:

Future audit will include whether Child's Plan shows pre proceedings work is understood by the guardian and is included in report to court. Following system changes reporting will be available from January 2024 to evidence activity.

Supplemented by headlines from annual national practice quality audit reporting July 2023

5) Guardian's recommendations are shared with child and response is included in report

Reporting on whether Child's Guardian shared recommendations with children (%) available from January 2024.

Quality and content of recommendations and children's responses to be looked at in practice quality audits. Headlines available from quarter 4 (January – March 2024)

6) Local arrangements to make every hearing count:

Internal quality audit practice priorities to be updated to include questions on delay and whether action has been taken, this data can be considered alongside on reason for delays in public law over 26 weeks. Reporting available from October 2023



Private Law Improvement Programme

The private law improvement programme runs in parallel to the public law improvement programme. It will enable leaders to focus and coordinate improvement priorities in private law across the whole of Cafcass:

- **r16.4 development programme**, including bringing long running children's cases to an end and evaluation and next steps of the new, structured model of practice for new children's cases, incorporating Cafcass Positive Co-parenting Programme
- **Reducing repeat assessments** (addendums originated by Cafcass), timescales for reporting and duration of proceedings
- **Making recommendations for child arrangements**, including safety of arrangements, shared arrangements, indirect arrangements and reporting on recommendations
- **Development of direct work resources** (including mapping of current resources and improving these) and skills
- **Private law mapping programme**- using data by court area



Principal Social Worker update

- **Learning reviews** are changing practice policies and guidance. A Learning Review of four children's cases in the early stages of private law has been completed and identified insufficient focus on the safety of arrangements for children when fact finding hearings were being recommended with consequential delays. The requirement for management oversight of these decisions has been introduced and the learning has been discussed with teams at national and local events
- **Learning from Significant Incidents and audits** is also directly influencing the work on the private law internal change programme and Pathfinder developments
- **Planning for Practice week 2023** is well underway. This will be a fantastic opportunity to learn from excellent practice, to energise and motivate and to take a further step towards our ambition for the Together Practice Framework to be fully embedded and used consistently in practice, business and corporate services
- The **Family Forum** is going from strength to strength, with challenge from members influencing practice developments directly, for example work is underway on our guidance to support recommendations for 'indirect contact'



Complaints policy and process update

- Since April 2023, complaints, correspondence and children's complaints located in one team, located in Strategy Directorate
- Updated policies for children and adult complaints due for publication on 1 August
- Website to be clearer about what our complaints process involves and what people can expect
- In the year to date (April-June 2023) we have received 238 adult complaints for investigation, seven complaints from children, and 33 enquiries from MPs
- Working on a revised format for reporting on our performance in responding to complaints and correspondence, including capturing and acting on the important learning they contain. Our first report will be shared with the Performance and Quality Committee in March 2024. Earlier reports on scale and quality of complaints will be received by the corporate management team. A schedule is being developed for this reporting.
- We will produce an annual report on complaints and correspondence for each financial year (starting with 2023-24) a summary of which will be published in our Annual Report and Accounts.



**Taking me seriously: How we help
Our new film series – 3 volumes – each with 2 films**

**This is volume 1, film 1 June 2023
Our national improvement service in partnership
with the FJYPB**



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Public question



Question from the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

1. We received several questions from the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) who are developing their own approach for handling complaints for young people
2. We agree with the PHSO objectives to identify who is not complaining, who is complaining prematurely, and who might be initiating a complaint and withdrawing. We have taken a similar approach in developing our own revised procedures for handling complaints
3. Our new separate policies and processes for children and adults were developed in response to feedback, and with input from FJYPB and the Family Forum. They introduce a more proactive approach to resolving people's issues before they escalate to a formal complaint. They are relationship driven and supportive for those who need a full investigation.
4. We have written to the PHSO to suggest a meeting so we can address their questions in more detail.
5. We will also connect them with the FJYPB, so they can hear directly from young people about their experiences of using services and sharing feedback

