

Joint statement from the NACCC, Cafcass and Cafcass Cymru about Child Contact Centres

NACCC, Cafcass and Cafcass Cymru continue to work in partnership reviewing information from the NHS, World Health Organisation and Public Health England & Public Health Wales.

The guidance from NACCC in the short term is that people should not be attending Child Contact Centres, for the purposes of Contact in the current climate. This is in line with the information shared by the President of the Family Division regarding Child Contact Activities (CCI) Support for Separated Parents Information Programme (SPIP) Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme (DAPP) and DNA testing.

From Wednesday 25 March courts suspended new ordering of contact to take place at contact centres.

Some accredited Child Contact Centres are looking at alternative ways to ensure that child contact can continue to take place, by exploring different methods such as:

1. **Centres are working creatively with families** to see if there are other people that might be able to take up the role of the contact centre. This works well where there are family members or other trusted people that can step in, to support. The government has said that children can travel to see parents and the judiciary are urging parents to work together in making decisions for children where this is safe and appropriate. Guidance from the President of the Family Division [can be found here](#).
2. **Indirect Contact** is being achieved using technology like skype, WhatsApp video calling, facetime and so on. Some centres are finding ways to support this so that similar arrangements can be implemented in line with the services usually being offered. There is [guidance available from NACCC on this](#).

NACCC are developing an app, similar to Skype, to offer remote contact between parents and children without needing the personal details of either parent. Contact supervisors will be able to control and monitor the contact and the technology and therefore can bring sessions to an end if necessary.

The centres who can offer remote contact opportunities are prepared to facilitate contact for any parent, regardless of where they live in the country - location doesn't matter when working with families online.

After current restrictions are eased, families could return to face-to-face contact at their local centre if this is needed.

At this point we would strongly urge members of the public to contact NACCC or your local contact centre for latest information about what services are available locally. [You can find and contact your local centre here.](#)

The key message from the President of the Family Division is that where coronavirus restrictions cause the contact arrangements to be varied, there should be safe alternative arrangements for the child. This will include reasonable judgement about the circumstances, including the child's health, the risk of infection, and the presence of any vulnerable individuals in the household.

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