

## Child Contact Centre policy

### Overview

While recognising and valuing the professional autonomy of our practitioners (Family Court Advisers, Practice Supervisors, Service Managers, Heads of Practice), Cafcass has a responsibility to ensure that work with children and families is of the highest quality in line with the best social work practice and the expectations of the family court.

This policy sets out our expectations for all practitioners when considering the use of external organisations for supervised child contact arrangements, in private law cases.

### Why this is important for children

This policy will promote the use of safe and child-focused services to keep the best interests of the child at the centre of the work we do.

### 1. Principles for Cafcass staff when considering the use of supervised child contact services

- 1.1 All planned work and recommendations to court should be in line with the Cafcass [Child Impact Assessment Framework](#) and [guidance for Cafcass commissioned contact activities](#).
- 1.2 Where a practitioner considers the use of an external organisation to provide child contact services either as part of planned work, signposting parents to an organisation or when making a recommendation to court – the organisation providing a service will need to be accredited with the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC<sup>1</sup>). This applies to supported or supervised child contact services being delivered in community settings or centre based.
- 1.3 Practitioners should consider what support children might need to prepare them for recommended services and who will deliver this preparation.
- 1.4 Cafcass' National Commissioning Team (NCT) will only contract NACCC accredited organisations where child contact services are being offered.
- 1.5 Practitioners can check the location of the nearest centre before making a recommendation to court. An up-to-date list of all accredited organisations and centres

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<sup>1</sup> The National Association of Child Contact Centres, [NACCC](#), is the membership and accreditation body for child contact services and works to ensure that in, and out of, court, contact centres and services are child focussed, safe and deliver meaningful contact that helps parents, where appropriate, to move on and resolve their dispute.

can be found on the NACCC website. Practitioners should check with the contact centre if there are waiting times and services can be delivered. Cafcass is not able to provide any support with travel arrangements.

- 1.6 Where a practitioner becomes aware of an organisation offering supported or supervised child contact services without NACCC accreditation they should inform Cafcass' National Commissioning Team (NCT) by emailing [nct@cafcass.gov.uk](mailto:nct@cafcass.gov.uk). Where appropriate, NCT will liaise with NACCC to encourage organisations to gain accreditation.
- 1.7 Where a practitioner has concerns about an organisation's compliance with the NACCC accreditation standards they must raise the concerns with NCT, [nct@cafcass.gov.uk](mailto:nct@cafcass.gov.uk). NCT will alert NACCC about the concerns.

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